




**Just Landed!
Getting Set Up
In Panama**

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW...

- **Transportation**
 - **Buying a Phone Plan**
 - **Setting Up Utilities and Paying Bills**
 - **Shopping**
 - **Meeting People**
 - **Learning Spanish**
 - **Getting Your Mail**
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- A decorative graphic consisting of several parallel white lines of varying lengths, slanted diagonally from the bottom right towards the top right, set against the blue background.

TRANSPORTATION

- Walking
- Your own car
- Public transportation
- Taxis
- Rideshare apps





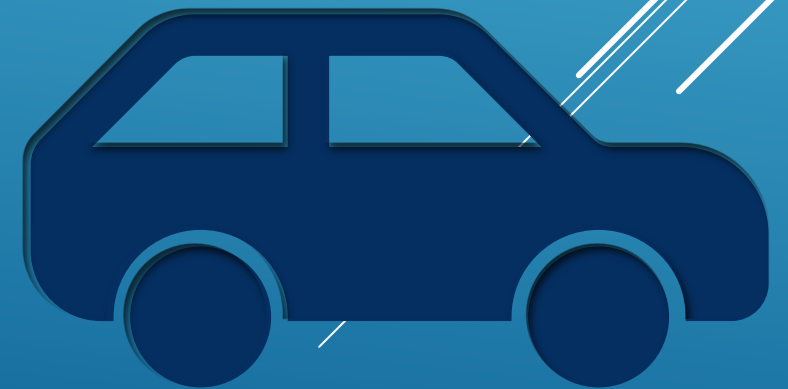
**CAREFUL WHERE
YOU STEP...**

Licenses

- ❑ Home license good for 3 months
- ❑ After 3 months, apply for local license
- ❑ Panapass

Buying A Car

- ❑ To buy or not to buy?
- ❑ Panama City has the best deals
- ❑ Check local listings (Encuentra 24, Craigslist, dealerships, expat groups, Facebook marketplace)
- ❑ Always negotiate
- ❑ Financing



YOUR OWN CAR...



METROBUS



- ▶ **Pros:** cheap (25 cents a ride), routes connect the whole city and surrounding areas, air-conditioned
- ▶ **Cons:** can be very crowded, schedules aren't always reliable, long waits, traffic





THE METRO

- 2 lines, no. 3 in progress
- Cost: 35 cents L1, 50 cents L2
- Pros: fast, clean, affordable
- Cons: limited routes, very crowded at rush hour



TRAVEL TO THE INTERIOR



- The buses that leave from the National Transportation Terminal will get you just about anywhere in Panama.
- When you enter the transportation terminal, you'll see a line of ticket windows. Each window is for a different destination, and they're grouped by province.
- You'll need to buy a Rapid Pass to access the area where the buses park. You can buy your pass from machines at Albrook—they cost US\$2 and are rechargeable. The fee to enter the departure area is 10 cents.
- A bus ticket to Coronado costs US\$2.80, US\$4.25 to El Valle, US\$10 to Las Tablas, about US\$20 to David, US\$28 to Bocas del Toro.
- Bring a jacket!



YELLOW TAXIS

- Taxi drivers in Panama are infamous for overcharging tourists and for driving recklessly. Don't use yellow taxis unless you have no other option.
- If you settle in the interior in a place where rideshare apps don't exist, ask people you know to recommend *taxistas* they trust.
- Tips: agree on a fare *before* getting in the taxi, pay through the window *after* getting out, ask friends beforehand how much a reasonable fare is for your route.



RIDESHARE APPS

- Uber (most expensive)
- inDriver (cheap, rides start at US\$3. The app lets you “negotiate” with drivers—you name a price, and they can accept or offer a higher amount)
- DiDi (can be even cheaper than inDriver but it’s not as popular and you might end up waiting a while for a driver to accept your request).



Panama's Diablos Rojos





AIRPORTS



- Tocumen International Airport (Panama City)
- Enrique Malek International Airport (David): Flights to and from Panama City and San Jose, Costa Rica
- Marcos A. Gelabert International Airport (Albrook, Panama City): Air Panama flights all over the country, including Bocas del Toro and the Pearl Islands, plus Cartagena and Medellin in Colombia
- Scarlett Martínez International Airport (Río Hato, Coclé Province): flights to and from Panama City and to Toronto, Montreal, and Québec City in Canada

- Plan or prepaid?
- Set up a plan in the provider's store
- If you go prepaid, download the app and recharge directly from your bank account. There are a wide variety of prepaid plans available... one day, one week, two weeks, one month, etc.
- You can also buy prepaid minutes in mini supers
- You can buy SIM cards from the provider's store, or from mini supermarkets for about US\$1

BUYING A PHONE PLAN



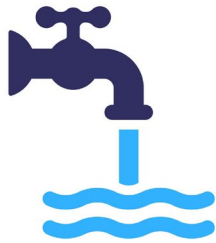
SETTING UP UTILITIES



GAS



ELECTRICITY



WATER

You Will Need:

- Rental contract/deed
- Passport
- Deposit
- Appointment for installation
- Patience

Companies:

- Electricity: Naturgy/ENSA
- Gas: Tropigas/Panagas
- Water: IDAAN
- Internet: Tigo/Claro/Cable & Wireless
- Bills are paid electronically

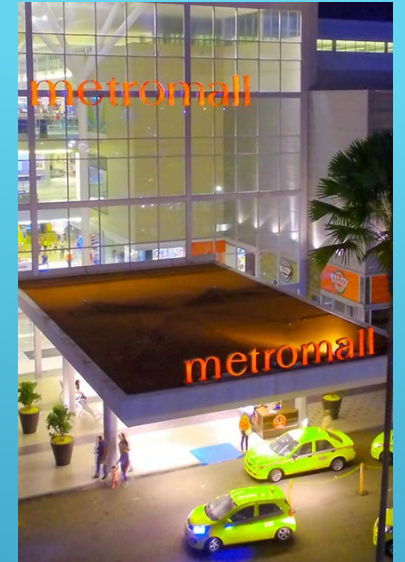
- ❑ **Machetazo**—similar to Walmart (affordable, low-end home goods, clothing + shoes, food, etc.)
- ❑ **Conway**—high-end department store (clothing + shoes, furniture, home good, health products, technology, etc.)
- ❑ **Do-it Center, Novey, Discovery Center**—similar to Home Depot
- ❑ **Melo**—gardening and pet supplies
- ❑ **Titan, El Costo, Aliss**—cheap department stores
- ❑ **Luz Décor, Lumicentro, Ilumitec**—lighting
- ❑ **Deja Vu Muebles**—affordable consignment furniture
- ❑ **Online classifieds:** encuentra24, craigslist, Facebook groups/Marketplace
- ❑ *Línea blanca*—fridges, washers and dryers, etc.



SHOPPING

MALLS IN PANAMA CITY

- ❑ Multiplaza
- ❑ Albrook
- ❑ AltaPlaza
- ❑ Metromall
- ❑ Soho Mall



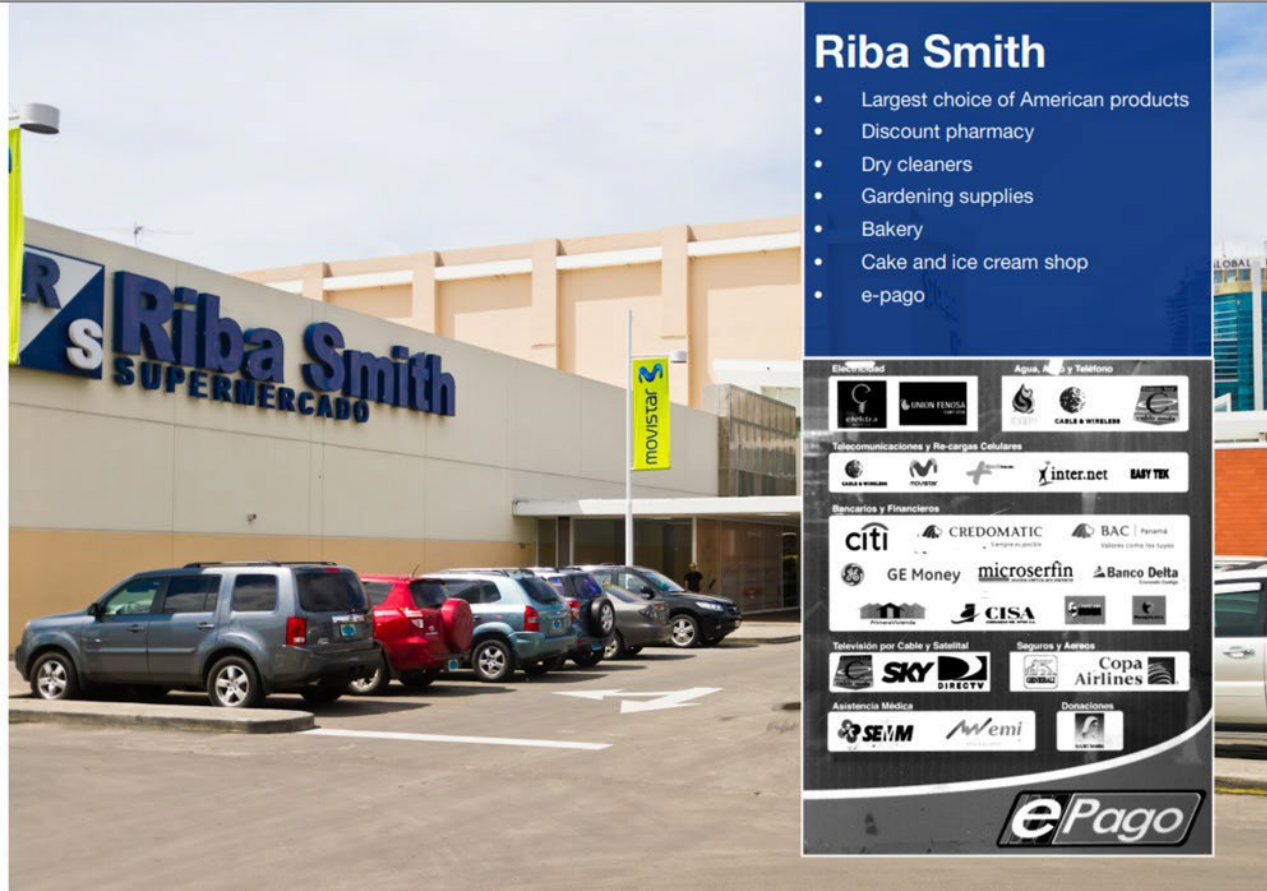


MALLS IN THE INTERIOR

- ❑ Westland Mall—Vista Alegre/Arraiján
- ❑ Santiago Mall—Santiago, Veraguas
- ❑ Federal Mall—David, Chiriquí
- ❑ Mall Paseo Central—Chitré, Herrera



Supermarkets



Supermarkets

Super 99

- Basic products
- Sometimes poor service



El Rey

- American products
- Pharmacy
- Environmentally responsible company





MERCADO DE MARISCOS



FARMER'S MARKETS/MERCA PANAMA

Mini Supers And “Chinos”





Casco Antiguo
SPANISH SCHOOL



Español ^{en} PANamá



- ❑ The level of Spanish proficiency you'll need depends on the destination you're settling in.
- ❑ No matter where you settle in Panama, you should learn at least basic Spanish (you'll need it at some point).
- ❑ Options for learning Spanish:
 - 1) Enroll in a course at a Spanish school like Casco Antiguo Spanish School, EPA! Español en Panamá, or Habla Ya Spanish School. An excellent social opportunity.
 - 2) Sign up for in-person or virtual classes with a tutor.
 - 3) Learn independently with a program like Rosetta Stone.
- ❑ Practice!

LEARNING SPANISH



- ❑ Panama has no mail service.
- ❑ You have two options for receiving letter mail and packages:
 - 1) Use an international courier service like UPS, DHL, or FedEx. You'll send and receive packages at one of their offices. (Very expensive option).
 - 2) Sign up for a P.O. Box in Miami with a company like Mail Boxes, Etc.
- ❑ Sign up for a paperless mail service

GETTING YOUR MAIL

Join expat social media groups *before* moving to Panama

- ❑ Expats in Panama, Young Expats in Panama, Expats in Panama-David, Boquete Community Group, Expats in Coronado, Panama, etc.
- ❑ The best way to learn about clubs, activities, get-togethers, what's going on in the community, and to ask for advice and recommendations.

Volunteer—give back and make new friends

- ❑ Wide variety of local, national, and international organizations
- ❑ Pick a cause you're passionate about: pets, education, children in need, people with disabilities, etc.

Join clubs

- ❑ Look for ones dedicated to your hobbies or try new pastimes!

Get as involved in your new home as possible

MAKING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS



PANAMA
LETTER

REALIZE YOUR PANAMA DREAMS
PANAMACIRCLE

- Panama Circle
- *In Focus: Panama*
- *Panama Letter*

LIOS RESOURCES



Enjoy Your Stay In
Panama!