



## Frequently Asked Questions

**PLEASE TAKE 30 mins. TO READ CAREFULLY AND**

**BE TOTALLY PREPARED FOR THE TRIP!!**

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# **STEP INTO ANOTHER WORLD... & STEP OUT OF YOUR COMFORT ZONE!**

**Before coming on our trip you, and everyone from your group, must understand what San Blas Adventures offers.**

**It's a wild adventure through some of the most beautiful remote islands in the Caribbean. There may be bad weather, rough sea, you'll probably get wet, there will be limited privacy, bucket showers, rustic accommodation, sleeping in hammocks, engine failures, mosquito bites, sunburn... While discovering a new world anything can happen!**

**After reading this FAQ, Please send us an email stating the following:**

**“I (full name) have read, understood and agree with the information in the FAQ”**

**!Your place on the trip is not confirmed until we receive this!**

# **CONFIRM YOUR BOOKING!**

## **CONFIRM YOUR BOOKING AT LEAST FIVE DAYS BEFORE THE TRIP**

If you have booked your trip more than 5 days in advance, please send us and email letting us know you still intend on joining the trip!

### **CONFIRM YOUR BOOKING BY SENDING US AN EMAIL WITH THE FOLLOWING:**

#### **"I WILL JOIN THE TRIP"**

As we have only collected a deposit from you, and also for organization purposes, it's very important we have contact with you and an e-mail confirmation that you will definitely be joining the trip. **Just like checking in for a flight**, if we do not receive confirmation by email, it's possible that your seat(s) can be resold,

*so make sure you get in touch!*

Once you are booked, IF you didn't provide this information already - **please send us the following:**

- **The email of everyone in your group**
- **Full name (as it shows on the passport)**
- **Hostel/hotel name**
- **Nationality**
- **Date of birth (day - month - year)**
- **Passport #**
- **Any special dietary needs (vegetarian, vegan, pescatarian, allergies, food intolerance, etc.)**
- **Occupation (when not travelling)**
- **Whatsapp # or telephone number (with country code)**

## **TRAVEL WITH US AND SUPPORT THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

**We work very closely with the Kuna on all aspects of the trip** and most of the money from your fare stays in San Blas, distributed among the local people we work with and the different communities we visit along the way.

**San Blas Adventures donates to various projects** in the Kuna Yala and in Capurgana. From the beginning of our Adventure you'll see that there are many ways in which local people along our route can benefit and share the opportunities that tourism brings.

**RECYCLING IN KUNA YALA:** Waste distribution and recycling are major issues in Kuna Yala that the Kunas have never dealt with.

They have not had access to the information and education on how to deal with such issues, which means unfortunately some parts of some islands are littered with plastic, so we have decided to start doing something about it!

Classes and education will be offered on the benefits of recycling for the land, sea, and animals. A rescue project is taking place for the Leatherback turtles who land in Armila to lay their eggs every year.

This is a huge project and it's one foot in front of the other, but we are dedicated to growing our efforts with the goal of a garbage free San Blas, and education in the villages so it stays that way for generations to come.

We have close ties with the communities of San Blas and want to give back for all the knowledge, beauty, friendships, and love they have shared with us!

**IN CAPURGANNA :** We are involved in various projects including education and sports for children, caring for the elderly, and general positive development in the village. We want to say thanks to you all for choosing to travel with us and making these things possible!

## **WHERE DOES YOUR MONEY GO?**

**Watching where your money goes is very important!**

**Come with us and support the local families.** Ethical travel doesn't mean we want tourists to stop having fun, we just want them to think about how they're spending their time and money.

**Be a conscious traveler, with an awareness of the place you're going and whether or not the money you spend benefits the economy of the local hosts.**

**We work very closely with the Kuna on all aspects of the trip** and most of the money from your fare stays in San Blas, distributed among the local people we work with and the different communities we visit along the way

## UNIQUE ROUTE

- We travel between Sapzurro/Capurgana in Colombia and Carti in Panama. This is literally from one end of the San Blas Islands to the other.
- We are THE ONLY tour that takes you through the full archipelago of San Blas. Passing through all 365 islands.
- **NO OCEAN CROSSING:**
  - Traveling this way you're always in sight of the coastline, weaving through paradise islands and indigenous villages.
- **COLOMBIAN HIGHLIGHTS:**
  - Visit Sapzurro, Capurgana & La Miel on your way. Some of the most beautiful bays in the Caribbean. See more here: <https://sanblasadventures.com/map/>

## WHO IS OUR TRIP FOR?

### **MEET PEOPLE FROM AROUND THE WORLD!**

We encourage a wide mix of ages within the group, from old time adventurers to short break professionals to first time travelers. Every combination of people makes a unique, one off, atmosphere onboard. There is no upper age limit. All you need is a normal physical condition to get on and off the boat, and an adventurous team spirit!

## HOW BIG IS THE GROUP?

Depending on the season, our trips leave from 8 up to 27 crew not included.

## **WHAT'S INCLUDED AND WHATS NOT INCLUDED?**

### **WHAT'S INCLUDED:**

- 4 days – 3 Nights
- Boat travel from Carti to Sapzurro or Sapzurro to Carti (depending on trip direction)
- Meals, from lunch on the first day to lunch on the last day
- Accommodation
- A bilingual Tour Guide
- A local Guna guide
- Kuna Yala entrance fee
- Islands Fees
- Panama Immigration fees
- Snorkelling equipment
- Beach equipment
- An unforgettable experience!

### **WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED:**

- Perfect weather and sea conditions – No guarantees.
- Accommodation before and after the trip.
- All transports before and after the trip.
- Alcohol, drinks, water
- Snacks between the meals
- Fins (snorkel and mask are included)
- Towels

## **FOOD AND BEVERAGES**

All meals are included from lunch the first day to lunch the last day of the journey.  
10 meals in total.

### **Snacks are not included**

**Dietary requirements:** Please inform us of any dietary requirements. If you are vegetarian, vegan or have allergies etc

Our menu is based on traditional caribbean cooking with a gringo touch, using fresh seafood, lobsters when available, chicken, vegetables, fruits, rice... The seafood in San Blas is first class and we serve lots of it

We buy our fish directly from the fisherman on some islands or the locals prepare delicious meals for us. We stock up on fresh fruits and vegetables, vegetarians and vegans will enjoy healthy dishes. The crew usually serves fresh fruits between meals or after meals.

We are proud of our food, our teams and the Kunas cook with passion. Sometimes we do not cook per plate but in one big batch caribbean style so it will be hard to separate ingredients just to cater for those who do not like garlic or onions etc. Remember that you are on remote islands! You may have to make a small exception sometimes.

**We always work to improve and do our best to satisfy our guests!**

### **DRINKS ARE NOT INCLUDED**

**WATER:** We recommend around 1 gallon per person before the trip as you can also buy water on some of the islands.

**Cold beers, sodas and coconuts:** can be purchased from most of the islands during the trip with a cost of \$1-2 depending on the island.

**Rum:** A popular drink among guests, should be bought before the trip as it is usually not available on the islands.

### **OUR BOATS, TRAVEL TIMES AND SEASICKNESS**

We travel an average of 2-3 hours per day on locally owned and operated speedboats. The total travel time during the trip is around 8-10 hours depending on sea conditions. This is a great alternative to sailing as it means you spend most of your day on the islands, relaxing in the sun, exploring villages, snorkeling, and just enjoying island life in general.

#### **SEASICKNESS IS NOT LIKELY:**

Because our boats go faster and don't sway so much from side to side it's very unlikely you'll get seasick. Of course, on rare occasions, and to people who are very sensitive it can happen. If it does happen, the good news is that the boat ride is so short you'll be off on the next island soon enough. If you are prone to seasickness, you can bring some seasickness pills with you just in case.

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## **DO I HAVE TO PAY ISLANDS OR IMMIGRATION FEES ?**

**NO.** We take care of your stamp in or out of Panama, your entrance fees for Kuna Yala & island fees for each island. On the Colombian side stamping in is free\* and is done in Capurgana.

## **WHERE DOES THE TRIP START?**

**Our trip starts in Carti** at the beginning of San Blas. This is where you will get on the boat and start your journey!

To get there you will need to **take a jeep from Panama City**. This is a third party company and the cost is not included in our trip, however, we can help you organize it. All you need to do is let us know where you're staying. **Jeep cost is \$30 per person**

## **WHERE DOES THE TRIP FINISH?**

Our trip ends in Sapzurro, Colombia near La Miel and Capurgana. These are some of the most beautiful, off the beaten track bays you will ever see. White sand beaches backed by untouched jungle, vibrant Caribbean villages in bays you can walk between. **NO ROADS!** Just horse and cart transport, waterfalls, hikes, a natural Jacuzzi, and some of Colombia's best diving. There IS a danger though... you may want to stay

## **TRAVEL AFTER TO CARTAGENA OR MEDELLIN**

You will need to spend at least one night in Capurgana in order to catch the morning boat to Necocli, however we suggest you stay a few nights to enjoy the area before traveling on to Cartagena or Medellin. To get to either of these places it takes one day, leaving in the morning and arriving in the evening. The journey consists of one boat ride and one or two bus/van rides.

**COSTS AND TRAVEL TIMES TO CARTAGENA & MEDELLIN (ALL TIMES & PRICES ARE APPROXIMATE):**

**Capurgana:** Stamp into Colombia at the immigration office. This is free and easy, no need for onward ticket. You will only need 1 copy of your passport and your yellow fever card. *We recommend getting the yellow fever vaccine before getting to Panama Republic. Our guide will tell you options to fulfill this requirement at the briefing.*

- 1. Capurgana to Necocli:** Around 1.5 hours. Leaves once a day at 11:00am. Cost is 70.000 COP
- 2. Boat to Necocli:** You must book your ticket for the boat to Necocli and stamp out of Colombia the day before you leave.
  - 1. Preparation for Necocli ferry:** Make sure all your bags are protected by bin liners. These can be bought at the shop by the dock. Have sun block ready. (Hint: the most comfortable place to sit is the back of the boat)

### **3. Necocli to Cartagena:**

1. Van to Monteria: 40.000 COP. around 3 hours
2. Van from Monteria to Cartagena: 65.000 COP around 5.5 hours.
3. Around 105.000 COP in total
4. Necocli to Medellin: 70,000 COP, around 9.5 hours.

**Total cost from Capurgana to Cartagena:** Around 220,000 COP (approx. \$75) all amounts need to be paid in Colombian Pesos.

**Total cost from Capurgana to Medellin:** Around 185,000 COP (approx. \$62) all amounts need to be paid in Colombian Pesos)

**Note: All amounts may change due to providers' policy and money exchange rates.**

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## **HOW TO GET BACK TO PANAMA AFTER THE TRIP**

If you'd like to experience this amazing adventure through San Blas, visit the border towns where we finish and come back again, there is a couple of ways!

### **Coming back with us:**

If you'd like to do the trip twice with us to return to Panama, we offer a **\$50 discount** the second time you take the trip.

### **By plane:**

A short boat ride from Capurgana to Puerto Obaldia and a flight to Panama City and you're back in Panama for around \$120 USD.

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## **HOW DO I GET TO THE DEPARTURE POINT ?**

We help organize the group transport by Jeep to Carti where the trip begins. All you need to do is let us know where you're staying. The transport will pick you up the morning of the trip at 5am. The cost is \$30 USD per person.

**Important note:** You must keep us updated and stay in contact with us if you change your hostel so the jeep will know where to pick you up! You must be outside and ready at 5am. if you miss the Jeep, it can become a costly mistake for you to catch up with the rest of the group!

**The transport service is NOT our company and the cost of transfer to the port is not included in our trip. We are not responsible for this part of the journey.**

**Important Note:** Late pick up or late arrival to the departing point due to no show, sleeping in or forgetting belongings at your hostel/hotel may cause extra expenses of up to \$100-200 plus losing the 1st day activities.

If you bring any delicate valuables (money, docs, etc.), any breakable item, shock sensitive electronic devices, computers/laptops/mobile phones/tablets, etc. we recommend carrying them with you in your daily backpack inside the 4×4 car to avoid any shock damage or loss.

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## **GROUP MEETING THE DAY BEFORE THE TRIP**

We organise a meeting at Lunas Castle Hostel, Casco Viejo (old town) in Panama city at **11:00 a.m. the day before the trip.**

This meeting is held for you to get a full briefing from your guide in order to be fully prepared for your departure the next day. You can also get to know the other people of the group, as well as pay the remaining balance of trip and the \$30 USD for the shared 4×4 jeep transport to the port. This meeting is really important so please be there if you can!! It's also a good opportunity to see Casco Viejo at the same time.

### **WHAT IF I MISS THE BRIEFING?**

***Read our FAQ twice!*** There is all the information you need to be totally prepared for the trip. In that case you will pay the remaining balance before the trip in the morning of departure to your guide.

We strongly recommend that you attend the briefing to avoid any misunderstanding or surprises and to answer any of your questions!

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## **PACKING AND BAG PREPARATION**

It's very important you follow these suggestions to prepare and protect your belongings during the trip.

### **SEPARATE YOUR THINGS**

**Put what you will use for the trip in your small bag.** This is the bag you will keep with you for the trip. Your big bag with everything you don't need for the trip will be stored and may be carried separately. You will not have access to it for the entire trip until the end. Think carefully about what you need to bring.

For your **electronics and important documents**, you **MUST** seal them in sealed plastic bags then tape them up so they are **100% WATERPROOF**. In the unlikely event of water entering your bag we cannot be held responsible for damage to electronic equipment or personal items.

**Do this the night before.** That way when we get to the boat we can store the bags and supplies straight away and vamos as soon as possible.

**Passport:** We suggest storing it in a sealed plastic bag (ziplock) and carry it in your hand bag or small bag. You will need to present this when entering San Blas, so please don't store it in your big bag

### **SOME IDEAS FOR PACKING**

- Change of Clothes
- Swim suit
- Towel
- Torch
- Camera (fully charged)
- Warm clothes or a sheet to sleep in. Can be chilly in a hammock.
- A warm jumper/sweater/light jacket.
- Some dollars to buy drinks, coconuts, kuna art, etc.
- Sun Block/after sun.
- Water
- Snacks
- 3 copies of your passport
- Toilet paper
- Cigarettes
- Mosquito repellent
- Good spirit – and some good spirits!!

**NOTE :** Remember that you will be traveling on a boat with a good probability of getting water splash in the boat. We strongly recommend you get a travel-insurance policy which covers you for loss or damage to your personal belongings, as we cannot be responsible for them.

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## **ELECTRICITY AND CHARGING BATTERIES**

There are often no plugs or electricity on the Islands. Sometimes you will be able to charge batteries on some of the nights if you are lucky and find a solar panel with a plug!

We recommend that you fully charge your batteries the night before the trip.

Remember to pack a Flashlight or Head-torch.

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## **MONEY PREPARATION AND PESOS**

Make sure you get enough cash in Panama City before the trip. Remaining balance should be paid in cash dollars. There are no ATMs in San Blas, Sapzurro, or Capurgana. The first ATM that you'll see after leaving Panama City is in Necocli.

### **HOW MUCH MONEY DO YOU NEED:**

- **TRIP BALANCE**
  - Trip price minus your reservation deposit
- **JEEP TRANSPORT**
  - \$30USD Shared 4×4 car from Carti to Panama city downtown
- **SUGGESTED EXTRA MONEY**
  - Around \$50 – \$150 USD for the islands (Drinks and coconuts in San Blas are \$1-\$2 USD and Guna art & jewellery are sold between \$5-\$30 USD)
  - Around 300.000 COP (\$100 USD) for onward travel in Colombia (transport to Cartagena or Medellin, 1 night accommodation in Capurgana and meals). We recommend having extra cash with you so if you fall in love with the area of Sapzurro/Capurgana you can spend some extra days there!
  - In total we recommend around \$250 USD extra cash. That way you're covered for everything!

## WHERE CAN I GET COLOMBIAN PESOS?

You can exchange dollars to pesos at Albrook Mall, in Casco Viejo, any Western Union, any bank, or any money exchange house (Casa de Cambio). You can also exchange Dollars once you arrive to Capurgana, so if you run out of time, no need to panic!

## WHY IS THE REMAINING BALANCE PAID IN CASH?

This adventure is run through a very remote part of the world. Part of what sets us aside from other routes & tours through San Blas is how closely we work with the communities and how much of our tour is provided by the locals, including our crew, boats, accommodation, food, and the beautiful places we spend time at each day. It is necessary for us to receive balances after the deposit in cash in order to pay for each service provided by the Kuna.

## PAYING VIA PAYPAL:

We are only able to take a very limited amount of full booking payments with PayPal per trip. This will be available on a first come first serve basis. There is an additional 7% charge for PayPal payments.

**\*All PayPal payments made must be in USD, or additional fees covered in the balance\***

You do not need to be registered with PayPal to pay your deposit. Instructions on how to pay can be answered by email.

## PREPARE FOR NO CASH MACHINES :

Remember that **there are no cash machines, no banks, no ATMs between Panama City and Necocli**. We suggest taking money out a few days before the trip to avoid last minute problems. The trip is all inclusive except for drinks. How much money you need will depend on how much you drink, if you want to buy souvenirs and of course if you want to stay a few more days in beautiful Capurgana!

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## **PAYMENTS AND CASH**

### **ONLINE BOOKING**

We require \$120 U.S.D deposit to confirm your reservation. This is payable through our online booking system at [www.sanblasadventures.com/calendar/](http://www.sanblasadventures.com/calendar/)

### **PAYPAL DEPOSITS**

On rare occasions if a guest for some reason cannot make the booking online we can take deposit with PayPal. \*there is an additional 7% charge for PayPal payments.

### **PAYPAL FULL PAYMENTS**

We are able to take a very limited amount of full booking payments with PayPal per trip. Usually 1-3 per trip. This will be available on a first come first serve basis. \*there is an additional 7% charge for PayPal payments.

You do not need to be registered with PayPal to pay your deposit. Instructions on how to pay can be answered by email.

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## **BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE AND EXTRA BAGGAGE**

### **BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE**

Each guest has a baggage allowance of **one large backpack and one small carry on bag.**

**Extra:** If you would like to take something extra please check with us before booking to confirm that we have space.

## **COSTS**

Extra backpack \$30

Surfboard \$30

Kite board \$30

Bicycle \$100

**Note:** The extra charge covers the extra weight on the boat and does not cover damages. You should take care of your gear on the boat. If something breaks it's your responsibility.

**Surfboards:** We suggest you sit at the front of the boat and watch your board. Take charge of taking the board on and off the boat yourself and storing it somewhere it won't get damaged for the night.

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## **PASSPORT - IMMIGRATION - STAMPS**

PLEASE, **MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE ENTRANCE STAMP TO PANAMA** IN YOUR PASSPORT BEFORE HEADING TO CARTÍ.

### **STAMPING OUT OF PANAMA:**

We do this on the last day of the trip and all costs are covered by us. This can be a lengthy process depending on group size etc. We will do our best to speed it up, but please have patience! You will need 3 copies of your passport.

### **STAMPING INTO COLOMBIA:**

You will do this in the immigration office on the main street of Capurgana on the last day of the trip. It is totally free and easy.



## **PASSPORT:**

You will need your passport on you on the first morning of the trip in the jeep to show as you enter San Blas. And on the last day of the trip to stamp out of Panama.

## **YELLOW FEVER VACCINE:**

Colombia requires the Yellow fever vaccine to enter the country. If you have a yellow fever vaccine card, please make sure to bring it with you. If you don't have it yet, we recommend getting the shot before getting to Panama Republic. If you cannot get the vaccine in time don't panic, you'll still be able to cross the border. Just let your guide know at the briefing and they will give you the latest information

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## **RULES AND RESPECT FOR THE KUNA**

### **OUR RELATIONSHIP AND YOUR EXPERIENCE**

After many years of operating in San Blas we have developed very close relationships with the local indigenous community, the Kuna. Being able to share this experience with you, and share you with them, is an integral part of our trip and what really sets us apart.

**Throughout the trip you will be meeting locals who work with us, communities that we work closely with, and villages where we buy supplies like fish/seafood, rums, & ice, etc. We highly respect the communities in our route and we plan our trips in a way that we don't exhaust the villages with our visit.**

**Most of our crew are from these villages and we are welcome there.**

As an individual you are welcome to go around villages to talk with and meet the locals.

## PHOTOS

Photos are a big deal in Kuna Yala, some will ask you 1\$ for taking a photo of them, some will completely refuse. In all cases you will need to start a conversation with them first and then ask for a photo.

Kunas children will go after your camera and make your photography a dream! However, you will still need to ask their permission and if their mother or father is around, you will need to ask permission from them.

**Coconuts:** The San Blas islands are coconut plantations planted by the Kuna. Every coconut, no matter where you find it, has an owner whom you need to find and pay before going crazy banging it on rocks and whatever you can find to try and get it open. Kunas have machetes and they will open it for you.

### **Village Rules:**

- Always wear a shirt in villages,
- Ask before taking pictures. Sometimes the Kuna may charge you 1\$ for picture.

**Please don't offer alcohol to the Kuna**, particularly rum, the results are not fun for anyone!

You can bring things for the Kuna kids. Some suggestions are: books, pens, volleyball, basketball, football, any game.... It's better to give these kinds of things than sweets.

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## **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL**

### **NO DRUGS ON BOARD!**

Be 100% sure you have NO DRUGS with you on the trip. At some point the authorities may check all your luggage, in which case they will find whatever you have and you will go to jail for a very long time, like 10 years! Not fun. Rum on the other hand is legal and lots of fun!!

**\*\* The army will check all your luggage at the Panamanian immigration – Be 100% sure you don't have any drugs, they will find it and you will go to jail for 10+ years\*\***

## ALCOHOL

**Avoid drinking too much alcohol!** Of course you will want to enjoy a few beers and sample some of the local rum around the fire at night, however don't make yourself a liability. Nobody wants to have to look after the drunk guy. Tropical hangovers are a nightmare and you don't want to miss out on the day activities if you are trying to recover from the night before! Also, if you hurt yourself you're a long way from the nearest hospital and there are no ambulances. (there are some clinics in some villages)

**Drinking in the indigenous villages is not permitted by the Kuna laws, for that we have our private social areas to socialize and have a drink all together!**

**Be understanding and respectful of others:**

In a San blas adventures group most of the people are well traveled, well mannered and well informed. It is a holiday break so they are allowed to party and socialize.. if you want to join – you can, if not then there is plenty of space to chill, explore or enjoy the islands your way.

As a free flowing trip, we want people to enjoy themselves but we are not shy to let you know if you get a little too excited with the drinks. There's generally a good sociable atmosphere when travelers get together on a boat roaming paradise islands and we encourage people to enjoy the trip their way as long as they respect other people who want to do other things too. It's also important to respect the kuna people leaving on the islands and the ones working with us or part of the crew. We want our groups to be socially aware, respect each other, the crew and the locals.

## KUNA AND ALCOHOL

Unfortunately we have to keep mentioning this and double reinforcing its importance. **DO NOT GIVE KUNA ALCOHOL** Kuna are an indigenous people and like many asians they don't have the enzymes to digest and filter alcohol properly. What seems funny can quickly turn into a really annoying or potentially dangerous situation. It's not safe to be completely intoxicated on a small island. Please be respectful of this!

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## **SLEEPING ARRANGEMENTS**

**Each night you will have the luxury of sleeping on a new island!**

Since each day will be on a new island, you'll get to experience sleeping in a mixture of cabana beach islands and Kuna village islands. Some are on their own private island, within a traditional village or on a secluded beach.

### **HAMMOCKS/BEDS**

Accommodations are provided by the Kuna people and generally consist of dorm style rooms with hammocks. Some islands have some beds available.

### **COUPLES**

Where possible we give couples a room of their own, and the opportunity to sleep together, however sometimes due to availability you may have to be in a shared room with other guests.

### **BUGS**

The islands we stay on are mostly bug free but it's always a good idea to bring some repellent anyway. In the rainy season there may be sandflies on some of the islands. We recommend some kind of oil, like baby oil or coconut oil, as the best defence against sandflies and no-seeums (chitras).

**There will be no sleeping on board as we are a speedboat.**

We recommend that you bring earplugs if you are a light sleeper.

**Keep in mind: This is an adventure!! Amenities are rustic with a charm**

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## **TOILET AND SHOWER**

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**TOILET:** There is no toilet on the boat!

Depending on the islands, we have a mix of plumbing toilets and indigenous Kuna toilet, they are rustic toilets build above the sea, you will have the experience of a lifetime using this ancestral way to do your necessities! We advise you not to throw toilet paper in the sea but to put it in the trash.

**SHOWERS:**

There are fresh water showers on the islands. Water either comes from a well or water drums filled from a river on the mainland.

**NO TOILET OR SHOWER?!**

Some islands we stop at during the day have no toilet, shower or running water.. Just coconut trees. You might have to improvise...

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## **BICYCLES AND MOTORBIKES**

**BICYCLES**

Before booking check with us that we have space to take a bike on the trip date you want to travel.

**Cost: \$100**

**MOTORBIKES**

Sorry, we cannot take motorbikes.

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## **PREGNANT WOMEN**

we do Not bring pregnant women on our trip for the simple reason to avoid issues with the pregnancy due to the bumpy ride of the boat.

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## **FLIGHTS AND DELAYS**

**DELAYS: It's possible at any time of the year that a trip can be delayed**

**DECEMBER-APRIL:** Is the most common time for this to happen. Check FAQ/summertime

**LOW SEASON SEPT-NOV:** On rare occasions in the low season we may delay a trip one or two days if there are not enough people booked.

### **RANDOM EVENTS**

Sometimes in Panama, Colombia or in San Blas there are events (like a strike) that can stop everything. In this case there's nothing we can do but wait.

### **REFUNDS DUE TO DELAYS**

If a trip is delayed for any reason and you are no longer able to make the trip we can refund your deposit.

### **FLIGHTS:**

We suggest you leave a few days leeway in your travel plans and particularly if booking flights after the trip. This way you'll be relaxed if something happens out of the ordinary.

If you do have a flight booked directly after the trip understand that there is always some risk you might not make it. Of course if you let us know we will do everything we can to help you get you to your flight on time.

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## **RESCHEDULING POLICY**

### **REBOOKING/DATE CHANGES:**

Bookings are transferable to another date or direction free of charge (1 time) if we are notified at least 10 days before departure \*subject to availability.

**1st rebooking more than 10 days before the trip = Free**

**2nd rebooking, and any rebooking after = \$20 per person in the booking.**

**3-10 days before the trip = fee of \$20 per person in the booking**

**1-2 days before the trip = Fee of \$40 per person in the booking.**

**\*This doesn't apply for health, or other emergencies with proof. In that case send us an email with the document showing why you had to rebook.**

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## **CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY**

### **IF YOU WISH TO CANCEL YOUR SPOT ON A TRIP SCHEDULED:**

If you cancel you may be eligible for a refund depending on how many days before the trip you cancel:

**More than 30 days : FULL REFUND**

**8 – 30 Days (DAYS INCLUDED) : 50% REFUND**

**\*7 Days or less : NO REFUND**

**\*We will not refund any deposit amount if you have cancelled less than 7 days before your scheduled departure.**

Refunds will be mostly done with PayPal or through our booking online system.

### **IF WE CANCEL OR DELAY A TRIP :**

We only cancel a trip if there is a severe weather warning or if the Marin office does not give us clearance to travel.

On rare occasions we may delay the trip a day or so if we don't have enough people to run the trip or if for some unforeseen reason we cannot leave on the day scheduled.

If our trip cannot proceed on the scheduled departure date, we will reschedule in the next day/s. In that case we will let you know sending an email explaining the delay. We issue full refunds if a trip date is moved or cancelled due to weather or any other reason.

We will issue a full refund if we cancel the full trip.

If we cancel the full trip, you can also join the next departure if there is an available seat and if that works for you.

**Note :** By Booking the trip you accepted our FAQ, the terms & conditions and liability & release

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### **PROPERTY LOSS/DAMAGE POLICY**

**You are responsible for and must take care of your own property.**

### **IN TRANSIT BEFORE AND AFTER THE TRIP**

Take care of your personal stuff during the transport before and after the trip, make sure you don't forget anything inside the vans, buses or jeep you travel with. If you forget something it will be lost and almost impossible to get it back



## **ON THE ISLANDS**

Every time before leaving an island, getting on, or off the boat, make sure you have all your stuff packed and don't forget anything on the islands, phone, towel, sunglasses,... You will almost definitely never go back! and you'll probably never get back what have left behind.

## **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY**

We can not be responsible for your personal items left behind, missing, lost or damaged. The best is to take care of your stuff.

**NOTE :** Remember that you will be traveling in remote islands. We strongly recommend you to get a travel-insurance policy which covers your personal items lost, damaged or stolen.

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## **THIRD PARTY TRANSPORT POLICY**

### **THIRD PARTY TRANSPORT**

Although we help you organize transportation from Cartagena to Necocli, or from Panama city to Carti, Carti to Panama City, all vans hostels, and boats are not a part of San Blas Adventures or our services. We do our best to choose the most professional, organized and punctual providers. If some part of the trip does not go as planned, please be patient. you can call your guide with any problems during the travel.

### **OUR TRIP**

Remember our trip is a speed boat island hopping trip starting in Sapzurro and ending in Carti or vice versa. All transport outside of this trip is 3rd party and not part of our tour.

## **WHY THIRD PARTY TRANSPORT IS NOT INCLUDED**

There are many reasons why we do not include transport before and after the trip.

**1: To give guests flexibility in their travel plans before and after the trip.**

**2: Running our tour in this remote part of the world is a logistical monster. It's more than enough for us to run and be responsible for.**

**3: We cannot control the transport provided. We really have minimal control over the quality of the service and the actions of the providers. They are the way they are.**

**4: Our boat transport is run by Kuna and they have limits to where they can take their boats. That's why the tour starts in Sapzurro and not in Capurgana.**

**Just like before a flight your taxi is not included to the airport.**

We help by giving information and helping to organize transport before and after the trip however these extra services are not part of our tour and ultimately they are your responsibility.

### **NOT ALWAYS PERFECT!**

We do our best to work with the most professional providers available to us, however the fact is that in this part of the world even that best could be well below what you might find in a 1st world country.

**On rare occasions these third party services may:**

be late – unorganized – drive too fast – drive too slow – have a car that's not in the condition you're used to – be unfriendly – make you wait somewhere or pick people up you think shouldn't be in the car... Maybe even a chicken if you're lucky!

**That's life in this part of the world.**

## **COMPLAINTS ABOUT THIRD PARTY TRANSPORT**

Please do not complain about the third party transport or let it bring you or others down if your experience is not perfect. You have to understand that there is NOTHING WE CAN DO. That's why we let you know here about all the things that can happen. In saying that, It doesn't mean that you'll definitely have a bad experience. 95% of the time it's fine. Obviously if something extreme happens then we want to know. However, ultimately complaints should be taken up directly with the provider in question.

Only bring good energy on our trip please!

## **EXTRA SERVICE AND NOT MANDATORY**

The transport we help organise before and after the trip is totally not our transport and organising it is an extra we do to help make things easy for you. You're completely welcome to organise your own transport and make your own way to the start point of our trip.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

We can not be held responsible for any property loss or damage during these travel with 3rd party providers. However, in the case something does happen, we will communicate with the transport provider and do our best to assist you.

## **PRICE CHANGES**

We do our best to keep our information up to date but 3rd party providers can change their prices from day to day. All prices are subject to last minute changes and our information may not be 100% up to date. If you see our information is not up to date please let us know.

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## **HEALTH, SAFETY AND TRAVEL INSURANCE**

All travelers must have their **own health Insurance**.

Having personal insurance is not a mandatory requirement, but we strongly recommend you have a personal insurance policy to protect you.

**We are an adventure company traveling in a very remote area.**

We do as much as we can to avoid accidents. Our crew are trained to respond in emergency situations and look out for dangers but no matter how much we take care accidents can happen in this environment. It is still up to our travelers to exercise caution and avoid mishaps.

**While it is not mandatory, we strongly recommend all travelers have their own Travel & health Insurance.**

Remember that you will be traveling in remote islands. We recommend travel-insurance policy that covers loss/damage/theft of personal belongings and medical insurance that covers travel and water sports. We cannot be responsible for such incidents on the trip.

**Note : By booking you accept our terms and conditions and liability release**

### **LIFE JACKETS**

Will be provided and it's important that you wear them at all time while on the boat.

### **SAFETY IN THE WATER**

Stay in a depth and distance from the island you are totally comfortable with. Only go snorkeling with at least one other person. No swimming at night. At night you can get in the water close to the island but not swim around off the shore.

### **WHAT HAPPENS IN AN EMERGENCY?**

Some of the village islands throughout San Blas have clinics with doctors trained in western medicine. Most issues can be dealt with at these clinics. In worse cases we would have to make every effort to get an injured person to Panama City.

## **ALLERGIES**

**If you know you allergic to something and could need an epi pen, please make sure you have it with you!!! This could save your life.**

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## **SAFETY AND SECURITY IN COLOMBIA**

(CNN) – There was a time when few travelers visited Colombia, when the country was synonymous with drug lords, when the only English you heard on the streets was spoken by American Marines.

That Colombia — a country of conflict and cartels — has largely disappeared, replaced by a rejuvenated capital of Bogota and a resilient culture that refuses to be bogged down by the dark days.

Premonitions and stereotypes should be swept aside before visiting this South American country of spectacular scenery. Today's Colombia is much more than the ugly Escobar legacy or its famed Andean coffee — though a cup of café will most certainly reach your hands during a trip!

- Medellin is the world's most innovative city, officially
- Drug culture stereotypes are false and offensive
- Bogota must be seen from Monserrate
- Security has dramatically improved
- Cali is Salsa City
- Capurgana, Sapzurro best kept secrets villages!!

Link to the blog :

<http://edition.cnn.com/2013/04/24/travel/colombia-10-things/>

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## WEATHER IN THE SAN BLAS

### MAY - NOVEMBER

Typically known as the rainy season, this is actually a very comfortable time of year to travel in San Blas. The seas are calm and when it rains, it usually only lasts a short time and we almost always have some sunshine.

Our trip depends on the weather so keep in mind that the itinerary can change at any time

### SUMMERTIME: DECEMBER-APRIL

For these months there is almost always a strong wind blowing from the North-East. In general the sea is rougher and sometimes we may have to delay.

On the upside, it is the Caribbean summer and because we travel along the coast a lot of our trip is sheltered by islands and reefs.

Remember: We can't control the weather, but we can control our attitude!

Please read carefully through our FAQ page and our Summertime segment. ***Please don't book any flights for after the trip (December to April) before reading our summertime segment & FAQ page. We recommend to allow 4-5 days after the expected trip end date for scheduling flights or commitments.***

Summertime... and the livin' is breezy!

“Summer” in San Blas is from December to April and means blue skies, hot days and strong winds. Due to weather conditions at this time of year there are a few things we do differently that you need to take into consideration before booking with us.

Weather : During these months there is a strong wind that comes almost constantly from the north-east. This means that the sea can be rough, sometimes too rough to travel in. For the same reason, at this time of year, few sailboats travel to Cartagena as the open ocean stretch can be too rough, particularly outside Cartagena. Our trip is along the coast, mostly within the protection of islands and reefs, however there are sections where we are exposed to rough seas. We operate at this time of year with extreme caution. Safety always comes first and it's possible we may delay or cancel a

trip, before or during the trip. We will always keep you up to date and informed on sea conditions and possibility of delays or cancelation.

## **DIFFERENCES TO BE AWARE OF**

**Voyages:** Due to the winds our travel times can take longer and you'll get wet.

## **DELAYS AND FLIGHTS**

It's important that you do not have a flight or anything pressing at the other end. The trip could be delayed before it begins or we may have to wait a day or more on one of the islands to let weather pass (this can be a great extra experience, if you're not in a rush, more time on the islands!). The longest we've been delayed in the past is 4 days. Deposit is refundable in the case of delay.

**EXTRA COSTS:** if we do get stuck on the islands there will be an extra cost of \$30 USD a day for food and accommodation. We suggest you bring an extra of around \$150 USD more than the suggested amount, for this time of the year.

\* **this is to be calculated on top of the normal \$50 – 150 USD normally recommended for spending on the islands.**

**Total recommended to bring: \$200 -300 USD**

**BOOK EARLY:** Being high season and windy season together there are many travelers and few boats so get in sooner rather than later!!

**To give you an idea of the frequency of delays,** in general we are delayed 2 – 6 times throughout the entire high season and delays in the past have been anywhere from 1-4 days.

**CANCELLATION:** (This is extremely rare, however we have to have a policy)

**If the trip is cancelled due to weather before the trip we will refund your deposit.**

In the very unlikely event that the trip is cancelled during the trip and we have to return we will refund \$80 per day for the days of the trip remaining and provide transport back to the start point.

**Once the trip has started there are NO REFUNDS**

If you decide to cancel/leave the trip, during the trip, because of a delay or any other reason there is no refund and you will need to pay for boat transport back to the start/end point.

We will warn you before the trip of the likelihood of delay. If you're worried about a flight after the trip it's better to cancel and take another transportation.

### **ANY OTHER INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW?**

You should be able to find all the answers at your questions above, however: If you do have a question that is not already answered here then you can send an email [tocontact@sanblasadventures.com](mailto:tocontact@sanblasadventures.com)

### **IF YOU DONT GET A RESPONSE**

Sometimes your email can be lost in the spam somehow, If you don't receive any answer in 48h, please don't hesitate to send us a new email.

### **CAN WE BOOK A PRIVATE TRIP?**

We can organise the trip for private groups for 12+ people. Please contact us on our email at [contact@sanblasadventures.com](mailto:contact@sanblasadventures.com)

### **WHERE CAN I SEE MORE PHOTOS/VIDEOS?**

SAN BLAS ADVENTURES VIDEO :

[WATCH HERE!](#)

Our tripadvisor :

[san blas adventures](#)

Our Facebook for more photos!

[san blas adventures](#)

Instagram :

[san blas adventures](#)

Lonely planet :

[san blas adventures](#)

And much more!..You can google san blas adventures and get more reviews, photos and blogs from people who did our trip

### **AGREE TO AND ACCEPT OUR FAQ?**

By booking our trip you understood, accepted and agreed on our FAQ, terms and conditions and liability and Releases

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