

ESSENTIAL PRE-TRIP INFORMATION

What You Need To Complete Before Your Arrival

- [Legal, Medical, Dietary and Logistics Google Form](#)
- Read "[Health and Safety in the Jungle](#)" document
- Read and [send](#) info@experiencemamoni.com a copy of the "[Experience Mamoni Liability Form - Risk Management and Acknowledgment of Risk Memo.pdf](#)"
- Send info@experiencemamoni.com a copy of your flight itinerary.

Please note that failing to send the documents requested may mean the cancellation of your trip.

Visa/Passport

To enter Panama, a passport valid for at least six months after arrival is required from all nationals from Australia, UK, Canada, USA and all EU countries, without requiring a visa for stays of up to 180 days. If traveling overland, get an exit visa and a Panama entry visa stamped on your passport. Difficulties can arise further down the line when leaving Panama if the stamps are absent.

See detailed list of visa requirements at [Embassy of Panama site](#).

Driving

Visitors may drive with national licenses for up to 90 days during their visit.

Currency and Cash Withdrawals

The official currencies in Panama are the American dollar (USD) and the local Balboa at an exchange rate of 1:1. American dollars are accepted everywhere. We recommend to always have some USD cash on hand and credit cards are accepted in most places in Panama City. Outside of Panama City expect to use only cash.

Cirrus and Plus systems are clearly marked on the ATMs and allow you to perform transactions such as withdrawals and balance inquiries since they are affiliated with this network. Just remember that the bank will immediately charge a fee or commission to the card as a percentage of every transaction that takes

place.

The main advantage is that you can withdraw cash directly from your personal debit and credit card. Across the nation, banks in Panama commonly position their ATMs at supermarket chains, which can be found in the majority of the provinces, as well as in malls and shopping plazas. In addition, most of the banks have representative offices in the provinces.

Health Concerns

Please use the legal, medical, dietary, and logistics google form to inform us of all serious existing and previous medical conditions, restrictions or disabilities and allergies, as well as medications which you are currently taking so that we may be prepared to provide that information to health care professionals in the event of an emergency. We recommend purchasing travel medical insurance for any medical emergencies in Panama.

Please bring any auxiliary medical supplies specific to any conditions you may suffer from (e.g., inhalers, epi-pens, etc.). It may also be helpful to bring a small quantity of a broad spectrum antibiotic like Ciprofloxacin. Remember: *Experience Mamoni does not carry any prescription medications.*

Insects

The threat of insect-borne disease in our area is low but there have been reported cases of diseases such as leishmaniasis in the Mamoni Valley. It is recommended at all times to protect yourself from insect bites with proper clothing that covers the skin and/or protect exposed skin with insect repellent that contains DEET. We recommend repellents that contain a minimum of 20% DEET (eg. Dak's Greenhead Fly, Insect and Tick Repellent).

Weather & Climate

The days in Panama are humid and hot, with temperatures ranging between 75 and 95 degrees Fahrenheit (23-35°C). Nights are pleasant, with temperatures in the 70s and 80s (21-26°C). Centro Mamoni will be wetter and a bit cooler. Please note that it rains frequently, both day and night.

If you plan to spend any time in Panama City, buildings are almost always overly air conditioned. Packing in layers will allow you to be comfortable in a variety of settings.

Electricity

Panama is on the 120V, 60Hz system—as is Centro Mamoní. Sockets are the flat two-pin variety (as in the US).

Communications

Centro Mamoní offers microwave wireless internet service for voice and internet communications. The telephone number at Centro Mamoní (calling from outside of Panama) is 011-507-832-5801. See other important contact information below.

Safety and Emergency Information

We will conduct a briefing on safety and emergency procedures upon arrival at our Centro Mamoní campus.

Important Contacts

Internationals: dial **011-507** and then the following phone numbers:

Mark Knetsch	6209.6942	Managing and Program Director	Biography	Mark@ExperienceMamoni.com
Nico Armstrong	6409.2023	Guide & Activities Coordinator	Biography	Nico@ExperienceMamoni.com
Anna Gili	6275.7287	Business Development & Program Coordinator	Biography	Anna@ExperienceMamoni.com
Centro Mamoní	832.5801			

What to Bring

Try to go as light as possible and take only essentials. Packing quantities are only suggestions based on your tropical rainforest working environment and feel free to alter quantities or add other items as you see fit for your personal needs.

Note: You will have access to a hand-washing and dry room facility.

Research Permits

Scientific permits are required in the Republic of Panama for the legal observation, collection, import and export of scientific samples. Additionally, researchers need to bring all the materials needed for their work. Experience Mamoni maintains a zero-tolerance policy regarding the failure to comply with the regulations.

Clothing

While in the rainforest you'll only wear casual outdoor clothing suitable for warm and wet weather. Please avoid jeans or any other kind of 100% cotton clothing. Bring lightweight clothing made of synthetic blends that wick moisture and dry quickly.

Bring clothing ideal for sun protection and protection from insect bites. Also, consider a lightweight fleece jacket and a lightweight rain jacket, preferably one made of Gore-Tex or of other breathable material.

Use your own judgment, based on the expected weather conditions, overall packing/weight restrictions for your luggage, and the time with us at Centro Mamoni. Remember that you will also want to have a clean set of clothes to change into in the evenings. Loose fitting clothing is the most comfortable.

Recommended Packing Items

Luggage

- Bag of 65L capacity that is waterproof (if it has zippers it is NOT waterproof)
- Back pack of 35L capacity that is waterproof (for day hikes)

Clothing

- 3 tropical, lightweight long pants that zip into shorts and are made of synthetic blends that wick moisture and dry quickly
- 1 bathing suit
- 3 lightweight, ventilated, long sleeve, button up shirts
- 3 lightweight T-shirts
- Lightweight rain jacket made of Gore-Tex or similar quality material
- 5 pairs of good hiking socks that wick moisture and go above the ankle
- 6 pairs of abrasion limiting underwear
- Hiking boots (\$15 rubber boots **are the best option** and can be purchased in Panama; these are ideal for field work and hikes)

- Sandals/crocks/or Teva-type
- Lightweight brimmed hat
- Bandana to keep sweat out of eyes or sun off the neck

Equipment

- A good waterproof or resistant headlamp (*Pretzl* or *Blackdiamond*)
- Rechargeable batteries and a spare set (we have chargers).
- Quick-dry towel
- 15L Dry bag for camera and other electronics (GPS, phone, camera, etc.)
- Large ziplock bags
- 1 liter Nalgene water bottle
- 2 or 3 liter camelback
- Rite in the rain all weather field note pad
- Writing utensils
- Sunglasses
- Lightweight laptop
- Personal medical kit and medications-- Ace bandage or brace if you're prone to sore knees or ankles. *Moleskin* or other foot/hand protection if you are prone to blisters; Experience Mamoni does not provide medical supplies.
- Working gloves (gardening, construction, hikes)
- Biodegradable laundry soap bar

Travel Accessories

- Toiletry kit—soap, toothbrush, and so on. Please be sure to bring biodegradable soap and shampoo items. *Dr. Bronners* works well
- Insect repellent with a minimum of 20% DEET (cream or a spray not in aerosol cans)
- Sunscreen and lip protection (preferably zinc oxide) with at least SPF 15 rating

Optional Packing Items

- Multi tool
- Compass
- Snake gaiters
- Camera and water resistant case
- Paracord
- Carabiners
- GPS for hikes

- Permethrin to soak clothing against bugs
- Hiking poles
- Shoe insoles (extra comfort for rubber boots)
- Earplugs for peaceful sleeping
- Binoculars – gas filled to reduce fogging
- Musical instrument
- Dive mask and snorkel (if visiting the islands)
- Electrolyte mixes to flavor the water in your water bottles
- Energy bars and/or trail snacks or any of your favourite snacks

Other resources for general info on Panama:

VisitPanama.com

US Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs