**Daylong tour to Gatún Locks, Panama Canal Expansion and San Lorenzo by train (return trip by car, lunch is included)**

The tour starts early in the morning with the shuttle service to the railroad station where

you will take a colorful train of ancient railway cars to Colón. Panama’s railroad was built during the time of The California Gold Rush for the purpose of shortening the course from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. This work finished in 1885, a year when French people decided to buy it for the sake of the construction of the canal. In 1994, the French people sold it to the United States along with the rights over the canal; they in turn administered it until 1979. A passenger service operates since 2001, since the railroad borders the canal and passes along the historic Culebra Cut and the magnificent Gatún Lake; the water used by the canal comes from said lake, it traverses the area’s lush vegetation. From the Visitor Center, you will be able to see at a short distance, you will even be able to touch, the mastodontic vessels that pass through the canal and you will be able to see in detail the ingenious system of locks that lifts ships so that they pass from one basin to another. Forthwith, you will be able to see in detail the canal expansion works that will allow the transit of supersize ships, another ambitious feat through which it is expected to have a water recycling system and larger basins. In order to continue toward San Lorenzo National Park, you should wait until one of the basins are closed and pass through one little iron street next to the impressive screen. San Lorenzo Reserve is a protected nature reserve which provides shelter to twelve ecosystems and occupies approximately 9,653 hectares of forest, mangroves, rain forests and semi-deciduous forests where 430 bird species and 81 mammals have been identified. It is part of The Mesoamerican Biological Corridor to a great extent which represents a paradise for Biologists and Amateur Bird Watchers. The area was the former U.S. army base of Fort Sherman where army officers and astronauts were trained in combat techniques and in how to survive in the jungle. The jewel of the park is undoubtedly Fort San Lorenzo which dominates Chagres River’s mouth and was built by Spaniards in order to protect the transcontinental route to the New World from pirate assaults. It is a UNESCO's World Heritage Site. You will have lunch during the tour.

DURATION: approximately 7 to 8 hours.

TIME: To be agreed.

GUIDE: a private Spanish speaker guide.

INCLUSIVE: shuttle service from/to the hotel, train ticket from Panama City to Colón, entrances to the Visitor Center and lunch. The train leaves very early, that is why we offer takeaway breakfast upon prior request.

NOTES: The train does not work on weekends. If you wish, the rail journey can be replaced with a private shuttle service. Visits order may be modified, even during the tour. You should bring your passport.

RECOMMENDED OUTFIT: comfortable shoes and clothes, hat, sunscreen, repellent, and a raincoat, especially between April and December.