

Sol Bungalows Guest Information Packet

First and foremost, thank you for considering Sol Bungalows as your accommodation in Bocas del Toro. Our number one goal as your hosts is to give you the ultimate Bocas del Toro experience and we are honored to have the opportunity to do so!

If you require a more general information guide about Bocas del Toro, please read our [Ultimate Guide to Bocas del Toro](#).

In this PDF:

All of the important information you need about staying with us can be found in this PDF. If you have further questions, please ask us!

Contact:

Email: info@solbungalowsbocas.com

Whatsapp: +507-6807-0830 (Drew: English, Spanish) or, +507-6643-3253 (Tamara: Deutsch, Francais, Italien)

Please download the phone app “Whatsapp,” which you can use to call and message us for free over WiFi. We will also use this app to communicate throughout your stay for breakfast orders, water taxi arrangements, or any other requests you have.

Getting Here

Please forward us your arrival information. A more detailed guide on how to get to Bocas del Toro can be found on our blog, [here](#).

Flying (Recommended)

The best and easiest way to get to Bocas del Toro is by flying from Panama City with Air Panama. Here's how to do it:

Step 1: First, you'll book your international flights to Tocumen International Airport in Panama City (PTY).

Step 2: Next, you'll get flights with Air Panama from the Albrook International Airport to Bocas del Toro (PAC → BOC). Book these flights directly on AirPanama.com, and leave 2.5-3 hours in between your international flight arrival and the domestic flight to Bocas del Toro as you will need to clear immigration and then transfer airports from Tocumen International (PTY) to Albrook International (PAC) where Air Panama flies out of. You may need to spend a night in

Panama City so that your flights line up better: Check out our guide: [5 Best Hotels and Things to do in Panama City](#)

Helpful Tips:

- Book your Air Panama flights in advance as they can fill up and get more expensive as the dates get closer.
- Air Panama officially recommends leaving 1 day in between your domestic and international flights as a buffer for delays and flight cancellations due to weather.
- It takes about 30 minutes to drive from Tocumen Airport to Albrook Airport, and you can use UBER (cheapest way) or just take an airport taxi (fastest way). The airport taxis cost around \$35 total but UBER can be much cheaper.
- Alternative Domestic Panamanian Airline: FlyTrip is a smaller private airline that also offers flights from Panama City to Bocas del Toro from Thursday to Sunday plus Tuesdays and might be worth checking out for you!

Getting to Sol Bungalows

Both the plane and bus options will bring you to Isla Colón, the main island of the Bocas del Toro Archipelago.

Plane Arrivals:

- 1) Once you have collected your luggage you will exit the baggage area and there will be local people waiting and asking if you need a taxi. Get one of these taxis and tell them to take you to **BOCAS DOCKS**
 - a) **Bocas Docks** is a private water taxi station where you can get a boat over to us. Just tell them you need to go to Sol Bungalows. This ride cost \$20 and they are open until 6PM.
 - i) There is also a restaurant located at Bocas Docks called JJ's, so you can grab a seaside lunch if you arrive before check in. (Closed on Sundays)
 - ii) There is also a big blue overwater hotel right next to Bocas Docks with a restaurant that is open all day every day, called Bambuda Bocas Town.
- 2) **Important: do not purchase tours in town before speaking with us so we can recommend the guides we know and trust.**
- 3) This water taxi ride takes about 5 minutes. We will be waiting for you on the dock when you arrive!

Boat Arrivals:

- 1) If you are coming from the mainland by boat, you will be getting a shuttle from the town of Almirante, which is the closest town on the mainland to the Bocas del Toro Islands.

- 2) From here you will take a 30 minute water taxi to Bocas Town on Isla Colón.
- 3) You should be able to get a water taxi right from the taxi station that you arrive in, **please request a big water taxi.**
- 4) Get your water taxi to Sol Bungalows on Isla Solarte (next to the Casa Blanca in Solarte Uno). This will cost \$5 per person.

Our Amenities

Hotel Amenities

- Massage option on site
- Breakfast Included
- Dinner option on-site (except for Sundays)
- Free filtered rainwater for drinking
- Kayaks and Paddle Boards (Shared with all guests)
- We are Solar Powered
- We catch all of our water from the rain and need your help conserving this

Bungalow Amenities

- Hot/Cold water shower
- Outdoor Shower
- 1 King Size Bed - Premium linens with memory foam mattress and ceiling fan above the bed
- WiFi
- Large L-shaped sofa that can be converted into 2 single beds (ask us for this option)
- Glass floor with nighttime illumination
- Safe/ Lock Box
- Stairway to access the water
- 2 Lounge chairs
- 2 Adirondak chairs in covered outdoor seating area
- Catamaran net hammock on the deck
- Brazilian hammock
- Tile Floors
- Mosquito screens on windows and doors
- 2 Personal Umbrellas
- 2 Snorkel Masks
- Mini Fridge in bungalow
- Total area of Bungalow: 72 Square Meters/ 216 Square Feet

We are an off-grid and sustainable accommodation.

- We are an off-grid B&B that relies on solar power and rainwater catchment systems. As these are both limited resources, we depend on our guests to use them both responsibly and sustainably. Bocas del Toro's climate can be unpredictable and we truly do not know when the start of a month-long drought may be upon us!
- Some conservation tips:
 - Turning off all fans/ lights when leaving your bungalow.
 - Taking short showers or "Navy showers"
 - Do not flush any non-organic material down the toilets. No toilet paper, no chemicals, ect.

General Information

Check-in

- 3 PM

Check-out

- 11 AM

Extra Guests

- The standard rate includes 2 Adult guests
- Extra Adults (4 total maximum per bungalow) will be charged \$38 per person, per night.
- Extra Children will be charged \$25 per child, per night.

Host on Site?

- We will be on site from 8AM-12PM for breakfast and coordination of activities, and 6PM-close for dinner.
- We live nearby and can come down to the bungalows at anytime, just contact us Via Whatsapp

Safety

Bocas del Toro is a developing destination that has a large number of people living in what is categorized as "extreme poverty." Our Bungalows are located near an indigenous village called Solarte Uno where many people live in this type of poverty. This is very common all over Bocas del Toro. While we believe that our hotel is 100% safe, we still advise our guests to practice common sense and caution while staying with us.

- In order to ensure your safe visit at Sol Bungalows we recommend the following:

- Keep your valuables in your in-room safe.
- Lock your bungalow doors at night or when you leave your bungalow (the screen deck doors have locks on them for this reason)
- Be conscious of your surroundings and do not flaunt cash or wealth. The average pay for a Panamanian worker is \$2-\$3 per hour, so even a \$20 bill can be enticing to the wrong person.
- Only bring what you need on excursions, leave your passport and unnecessary money or valuables in your safe.
- Book tours and activities through us to ensure you are using the best tour guides and operators.
- “Just say no” to offers of illegal substances.

We recommend you practice the same type of caution as you would anywhere else in Latin America.

For more information about crime and health safety in Bocas del Toro, please visit our blog post [here](#).

Nighttime Noise

We are located 2 miles away from Bocas Town but we can still hear the music from the clubs there at night. It is generally not a problem but some guests may find it annoying on the nights when it is particularly loud, like around the holidays. Some things we provide to help this are:

- Ear plugs
- White Noise Machine
- You can also close the windows and glass doors of your bungalow to block the sound

You may also hear roosters crowing, boats passing by, and waves splashing on the posts of your bungalow.

The most common complaint we receive from our guests is about the music at night from Bocas Town, so we want all future guests to be aware of this ahead of time.

Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

- **Breakfast (8AM-10:30AM)** is included with your stay. Each meal includes French press coffee or tea, fruit juice, a cup of fresh fruits, and your choice of a smoothie bowl, omelet, pancake, breakfast sandwich, oatmeal, or the traditional 2 eggs, bacon, and toast.
- **Lunch** is not available on-site at Sol Bungalows and there are no lunch options within walking distance on our island. However, we are located within a 5 minute boat ride to

some amazing lunch spots, which you are encouraged to visit. Many tours and activities are combined with lunch as well.

- **We do not serve dinner on Sundays**
- **Dinner (7PM)** is available on-site. We have a set menu that changes daily which includes an appetizer, main dish, and dessert for \$26-\$31 per person. Sign up for dinner is made at breakfast or can be arranged for your first night with us via email or whatsapp. Some dinner items include fresh fish, ceviches, curries, and vegan and vegetarian dishes.

Drinks:

- Fresh fruit smoothies are available during breakfast and a selection of wine, beer, and mixed drinks are served at dinner.
- Due to our size limitations we do not have a bar that is open all day. Instead, you can purchase alcohol or other beverages from us or in town and keep them chilled in your mini fridge for easy, all day access. (Bocas Town for purchasing drinks/ snacks is only 5 minutes away)
- All of our water is filtered rain water and is perfectly good and safe for drinking.
- We also have a honor system fridge with beer, soda and white wine if you need anything.

What to Pack:

- Water shoes for swimming around bungalow
- Rain Poncho or rain jacket
 - A rain poncho that covers your whole body is better for the heavy rains/ boat rides in the rain
- Flip Flops, Tevas, or the locally favorited Crocs,
- Reusable Water Bottle
- Reef Safe Sunscreen
- Natural Bug Repellent or one high in DEET (we also make and sell a coconut oil based repellent)
- Light, Breathable Clothing (Quick drying is a bonus)
- A book for rainy days
- A light pair of pants and a light long sleeve for cooler nights and bug protection
- A hat for sun protection

Money and Paying for Things in Panama

Panama's Currency is technically the Panamanian Balboa, but USD is what is actually used throughout the country. Credit Cards are widely accepted, especially in Panama City, but it's always good to have cash on hand as well. Cash is used to pay for taxis or street vendors and tour guides. Tipping for services is also appreciated, like people who handle your luggage, so having some small bills on hand is helpful.

Cash and ATM's

We recommend bringing \$100 cash per day, per adult for your time in Bocas. This will pay for water taxis, tours, and tips. It's also a good idea to bring small bills like \$1, \$5, and \$10 for water taxis.

There are several ATM's in Bocas Town but the withdrawal fees are very high and there is a \$500 withdrawal limit per day. It is much better to bring cash from home if possible or to take out enough in Panama City before coming to Bocas.

Credit Cards

Many restaurants in Bocas Town accept credit cards but many are still cash only. Super markets, pharmacy's, and other general stores in Bocas Town will accept credit cards.

Activities:

Bocas del Toro is full of fun activities that everyone can enjoy. We will help coordinate any tours and activities you wish to participate in! The most popular activities are:

- Surfing
 - Lessons, private guides, and surfboard rentals can all be arranged!
- Scuba Diving
- Beach Visits
- Fishing (Deep Sea and Inshore)
- Spearfishing
- Snorkeling
- Exploring the Bastimentos Bat Cave
- Paddle Boarding and Kayaking
- Guided Hikes
- Island Adventuring Tours
- Horseback Riding
- ATV Rentals (Through beach and jungle terrain)
- Bike Riding
- Cultural Tours such as cacao farm visits and indigenous community visits

On-Island Activities:

From Sol Bungalows you can:

- Snorkel (2 Snorkel Masks provided per bungalow)
- Paddleboard and Kayak
- Go on a guided hike to Hospital Point

For more information on what activities are available in Bocas, you can check out the [page on our website](#), or our blog post, [29 Awesome Things to do in Bocas del Toro](#).

Getting Around:

The primary form of transportation in the islands of Bocas del Toro is by boat. You will have to use the water taxi system to navigate to and from our island and bungalows. While this is something that we believe makes Bocas del Toro very special, it is something that may not be ideal for everyone.

Transportation Costs:

Having to use water taxis is a hidden cost that many people overlook when coming to Bocas del Toro.

Here are some things to consider:

- **Prices are charged per person**
- Nighttime prices are more expensive than Daytime prices
- Water Taxi Prices from Sol Bungalows to:
 - Bocas Town: \$5
 - Isla Carenero: \$5
 - Old Bank, Isla Bastimentos: \$5
 - Red Frog Beach: \$8
 - The Blue Coconut: \$5
 - The Floating Bar: \$5

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