Guna Yala / San Blas Islands

Panama | Community-led island visits

A PRACTICAL PLAN FOR YOUR DAY ASHORE

1 Your landing is sailing-specific

Cruise and expedition visits use the landing arrangements assigned by the ship, which may involve tenders, Zodiacs or local boats. Confirm the island, landing conditions, mobility requirements and last return boat. Weather can change or cancel a landing.

2 Respect Guna authority

Guna Yala is an Indigenous territory with community authorities and local rules. Use a community-approved operator and follow permissions, visitor charges and landing instructions. Carry the original travel documents required by the ship and authorities; do not assume a ship card alone is sufficient.

3 Culture and island time

Molas are a distinctive Guna textile tradition. Buy directly from local artisans where possible and ask permission before photographing people. Beaches, snorkeling and island-hopping depend on your excursion and the community's rules; check what is included rather than assuming every activity is available.

4 Arrive prepared

Facilities vary by landing island and can be limited. Ask about water, toilets, food, shade and accessibility; bring small U.S. dollar bills and required supplies. Do not fly drones without explicit local authorization. Leave shells and coral in place and take your rubbish back.

BEFORE YOU GO / BEFORE YOU RETURN

Use ship time. Follow your own all-aboard or last-tender deadline and allow a generous buffer for queues, traffic and weather. Confirm hours, tickets, access and transport for your sailing date.

OFFICIAL SOURCES | REVIEWED 25 OCTOBER 2026

tourismpanama.com / travel requirements
gunayala.org.pa / gunayala_en_resumen.htm
gunayala.org.pa / index_transporte_maritimo.htm
tourismpanama.com / handicrafts to buy in panama