

# PANAMA: Tour keeps getting better

By HELEN KAULBACH

It's more than just a canal. It's some of the finest beaches in the world, and the best shopping you'll find this side of the Far East. It's very old world culture set

in a very modern city. It's gambling casinos in most of the big hotels. It's steeped in history, and it has off-shore resort islands as unspoiled and uncommercial as most of the popular resort places were 30 years ago.

And, of course, Panama is the canal, still the biggest tourist attraction in town.

Again this year, Sunflight Holidays is offering Panama and Contadora Island vacations as part of its fall and winter program. This is the third year Sunflight has offered a Panama trip and they keep refining it.

This year the agency has announced two big new choices. In addition to the week on Contadora Island, vacationers may choose one week in Panama City, or a two week holiday — one week each in Panama City and Contadora.

The price of \$399 is constant throughout the year, for any departure between Nov. 9 and April 18 and includes more extras than you'll find on a much more expensive holiday. Accommodation is at the El Panama Hilton, a luxury hotel with a rooftop lounge, tennis courts and swim-up bar in one of the largest swimming pools anywhere.

Sightseeing trips include a morning bus tour of Panama City and a visit to the canal and locks; a full day boat trip up the Panama Canal, returning on the Panama Railroad (the first railroad ever completed ocean to ocean); and a full day trip to Taboga, a small island off the coast where flowers are abundant, the beaches perfect for swimming and snorkeling and no motor traffic allowed.

Two meals are also included — a welcome barbecue on arrival, and a farewell dinner.

For those with the stamina, two optional extra tours are offered.



with its intricate reverse applique, a red and yellow print scarf covering their heads, long wrap-around skirts, yards of tiny colored beads on arms, neck and ankle, and they are simply loaded down with gold jewellery.

It is the custom among the Cuna Indians for the women to wear the wealth of the family in gold. Some of them wear large gold discs the size of saucers hanging from their ears. Others have necks or gold discs and plates chained together hanging from chin to waist. It's a wonder they don't collapse from the sheer weight of it!

San Blas is a photographer's paradise. The children are beautiful and happy to pose. The women, with their gold jewellery and bright blue mola blouses, are so colorful you'll wonder if your film can absorb it all.

Spanish is the language of Panama but most people know a little English so you shouldn't have much trouble. You'll find that after a day or two you'll begin to use certain Spanish words yourself. Three words almost immediately learned are "cerveza" for beer; and "damas" and "caballeros", the names on the washroom doors.

The currency is easy to use in Panama. It's called the "balboa" and is the same size, weight and value as the American coins and is used interchangeably. Both currencies are accepted in the slot machines in the casinos.

There are casinos in most of the large hotels in Panama City and also

in the hotel on Contadora. These seem to be less heavily weighted in favor of the house than the casinos in Las Vegas or the Bahamas.

One thing you don't have to worry about in Panama is the stomach upsets so common in other southern resorts. The water is clean and pure and drinkable straight from the tap.

The dress code in Panama City is relaxed and casual during the day but because of the Spanish influence is more formal after dark. Most people dress for dinner, which is served late by our standards.

Sunflight Holidays is now the only Canadian tour operator in Panama and you can book your holiday through any travel agent.

## Hallowe'en treats

Have you noticed anything different in your household lately? Anyone peeking around the kitchen door? Or who's that squeaking like his voice is sore?

Goblins, you would assume at this time of the year.

Yes, it is Halloween time, and time to think about the tricks and treats for this special evening.

Caramel-coated apples are an old-fashioned Halloween treat that still makes a lot of sense today. Certainly more fun for the "trick and treat" that the standard handful of kisses, caramel apples also offer food value, particularly if the coating is milk-based.

Just harvested McIntosh apples are best for candy apples, but choose apples which are small. They are easier to work with and easier to eat, especially for preschoolers. Also keep the coating thin. It is more economical and again makes it easier for the smaller ghosts and goblins to manage.

**HALLOWEEN CARAMEL APPLES**

- 1 can Sweetened Condensed milk
- 1 cup sugar
- 3/4 cup golden corn syrup
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 8 small apples
- 8 wooden skewers or popsicle sticks

Insert wooden skewers well into stem of apples. In a heavy saucepan, combine sweetened condensed milk, sugar and corn syrup. Stir and cook over medium heat to 230 degrees F on a candy thermometer or to soft ball stage. Remove from heat. Stir in butter and vanilla. Working quickly, dip apples in caramel and spoon over to coat well. Place apples stem side up to harden on greased paper.

Sesame seeds are being used more and more in different recipes and are delicious in this recipe for sesame brittle.

**SESAME BRITTLE**

- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 cups toasted sesame seeds
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Melt the sugar in a heavy frying pan or saucepan over a low heat, stirring constantly. When sugar is melted, remove from stove and add sesame seed and vanilla quickly. Pour into a well-buttered pan to about 1/4 inch depth. Mark into squares while warm and break along lines when cold.

**BLACK CAT COOKIES**

- 1 cup soft shortening
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. grated lemon peel

Blend in:  
1 egg  
2 tbsp. milk  
Stir altogether in another bowl, 2 cups flour, 1 tsp. baking powder, 1/2 tsp. salt and 1/2 tsp. soda. Mix these dry ingredients into shortening mixture. Drop dough by rounded teaspoonful about 2" apart on baking sheet. To flatten each cookie, dip glass in sugar and press on dough. (You may like to tint the sugar an orange color.) Bake 8-10 minutes in a 400 degree oven. Should get 3 dozen

cookies. As soon as the cookies come from the oven, place a chocolate peppermint wafer in the centre of each. Place 2 semi-sweet chocolate pieces next to mint for head, 1 piece for tail. Lift onto cookie rack as chocolate melts. With a toothpick shape melted chocolate pieces into head with ears.

**PEANUT BUTTER FUDGE DREAMS**

- 1 cup white sugar
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 1 pound peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup marshmallows
- 1 cup milk

Few grains salt  
Cook sugar, milk and salt to the soft-ball stage. Add marshmallows, peanut butter and butter, just before removing from the stove.

Cool, add vanilla and beat, then pour into a buttered pan.

**PUMPKIN COOKIES**

- 1/2 cup shortening
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 cup pumpkin (mashed)
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 cups flour
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. cinnamon

1 tsp. baking powder  
1 cup chopped nuts  
1 cup raisins

Cream shortening and sugar. Add pumpkin and vanilla. Sift dry ingredients, combine with the first mixture until well blended. Stir in nuts and raisins. Drop by spoonful on dry baking sheet and shape with a fork dipped in milk. Bake at 375 degrees for 15 minutes. Yields about 6 dozen.

**MULLED CIDER**

- 2 quarts cider
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 3 sticks cinnamon
- 1 tsp. whole cloves
- 1 tsp. whole allspice

Mix sugar and cider in a kettle. Add spices which have been tied in a cheesecloth bag. Boil 10 minutes. Remove spice bag and serve very hot.

**WITCHES' BREW**

- 1-1/2 lbs. ground beef
- 1 package 1/4" noodles
- 3 medium size green peppers
- 2 medium onions
- 1 large (28 oz.) can tomatoes
- 1 can red kidney beans
- 1 can cut mushrooms

Cheeddar or Brick cheese  
Cook meat in large frying pan until it loses raw look. Cook noodles until just tender, drain well. Using two good-sized casseroles, divide the meat and noodles between the two casseroles. Slice onion and saute in same frying pan as meat, adding a little butter if necessary. Sauté green peppers cut in strips, until they are limp. Add onion and green pepper to casseroles. Then add whole can of tomatoes and kidney beans, also mushrooms after draining. Mix well. Arrange thin slices of strips of cheddar or Brick cheese on top of casserole in pumpkin or moon shape.

Cover casseroles and cook in oven at 350 degrees for about 1 hour or until well heated through. Will keep refrigerated for about 4 days or may be frozen. Each casserole will serve 4-6 people.

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