



# The Big Ditch

## The Panama Canal

The Panama Canal is by no means a new sight for most of the crew. Some have been through four or five times; yet it was still a first time for many. Navigating the channel, including the locks, takes roughly 16 to 20 hours—depending on the traffic. POLAR SEA's journey began early on the morning of September 22 at Cristobal Station (east heading west). The sights included countless ships, a seemingly-untamed jungle, the Canal Locks (Gatun, Pedro Miguel, and Mira Flores), and the Canal—replete with aids to navigation. It concluded late that evening as POLAR SEA ventured out to the open sea, northbound for home.



The journey from East to West starts at the Gatun Locks at Cristobal Station.



Two of the many ships transiting the Canal 24 hours a day.