

DID YOU KNOW?

More Than 960 Cyclists from 26 Countries Race Through Boquete's Coffee Farms Every September

Every September since its launch, the **Gran Fondo Cycling Challenge** has turned Boquete's back roads into an international cycling stage. The **2026 edition**, held **September 13**, was the race's fifth year running, with all categories rolling out at 6:30 a.m. through coffee farms, rivers, and the highland vegetation that makes Tierras Altas one of the region's most iconic destinations.

Riders choose from several formats depending on their ambition: the full **Gran Fondo**, a punishing **125-kilometer** route with **1,900 meters** of cumulative climbing; the **Medio Fondo** at 80 kilometers; the recreational **Piccolo** at 52 kilometers; and a newer 70-kilometer **MTB/e-bike** category for mountain and electric bikes.

The 2026 field drew **more than 960 cyclists from 26 countries**, including Panama. Colombian rider Jeanka Jabalino said she was struck by the highlands' climate and atmosphere, while Costa Rican racer Aracelis Contreras called the course a chance to explore a region unlike anything at home. Local finisher Orlando Torres, who rode the Piccolo route, put it more bluntly: "short but demanding, with many hills."

The race is more than a sporting event for the district. "This moves not only hotel industry, but also small businesses," said **Adolfo Jurado**, a member of the event's organizing committee. "We combine culture; at hydration points we have typical dances and tamboritos."

Sources:

- GF Cycling Challenges, "Boquete" event page
- TVN Panamá, "Gran Fondo Cycling Challenge reunió a más de 960 ciclistas de 26 países en Boquete" (2026)
- Panamá América, "Todo listo para el Gran Fondo Cycling Challenge Reto Boquete"