

# BELIZE TRAVEL GUIDE



BEACHES + NATIONAL PARKS  
FORESTS + WILDLIFE + DIVING  
LODGING + CULTURE + SPORTS  
ARCHAEOLOGY + NIGHTLIFE



*Mother Nature's  
best kept secret*

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Dear Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to Belize.

We know that you have many destination choices when making your vacation decision and we are pleased that you have chosen Belize. We offer you a diverse combination of nature, wildlife, reef, rainforest, culture, art and music coupled with friendly Belizeans eager to welcome you and ensure that your stay is an enjoyable one. You will find that each destination in Belize is unique with its own special charm.

Our country is rich with natural resources and each year, more and more visitors are discovering for themselves the wonders and natural treasures of Belize. The government has declared tourism a national priority and we will consistently strive to improve your access to Belize, the level and quality of our tourism product, our infrastructure and the expertise of our service providers.

We recognize that our tourism industry has been built

on the wealth of natural attractions and we will continue to focus on the development of the tourism industry in an environmentally sustainable manner.

Whether you are here for a day, a week, or a month, Belize will fascinate you. We invite you to return regularly, and build your own collection of lifetime memories.

On behalf of Belize's Government and people, I wish you a pleasant stay with us.

Sincerely,

**Hon. Manuel Heredia, Jr.**  
Minister of Tourism

“...each destination in Belize is unique, with its own special charm.”

# Our Minister Welcomes You





Dear Friends of Belize,

Welcome to this special place where Central America meets the Caribbean. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to share our country with you.

While in Belize, you will often find yourself in nature's most charming settings. With 40% of our country under some form of protection, you are bound to experience nature at its best. Here you will dive or snorkel the Belize Barrier Reef; discover the history of the ancient Maya civilization;

explore winding rivers and tropical forests; encounter caves and waterfalls. And I assure you, wherever you go, you will experience the warmth of our Belizean people.

If you have visited us before, you already know that each return will become a new adventure. Whether you want to relax or explore, I am certain that you will find Belize your ideal vacation destination.

In partnership with the growing number of Belize hotels and tour services, the Belize Tourism Board remains committed to the ongoing development of its tourism industry in order to continuously provide you, our guests, with world-class services and genuine Belizean hospitality.

On behalf of all of us at the Belize Tourism Board, welcome to Belize!

With friendship,

A stylized, handwritten signature in white ink that reads "Tracy Panton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

**Tracy Panton**  
Director of Tourism

“...find yourself in one of mother nature's most charming settings.”

# Our Director's Message to you





# Reef



“The coastal area of Belize is an outstanding natural system consisting of the largest barrier reef in the northern hemisphere, offshore atolls, several hundred sand cays, mangrove forests, coastal lagoons and estuaries.”

- UNESCO - World Heritage Program

# W N E R

“Each night I fell asleep to a lively jungle orchestra of exotic birds, armadillos and kinkajous”

*Elegant Bride*

# Rainforest





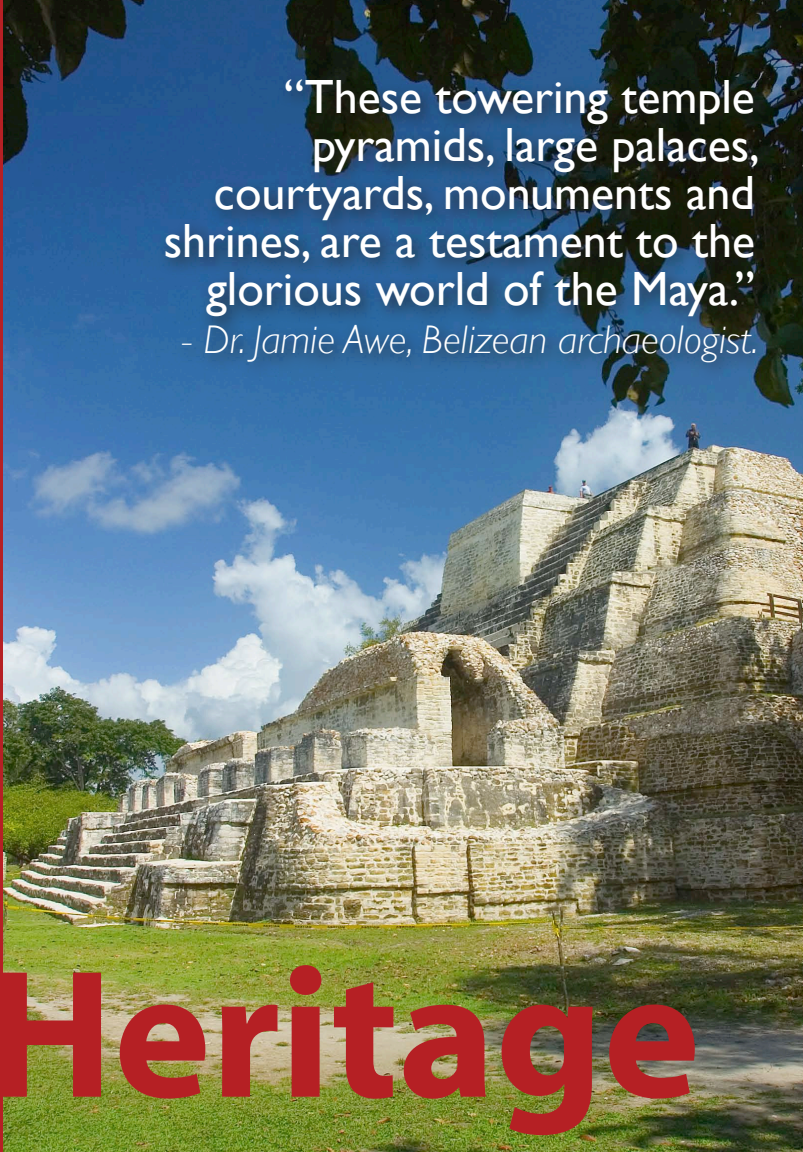


# Culture

Drums of my Fathers  
Rumbling in my bones  
Drums of my Fathers  
Beating in my mind  
Drums of my Fathers  
Capturing my soul...

*Excerpt from "Drums of My Father"  
by Belizean poet E. Roy Cayetano*

NEW



"These towering temple pyramids, large palaces, courtyards, monuments and shrines, are a testament to the glorious world of the Maya."

*- Dr. Jamie Awe, Belizean archaeologist.*

# Heritage



# Welcome

Nestled between Mexico and Guatemala on the Caribbean coast of Central America the spectacular natural attractions and the possibility of discovery beckon from Belize, Mother Nature's Best kept Secret.

As one of the last unspoiled places on earth, Belize offers travelers the richly rewarding authenticity they seek in a Caribbean getaway. For generations, the English-speaking people of Belize have demonstrated a cultural commitment to preserve the country's unique charms. This enduring promise—to the land, the waters, and to our guests—inspires everyone to achieve a genuine and intimate connection to a multitude of extraordinary, untrodden experiences. Every one of these spectacular experiences will stir your soul, expand your mind and change your life.

More than a vacation, Belize is a state of being where your senses come alive and you find yourself fully inhabiting every moment. Just a two-hour flight from the U.S., you can be one with the rainforest. You can be one with the Hemisphere's largest barrier reef. Be one with majestic Maya temples. Be one with turquoise waters. Be one with the wonder and excitement. Be one with Belize.

# belize



# VISITOR INFORMATION

## GENERAL FACTS:

### Language and Population

The population of Belize is approximately 311,000 people. English is the official language and widely spoken. Belizeans also speak English based Creole (*Kriol*). Other languages include Spanish, Maya, Garifuna and Mandarin.

### Climate

Offering a subtropical climate with brisk prevailing trade winds from the Caribbean Sea and an average temperature of 80°F, Belize has two seasons: the dry season from December to May and the “green or rainy season” from June to November.

### Time Zone

Belize is on GMT-6 or US Central Standard Time. Daylight saving time is not practiced.

### Government

Independent from Britain since 1981, Belize (formerly British Honduras) has a democratically elected parliamentary government and is a member of the British Commonwealth.

### Currency

The local currency is the Belize dollar. US\$1 is equivalent to BZ\$2. ATMs are located countrywide in the main cities and towns and most allow cash withdrawals via credit card.



### Electrical System

110 volts A.C.

### Water

Belize tap water is treated in cities and towns and is safe to drink. Bottled water is also available for purchase throughout the country.

### Clothing

Pack light casual clothing, preferably made of natural materials. Check with your travel representative about attire for adventure activities.

## GETTING HERE

### Entry Requirements

- Visitors to Belize must be in possession of a passport valid for at least 3 months after the date of arrival and a return ticket with sufficient funds to cover their stay.
- Visitors are given a one month stay after which an extension can be applied

for with the Immigration Department.

- Visas are not required for persons traveling from the United States, Canada, United Kingdom and most European, Caribbean and Central American countries.

- For visitors driving/boating into Belize from Guatemala or Mexico, a temporary importation permit must be secured at the point of entry. Vehicle/vessel permits are valid for thirty days.

### Traveling with Children

Children under 18 years of age must have proper documentation including a valid passport and letter of parental consent. Children traveling with one parent require a notarized letter of authority from the other parent indicating travel consent.

### Traveling with Pets

Pets must be accompanied by a veterinary certificate issued by a registered veterinarian from country of origin and an import permit from the Belize Agricultural Health Authority (BAHA), +501-223-1653.

### Ports of Entry

**By Air:** Commercial airlines all land at the Philip Goldson International Airport (PGIA) in Ladyville, 10 miles from Belize City. Private airplanes need to be cleared through the Belize Airport Authority and Civil Aviation Department at the PGIA.

**By Land:** Belize has two main border points - Santa Elena at the northern border with Mexico and Benque Viejo del Carmen on the western border with Guatemala.

**By Sea:** Seaports where vessels may clear Customs and Immigration are located in Belize City and San Pedro Town in the Belize district, Big Creek and Dangriga Town in the Stann Creek district and, Punta Gorda Town in the Toledo district.

## EMERGENCY INFORMATION

### Hospitals

Belize has both public and private hospitals. There are hospitals located in urban centers; clinics and nurse practitioners can be found in rural areas.

### Emergency Numbers

- Police emergencies Dial 911
- Fire or medical emergency Dial 90

### FEES & TAXES

- Hotel room tax - 9%
- Sales tax on goods and services - 10%
- Airport Departure fees:
  - Departure tax - US\$30.00
  - Security tax - US\$2.50
  - Conservation fee - US\$3.75



**JANUARY**

- Horse race in Burrell Boom
- KREM New Year's Cycling Classic

**FEBRUARY**

- International Billfish Tournament
- Fiesta de Carnaval
- Valentine Cycling Race
- Tour of Belize Cycling Race

**MARCH**

- Baron Bliss Day
- La Ruta Maya Canoe River Challenge
- San Cas Belmopan Cycling Classic
- San Jose Succotz Festival, Cayo

**APRIL**

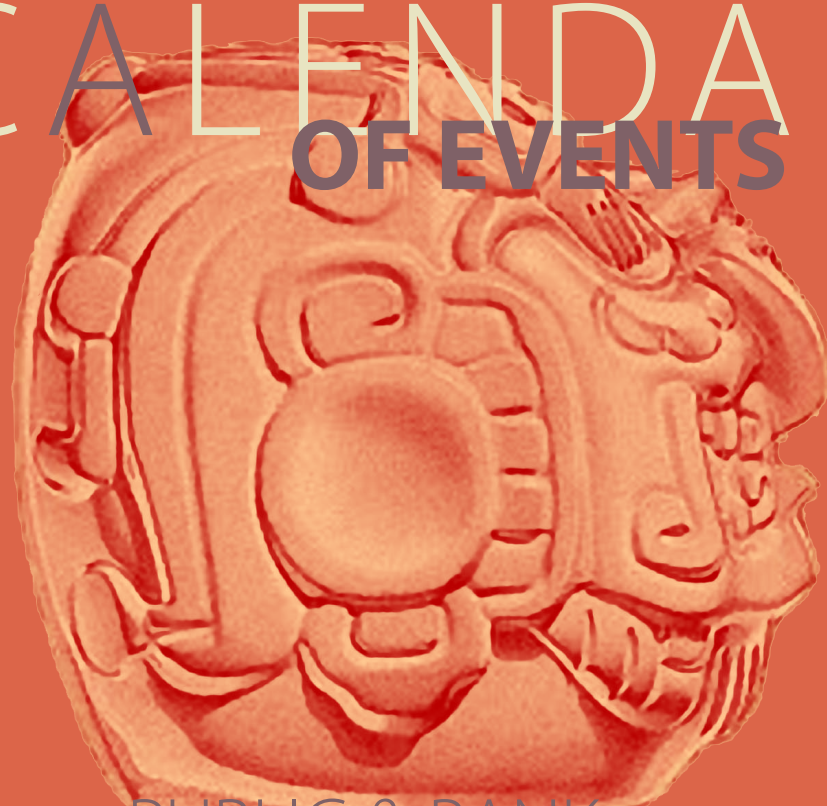
- Burrell Boom Easter Monday Cycle & Horse Races
- Easter Fair
- Holy Saturday Cycling Classic
- National Agriculture & Trade Show, Belmopan

**MAY**

- Labor Day
- Blue Water Fishing Tournament
- Crooked Tree Cashew Festival
- Mother's Day Cycling Classic
- Commonwealth Day
- Cayo Expo

# CALENDAR

## OF EVENTS



## PUBLIC & BANK HOLIDAYS

New Year's Day – Jan. 1  
 Baron Bliss Day – Mar. 9  
 Good Friday  
 Holy Saturday  
 Easter Sunday  
 Easter Monday  
 Labor Day – May 1  
 Commonwealth Day – May 24

St. George's Caye Day – Sept. 10  
 Independence Day – Sept. 21  
 Pan American Day – Oct. 12  
 Garifuna Settlement Day – Nov. 19  
 Christmas Day – Dec. 25  
 Boxing Day – Dec. 26

**JUNE**

- Dia de San Pedro
- Placencia Lobsterfest
- San Pedro Festival
- Placencia Cycling Classic

**JULY**

- Benque Viejo del Carmen Fiesta
- Toledo Cacao Festival
- Progreso Village Pibil Festival
- Caye Caulker & San Pedro Lobster Festivals

**AUGUST**

- Costa Maya Int'l Festival San Pedro
- Toledo Deer Dance Festival
- San Joaquin Festival

**SEPTEMBER**

- St. George's Caye Day
- Carnival, Belize City & Orange Walk
- Orange Walk Fiestarama
- Independence Day

**OCTOBER**

- Belikin Fishing Spectacular
- Pan American Day

**NOVEMBER**

- Garifuna Settlement Day

**DECEMBER**

- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day

*\*Some holidays are observed on a different date than the date they actually fall on. Check [www.travelbelize.org](http://www.travelbelize.org) for final dates.*



With picturesque backdrops and amazing weather, Belize combines the perfect elements to create the wedding of your dreams. Whether at an ancient Maya temple, in a tropical garden or barefoot on a private island, if you can imagine it, there are Belizean hotels and professional wedding planners to arrange it.



Belize is a great place for a family vacation regardless of the ages of family members. With diverse activities available, it is easy to satisfy individual needs and interests of family members from babies to seniors. Most hotels and tour operators offer specially designed packages for family travel.

## SPECIALTY TRAVEL

“Wild and exotic” or “private and peaceful” your honeymoon choices range from the luxury of a private island or jungle lodge to the warmth of a beachfront hotel or rural cottage. Belize is a place where nature and nurture work together to enliven your senses; a place that will inspire a tingle of romance to make its way from your heart into the arms of the one you love.



*For the special-interest traveler, Belize offers a great diversity of attractions and activities at a variety of user levels. Whether traveling alone, with a group or with family, the options are endless.*



Belize is nature's classroom, and there are many well-established programs. Organized study tours, school-based courses and volunteer service programs are available for all ages and budget levels. Popular programs include tropical ecology with both rainforest and marine experiences, traditional herbal and medicinal practices, archaeology, anthropology and photography.



## By Air

From the United States, Canada, the Caribbean and Latin America, international flights to Belize are available from Atlanta, Charlotte, Dallas, Houston, Miami, Los Angeles and all Central American countries. The major airlines servicing Belize are: American Airlines, Continental Airlines, Delta Air Lines, US Airways and Grupo Taca.

## By Road

Driving to Belize can be an adventure with much to see and do. Depending upon the route taken, the trip from the US through Mexico is between 1,350-2,000 miles. Traveling to Belize via Cancun, Mexico City and Chetumal is comfortable, relatively fast and inexpensive. All-weather

highways connect Mexican cities with the border city of Chetumal from which there are regularly scheduled buses to Belize City. Regular bus services operate between Tikal and Flores in Guatemala and Belize City.

## By Sea

For travelers touring Central America, traveling to and from Belize by boat is a viable option. There are regularly scheduled water taxis that shuttle from Dangriga and Punta Gorda in southern Belize to Guatemala and Honduras.

For a one-day visit to Belize, many of the major international cruise lines offer Belize as a popular port of call on their weekly itineraries. A short visit with a cruise line will entice you to return for a longer stay.

## By Air

The most time-efficient option for travel within Belize is by small airplane. Regularly scheduled flights cover the country and provide passengers with a vantage point that leaves many wishing that the flights were longer. Local airlines include: Tropic Air, Maya Island Air, Javier's Flying Service and Caribee Air service. Astrum Helicopter Service also provides charters throughout the country.

## By Bus

The least-expensive way to get around Belize is by bus, with Belize City and Belmopan serving as the central bus depots for travel to the districts. Buses travel to and from the towns several times daily with stops along the highway at villages and visitor attractions. However, some of the more remote villages may have only daily service. Please check for altered schedules on Belize's major holidays.

## By Road

Belize's major highways are paved and offer breathtaking views of the Belizean countryside. Many of the side roads to villages and attractions are graded dirt roads. Belize traffic laws are standard international laws and all driving in Belize is done on the right side of the road.

Rental vehicles are available at the PGIA airport and in many towns. Drivers must hold a valid international driver's license which can be used for up to 90 days. Gas stations are located in major towns and cities but are less common on the highways and in the villages.

## By Boat

Both the Belize Marine Terminal and Fort Street Tourism Village Water Taxi Terminal provide hourly water taxi service to the popular island destinations of Caye Caulker and Ambergris Caye. Licensed tour operators offer tours and transfers from Belize City, Dangriga, Hopkins, Placencia and Punta Gorda to the outer atolls and islands offshore.







# Reef & Beach



# Activities

“...Belize is the Western Caribbean’s premiere dive destination...”

- *Skin Diver Magazine*





Encounter the playful dolphin and gentle manatee in their natural habitat.

Visitors to Belize consistently rate marine attractions as the primary reason for visiting. Belize is blessed with rich diversity in its marine habitats, resulting in UNESCO awarding World Heritage Status to the Belize Barrier Reef. The marine attractions are as varied as the natural formations that make up this 185-mile coastal wonder. Explore the barrier reef, atolls and over 400 islands, white sand beaches, fringing and patch reefs, over 100 species of coral, hundreds of species of fish and an abundant variety of marine life. To ensure the survival of these delicate ecosystems, miles of the Belize Barrier Reef have been designated as marine reserves.

### SCUBA Diving

With underwater visibility routinely extending to 200 feet, divers of all ages and abilities find their way to Belize. Divers are eager to explore the spur and groove coral formations and sheer walls along the length of the reef. Get certified before your visit, or introductory courses are available with qualified dive instructors in any of Belize's coastal or island locations. Popular dive sites include the atolls, the world-famous Blue Hole, Shark Ray Alley, Hol Chan Marine Reserve, South



Water Caye Marine Reserve, and seasonal whale shark encounters at Gladden Spit.

### Snorkeling

Floating atop the warm, clear turquoise waters with a mask and snorkel provides an exciting glimpse into Belize's underwater glories and is a "must see" even for the first-time snorkeler. Knowledgeable local guides will help you explore the kaleidoscope of color found in hard and soft corals, vibrant sponges and over 500 species of fish. Swim with the gentle rays and docile nurse sharks in waist deep water or enjoy the view from 20ft above on the water's surface.

### Fishing

No matter what your level of expertise or interest is, Belize has world-class fishing from Bacalar Chico in the north to Punta Icacos Lagoon in the south. The reef



flats and grass beds around mangrove islands and coastal lagoons throughout the country provide the opportunity for fly-fishing's "Grand Slam" – tarpon, permit and bonefish. The many river mouths are home to snook, tarpon and jacks. Near the Barrier Reef spend a day or hour bottom-fishing for grouper, barracuda or snapper. And for the adventurous, troll offshore for big game fish including marlin, sailfish, bonito and kingfish. To protect our delicate ecosystem, Belize practices "catch and release" sportfishing.

### Kayaking

Greet the sun with a short early morning kayak or choose a week-long kayak adventure between islands. Inside the shallow fore reef, be on the lookout for fish, rays and dolphin or explore the intricate mangrove ecosystem for resident and migratory birds in the branches and the delicate seahorse in the root systems.

### Wind Sports

The constant trade winds and wide expanse of calm waters inside the barrier reef and along the coast make it an ideal playground for sports such as wind surfing, kite surfing/boarding and parasailing.

### Sailing

Sailing inside the protected length of Belize's Barrier Reef allows visitors to explore the islands and snorkel among the patch reefs. Whether on a private vessel making port, or looking for a bare boat charter, Belize has dependable facilities and numerous professional operators ready to meet your cruising needs.





# Rainforest & Inland

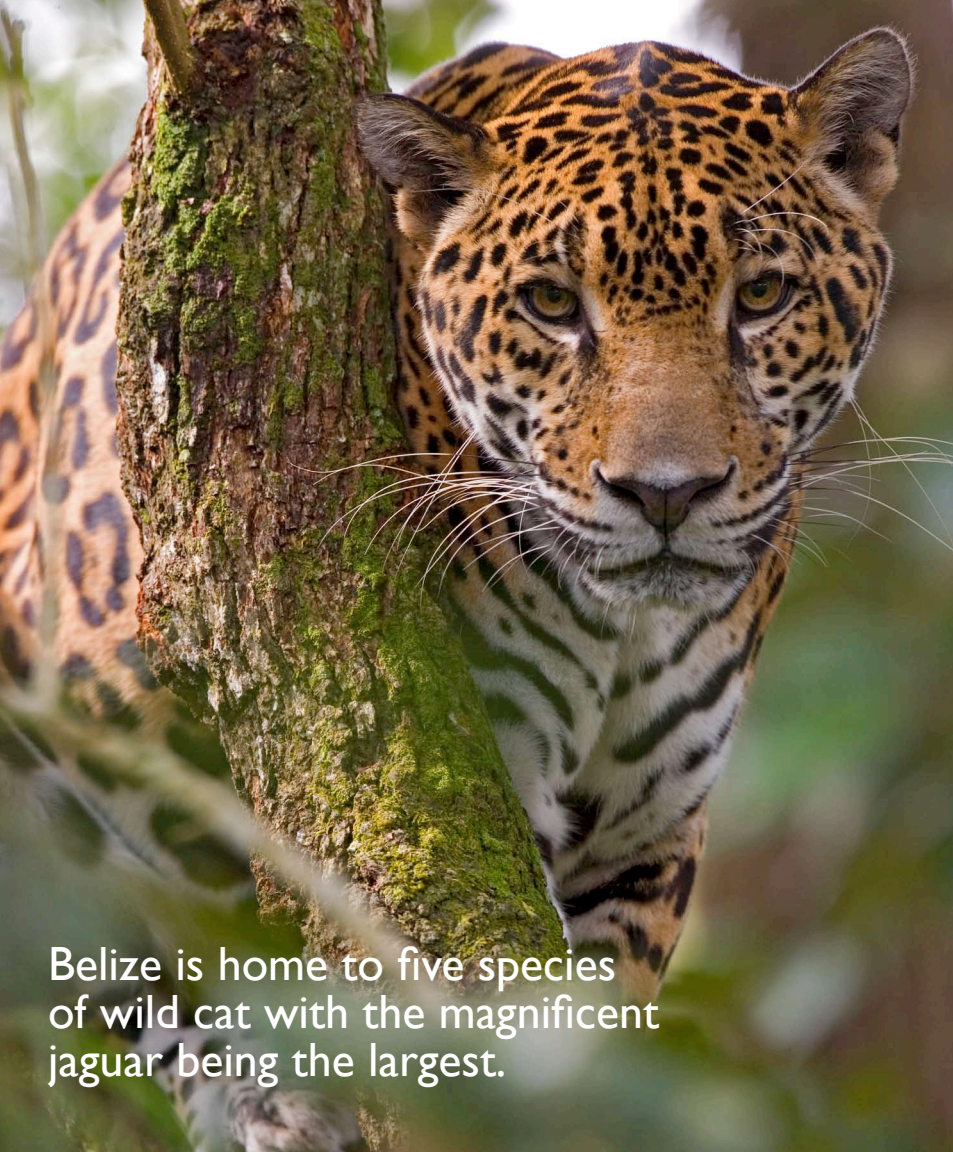


## Activities

“One of the things that makes Belize such a spectacular destination is its natural beauty. Belize boasts the most accessible wilderness in the Western Hemisphere and wildlife that lures travelers from all over the world.”

*-Insight Guide to Belize.*





Belize is home to five species of wild cat with the magnificent jaguar being the largest.

The slopes of the Maya Mountains are framed by the miraculous beauty of tropical rainforest, famously tangled, wet and filled with more species of plants and animals than any other habitat on earth. Seventy-five percent of Belize is covered with tropical forest of which 40% is protected. Within this diverse ecosystem are magnificent waterfalls stemming from cool, clear rivers. Belize also houses the only jaguar reserve in the world, with five different species of wild cats as well as hundreds of birds and exotic plants.

### Trails & Hiking

An abundance of national parks, private nature reserves and botanical gardens offer nature trails for soft or extreme adventure. Whether taking a day tour or spending several days camping, you will encounter exotic tropical plants, the song of brilliantly plumed birdlife, glimpses of tropical wildlife, including howler monkeys in the trees overhead, a crocodile sunning quietly along the riverbank or the tracks of the elusive jaguar and tapir.

### Birdwatching

Belize is home to over 500 species of birds. Prominent examples include Belize's national bird the keel-billed toucan -- found in forested areas; the



elegant jabiru stork -- the largest flying bird in Central America with a wingspan of some 8 feet which nests in the coastal wetlands; flocks of scarlet macaws which feed and nest in the Maya Mountains; and the magnificent frigate bird frequently seen soaring along the coast and over the islands.

### River Trips

Belize is blessed with sparkling rivers and lagoons that create glistening threads against a tapestry of green. These clear waters make their way from the mountains through limestone caves to the Caribbean Sea. Cool off with a swim, take a leisurely canoe ride upriver or float beneath towering trees and through magnificent caves on a cave-tubing adventure.





### Caving

Belize's land surface is underlined by limestone with the most extensive network of caves and sinkholes in Central America. Therein lies magnificent natural formations such as stalactites and stalagmites, crystal caverns and underground waterfalls. Other caves house secrets of Belize's Maya heritage including, intact pottery and human skeletal remains.

### Archaeology

Belize was once the center of one of the greatest civilizations of antiquity. Evidence of the ancient Maya lie strewn about the country. Climb ancient temples for spectacular views of the surrounding jungle; view larger-than-life stelae and carvings of gods and rulers; marvel at the beauty and artistry of jade artifacts in museums and visitor centers; or indulge your dream of being an archaeologist through study programs or assisting with professional field research.

### Ziplining

Belize's ziplining, rappelling and aerial canopy tours are first-class, high-adventure trips for adrenaline junkies and thrill seekers. On the canopy

tour, traverse from one tree platform to another high above the forest floor securely fastened to a steel cable. Enjoy the rush of rappelling through the rainforest canopy to the forest floor hundreds of feet below.

### Horseback Riding

Cantering across the savannah, crossing a jungle stream or blazing a trail through the rainforest astride a well-trained horse offers an exciting perspective of Belize's terrain.

### Camping

Spend the night in the wild. Discover nocturnal creatures on night hikes. Awaken to the sounds of the rainforest. Designated campgrounds are located in many national parks and several offer guided night tours.







# Culture & People

“Belize is at once Caribbean and Central American. To Belizeans, this is not a contradiction but an affirmation that goes to the heart of their national identity and shared aspirations.”

– *Americas Magazine*





Travelers to Belize quickly discover what makes Belize unique. It is the friendly people. Colorful personalities with an array of traditions and customs representing over ten diverse cultures make the Belizean people the country's greatest resource and stewards of Belize's tourism. Comprised of the Maya, Creole, Mestizo, Garifuna, East Indian, Mennonite, Arabs, North Americans and Chinese, this harmonious mixture results in one of the most peaceful countries in the region.

### Maya

The Maya are the first known inhabitants of Belize, governing an advanced civilization more than two thousand years ago. The Maya, who have preserved many traditional customs and spiritual practices, comprise ten percent of Belize's population. Through the Maya Home Stay Network, Maya families welcome visitors to stay with them and participate in daily activities such as tortilla preparation, farming, roof thatching, identifying traditional medicine and playing marimba music.



### Creole

The descendants of African slaves and European settlers of the Colonial era, the Creole constitute a third of Belize's population. From this culture has come one of the country's dominant languages known as *Kriol*, the national dish of rice and beans, and Boom and Chime music resonating from a blend of drums, accordion, banjo, harmonica and animal jawbones.

### Mestizo

The Mestizo of Belize are a subtle reminder of Belize's Spanish roots. Descendants of Maya and Spanish settlers, who immigrated to Belize during the Caste Wars of the Yucatan, the Mestizo live predominately in northern and western Belize. Rich flavorful soups such as Relleno, Chimole and Escabeche and widespread colorful town and village festivals contribute to the Belizean identity.



Maya women make traditional handicrafts from natural materials found in the rainforest such as calabash, the jipijapa plant and river slate.



### Garifuna

November 19th commemorates the arrival in 1823 of the Garifuna and their contribution to the Belizean landscape. The rich culture of the Garifuna includes the hypnotic drumbeat of popular Punta music and longstanding healing traditions. In 2001 UNESCO proclaimed the Garifuna language, music and dance to be among the masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

### East Indian

Brought to Belize in the early 1800's to work on sugar plantations in the north and south, the East Indian has quietly assimilated into the other ethnic groups of Belize. More recent immigrants from modern India are active in the merchant and business communities.

### Mennonite

Two different Mennonite sects of German ancestry make their home in Belize. Their distinct communities maintain longstanding religious practices, customs and lifestyles. Both groups are prolific farmers. The traditional sect shun the combustion engine and wear somber clothing, whereas the more modern sect utilizes state-of-the-art machinery and farming practices and are an integral part of the Belizean economy.

### Arabs

Lebanese, Palestinians and Syrians make up a small but industrious group in Belize. Arriving in the late 19th century, these groups remain a close-knit community with a strong presence as merchants in towns and cities throughout the country.

### Chinese

This distinct group has quickly integrated into Belizean society. Hard working and diligent, they have maintained a strong community throughout Belize and operate primarily in the restaurant and merchant businesses.





# Maya Temples &

# Archaeology

Belize was at the heart of one of the greatest civilizations of the ancient world.





Caracol conquered Tikal in 563 AD and dominated the region for over a century.

Belize is believed to have been at the heart of the Maya civilization that dominated Central America from about 250 to 900 AD. Supporting this theory is the fact that Belize possesses the greatest concentration of Maya sites in the entire region with more than 1,400 recorded. The physical evidence of this great civilization includes ceremonial temples, stately structures and fine artwork made of jade, stone and clay.

Most of the sites are readily accessible by public or private transportation and local guides are available to explain the architectural detail and cultural significance. Maya antiquities are also on display at the Museum of Belize in Belize City and at the various visitor centers countrywide.

### **Cerros: Maya Hill ①**

Located on a small peninsula jutting into Corozal Bay, Cerros is the only Maya site located on the coastline. This historically important site witnessed the early “rise of Maya Kinship” and rose to prominence during the Late Pre-Classic (300 BC). For those visitors who love to go off the beaten path, visit this unique Maya site while enjoying the peace and tranquility of the Corozal district.



### **Lamanai: Submerged Crocodile ②**

Lamanai lies along the banks of the beautiful New River Lagoon in the Orange Walk district. A major attraction of this site is the well-preserved mask of a Maya ruler emerging from a crocodile headdress. Lamanai features monumental architecture of temples and palaces dating from the Classic and Pre-Classic Periods and is one of Belize’s largest and most beautiful ceremonial sites.

### **Altun Ha: Water of the Rock ③**

Located on the old Northern Highway, 31 miles from Belize City, Altun Ha was an important trading center strategically located about six miles from the coast. An unusual characteristic of this site is that no stelae were found. However, during excavation many valuables were uncovered here, including the famous Jade Head in 1968.





### Cahal Pech: *Place of Ticks* 4

Located in northwestern Cayo district overlooking San Ignacio Town and the Macal River, Cahal Pech sits in a lush jungle setting only a short ten-minute walk from the town's center, giving urban visitors easy access to an archaeological site.

### Caracol: *The Snail* 5

Located in the Chiquibul National Park in southwestern Cayo district, Caracol which was once home to 150,000 people, is the largest Maya center in Belize and has a dominant place in Maya history. The largest temple at Caracol is "Caana" or "Sky Place." This massive pyramid rises over 140ft above the jungle floor and is the tallest manmade structure in Belize. These temples are some 46 miles into the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve, but definitely worth the drive.

### Xunantunich: *Maiden of the Rock* 6

Located in the Cayo district near the Guatemalan border, the journey to Xunantunich includes passage across the scenic Mopan river via hand-cranked ferry. Climb "El Castillo," displaying a spectacular 130ft frieze and the tallest structure on site, providing breathtaking views of the towns of San Ignacio, Benque Viejo

Del Carmen and the Guatemalan countryside. Displays at the visitor center demonstrate the importance of this site as a ceremonial center in the Classic Period.

### Lubaantun: *Place of Fallen Stones* 7

Lubaantun is located a mile from San Pedro Columbia Village in the Toledo district. This unique site is constructed of cut stones laid and fitted without mortar. Lubaantun was a major center of religious, ceremonial, political and commercial activities during the eight and ninth centuries (730AD-860 AD)

### Nim Li Punit: *Big Hat* 8

Nim Li Punit is located near the village of Indian Creek, in the Toledo district. The site is famous for its stelae, where more than 25 have been found. Nim Li Punit got its name from the longest stela in Belize (30ft) and one of the tallest in the Maya world. The stela carving depicts a figure wearing a large headdress.



# Caves & The

# Underworld

Within these powerful limestone formations lie remnants of a great Maya civilization, exotic wildlife and streams of crystal waters.





Much of the geological structure of Belize is porous karst limestone. This makes it ideal for the formation of underground caves and rivers, and the southern half of the country is dotted with them. Although many caves have been known for years, new ones are still being explored. The latest and perhaps most exciting cave discoveries in Belize are still very much for the professional speleologist. Cave divers sponsored by the National Geographic Society have found Central America's longest cave system on the Chiquibul River in the Maya Mountains. Here too, there is evidence that the Maya knew of these underground worlds and used them for religious ceremonies.

### **Rio Frio Cave 1**

Rio Frio Cave is located in the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve and reveals an impressive 65-foot arch at its opening. Only one-half mile in length, this is a great choice for the first-time caver. From the opening visitors have a striking view of the entire cave and the stream running through it.

### **Barton Creek Cave 2**

Hidden in the small Mennonite community of Barton Creek, along the



Chiquibul Road in the Cayo district, are the cool, dark caverns of Barton Creek Cave. This cave was used by the ancient Maya for ritualistic activities such as human sacrifices, bloodletting rituals and fertility rites.

### **Che Chem Ha Cave 3**

Che Chem Ha cave located 16 miles from San Ignacio offers an extraordinary experience. The cave entrance is decorated with Maya motifs and is guarded to prevent looting of hundreds of fully intact ancient Maya pots. Visitors are escorted by an experienced resident guide beginning with a 45-minute uphill hike through farmland and beautiful forest.

### **Actun Tunichil Muknal Cave 4**

Deep within the forests lies a wonder of both ancient and natural Belize. Following a 45-minute drive from San



Ignacio and a 45-minute hike through the beautiful Tapir Mountain Nature Reserve with numerous jungle stream crossings, visitors find a crystal-clear stream flowing from the cave opening. A short swim into the cave and a guided hike through the underground realm is rewarded by one of the most impressive Maya sites in Belize, including massive pots, ceremonial chambers and human skeletal remains cemented in limestone.

### Caves Branch 5

Flowing west of the Sibun River, Caves Branch River carves into limestone walls deposited by ancient reefs to form a massive cave system. The river dips in and out of these caves, allowing visitors to float through the filtered light of the jungle foliage. 1,000-year-old pottery shards, statues of fertility gods and embedded human footprints can be seen along the way.

### St. Herman's Cave 6

One of the most accessible caves in the country, St. Herman's lies among the dense tropical forest on the Hummingbird Highway, just 12 miles southeast of the capital city of Belmopan. As part of the Blue Hole National Park established in 1986,

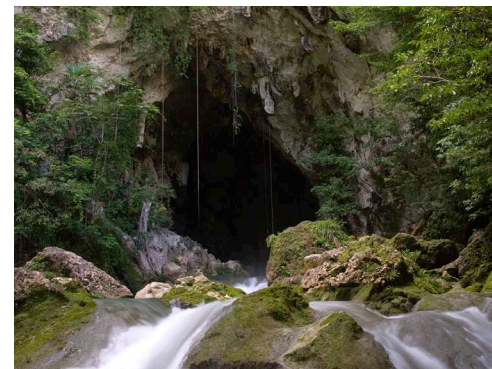
this cave holds important cultural and archaeological significance evidenced by its use by the Mayas during their Classic Period.

### Tiger Cave 7

Also referred to as the San Miguel Cave, given its proximity to the Maya village of San Miguel in the Toledo district, the nature hike to this cave offers an opportunity to learn about the diversity of the Toledo rainforest and a firsthand view of Maya farming practices.

### Hokeb Ha Cave 8

On a cool shady hillside near the village of Blue Creek is Hokeb Ha Cave. According to archaeologists, the discovery of several ceramic and ceremonial altars reveal that the Maya used this cave in the Late Classic Period.





# Past



Built in 1922, the Swing Bridge in Belize City remains the only hand-cranked bridge in Central America.



The Museum of Belize, once the country's central prison, provides a glimpse into Belize's rich past and exotic natural history.






# Present





# Islands & Marine Attractions



Swim, snorkel, dive, fish, birdwatch  
or relax while being caressed by the  
Caribbean Sea.



Off the coast of Belize lie hundreds of palm-studded coral sand islands and three of the Caribbean's four atoll formations. Ideal for a picnic between dives or a peek into the sanctuaries of exotic tropical birds, many of these islands offer a choice from budget to luxury accommodations. Choose the seclusion of a private island or the activity of an island town, immerse yourself in the underwater world offshore, or bask on the beach in the warmth of the tropical sun. Eight marine protected areas within Belizean waters attest to the region's remarkable biodiversity as well as its commitment to management and protection of marine ecosystems.



### Turneffe Atoll 1

Turneffe is the closest to the mainland of Belize's three atolls and only a short distance from the Barrier Reef. Surrounded by small orchid-strung mangrove islands, the spectacular underwater formations make this a popular dive and fishing location.

### Lighthouse Reef Atoll 2

Lighthouse Reef Atoll is another marine lagoon bounded by reefs and sand islands. A nesting site of the rare Red-footed Booby is located on Half Moon Caye. This atoll and the surrounding waters form the first protected area in Belize. An observation tower and picnic facilities make this an ideal stop between dives.

### Glover's Reef Atoll 3

Fifteen miles outside the Barrier Reef and some 70 miles from Belize City is Belize's most remote atoll. On the southeast end, the six coral isles sitting atop the reef provide easy access for diving, snorkeling and sea kayaking.

### The Blue Hole 4

Six miles north of Halfmoon Caye in Lighthouse Reef, is the Blue Hole, the result of a cave which collapsed centuries ago. The Blue Hole is nearly 1,000 feet

across and is ringed by corals, making for an excellent snorkeling adventure. The base of this fringing reef gradually slopes to 50 feet, then into a seemingly bottomless underwater cavern.

### Hol Chan Marine Reserve & Shark Ray Alley 5

Hol Chan Marine Reserve and Shark Ray Alley are located only 4 miles from San Pedro Town and 36 miles from Belize City, making them easily accessible and popular diving and snorkeling sites. The shallow waters offer even the novice swimmer a chance to encounter docile nurse sharks and rays.

### San Pedro, Ambergris Caye 6

Ambergris Caye is Belize's largest island approximately 36 miles from Belize City, and is the birthplace of Belize's tourism. From the cobblestone streets of San Pedro Town outward to the northern and southern ends of the island, there is a wide assortment of accommodations, restaurants, bars, shops and tour operators to suit all budgets.

### Caye Caulker 7

The island of Caye Caulker is five miles long and a half-mile wide with a population of approximately 1,200 people. Once known for producing traditional wooden sailboats, residents



now embrace the thriving fishing and tourism industries. Many islanders own and operate restaurants, hotels, bars, gift and dive shops, offering an authentic Belizean island experience.

### Other Islands 8

Hundreds of islands of various sizes and shapes lie off the coastline along the entire length of the Belize Barrier Reef. Each island location and facility is different. Mangrove-entwined islands sit beside white coral sand beaches. Some offer the opportunity to access unusual natural attractions such as bird sanctuaries, while others are near whale shark spawning sites. Onshore, a diverse selection of facilities are designed for visitors ranging from student groups to luxurious exclusivity.

### Other Marine Attractions

South Water Caye Marine Reserve - page 87



# Hotels on The Islands

Below are telephone numbers for hotels on the Islands of Belize. The Belize country code is (501). To call direct from outside Belize dial your international access code, followed by 501 and the local seven-digit number. For detailed hotel information visit [www.travelbelize.org](http://www.travelbelize.org).

## San Pedro

Agape House	226-2533
Aqua Marina Suites	226-4675
Aqua Marina Time-Share Suites	226-4675
ASunsetBeachResort.Com	610-2526
Azul Resort	226-4012
Banana Beach Resort	226-3848
Banyan Bay Vacation Club	226-3739
Belize Legacy Resort	610-0000
Belize Yacht Club Resort	226-2777
Belizean Reef Suites	226-2582
Belizean Shores Resort	226-2355
Bermuda Landing	610-3506
Blue Dolphin	206-2527
Blue Reef Island Resort	220-5098
Blue Tang Inn	226-2326
Brianna's Beach House	226-4202
Capricorn Resort	226-2809

Captain Morgan's Caribbean - Vacation Beach Club	226-2207
Captain Morgan's Retreat	226-2207
Caribbean Villas	226-2715
Caribe Island Resort	226-4091
Casa Blanca Beach Resort	624-1835
Casa Caracol Guest House	226-2267
Casa de Lisa	610-2526
Casa Escalante	226-2489
Casa Manana Guest House	226-3461
Casa Redondo Suite	610-2526
Casa Redondo Villa	610-2526
Casa Roja	226-4128
Casa Tortuga Villa	226-2116
Caye Villas/Los Encantos	226-3077
Cayo Espanto	226-2473
Changes In Latitude	226-2986
Chez Caribe	226-3077

Coconuts Caribbean Hotel	226-3500
Conch Shell Hotel	226-2062
Coral Bay Villas	226-3003
Coral Beach Hotel	226-2013
Corona Del Mar Hotel & Apartments	226-2055
Costa Maya Reef Resort	226-4700
Costa Maya Reef Resort	226-4700
Time Share	226-4700
Eden Park Villas	226-3258
El Fuerte House	226-3737
El Pescador Lodge & Villas	226-2398
Exotic Caye Beach Resort	226-2870
Grand Colony Island Villas	226-3739
Grand Colony Vacation Club	226-3739
Grumpy & Happy Deluxe Accommodations	226-3420
Hotel Del Rio	226-2286
Hotel San Pedrano	226-2054
Journey's End Hotel	226-2173
La Perla Del Caribe	624-9504
Lily's Hotel	206-2059
Martha's Hotel	206-2053
Mata Chica Resort	220-5010
Mata Rocks Resort	226-2336
Mayan Princess Hotel	226-2778
Mosquito Coast Villas	226-3077
Oasis del Caribe Condos	226-3077
Paradise Villas - Nellie Gomez	226-2087
Pelican Reef Villas	226-2352
Perla Escondida	226-2297
Playa Blanca Island Villas	226-3785
Portofino Resort	220-5096

Ramon's Village	226-2071
Royal Caribbean Resort	226-4220
Royal Palm Condos	610-2576
Ruby's Hotel	226-2063
San Pedro Holiday Hotel	226-2014
San Telmo	663-9021
Seascape Villas	226-2119
Seven Seas Resort	226-2382
Seven Seas Resort Time Share	226-2382
Spindrift Hotel	226-2174
Sueno Del Mar	226-4001
Sun Breeze Beach Hotel	226-2191
Tara Del Sol	226-3856
The Cloisters	226-2812
The Island Cottage	226-2392
The Palms Condominiums	226-3322
The Villas at Banyan Bay	226-3739
Tomas Hotel	226-2061
Tradewinds Paradise Villas	226-2822
Tranquility Bay Beach Resort	624-3686
Trec Guest House	226-3389
Tres Cocos Houses	226-3077
Victoria House	226-2067
View The Blue	226-3856
Villas At Del Rio	610-3506
White Sands Cove	226-3528
Xaman Ek Resort	226-4455
Xanadu Island Resort	226-2814





# Hotels on The Islands

## Caye Caulker

1788 Motel	226-0388
Alamina Beach House	226-0192
Amanda's Place	226-0029
Anchorage Resort	206-0304
Auxillou Beach Suites	226-0370
Banana Cabana	226-0055
Barefoot Beach Belize	226-0205
Barefoot Caribe Hotel	226-0161
Belize Odyssey Resort	621-1558
Bella's Guest House	226-0360
Blue Wave Guest House	206-0114
Casa Rosado	610-3964
Caye Caulker Condos	226-0072
Caye Caulker Rentals	226-0029
Chateau Giselle	226-0075
China Town Hotel	226-0228
Chocolate's Guest House	226-0151
Costa Maya Beach Cabanas	226-0432
Cruzy's Crib	226-0017
Daisy's Guest House	226-0150
De Real Macaw	226-0459
Diane's Beach House	226-0286

Edith's Guest House	206-0069
Georgia Peach Villa	226-0029
Heredia's Apartment Rentals	226-0132
Ignacio's Beach Cabins	226-0175
Iguana Reef Inn	226-0213
Jaguar Morning Star Guest House	226-0347
Jan's Place	226-0173
Leeside Rooms	226-0020
Lena's Guest House	226-0106
Lorraine's Guest House	206-0162
M & N Hotel & Apartments	226-0229
Mando's House	226-0017
Mara's Place	206-0056
Marin's Guest House	226-0444
Marlin's Guest House	226-0064
Maxhapan Cabins	226-0118
Mira Mar Hotel	206-0357
Moana Wahoo	226-0029
Morgan's Inn	226-0178
Oasi Apartments	226-0384
Ocean Pearle Royale Hotel	226-0074
Pancho's Villas	226-0304

Picololo	226-0371
Popeye's Beach Resort	226-0032
Rainbow Hotel	226-0123
Raul's Rooms	226-0133
Reef House	226-0029
Sailwinds Beach Suites	226-0075
Sandy Lane Guest House & Cabanas	226-0117
Sapphire House	206-0026
Seaside Cabanas	226-0498
Shirley's Guest House	226-0145
Sunset Guest House	223-0184
TAJ Hotel	226-0034
The Canuck Cottage	226-0484
The Crows Nest House	226-0185
The Lazy Iguana Bed & Breakfast	226-0350
The Tropics Hotel	226-0374
Tina's Backpackers	626-0333
Tom's Hotel	226-0102
Tree Tops Guest House	226-0240
Trends Hotel	226-0094
Tropical Paradise Resort	226-0124
Vega Inn and Gardens	226-0142
Villa Hermosa	226-0029
Zekes Casa Roja	
enquiries@accommodations.com	

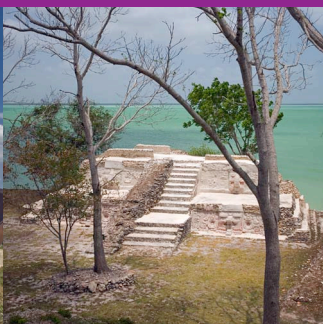
## Offshore Islands - North

Belcove Island Lodge	227-3054
Blackbird Oceanic Field Station	220-4256
Calypso Beach Retreat	223-2077
Caye Chapel Island Resort	226-8250
Half Moon Caye	
Natural Monument	223-5004
Hugh Parkey's	220-4024

Belize Adventure Lodge	223-4526
The Lodge On St. George's	220-4444
Turneffe Flats Lodge	220-4046
Turneffe Island Lodge	220-4142

## Offshore Islands - South

Blue Horizon Lodge	660-4299
Blue Marlin Lodge	522-2243
Coco Plum Island Resort	522-2200
Fairweather's Place	802-0030
French Louie Caye	523-3636
Gaviota Coral Reef	509-5032
Glover's Atoll Island Lodge	660-3279
Isla Marisol Resort	520-2056
Island Adventures Campground	522-3328
Lana's on the Reef	520-5036
Leslie Cottages	670-5030
Moho Caye Lodge	223-6324
Off the Wall Dive Center	614-6348
Pelican's Pouch, South Water Caye	522-2044
Ranguana Caye Camp	523-3565
Robert's Caye Resort	523-2010
Tobacco Caye Lodge	520-5033
Tobacco Caye Paradise Lodge	520-5101
Whipray Caye Lodge	608-8130



# The District of Corozal

Secluded Corozal is a scenic and peaceful town, nestled along the windswept waters of Corozal Bay.



Peaceful Corozal district blends Spanish flavor with the allure of a serene haven away from the busier tourist track. Nestled in the rich blue-and-white-capped waters of windswept Corozal bay is Corozal Town with a population of 9,100. Charming resorts, comfortable homes and shady parks overlook the inviting waters. Visitors and retirees from Europe and North America mix easily with more deeply rooted locals, mostly descendants of Mestizos who fled the 19th century Caste Wars in Yucatan.



### Corozal Town ①

Corozal Town is the northernmost urban center in Belize. The town's name is derived from the cohune palms that dominated the landscape when the first inhabitants arrived. The local economy is primarily based on the sugar industry. Located 85 miles northwest of Belize City and only 10 miles from the Mexican border, day trips to neighboring Chetumal or the reef are easily arranged.

### Consejo Shores ②

On Corozal Bay seven miles north of Corozal Town sits Consejo Shores, home to many retirees. The seafront parks sloping into shallow sandy waters are ideal swimming grounds for small children and the inexperienced swimmer. Visitors can also enjoy fishing, sailing, kayaking and water sports. Nature abounds here with many species of tropical birds, orchids, and other marine vegetation along the shoreline.

### Progreso Lagoon ③

During the peak of the Maya civilization, Progreso Lagoon served as a busy marine highway for merchants to trade their goods, as well as a strategic military lookout post. Today, visitors enjoy the calm waters of the lagoon and the equally tranquil village life.

### Shipstern Nature Reserve ④

Originally started as a self-sustaining business devoted to the exportation of butterflies, Shipstern Nature Reserve was established in 1988. This 22,000-acre reserve protects a wide array of habitats, from wetlands and lagoons to tropical moist and dry forests. The dry forest is rare -- found only at Shipstern in Belize and just four different areas in the Yucatan Peninsula. Shipstern is home to all five cat species found in Belize, the endangered Baird's Tapir, some 300 species of birds including wood stork nesting sites, and a myriad of other plant and animal species.

### Sarteneja Village ⑤

Sarteneja is one of the gems of northern Belize. Just 30 minutes by boat from Corozal Town or 1.5 hours by road across two hand-powered ferries, this quiet village provides a panoramic view of emerald-colored Chetumal Bay. Fishing boats bob at anchor in the picturesque bay while the beach is lined by colorful sailboats being repaired and painted for the next trip south. This small village is home to one of the largest fleets of indigenous fishing crafts in the country. Sailboats with crews of 5-10 men venture south for weeks harvesting fish, conch and lobsters. Hire a fisherman to take you to



the archaeological site of Cerros to the west or Rocky Point, part of the Bacalar Chico National Park, to the east. Or just soak in the ambience of Belize away from the more touristy areas.



# Hotels in Corozal

*Below are telephone numbers for hotels in the Corozal district. The Belize country code is (501). To call direct from outside Belize dial your international access code, followed by 501 and the local seven-digit number. For detailed hotel information visit [www.travelbelize.org](http://www.travelbelize.org).*

Aldy's Guesthouse	602-4685	Hotel Maya	422-2082
Alta Mira Guest House	422-0605	Hotel Paradise Bay Villas	422-0209
Backpackers Paradise		Hotel Posada Mama	662-4080
	<a href="mailto:belize2004@yahoo.com">belize2004@yahoo.com</a>	Krisami's Bayview Lodge	423-2283
Candelie's Cabanas	423-2005	Las Palmas Hotel	422-0196
Casa Blanca Hotel By The Sea	423-1018	Mark Anthony's Hotel	422-3141
Cascada Maya Camping Site	422-2082	Marvirton Guest House	422-0361
Cerros Beach Inn	623-9530	Maya World Guest House	624-4790
Copa Banana Guest House	422-0284	Mirador Hotel & Restaurant	422-0189
Corozal Guest House	402-0634	Princess Hotel	423-7652
Fantasy Point Progresso	420-6033	The Smuggler's Den	600-9723
Fernando's Seaside Guest House	423-2085	Tony's Inn And Beach Resort	422-2055
Gibson's Guest House	422-3163	Win - Gate - Inn	403-8010
Hok'ol K'in Guest House	422-3329		







# The District of **Orange Walk**

Tangled water lilies line the banks of the New River, once a major waterway for the ancient Maya and now a veritable paradise of wildlife and scenery.

As the sweet smell of sugarcane permeates the air in the Orange Walk district, the grand Maya temples, primal jungle and exotic birds entice one to explore. The strong Spanish influence here is unmistakable. Old-fashioned tortilla factories, mission churches and Spanish-styled homes are everywhere.

Orange Walk district is home to approximately 16,000 people, primarily descendants of the Mestizo culture borne of the Spanish-Maya refugees of the Caste Wars. The main source of income before the 19th century was mahogany logging, which has now been replaced by sugarcane production.



### Banquitas House of Culture 1

For visitors interested in the history and culture of Orange Walk, Banquitas House of Culture is a “must see.” At the museum you will find exquisite paintings and art by local artisans, as well as a permanent exhibition on the history of Orange Walk Town.

### Blue Creek 2

Blue Creek is a Mennonite village settled in the early 1950's. Primarily an agricultural community, the inhabitants are also well known for furniture manufacturing and construction services. Perched atop a hill overlooking the community is a small bed and breakfast facility, offering a chance to experience the rural lifestyle of Blue Creek.

### New River Lagoon 3

The Maya temples of Lamanai are best visited by an hour-long boat trip through the remote jungle swamp and waterway of the New River. The river's surrounding wetland is teeming with exotic plants and wildlife including crocodiles, turtles, huge tarpon and water birds.

### La Milpa Archaeological

### Reserve 4

While this site has not been completely excavated, it has been identified by

archaeologists as the third largest Maya site in the country. La Milpa Archaeological Reserve has twenty-four plazas and approximately eighty-five major structures. Walking through this site is a combination of archaeological exploration and nature hike with occasional evidence of looter's trenches burrowed into the base of jungle-covered temples.

### Honey Camp Lagoon 5

Honey Camp is a great day trip from Orange Walk Town. Hundreds of coconut trees adorn the white sandy beaches and embrace the lagoon's clear blue waters. The Maya used the lagoon for ceremonial and residential purposes during the civilization's most volatile period from 1000 AD to 1500 AD. Archaeologists have uncovered two settlements on the lagoon: one along the banks which was occupied in the late Classic/early Post-Classic period, and the other on islands in the lagoon.

### Nohmul Archaeological Site 6

While many of the Maya sites in Belize have been renovated to what archaeologists believe they once looked like, some sites in Belize have been left in their natural state. Nohmul is an example of what happens to the works of man once nature takes over. The



vegetation-covered mounds lie in the middle of vast sugar cane fields, and from the top of what is left of the twin temples, the Blue Creek Escarpment is visible in the distance to the north. Ask directions to Nohmul in the nearby village of San Pablo.

### Rio Bravo Conservation Area 7

The 250,000-acre Rio Bravo Conservation Area is one of the largest private protected areas in Belize. The area is managed for conservation, scientific research, sustained-yield timber harvesting, non-timber forest product extraction, ecotourism and educational purposes.

### Other Attractions in Orange Walk District

### 8 Lamanai - page 41





# Hotels in Orange Walk

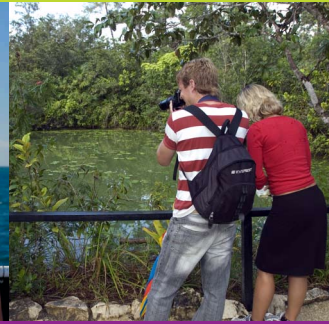
*Below are telephone numbers for hotels in the Orange Walk district. The Belize country code is (501). To call direct from outside Belize dial your international access code, followed by 501 and the local seven-digit number. For detailed hotel information visit [www.travelbelize.org](http://www.travelbelize.org).*

Akihito Japanese Hotel	302-0185	La Enramada Cabanas	302-2868
Blue Creek Hillside B&B	323-0155	La Milpa Field Station	227-5616
Chan Chich Lodge	223-4419	La Rosita Guest House	323-0445
Come 'n' Dine Motel	302-3420	Lamanai Outpost Lodge	672-2000
D * Victoria Hotel	322-2518	Lamanai Riverside Retreat	302-3955
Gami's Hotel	302-2579	Lucia's Guest House	322-2244
Hill Bank Field Station	227-5616	Orchid Palm Inn	322-0719
Honey Camp Beach Club	670-0697	St. Christopher's Hotel	302-1064
Hotel De La Fuente	322-2290	Victor's Inn	302-0183



# The District of Belize

As the cultural center of the country, Belize district pulsates with an infused mix of old-world charm and modern comfort.





The Belize district is home to Belize City, the country's commercial center and the largest concentration of Belizeans. A bustling port city, the country's largest hotels are found here with extensive conference facilities, professional services, a cruise passenger terminal, as well as restaurants, bars, nightlife and numerous historical sites. Inland waterways, once busy thoroughfares for colonial mahogany cutters, cross much of the district, creating habitats for an abundance of wildlife. Offshore islands offer idyllic day tours for snorkeling, diving and relaxing.



### Baron Bliss Lighthouse 1

Baron Henry Edward Ernest Victor Bliss, a paraplegic sailor, visited Belize in 1926 and fell in love with Belize's clear blue waters, appealing climate and kind people. Two months after his arrival to Belize, Baron Bliss died leaving Belize a \$2 million legacy. The distinctive lighthouse monument was erected at the Fort George Point in his honor.

### House of Culture 2

In 1814 the official residence of the British Governor of Belize was a symbol of British colonial rule. In 1996, "Government House" was renamed the "House of Culture" and an extensive renovation project was undertaken to retain the architectural integrity of the home. Today, the House of Culture hosts cultural exhibits, events and musical performances.

### St. John's Cathedral 3

St. John's Cathedral is the oldest Anglican Church in Central America. Built in 1812 it was constructed from red bricks originally used as English ship ballasts. The cathedral has a vivid history and was the site of coronations of three kings of the Mosquito Shore.

### The Museum of Belize 4

Built in 1857 as "Her Majesty's Prison,"

the two-story brick building has been restored, renamed and repurposed as the Museum of Belize. The museum hosts a permanent exhibition of Maya artifacts from archaeological sites throughout Belize, as well as cultural and historical items.

### Community Baboon Sanctuary 5

The Community Baboon Sanctuary located 20 miles northwest of Belize City is one of Belize's most successful ecotourism stories. Founded in 1985 to protect a small population of Black Howler monkeys inhabiting the area, the project now incorporates sustainable tourism practices and environmental education programs within conservation efforts. This grassroots program is managed by landowners of the eight villages in the Belize River Valley.

### Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary 6

Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary, 35 miles north of Belize City, is a premiere birdwatching location. The intricate network of lagoons, swamps, savanna and waterways is a sanctuary for both resident water-birds and migrants. The jabiru stork, the largest bird in Central America, can be found feeding in the lagoons or nesting at the very top of isolated trees. Along with iguanas, crocodiles, turtles, howler monkeys and other



tropical wildlife, Crooked Tree Village is home to a small traditional Creole community and the popular Cashew Festival.

### The Belize Zoo 7

One way to see Belize's native animals in their natural surroundings is at the Belize Zoo. No iron bars here; the animals live under the forest canopy in natural settings within large fenced enclosures. The zoo operates an environmental education program and a refuge and rehabilitation center for over 125 species of Belizean wildlife.

### Other Attractions in Belize District

8 Altun Ha - page 41



# Hotels in Belize

Below are telephone numbers for hotels in the Belize district. The Belize country code is (501). To call direct from outside Belize dial your international access code, followed by 501 and the local seven-digit number. For detailed hotel information visit [www.travelbelize.org](http://www.travelbelize.org).

## Belize City

A Roseville Stay Apts and B&B	224-4436	North Front Street Guest House	227-7595
Bachelor Inn	223-7310	Princess Hotel & Casino	223-2670
Bay View Guest House	223-4179	Radisson Fort George Hotel	223-3333
Belcove Hotel	227-3054	Renaissance Towers	223-2614
Belize & Beyond Nature Tours	623-7526	Royal Orchid Hotel	203-2783
Bellevue Hotel	227-7051	Sea Guest House	203-0043
Best Western		Seaside Guest House	227-8339
Belize Biltmore Plaza Hotel	223-2302	Smokin Balam	223-3969
Chateau Caribbean Hotel	223-3888	The Bakadeer Inn	223-0659
Coningsby Inn	227-1566	The Caribbean Palms Inn	227-0472
D' Nest Inn	223-5416	The Great House	223-3400
Fort Heights Cottages	227-8855	The Red Hut Inn	223-1907
Freddie's Guest House	223-3851	Three Sisters Guest House	203-5729
Hotel Las Palmeras	227-3345	Three Star Guest House	203-3723
Hotel Mopan	227-7351	Villa Boscardi	223-1691
Isabel's Guest House	207-3139		
Mama Chen Guest House	223-4568		

## Belize District

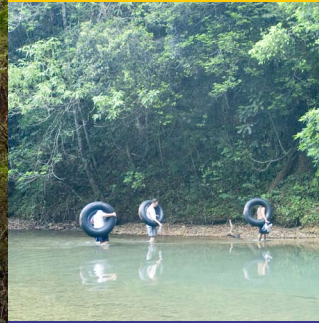
Black Orchid Resort	225-9158	Maruba Resort and Jungle Spa	225-5555
Belize River Lodge	225-2002	May Flower Motel	225-2754
Bird's Eye View Lodge	225-7027	Methos Coconut Campground	603-6051
El Chiclero Inn	225-9005	Newlands Bed & Breakfast	225-2056
Embassy Hotel	225-3333	Orchid Garden Eco-Village	225-6991
Estelle's Airport Hotel	205-2134	Rhaburn's Rooms	225-7035
Gentle's Cool Spot	609-4991	Sam Tillett's Hotel	220-7026
Global Village Hotel	225-2555	Silver Fox	205-5522
Howler Monkey Lodge	220-2158		
Ionie's Bed & Breakfast	220-8066		
Manatee Lodge	220-8040		



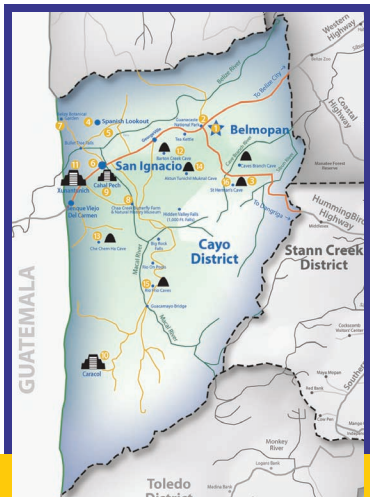


# The District of **Cayo**

Rivers, waterfalls, caves and mountains surround a tiny national capital and grand Maya cities.



The largest district in the country and home of the capital city of Belmopan, the Cayo district offers a plethora of ecotourism adventures. With an astonishing 880,000 acres of protected land in the form of nature reserves and national parks, this district is truly a nature-lover's dream. The lively towns of San Ignacio and Santa Elena and the quiet border town of Benque Viejo del Carmen provide a glimpse into the lives of the friendly residents. They also serve as a base from which to explore pine forests, clear rivers, rocky plateaus, ceremonial caves, towering mountains, cascading waterfalls and ancient Maya temples.



### Belmopan ①

In 1961, Hurricane Hattie swept over Belize City, destroying what was then the capital of the country. Ten years later, the government moved its offices and administrative buildings to the safer, new capital of Belmopan.

### Guanacaste National Park ②

This 50-acre pocket of protected tropical forest is centrally located just east of the Roaring Creek Bridge at the junction of the Western and Hummingbird Highways.

### Blue Hole National Park ③

Just 12 miles south of Belmopan along the Hummingbird Highway, is the Blue Hole National Park with a sapphire colored cenote and popular swimming hole. A well-maintained trail system leads through the forest and into St. Herman's Cave.

### Spanish Lookout ④

At Spanish Lookout, a modern sect of Belize's Mennonite population reside in a landscape of rolling hills. Since arriving in 1958 they have become an integral part of the Belizean economy in a variety of ways –poultry and dairy farming, hardware and equipment supplying and efficient land clearing services. Belize's first oil reserves were found here.

### Aguacate Lagoon ⑤

About 20 minutes from "downtown," Spanish Lookout is a quiet retreat near the large and refreshing Aguacate Lagoon. Amenities include trails for hiking and birdwatching and a thatched shed for picnicking.

### San Ignacio & Santa Elena Towns ⑥

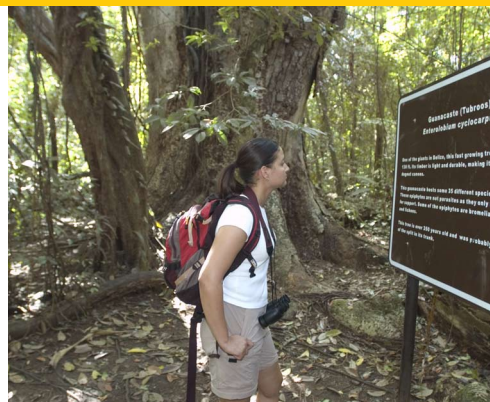
Located 67 miles from Belize City are the twin towns of San Ignacio and Santa Elena. San Ignacio is the largest town in the Cayo district and is a base for tourism activities throughout Cayo and the Guatemalan Maya site of Tikal. With its relaxing atmosphere and engaging ambiance, San Ignacio offers an exciting blend of ecotourism adventures and eco-resorts.

### Belize Botanic Garden ⑦

Hidden in a scenic valley, the 45-acre botanical gardens are alive with plants from Belize and around the world. Here, visitors can explore environmentally sound alternatives to agricultural trends, sustainable land use options, alternative crops and organic insect control.

### Chaa Creek Butterfly Farm & Natural History Museum ⑧

At The Lodge at Chaa Creek visitors can observe the fascinating lifestyles



of the Blue Morpho butterfly, and visit the Chaa Creek Natural History Museum which offers interactive displays, research papers and imagery depicting Cayo's rich ecosystem.

### Other Attractions in Cayo District

- ⑨ Cahal Pech - page 43
- ⑩ Caracol - page 43
- ⑪ Xunantunich - page 43
- ⑫ Barton Creek - page 47
- ⑬ Che Chem Ha Cave - page 47
- ⑭ ATM Cave - page 47
- ⑮ Rio Frio Cave - page 47
- ⑯ St. Herman's Cave - page 49





# Hotels in Cayo

Below are telephone numbers for hotels in the Cayo district. The Belize country code is (501). To call direct from outside Belize dial your international access code, followed by 501 and the local seven-digit number. For detailed hotel information visit [www.travelbelize.org](http://www.travelbelize.org).

Banana Bank Lodge	820-2020	Cosmos Camping & Cabanas	824-2116
Belize Jungle Dome	822-2124	Crystal Paradise Resort	824-2772
Belmopan Bed & Breakfast	822-0176	duPlooy's Jungle Lodge	824-3101
Black Rock Lodge	802-3929	Eastern Guest House	623-6066
Blancaneaux Lodge	824-3878	Ek' Tun	820-3002
Bull Frog Inn	822-2111	Elvira's Diner Guest House	804-0243
Caesar's Place	824-2341	Five Sisters Lodge	820-4005
Cahal Pech Village Resort	824-3740	Flores Villas	823-2195
Casa Blanca Guest House	824-2080	Garden of Eve Resort	824-3688
Casa Maya Resort	820-4020	Garden City Hotel	822-2583
Caves Branch Jungle Lodge	822-2800	Gumbo Limbo Village Resort	824-2928
Cedar Cabins	820-2050	Happy's	824-3179
Central O' tel	824-3734	Hidden Valley Inn	822-3320
Cheers Cabanas	822-8014	Hi-Et Guesthouse	824-2828
Chiclero Camp Resort	824-3132	Hummingbird Homestays	820-2034
Clarissa Falls	824-3916	Iguana Creek Resort	622-1997
Cohune Palms River Cabanas	609-2738	Iguana Junction	824-2249

Inglewood Camping Grounds	822-3555/4589	Super Palm Resort	822 3258
J & R Guest House	824-2502	Table Rock Camp Site	670-4910
Jaguar Paw Jungle Resort	820-2023	The Aguada Motel	804-3609
Ka'ana Hotel & Spa	824-3350	The Lodge at Chaa Creek	824-2037
KenMar's Bed & Breakfast	822-0118	The Log Cab-Inn	824-3367
La Casa Del Caballo Blanco	824-2098	The Macal River Camp	824-2037
Macal River Inn	804-0184	The New Belmoral Hotel	804-3502
Mallorca	824-2960	The Trek Stop	823-2265
Mana-Kai Camping	824-2317	Touch of Class Comfort Inn	804-4006
Mango Walk Inn	824-4181	Tropicool Hotel	804-3052
Mariposa Jungle Lodge	670-2113	Venus Hotel	824-3203
Martha's Guest House	804-3647	Windy Hill Resort	824-2017
Martz Farm Treehouses & Cabanas	614-6462	Wolf's Place	824-2509
Maxim's Palace	823-2360	Yam Wits Lodge	822-2906
Maya Mountain Lodge	824-2164	Yim Saan Hotel	822-1356
Maya Vista	620-0639		
Mida's Tropical Resort	824-3172		
Monkey Bay Educational Research Facility	820-3032		
Mopan River Resort	823-2047		
Nabitunich -The Stone Cottages	823-2096		
Pacz Guest House	824-4538		
Parrot Nest Lodge	820-4058		
Pine Ridge Lodge	606-4557		
Plaza Hotel	824-2040		
Pook's Hill	820-2017		
Primitas Bed & Breakfast	614-1601		
Rolson Guest House	824-2730		
Rosa's Hotel	804-2265		
Rumors Guest House	824-2795		
San Ignacio Resort Hotel	824-2125		

# The District of **Stann Creek**

A masterful culture, golden sand beaches, striking views of the Maya mountains and a unique sanctuary for the elusive jaguar, Stann Creek is an exciting blend of culture and adventure.



Breathtaking vistas of the Maya Mountains and the emerald citrus plantations of the Stann Creek Valley line the journey from Belmopan to Dangriga via the Hummingbird Highway. Dangriga, affectionately known as the “Garifuna Culture Capital of Belize,” combine with the South Water Caye Marine Reserve offshore and the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary to make the Stann Creek district an outstanding location to sample Belize’s reef, rainforest and culture.



### Dangriga Town ①

The district’s largest town is located 55 miles from Belmopan and 107 miles from Belize City. With a population of some 11,600 people, the vibrant Garifuna community of Dangriga offers art, music and exotic dishes, along with the annual November 19th re-enactment of their arrival on Belize’s shores in the early 1800’s.

### Hopkins Village ②

For authentic Garifuna culture and wide expanses of gold sand beaches, visit the village of Hopkins, just 12 miles from Dangriga. Once a sleepy fishing village, in the recent years Hopkins has become a popular tourist destination with amenities ranging from budget to luxury. Whether visitors want to unwind on the beach, eat a fried fish, kayak along the shore, or take day tours to the reef and rainforest, there is always something to do.

### Placencia Peninsula ③

This 16-mile peninsula of white sand bordered by calm lagoons on the west and the blue Caribbean on the east hosts the picturesque village of Placencia at its tip. Once a scarcely populated fishing village, Placencia has become a thriving tourism center as a quaint seaside resort with a local flair, while the peninsula offers modern resorts, vacation rentals and condominiums.

### Cockscomb Basin Wildlife

#### Sanctuary ④

The Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary spreads over 160 square miles of rugged gullies and steep slopes – all carpeted by rainforest. Established in 1990 as the world’s first jaguar reserve, the sanctuary is home to an abundance of wildlife, including all five species of wildcats – jaguar, puma, ocelot, margay and jaguarundi. An extensive trail system leads to hidden waterfalls along a tropical river, and past spectacular “kaway swamps” where over 290 species of birds have been recorded.

### Mayflower Bocawina National Park ⑤

This unexcavated Maya site is located off the Southern Highway near Silk Grass Village. In front of the two ceremonial mounds of Maintzunun and T’au Witz is a large pit suggesting that these sites were once used for ceremonial offerings to the Maya gods. Home to an incredible number of bird species, the hiking trails also lead to a series of refreshing waterfalls, including the Bocawina Falls.

### Red Bank Village ⑥

Driving along the Southern Highway, a small sign points westward to the village of Red Bank. This little-known Maya village is famous not only for its Maya traditions, but for the flocks of Scarlet Macaw that live there. Between January



and March, these magnificent birds fly in to feed on the sweet, ripe fruit of the “annatto” and “pole wood” trees.

### Serpon Archaeology Site ⑦

Tour the mounds of the Serpon and Regalia Sugar Estates that thrived between 1863-1890. Walk among the jungle-covered remnants of an industrial lumber mill, foundry, a railroad, horse stables, cooperage and blacksmith forge, all evidence to Belize’s colonial past.

### South Water Caye Marine Reserve ⑧

Explore Belize’s largest marine protected area located only 10 miles off the coast of southern Belize. The reserve encompasses over a dozen major cays and many smaller islets, including Man-O-War Caye, a sanctuary for magnificent frigate birds and the brown booby. Snorkel off the beach on the islands atop the reef, dive off the “drop off” or snorkel among lush coral patch reefs.



# Hotels in Stann Creek

Below are telephone numbers for hotels in the Stann Creek district. The Belize country code is (501). To call direct from outside Belize dial your international access code, followed by 501 and the local seven-digit number. For detailed hotel information visit [www.travelbelize.org](http://www.travelbelize.org).

## Hopkins

All Seasons Guest House	523-7209
Almond Beach Resort	822-3850
Beaches & Dreams Seafront Inn	523-7259
Belizean Dreams Villas	523-7271 / 7272
Colonial Suites	822-3850
Glover's Guest House	523-7072
Hamanasi Adventure & Dive Resort	520-7073
Hopkins Bay Resort	523-7285
Hopkins Inn	523-7283
Jaguar Reef Lodge	520-7040
Jungle Jeanie By The Sea	523-7047
Key Belize	523-6206
Parrot Cove Lodge	523-7225
Ransoms Seaside Garden	<a href="mailto:ransoms@belizemail.com">ransoms@belizemail.com</a>
Seagull's Nest Guest House	523-7243

Sittee River Lodge	603-7776
Tania's Guest House	523-7058
Tipple Tree Beya	520-7006
Toucan Sittee	523-7039
Vandley's Beach House	523-3117
Yugadah Inn	503-7089

## Placencia

Acupuncture Center	523-3172
Ah-Kinchil	520-8022
Ally's Guest House	523-3623
Aqua Oasis Guest House	503-3027
Bahia Laguna Apartment	523-4091
Barnacle Bill's Beach Bungalows	523 - 8010
Be Back Cabins	622 -1686
Beachfront Suites	606 -1521
Bella Maya Resort	670-0005
Blue Crab Beach Resort	523-3544

Blue Garden House	503-3021	Eloise Travel Lodge	523-3299
Blue Lagoon Apartments & Rooms	523-4034	Evan's Place	523-3127
Bull's Mahogany Beach Cabanas	503-3071	Finca House	523-3481
C&C Comfort Rooms	503-3041	Garden Cabanas	523-3481
Calico Jack's Village Resort	520-8103	Gecko Lodging	501-3130
Captain Jaks	523-3561	George Cowdrey Guest House	523-3616
Captain's House Crow's Nest	523-3117	Green Parrot Beach Houses	523-2488
Carol's Cabanas	523-3132	Joyce and Frank's Bed & Breakfast	520-3086
Casa del Sol	523-3251	Julia's Guest House	503-3478
Chabil Mar Villas	523-3606	La Chapelle Suites	625-1742/503-3478
Coconut Cottage	523-3234	Laru Beya Resort & Villas	523-3476
Colibri Beach Villa	523-3125	Las Amigas Cabanas	523-3117
Colibri House	523-4046	Lost Reef Resort	606-7262
Cozy Corner Hotel	523-3540	Lucille's Travellers Inn	523-3190
Craboo Landing	523-3481	Lydia's Guest House	523-3117
Deb & Dave's Last Resort	523-3207	Macovy Blues Guest House	523-3163
Decked Out House	503-3162	Manatee Inn	523-4083
Easy Living Apartments	523-3524	Maya Beach Hotel	520-8040





# Hotels in Stann Creek

Maya Breeze Inn	523-8012
Maya Dream Beach House	503-3036
Maya Lodge	503-3074
Maya Playa Resort	523-8121
Miller's Landing	523-3010
Miramar Apartments	523-3658
Mirasol Villa	523-3481
Nautical Inn	523-3595
Ocean's Edge	523-8010
Omar's Guest House	600-8421
On Da Beach Campin'	503-3068
One World Rentals	523-3618
Orchid Villa	523-3481
Palmetto Place	523-3481
Paradise Vacation Hotel	523-3179
Pickled Parrot Cabanas	604-0278
Punta Mar Hotel & Residencies	600-0196
Ranguana Lodge	523-3112
Sea Spray Hotel	523-3148
Serenade Guest House	523-3380

Singing Sands Inn	520-8022
South Waters Resort	523-3308
Sunset Pointe	223-2149
The Inn at Robert's Grove	523-3565
The Maine Stay	523-3507
The North Beach	523-3207
The Placencia Hotel & Residencies	520-4110
The Village Inn	523-3217
The Yellow House	523-3481
TMM Cabins / Tiana's Suites	523-3586
Toucan Lulu	523-3117
Tradewinds Hotel	523-3122
Tri-Tan Beach Cabanas	607-0194
Turtle Inn Resort	523-3244
Westwind Hotel	523-3255
<b>Dangriga Town</b>	
Bluefield Lodge	522-2742
Bonefish Hotel	522-2243
Chaleanor Hotel	522-2587
Dangriga Central Hotel	522-2008

Double H. Guest House	522-2665
Pal's Guest House	522-2095
Pelican Beach Resort	522-2044
Riverside Hotel	522-2168
Ruthie's Cabanas	502-3184
Val's	502-3324
Weyohan Hotel	502-2398

## Stann Creek District

Cardie's Hotel	523-2421
Cockscomb Basin	
Wildlife Sanctuary	223-5004
Freetown River Lodge (IEEG)	603-6399
Heartland Inn Guest House	523-7247
Hotel Hello	503-2428
Hummingbird Inn	522-0512
Kanantik Reef & Jungle Resort	520-8048

Pinecrest Villa	503-2062
Possum Point Biological Station & Wee Wee Caye Marine Lab	523-7021
River House Lodge	603-0298
Tutzil Nah Cottages	520-3044
Ursella's Guest House	503-2062



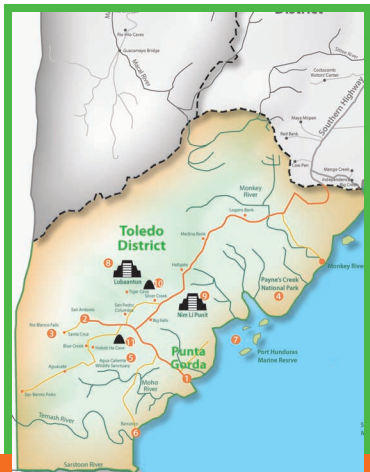


# The District of Toledo

Cradled by mountains, jungle and sea, rustic Toledo welcomes the curious and lures the adventurous.



Nearly 1,700 square miles jostle with opportunities for the adventure-minded and adrenaline-addicted traveler. Toledo district has a cultural blend of traditional Mopan Maya and Kek'chi farmers along with a healthy East Indian population. With the highest recorded rainfall in Belize, Toledo is home to Belize's only true rainforest coupled with intricate caves, incredible wildlife and some of the most beautiful offshore islands found in Belize. For an authentic cultural experience, stay at a traditional Maya home and partake in their daily activities.



### Punta Gorda Town ①

Situated along the Caribbean Sea across the bay from Guatemala with the dominant Maya Mountains in the background, Punta Gorda -- locally known as "PG" -- is the smallest and southernmost town in Belize. Visit an authentic East Indian restaurant and sample cultural dishes such as "Dal Rotti" or "Cohune Cabbage" spiced with yellow ginger.

### San Antonio Village ②

Of the thirty-five Maya villages in Toledo, San Antonio has the largest community of Mopan Mayas in the region. The residents of this traditional village welcome tourists and offer home stays, where visitors can actively participate in everyday Maya activities such as cooking and farming.

### Rio Blanco Falls ③

Established in 1994 as Rio Blanco National Park, this series of cascading waterfalls falling 15 feet into a deep pool is an excellent recreational spot for nature lovers. Managed by residents of Santa Cruz and Santa Elena Villages, the villagers are proud of this attraction. The park covers 500 acres and is located 30 miles northwest of Punta Gorda Town.

### Paynes Creek National Park ④

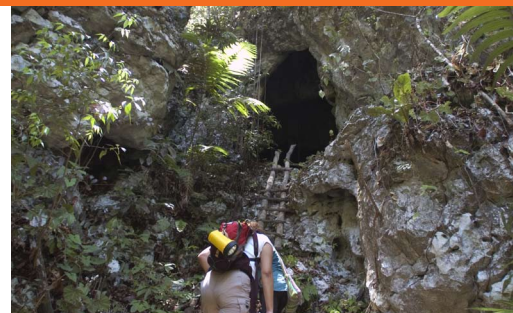
The best way to explore this wetland habitat is by boat through the Punta Ycacos Lagoon. The area is an important manatee breeding ground and supports an Ibis nesting site, a hawksbill turtle nesting site, and a large wading bird population. The Punta Ycacos Lagoon is increasingly used for sport fishing.

### Agua Caliente Wildlife Sanctuary ⑤

This sanctuary is a diverse wetland community that includes lagoons, marsh lands and high forest. The lagoons are a feeding area for hundreds of waterfowl including wood storks, endangered jabiru storks, black-bellied whistling ducks, sandpipers, and others. Encompassing 5,492 acres of land and surrounded by several Maya villages, this is a model example of community ecotourism.

### Barranco Village ⑥

Barranco is Belize's southernmost coastal village. Looking southeast, the hills of Honduras are visible. Just southwest of Barranco is the Sarstoon-Temash National Park. The pleasant drive to Barranco from the Southern Highway passes through several small Maya villages and provides excellent birdwatching opportunities. Barranco is a traditional Garifuna village, with a population of



about 200 people.

### Port Honduras Marine Reserve ⑦

Comprised of a large bay containing over 100 small mangrove islands with four major rivers draining into this bight, the influx of nutrient-laden sediments makes this a prime feeding ground for marine fish, manatee and dolphin. Fishermen find the coral shoals, river mouths and channels to be excellent fishing grounds.

### Other Attractions in Toledo District

- ⑧ Lubaantun - page 43
- ⑨ Nim Li Punit - page 43
- ⑩ Tiger Cave - page 49
- ⑪ Hokeb Ha Cave - page 49

# Hotels in Toledo

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Aleman's Guest House	720-2125	Indian Creek Lodge & Jungle Camp	223-6324
Belize Foundation For Research (Bfree)	614-3896	Machaca Hill Lodge	722-0050
Beya Suites	722-2188	Maya Village Homestay Network	722-2470
Blue Belize Guest House	722-2678	Nature's Way Guest House	702-2119
Blue Creek Rainforest Lodge	660-3711	Pallavi's Hotel	702-2414
Casa Bonita Apartments	722-2270	Sea Front Inn	722-2300
Charlton's Inn	722-2197	Sea Glass Cottage	722-2878
Circle C Inn	722-2726	St. Charles Inn	722-2149
Coral House Inn	722-2878	Steppingstones	620-8581
Cotton Tree Lodge	670-0557	Sun Creek Lodge	614-2080
Cuxlin Ha Resort	614-2518	Tate's Guest House	722-0147
Cuxlin Ha Time-Share Resort & Retirement Village	614-2518	The Lodge at Big Falls	671-7172
Enna's Guest House	720-2033	Toledo Ecotourism Association	722-2531
Frontier Inn	722-2450	Tranquility Lodge	722-2059
Golden Motel	663-0133	Tropics Inn Bed & Breakfast	678-9965
Hickatee Cottages	662-4475	Upstairs Lounge Inn	722-0111





[www.travelbelize.org](http://www.travelbelize.org)  
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**Belize Tourism Board**  
64 Regent Street , P.O. Box 325, Belize City, Belize  
Tel: 501-227-2420 • Fax: 501-227-2423  
[vacation@travelbelize.org](mailto:vacation@travelbelize.org)