



A Non-profit Nature Preserve dedicated to connecting our community with nature, educating people of all ages, conserving natural resources, and practicing environmental stewardship.



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BELIZE ECOTOUR WITH THE WILDERNESS CENTER

JANUARY 20-29,
2013



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BELIZE ECOTOUR WITH THE WILDERNESS CENTER

January 20-29, 2013

Itinerary:

Day 0: Arrive at the Belize International Airport, where you will be met by an Island Expeditions representative and transferred to the Tropical Education Center adjacent to the Belize Zoo. Here we are able to explore the surrounding savannah forest through their network of interpretative trails and wildlife viewing platforms. There is also a great Interpretive Center which details the diverse ecology of Belize and is an ideal starting point for the adventure ahead.

After checking into our rustic accommodations we are greeted with a Belizean dinner where we have a chance to meet our fellow travelers. This day is your day to arrive before the trip starts, meet your fellow travelers, and acclimatize to your new tropical environment. Transfers from the airport are included.

Accommodation: Forest Cabanas Meals: Dinner

Day 1: Today begins with short drive along the Hummingbird Highway toward the River of Caves area of Belize. We begin with an interpretive trail through lush Rainforest to the cave entrance and then, using inner tubes, we embark on an enjoyable 2 hour float underground through a limestone cave system rich with classic formations including soda straw, flow stone, stalactite, and stalagmite. After lunch we head into the Rainforest Canopy for a unique opportunity to travel by a series of treetop platforms and zip-lines through the rainforest. In the evening we return to the Tropical Education Center to enjoy the evening in our beautiful tropical pine forest setting. After dinner we have a rare opportunity to have an exclusive nocturnal tour of the renowned Belize Zoo for an up close experience with the wildlife that inhabits the forests, wetlands, and mountains of Belize. (please note this activity is by donation to the Belize Zoo and Conservation - we suggest \$10US)

Accommodation: Forest Cabanas

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 2-6: We depart early in the morning by charter boat out past the main Barrier Reef to our private Basecamp at Southwest Caye on Glover's Reef Marine Reserve. We are introduced to our new environment

and get settled into our accommodation. Once settled, the guides provide instruction - teaching the fundamentals of sea kayaking, snorkeling, and safety in the tropics. Then we paddle out to a nearby patch reef and start to explore some of the 700 snorkel sites that Glover's Atoll has to offer. Glover's is one of only four atolls in the Caribbean Sea and is truly the most spectacular marine environment in Belize. Due to its isolation from the mainland, the waters are exceptionally clear with inspiring scenery and a fabulously rich reef system that offers the best kayaking, snorkeling, and diving in the Caribbean. We spend the days exploring the atoll with both single and double kayaks (rigged for sailing!). Our itinerary is flexible in order to respond to both group and individual desires and abilities.

Activities include: sea kayaking, snorkeling the inner and outer walls of the reef, and learning to sail a kayak. In the mornings and the evenings we host informative sessions on a range of topics, providing an opportunity for guides to share their knowledge of Belize, the marine environments, and local culture. Perhaps a high stakes game of Hermit Crab racing to finish the day! If this all this sounds a little too busy you always have the choice of just kicking back in a hammock and relaxing with a good book and a cold drink. Accommodation: Tent-Walled Cabanas

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 7- Many choose to rise early this morning, enjoy a coffee on the dock and, for the last time, watch the sunrise over the atoll before enjoying a hearty breakfast. Our boat charter departs mid-morning back to the mainland with an estimated arrival around noon when the trip Ends.

Start of Maya World

After lunch we travel north to the Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary. After checking into our accommodations we, explore the nearby Creole village and settle into the rhythm of 'Belize Time' in the interior. Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8: After a nice breakfast the group departs for the Mayan Ruins of Lamanai. This day of exploration includes a complete guided tour - visiting the many temples, plazas, palaces, and museums within the park boundaries. Once we have had a chance to tour the

ruins, we depart Lamanai by boat for a scenic ride into the Crooked Tree Area where we have tremendous birding and wildlife opportunities: iguana, parrot, toucan, and even Morlet's crocodile can be seen along the banks of the New River Lagoon. Upon arriving on the shore, we transfer overland for 45 minutes to Crooked Tree Village. We overnight at Bird's Eye View Lodge, along the banks of the Crooked Tree Lagoon. Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9-With an early morning coffee and binoculars in hand, we enjoy the waking wilderness and the many hundreds of birds feeding along the shores of the Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary Lagoons. The protected area was created in 1984 primarily to preserve resident and migratory birds, and consists of a network of inland lagoons, swamps, and waterways that shelter one of the world's largest flying birds, the jabiru (jabiru mycteria.). After breakfast we enjoy a morning boat tour in the lagoons. After lunch we have time to relax and gather our bags before departing to the Mayan site of Altun Ha. Considered one of the major Mayan ceremonial centres of Belize, Altun Ha also functioned as an important trading centre between the interior and the Caribbean Sea during the classic period (250-900 AD). However, Altun Ha has been dated as far back as 600 BC. Within the site, there are more than 275 structures and there are up to 250 to 300 unexcavated mounds.

Travelers will be dropped off at the Belize International Airport in time to connect with their return flight home or will be dropped off at the Belize Biltmore Plaza, in Belize City, to continue with their independent arrangements. Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Cost of Trip: \$3,200 per person

Price includes all airport transfers from/to Belize, Glovers Cove and Myan Ruins. Includes Does not include flight, bottled drinks, alcoholic beverages, laundry or phone service, gratuities nor any meals or other expensed in Belize airport. Does not include travel insurance. A 50% deposit is required to confirm your reservation with final payment due 45 days prior to trip departure.

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