



## BELIZE CARIBBEAN GETAWAY



A verdant tropical adventure into rainforests, ruins and reefs  
Expertly designed for nature-oriented travelers seeking discovery, enjoyment and luxury

<b>DURATION:</b>	7 days / 6 nights
<b>SEASON:</b>	November through April
<b>DEPARTURES:</b>	Guaranteed with a minimum of 2 and maximum of 12 participants.
<b>TRIP RATING:</b>	Moderate nature, cultural, educational and family-friendly tour, Grade (I): This first-class soft adventure is an activity-oriented program featuring walking tours through tropical forest and National Parks (walking is 2-3 hours in duration at elevations below 3,000'). Also canoeing, wildlife viewing, zip lining, snorkeling, and/or sea kayaking.
<b>2024/25 DATES:</b>	On request any week of the year during the travel season.

### INTRODUCTION:

Belize is one of the few remaining unspoiled places on earth. Come sea kayak and snorkel in translucent seas and be awed by the longest barrier reef in this hemisphere. Inland, you can explore ancient Mayan sites and lush rain forests teeming with exotic tropical flora and fauna. You'll come away with a greater appreciation for this special place. Adventurous families with kids (or kids at heart), couples and nature-lovers of all stripes will find magical moments and make fond memories in this diverse and safe outdoor wonderland. Approximately 26% of the country features protected forests, parks, reserves, and aquatic habitats. There are 95 different protected areas to visit in this country.

Let Southwind bring you the essence of Belize – a classic, family-friendly journey that includes all the “musts.” Experience the tropical white sand beaches of Ambergris Caye. Get active on hiking trails, canoeing, or paddling a sea kayak. Relax in well-appointed, comfortable, and environmentally friendly lodging. Spot exotic wildlife like howler monkeys, Keel Billed Toucan, Coatamundi, butterflies, birds and tropical fish galore. Seek thrills on a zip line, cave exploring, and discovering the ancient and mysterious Mayan ruins of Xunantunich or Caracol. Belize is calling all adventurers – time to answer!

Amazingly diverse, Belize offers verdant rainforests; mysterious Mayan Ruins, and colorful tropical reefs. The rainforest and the ruins are the reasons to come to the Cayo region first. Then, after this stop in Cayo, transfer to the amazing Belizean coast; with its authentic Caribbean small towns and Garifuna cottages, cays and private islands for snorkeling, diving, fishing, beach relaxation, and the amazing coastal jungles and waterways for adventure tours.

### TRIP HIGHLIGHTS:

- Stand at the edge of an ancient Mayan temple overlooking the verdant tropical forest
- Canoe through the Barton Creek Cave while admiring the geological formations
- Zip from treetop to treetop on an exciting 7-cable long canopy tour
- Explore for tropical birds and wildlife through the Belizean jungles
- Snorkel among tropical fish, sea turtles and manta rays on the second largest barrier reef in the world
- Walk along pristine beaches at Bacalar Chico National Park
- Enjoy the sunset views, tropical drinks and delightful appetizers as we navigate on the Caribbean Sea

## Belize: Caribbean Getaway

### DAY-BY-DAY ITINERARY:

#### DAY 01: TO BELIZE

Depart home and arrive in the afternoon to Belize's capital, **Belize City**. Meet your Southwind representative at the Goldson International Airport (BZE) and transfer inland to the scenic Cayo District. En route stop at the Belize Zoo and **Tropical Education Center** for an overview of the country's wildlife conservation goals as you begin your rainforest, ruins and reefs adventure in this western Caribbean nation. Arrive to the **Ka'ana Boutique Resort and Spa** near San Ignacio. A private welcome candlelight dinner is served in the La Ceiba restaurant. (D)

#### DAY 02: CAYO / CAVE CANOEING / ZIP LINE

After a fresh breakfast, begin your Inland Jungle Expedition inclusive in your stay. Drive by private vehicle with your guide 1 hour to **Barton Creek Cave** to board canoes. Paddle the gentle currents of a meandering creek through underground grottos carved through the mountain's limestone rocks while admiring impressive stalactites and stalagmites. Your guide describes the natural formations and ancient remains in this fascinating Mayan ceremonial cave plus the flora and fauna encountered. Stretching nearly two miles underground, this ancient cave can be explored only by canoe and using headlamps. This awesome trip amid tropical beauty will be something you'll always remember. At midday, lunch is at Barton Creek's picnic site with tables and restrooms available. This afternoon, we drive 30 minutes to **Calico Jack's** for a 2 hour zipline adventure. Soar through jungle treetops high above the forest floor along 7 runs and 12 platforms. The canopy tour involves traversing from one platform to another along a steel double cable suspended up to 80 feet above the forest floor. You will receive a safety briefing and outfitted with safety gear that includes a body harness, pulleys, helmet and gloves. Once geared up and checked, your tour starts with a short informative hike up to the first platform. After this thrilling experience, we transfer 1 hour back to **Ka'ana Resort** to relax with a Mayan cooking class. Gain insight into the culinary and cultural aspects of classic dishes like tamales, corn tortillas, and soups and the use of the *fogon*, an authentic Maya stove in a traditional kitchen. Dinner is on your own to unwind this evening. (B,L)

#### DAY 03: CAYO / MAYAN RUINS OR MOUNTAIN PINE RIDGE

##### Option A: Xunantunich ruins

Full day private guided tour of Xunantunich via a 1 hour horseback ride from Hanna's Stables. View the Xunantunich or *Maiden of the Rock* across the river from the village of San Jose Succutz. This major ceremonial center and museum is reached by a hand cranked ferry and is also near the eye-catching rapids of the Mopan River. Our visit (approx 2.5 hours) includes the El Castillo pyramid rising 131 ft above the plaza, making it one of the tallest buildings in Belize. This Mayan Classic Period structure has an impressive river valley view. The lower temple is famous for its large stucco frieze with a mask and large ears thought to represent the sun god. Adjoining is a moon sign with border symbols representing Venus. Afterwards, a private picnic lunch is served on the banks of the Mopan River. On the way back, we stop at the Succutz market, before continuing 20 min to the **Ka'ana Resort**. (B,L)

##### Option B: Mountain Pine Ridge

Full day private guided tour to the **Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve** for horseback riding (approx 3 hr) or nature hike. The oldest of Belize's natural areas, the park encompasses a spectacular range of rolling hills, peaks and gorges formed from ancient rocks. The protected area is comprised of 300 sq miles of unpaved roads and nature trails. Encounter an entirely different tropical ecosystem with unique flora and fauna. Orchids and ferns of many varieties grow abundantly throughout the pine forest while rare and endangered bird species make this reserve home. Among the highlights are the Big Rock Waterfalls, Rio Frio Cave and Rio On pools. A box lunch is provided followed by a visit of a 1,000 ft waterfall. Return to the familiar **Ka'ana Resort** to relax by the gardens and for a restful night. (B,L)

##### Option C: Caracol ruins

Full day private guided excursion departing at 7:00am with a 4 hour round-trip drive (2 hours on unpaved road by 4x4 vehicles). The Caracol site is exceptional, located 25 miles south of San Ignacio in the foothills of the Maya Mountains within the **Chiquibul Forest Reserve**, near the border with Guatemala. Caracol or *snail shell* in Spanish was rediscovered in the 1920's and is one of the largest ancient Maya cities, covering 65 sq miles. Archaeologists have found the earliest dated carved stelae in the country, dating back to 400 A.D. The unearthing of this massive structure called Canaa or "Sky Place" is believed to have been completed around 800 A.D. This pyramid is the tallest and largest handmade structure in Belize. Additionally, a recent discovery of glyphs at Caracol, apparently portraying a military victory over Tikal, suggests this center was supreme in the region. Box lunch is included at a picnic site with tables and restrooms. On the way back take a refreshing swim at Rio On pools formed by interconnected granite boulders and small waterfalls, a perfect spot on a hot sunny day. Later, return to the **Ka'ana Resort** around 5:00pm for a leisurely evening. (B,L)

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### DAY 04: CAYO / AMBERGRIS CAYE

We depart Ka'ana and transfer to the airport in San Ignacio (or Belize City Municipal Airport) to board Tropic Air **flight to San Pedro** on Ambergris Caye - the largest island in Belize and hub of Belizean maritime trade for centuries. Fishing, coconuts, and chicle were historic means of islanders support, but the last thirty years have led to a large growth in both the Belize dive and scuba trade, and ecotourism. The town itself has a unique feel with international cuisine in beachside restaurants mixed with local diners serving traditional Belizean food. The streets bustle with local artists and craftsman displaying their masterpieces. The rich variety of things to do in San Pedro Town makes Ambergris Caye the gateway to Belize's barrier reef and Caribbean waters. On arrival transfer by boat 15' with other hotel guests to the sea front **Matachica Resort**. Enjoy the sea and lunch on your own. In the afternoon experience an exciting private guided paddle of a kayak and/or snorkel by the reef. The Barrier Reef, longest in the western Hemisphere, shelters the best stocked light-tackle fishing grounds of the western Caribbean. The water is warm, crystal clear and ideal for a great variety of water sports-- jet skiing, canoeing, windsurfing, kayaking, sailing, kite surfing, parasailing, fishing, snorkeling and scuba diving. Gear is available complimentary from the resort. This evening enjoy a welcome dinner at the award winning Mambo restaurant at Matachica perhaps followed by a moonlit stroll along the shore. (B,D)

### DAY 05: AMBERGRIS CAYE / HOL CHAN MARINE RESERVE

Morning transfer to the marina to board the Seaduction catamaran with other guests and depart at 9am for a wonderful day at sea. We sail about 20 minutes towards **Hol Chan Marine Reserve** which is located off the southern tip of Ambergris Caye. Hol Chan is Belize's oldest marine reserve established in 1987, since then the reappearance of most species of fish have been quite significant. Hol Chan comes from a Mayan word for "little channel" and is currently home to over 160 species of fish, nearly 40 species of corals, 3 marine mammals and 3 species of sea turtle. You will enjoy a guided snorkel through the Marine Reserve and neighboring **Shark Ray Alley**. The entire reserve covers approximately three-square miles and is divided into four zones. The most recent zone is Shark Ray Alley where nurse sharks and southern sting rays, plus schools of fish congregate. It is a gorgeous site to snorkel. The shallow waters make the experience easy for visitors new to snorkeling to feel comfortable in the water and enjoy themselves. Once back on board you can rinse off with fresh water and settle in for the sail to **Caye Caulker**. When we reach Caye Caulker you will have time for lunch on your own at one of the cozy and simple local restaurants and explore the quaint island. After lunch, delight in a leisurely sail back to San Pedro to arrive at approx. 4:30pm. The catamaran service includes snorkeling gear, entrance to the marine reserve and refreshment & snacks (bottled water, sodas, beer, rum punch, shrimp cocktail and fresh fruit). Afterwards we transfer back to **Matachica Resort**. The evening is at leisure for exploring San Pedro -the Caribbean of old - via golf carts or bicycles (use of bicycles and kayaks is complimentary at Matachica). At day's end, you can savor a sumptuous dinner in town or at Matachica's Mambo restaurant. (B)

### DAY 06: AMBERGRIS CAYE / BACALAR CHICO NATIONAL PARK

Accessible only by boat, **Bacalar Chico** is a 23 sq mile reserve and reef on the northernmost part of Ambergris Caye. The region covers intra-island lagoons, mud flats, sink holes, mangroves forests, savannahs, semi-deciduous forest and is home to many different animals including puma and jaguar. Join other guests for a morning boat tour escorted by your private guide. Bacalar Chico was established in 1996 and is now a World Heritage Site, along with the Belize Barrier Reef. We make our way along the island's leeward side to the ranger station in the reserve to see flora of the northern part of the island. We then head out to snorkel **Barracuda Reef** and **Rocky Point** where thousands of fish live amidst the coral reef creating a beautiful underwater environment. We may also encounter West Indian manatees. This area is home to the country's largest turtle nesting site, almost 200 species of birds, mangroves and several Maya archeological sites. Later on, we head to **Robles beach**, where our guides will prepare a delicious lunch for you. Afterwards explore the deserted beaches, relax in a hammock or chill out in the tree house. Afterwards we return by boat to Matachica Resort. Later this afternoon, at 5pm, we depart for a special sunset cruise aboard the Sea's D Day houseboat. As we meander through the leeward lagoons on this comfortable vessel you can watch the sunset from the expansive second floor deck. Pre-order your optional wine from a selected list then sit back and enjoy the sunset sipping your wine and tasting a selection of gourmet tapas. The service includes beer, rum punch and mojitos. We will make our back to the dock at 7pm under romantic starlight. Transfer back to **Matachica Resort** for the night. (B,L)

### DAY 07: BELIZE / USA

Just offshore of Ambergris Caye is Belize's 175 mile-long Barrier Reef which provides some of the best snorkeling, scuba diving, and fishing in the Caribbean, and in the world. This morning you can take a refreshing swim in the Caribbean before transferring to the San Pedro airport to board a **20 min Tropic Air air taxi flight** to the **Belize International Airport**. Check in on your own to your international flight home. (B)

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### NOTES ON THE ITINERARY:

Although we do our best to adhere to the above schedule, this itinerary is subject to change for numerous reasons beyond our control, including group pace and acclimatization, weather, road, trail, creeks and sea conditions, flight delays or cancellations, as well as changes in plane schedules. This trip is suitable for healthy participants accustomed to outdoor activities, age 7 and up. For families we recommend Las Terrazas Resort at Ambergris Caye instead of the adults only Matachica Resort. Depending on final flight schedules, some of the activities may follow a different sequence but all or similar activities will be provided. Distances and altitudes are approximate and travel times indicated do not include lunch breaks, rest or photo stops, etc.

**2024 LAND COST for a private guided trip:** 4-6 participants: from \$4,450 p.p.d.  
7-12 participants: from \$4,350 p.p.d.  
Single Supplement: from \$1,100

2024 Land Costs are valid for departures through April 2025.  
p.p.d.=per person based on double or triple occupancy not including airfare.

**Note:** End of the year or holiday departures between December 15 and January 06, could have a Land Cost surcharge of 10-20%. For these departures we recommend making reservations 8 or more months in advance.

**ESTIMATED AIRFARE:** The Land Cost DOES NOT INCLUDE ANY FLIGHTS. Southwind's ticketing specialist can assist with all your air travel – providing an airfare quote to match your itinerary, personalized support for seating, monitoring schedule changes and coordinating directly with the airlines if any adjustments are needed. Round-trip international air from US gateways (Miami, New York, Los Angeles, Denver, Atlanta, Houston & Dallas) is approximately \$450-\$700 per person. Airlines offering service arriving to Belize City International Airport (BZE) include American, United, Delta, Southwest and Frontier. The in-country air taxi flights are estimated at \$270 per person for the San Ignacio-San Pedro-Belize city route. You have the option to arrange your own flights or redeem award travel yourself if you prefer. Tickets should only be purchased after Southwind notifies you that your trip is confirmed. The airlines request that tickets match your passport name. Upon receipt of your deposit, Southwind provides flight booking details for your travel dates.

### SERVICES INCLUDED:

- Comprehensive **pre-departure planning packet** and expert travel advice.
- **In-country transfers** and ground transportation as noted in comfortable private vehicles with professional drivers.
- Local and return flight reconfirmation, **in-country airport check-in and luggage assistance**.
- **Accommodations in first-class (4 star) hotels** as listed (or at similar hotels) on a shared basis with private bath. Advanced bookings are recommended if you plan to customized the itinerary and arrive early or extend your stay. Double rooms (with king/queen bed) for couples and/or Triple/Quadruple rooms for families can be requested in advance, but cannot be guaranteed, as most hotels offer very few rooms with Triple/Quadruple beds. Also very few connecting or adjacent rooms are available at certain hotels.
- **Meals** indicated on the itinerary (B=breakfast; L=lunch; D=dinner). **Vegetarian diets accommodated** on request (advance notification required). For other diets, consult your Southwind travel specialist before making a reservation.
- **Guided tours** as listed conducted on a private basis by knowledgeable, professional English-speaking native guides (except the zip line adventure, the cataraman/boat excursions, the Matachica Resort transfers, when other hotel guests may join, but some of the activities will be privately escorted).
- An experienced **English-speaking guide/escort** will lead the trip (Day 01-04) and another seasoned guide/escort for the Ambergris Caye portion of the trip. Assistant guides are provided for groups with 9 or more participants.
- Applicable entrance fees during tours.
- Single Supplement provides single room accommodations in all hotels. Due to the limited number of rooms at the small boutique hotels, there is a maximum of 2 singles allowed per group. If you require single accommodations, making reservations well in advance is recommended.

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### NOT INCLUDED:

- US domestic, international flights nor local flights within Belize.
- Tours, meals (at about \$30-45 each per person) or other services not listed on the itinerary.
- Early check-in or late check-out at hotels.
- Alcoholic beverages nor items of a personal nature; such as clothing, equipment, laundry and phone calls.
- Tips to the local staff.
- Expenses incurred in trip preparation such as, but not limited to, non-refundable airline tickets, travel insurance, and additional expenses resulting from flight delays, schedule changes, cancellations, or missed connections.

**KA'ANA RESORT:** This resort's philosophy and design speak to the traveler who desires to experience the culture, history, and geography of an unknown region without having to sacrifice the comforts and amenities of which they are accustomed. From the modern, luxury amenities framed by local art and woodwork to a modern, clean design scheme that showcases the outside without allowing it inside, Ka'ana introduces inland Belize to the experiential traveler with an appreciation for luxury. You will explore the jungles and archaeological intrigue of the Cayo region by day and be immersed in the comfort you have become accustomed to and deserve by night.

**MATACHICA RESORT & SPA:** Located only a stone's throw from the barrier reef, Matachica is a small village unto itself. Privately set on its own beach and easily accessible by boat, the Matachica boasts of a boho-chic vibe. The 31 colorful casitas and villas, decorated with art and furnishings from Central America, help you unwind quickly into your holiday. Only adults are allowed at the resort and all rooms are devoid of intrusive technology so you can really find your true nature to share with your partner. The resort also features a pier complete with 6 private pods set above the sea.

### OPTIONAL HOTEL UPGRADES:

All hotels in the *Belize Caribbean Getaway* have been selected based on their outstanding adherence to international standards, attention to quality and detail, and rich offering of amenities and comforts. However, upon request, we can upgrade your stay to the finest properties to be found in each location or the best Suites for 5-star luxury and VIP treatment and to be quoted separately.

**Cayo:** Upgrade to the Ka'ana Resort 1 or 2 Bedroom Private Pool Villa or to the Chaa Creek Lodge's new deluxe Villas.

**Ambergris Caye:** Upgrade to Phoenix Resort, Belizean Cove Estates or Coco Beach Resort.

Due to high demand these reservations are recommended at least 4-5 months in advance. Upgrades are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed.

**WEATHER:** Belize features a warm tropical climate year-round, with a rainy season between early June and early November. Average high temperatures are in the lower 80s, with average low temperatures in the mid 60's year-round. The weather varies considerably based on the region, with microclimates that depend on elevation and geography. The climate is tropical; humid and warmer, and in the highlands expect less humidity and cooler temperatures. Belize is a year-round destination, but ideal time to visit is during the "summer" dry season of November to May.

**TRAVEL INSURANCE:** We strongly recommend purchasing coverage to protect your trip investment. Travel insurance is important in case of unexpected events prior to departure causing the need to cancel or change your dates. Weather, natural events, medical reason, quarantine, local strikes, personal injury/illness (for you, your traveling companion or family members at home), could require itinerary interruption or changes. Missed connections, delayed arrival, lost/delayed baggage or the need for medical attention or evacuation are also reasons why coverage is important. Southwind recommends **Travel Insured International** which offers coverage options at a good value. If you, your traveling companion or a family member has a pre-existing medical condition, you can still receive coverage if a recurrence of the condition forces you to cancel your trip, but you do need to purchase a plan **within 21 days of your deposit**. Southwind can provide eQuote for insurance to review upon receipt of your deposit and Trip Reservation eForm. [Learn more about coverage offered by Travel Insured International](#)

## Belize: Caribbean Getaway

**HOW TO SIGN UP:** Please complete Southwind's Trip Reservation eForm. There are fields for up to 6 travelers per form with the same address. The deposit is **\$1,500 per person**, [please click here to pay your deposit](#) by any major credit card through our secure CardConnect system. In the total amount due box, enter your deposit amount (without a comma) based on the number of travelers in your party. If you prefer, you can also call us at 1-800-377-9463 to make payment arrangements by phone or send a check. You will receive confirmation of your deposit.

Reservations can be accepted up to 60 days before departure, provided services and space are available. Due to the popularity of Belize, we recommend making reservations at least 4 months in advance for non-holiday or about 1 year prior for holiday departures. Once your trip is guaranteed to operate, you will receive comprehensive pre-departure planning documents by email.

**Land Balance:** Final payment is due at 120 days by Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, check, or electronic funds transfer. You can split your balance on two cards. You will receive a trip invoice indicating your balance due.

Specific policies will be outlined in your finalized custom trip proposal. General policies can be found under the current [Terms & Conditions](#) on Southwind's website.

**We look forward to having you travel with us in Belize!**

**Southwind Adventures, Inc**

Your Latin America Travel Specialist since 1990

Tel: 303-972-0701 or 800-377-9463 • [info@southwindadventures.com](mailto:info@southwindadventures.com)

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