



FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE BELIZEAN EXPEDITION

How do I get to Belize?

Belize is about 2 hours and 15 minutes by air from Miami, Florida and Houston, Texas. U.S. gateway cities to Belize include Miami, Houston and New Orleans, Louisiana. Most Central American countries offer direct flights to Belize, including Guatemala, Honduras and Costa Rica.

International airlines serving Belize:

American Airlines: . Direct flights from Dallas/Ft. Worth, Miami.

Continental Airlines: Non-stop from Houston.

Taca (El Salvador): Flights from Houston, Miami, Los Angeles

Us Air: via Charlotte, NC

Delta Airlines: Via Atlanta

How do I get to Placencia?

When you are joining us on one of our trips that start from Placencia and you have booked on the combo or lodge package, we will arrange a flight for you on Maya Air connecting to your international flight. If you are meeting us in Placencia please call us and we will direct you to our Lodge.

Customs information

Visitors to Belize can bring in anything they will reasonably use. All of your equipment that you will need on your tour will be provided or can be rented in Placencia, however if you would like to bring extra fishing or diving equipment you may do so. 20 ounces of liquor may be entered duty free.

Exit and Entry Information

Canadians, US Citizens and visitors from the UK do not require a visa to enter Belize. A valid passport is required and at point of entry will be stamped with a visitor's visa valid for 30 days. Extensions may be obtained at the immigration department in Belize City. There is an airport departure tax at Belize International airport of \$30.00 US dollars.

Weather

The overall climate of Belize can be described as sub-tropical. The humidity while high, is seldom oppressive for long and is most noticeable along the coast. The mean annual humidity is 83%, but many days the humidity is masked by the cooling sea breezes. The Belize coastal area is exposed to southeast trade winds averaging 10-13 knots and attain an uncanny consistency during the month of July.



Temperatures in Belize range from 50°F to 95°F with an annual mean of 79°F. November to January are traditionally the coolest months with a 75°F average and May to September are the warmest at about a 81°F average. Location is a big factor for temperature as Cayo to the west can be several degrees colder than along the coast and during November at night, temperatures can fall to a beautiful 46°F in Cayo. In the mountains, the coldest days and nights might seem relatively very cold and blankets will definitely be needed at night. However, the mean annual temperatures on in the mountains is a perfectly comfortable 72°F.

Where will you stay?

In Placencia: Seakunga Eco Lodge (Opening December, 2006) (Tel # 501-523-3644 – www.seakunga.com) Located on the beach is comfortable and clean accommodation with views of the ocean. Here we spend the first and last day of the trip on the camp and combo options .

Camping Option: We use top quality Mec- tropical tents. Fitted with mosquito netting and ample room to relax after a day of kayaking or hiking. Our tents are specially designed for tropical climates and thus are made to aid air circulation.

Health Requirements and Cautions

Ensure that your tetanus is up to date and that you have had a shot in the last 10 years. We recommend that you make a visit to your local travel doctor or travel clinic before your departure. You may wish to take some medication for your personal first aid kit. Although there will be a first aid kit with all the supplies that you need it is good to carry a small one. Antibiotic powder is great to have for on hand for scrapes and cuts for the tropics. If you are on any prescription drugs be sure to pack enough for the entire time you are away and also some spare.

How to prepare for this trip:

Physically

Our trips are not strenuous however you will get more out of the experience if you have a good level of personal fitness. We recommend that you exercise regularly before the trip. For tours with a high component of kayaking such as our Paddle in Paradise or Peek at Belize it is important that you do upper body exercise prior to the trip to strengthen your arms and shoulders. If you have the opportunity to visit a gym prior to your trip exercises that are helpful are Lifting dumbbells, push-ups also the rowing machine is very helpful in strengthening the upper body. For the land portion of our tours we recommend that you do cardiovascular exercises prior to your trip. Taking walks and using the stairs rather than the elevator is a good way to start to condition your body and increase your cardiovascular stamina. We do provide a support vehicle at all time so there is always a back up if you do not wish to partake in any of the activities.



Mentally

To get more out of your trip to Belize it is always a good idea to enrich the experience with some knowledge of where you are going and what you are going to see before you get there. Even though Belize is an English speaking country and the culture shock is not that great there is a diverse culture, history and wild life to be explored.

[\(See recommended reading list\).](#)

Currency

Belizean Currency is in dollars and the exchange rate is directly related to the US dollar with one Belize dollar equal to fifty cents US (\$1.00 US = \$2.00 BZ). Most major credit cards are accepted in Belize (not in smaller towns). It is best to bring US travellers cheques and cash. Smaller denominations is better (\$5, \$10 and \$20) as you may have problems breaking bigger notes. Remember to keep a record of your traveller's cheques number and store them in a safe place. Some of your local currency is useful for when you return to your home.

Camera Information

Have enough film to last your whole trip. It must be kept in a cool place as sometimes the heat can affect the quality of film. X-Ray machines in current times do not damage film or camera equipment so you can generally put them through. It is a good idea to ask and make sure though. When sea kayaking, ensure your lenses have skylight filters; a polarizing filter is often preferred when shooting on the water. Water tight bags or hard water proof cases will protect your camera from water damage and fine dust. These boxes can be found at larger camera stores, diving and outdoor stores. As they have a foam protective layer on the inside they will also keep gear cool and can be placed on the deck for easy access to your camera when the perfect photo moment arises.

Air Travel

Arrive at the airport with ample time to check. International airlines ask you to be there 2 hours in advance of you flight. Ensure that your luggage is routed going to your final destination and that you do not have to pick it up and check it in again if you have a transfer. If you are tall it is always good to request a bulkhead or an isle seat for more leg room as most international carries have little room to move in economy.

If you have a dietary restriction it is important to let the airline know in advance and at the time of check in. To avoid the discomforts of Jet lag try to get plenty of rest prior to departure. Avoid coffee and alcohol as much as possible and during the flight try and drink as much water and juice as possible. If you have problems with flying there are herbal sleeping aids that you can purchase at you local pharmacy to help you get a good rest before your departure. The option to arrive a few days early to acclimatise yourself before your tour begins is a good idea and we can assist you with extra nights accommodation. Sometimes flight times are changed or flights are cancelled, reconfirming flights 72 hours prior to departure will avoid any disappointment at the airport.



Luggage and Protection of Valuables

When travelling to any destination especially overseas it is very important that your valuables are in a safe place at all times. A water proof or plastic lined money belt is advised to use for safe keeping of your passport, travel insurance, travellers cheques, cash and other important documents.

In the event loss of any documentation it is necessary for copies of all your important documents to be made. The first page of you passport, airline tickets, travel insurance numbers, credit cards, birth certificate and drivers licence. One copy left with a friend at home and the other copy kept in a different safe place in your bag.

Insurance

Medical insurance is recommended for the time that you are away, most plans will cover you for medical, flight delay and luggage. If you are bringing expensive camera equipment you may want to make sure that it is covered under your travel insurance plan. There may be an additional fee for items of particular value.

Environmental Organizations

SeaKunga Adventures helps people enjoy the world's unique places as they are meant to be. May it be wildlife in their natural habitat or the brilliance of the coral reef. All of us at SeaKunga Adventures support environmentally concerned organizations. In addition to doing our actively doing our part to protect the environment and running eco-tours we have listed some organisations that are worth mentioning. If you would like more information from any of these organizations to become a member or receive information on how you can support them you can contact directly should you wish to do so.

Belize Audubon Society, P.O Box 1001, 12 Fort Street, Belize City Belize Tel: 501-223-5004 Email:base@btl.net

Belize Center for Environmental Studies, P.O Box 666, 55 Eve Street, Belize city, Belize Tel: 501-823043

Belize Zoo and Tropical Education Center P.O Box 1787, Belize City, Belize Tel: 501-220-8004.

Email: info@belizezoo.org

Community Baboon Sanctuary, Bermuda Landing, Belize District, Tel: 2-44405

Recommended Reading

Diving and Snorkelling Belize. 1998, Franz O. Meyer, Lonely Planet Publications, Australia. Explores Belize's huge diving opportunities from the protected waters of the Hol Chan Marine Reserve to the wonders of the deep Blue Hole; this guidebook describes 43 of Belize's best dive sites with color photographs throughout.

Belize: Ecotourism in Action. 2000, Meb Cutlack, London, Macmillan Education Ltd., 2nd ed. This new edition details Belize's rainforest, Maya sites, flora, fauna, underwater and wildlife attractions and provides an introduction to its people, culture and customs, past and present.



Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Belize. 2001, H. Lee Jones and A.C. Vallely, Lynx Edicions, Barcelona, Spain, Includes list of 566 species reliably recorded in Belize through August 2001, a culmination of nearly a decade of field work; includes a review of the literature and critical evaluation of hundreds of museum specimens and photographs.

Rainforest Remedies. 1998, Rosita Arvigo and Michael Balick, Lotus Press, 2nd ed. Explores the diversity and mystery of the world's tropical rainforest; indexed, revised and expanded; looks at the ethno botany of both rainforest and medicinal plants as well as the little-known practice of traditional healers of this region.

A Belizean Rain Forest: The Community Baboon Sanctuary. 1998, Robert H. Horwich and Jonathan Lyon, Orangutan press, Gay Mills, WI, 3rd ed. A book about a grassroots conservation effort. Link here to Belize District Page to read about the Community Baboon Sanctuary

Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary. 1996, edited by Judy Lumb, Belize Audubon Society. The history, flora and fauna of Belize's Cockscomb Basin compiled by a team of 23 contributors and explores its history, physical description, vegetation, mammals, birds and trails; intended both as a guidebook for the general visitor and as a reference book for teachers and scientists. Email: base@btl.net

Adventures in Nature Belize. 1999, Richard Mahler. John Muir Publications, New Mexico, 2nd ed. 360 pp. US\$18.95 (paperback) A revised and updated guide for ecologically-minded travelers, with 8 pages of color photos and 50 black and white photos.

A History of Belize: Nation in the Making. 2002, edited by Robert Leslie, Cubola Productions, 6th ed., 125 pp. US\$10.00. Visit the people, places and events that have made Belize what it is. Topics include: Colonialism in Belize, Dependent Belize in the World Economy, Toward an Independent Belize; includes a chronological table. Email:cubolabz@btl.net