

## Adventure Quest

### **Inland or offshore, mountains or wetlands, Belize and adventures have a natural attraction.**

In Belize, where Indiana Jones meets Jacques Cousteau, endless adventures await both above and below the sea. Belize combines Sea World, Animal Kingdom, and Jurassic Park all in one, measuring its history not in hundreds, but in thousands of years.

Some destinations have beaches. Some have mountains. But unlike others, Belize offers world-class land and sea adventures in the same day — east for water sports; west for jungle life; north for wetlands; south for mountains. Or go any direction for ancient Maya cities. Every member of the expedition finds an activity to love in Belize.

Nature freaks marvel at the cool caves, blue holes, flowing rivers, dense jungles, high forests, and thriving reefs. They traverse these natural havens by foot or fin, canoe or inner tube, horseback or mountain bike. Organized tours to national parks, forest reserves, and wildlife sanctuaries leave daily from visitor areas.

Bird and animal watchers spot unusual specimens everywhere — skies, trees, savannas, and riverbanks. Jaguars prowl freely in the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary, a jungle preserve created in their honor, as if the country were a big open-air zoo. Black howler monkeys chase each other through the trees like children. And Belize is for the birds — over 570 species of them — painting the skies in streaks of reds, yellows, greens, and blues. In a rush? See the whole range of Belizean birds, mammals, and reptiles in a single day, at the Belize Zoo.

Water-sports fans ply the reefs, bays, and open waters in search of otherworldly undersea life. Blessed with America's longest barrier reef, Belize invites snorkelers to swim with the turtles, rays, and sharks. Divers explore tropical fish, corals, caves, and grottos. Anglers hook bonefish, permit, tarpon, snook, and billfish. Vacationing in Belize feels like playing in the world's largest fish tank.

Archaeologists step back thousands of years when they enter cities of the ancient Maya World. Do not leave Belize without visiting some. To get the inside story on these sites, join tours led by skilled guides.

Proud and respectful of their natural and archaeological wonders, Belizeans have set aside 20 percent of the country as national parks, reserves, and sanctuaries. Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary preserves the jabiru stork. Community Baboon Sanctuary conserves the black howler monkey. Hol Chan Marine Reserve protects the reef. Caracol Archaeological Reserve shelters ancient treasures. These and dozens more protected areas also ensure survival of another important species, tourists. Such planning keeps Belize a notch above other destinations.

In addition to natural beauty, diverse cultures populate Belize. Tours of unique villages introduce guests to Maya, Garinagu, Mennonite, and other fascinating peoples.

Visitors, especially first-timers, can spend weeks in Belize without seeing everything. But local tour guides can help them cover more territory and glean more from their experiences. In fact, a national training program has certified hundreds of knowledgeable tour guides. Find them in the box on this page, in the Belize Tourism Industry Association directory on page 000, or through the Belize Tourism Board at 223-1910/13.

Popular attractions, points of interest, and activities are listed below. Remember that fees, hours, and contact numbers are subject to change. Whatever type of adventure — nature, wildlife, water sports, or history — launch it in Belize.

## **TOUR OPERATORS**

Tour companies advertised and recommended by *Destination Belize* are listed in this quick reference guide.

Amphilife Tours .....	610-4411
Bel-Cruise .....	227-2255
Belize R Us Resorts & Tours .....	228-9158
Grayline .....	223-6025
Karibbean Water Sports.....	226-3205
Maya Travel Services .....	223-1623
Tanisha EcoTours .....	226-2314
TIDE Tours .....	722-2129
Tour Belize .....	227-1158

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