EXPLORE! Tour Notes

PRICE GUARANTEE 100% NO SURCHARGES

Family Belizean Adventures (FBZ 2015)

CULTURAL DISCOVERY

TOURDURAT
14
DAYS

Tour Style: Classic
Tour Pace: Busy
Tour Type: Small Groups
Tour Comfort: Standard
tour Code: FBZ

Tour Highlights - Family Belizean Adventures

- ✓ Wildlife - Opportunities to see howler monkeys, spider monkeys, toucans, parrots, crocodiles and much more in the tropical forests
- ✓ Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary - Spot the many types of birds on a boat trip though Crooked Tree Lagoon wetland habitat
- ✓ Jaguar Sanctuary - Stay in a jungle lodge in the Cockscomb Basin Jaguar Sanctuary, a rainforest reserve.
- ✓ Mayan sites - Visit the ancient temples of Xunantunich, and journey by boat through the jungle along New River to the site of Lamanai.
- ✓ Mesoamerican Barrier Reef - Experience Caribbean island life. Opportunities to snorkel over the corals of the longest barrier reef in the western hemisphere

Tour Essentials

Accommodation:	11 nights Standard Hotel 2 nights Simple Lodge
Included Meals:	7 breakfasts, 4 lunches, 4 dinners
Start Point:	Join tour: Belize City
End Point:	Tour ends: Belize City harbour
Transport:	Bus, Boat
Countries:	Belize
Minimum Age:	From 8 years

Family Belizean Adventures

Belize is home to very diverse cultures, an array of exciting wildlife and numerous animals that inhabit its rainforests and seas. Experience the historic and living culture of the Maya as we travel through jungles to discover ancient pyramids and visit local markets. On the Caribbean Island of Caye Caulker, we have the opportunity to relax and snorkel with a wide variety of marine life including stingrays and turtles on the largest barrier reef in the western hemisphere.

Why Book this tour

This adventure is for families who want an unusual family destination that is easy to travel around and is relatively untouched by mass tourism and allows for included visits to Mayan sites, walks in lagoons, viewing wildlife in sanctuary's and reserves, stays in jungle lodges and time at the end to relax by a barrier reef. An adventure with a difference and a time that will be remembered....

Suitability

We've given each of our tours a comfort rating and a tour pace, walking or cycling grade to give you a general idea about the level of activity on each tour and the standard of accommodation you will be staying in at the end of your day's adventure.

Often you'll stay in different styles of accommodation during your tour; so we make an average rating across the entire tour. For more information on where you'll stay each night, please refer to the day by day tour itinerary.

Tour Comfort: Standard

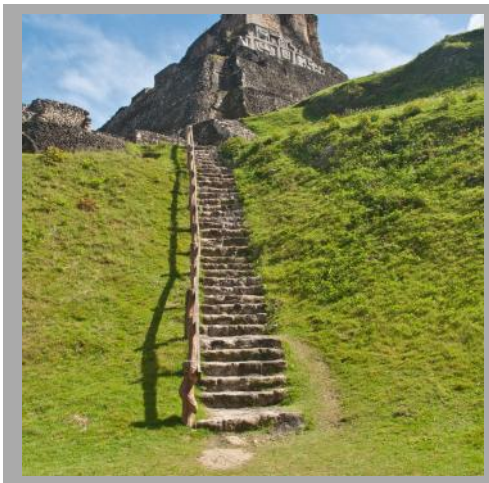
Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

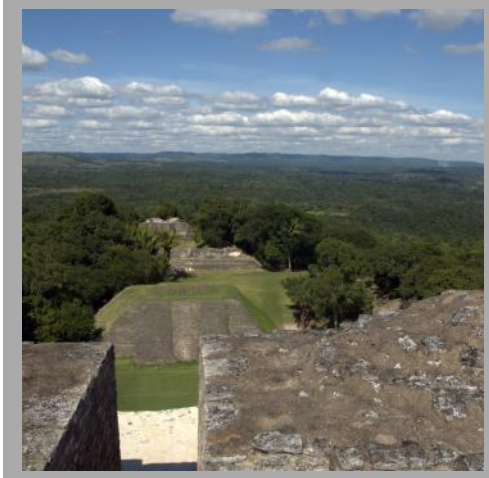
Tour Style: Classic

Packed with adventure, these tours offer inspiring destinations and authentic travel experiences at a reasonable price. Using all kinds of transport and accommodation, we'll take you off the beaten track to discover the true heart of the people and places you visit.

Tour Pace: Busy

There may be early starts, long journeys and tiring days along the way, but you'll return home feeling you've really experienced as much as you possibly could.





Your tour itinerary

Tour itinerary notes

While our intention is to adhere to the day-by-day itinerary as printed below, a degree of flexibility is built in. Overnight stops may vary from those suggested.

Your Tour Leader

A Tour Leader is an integral part of any Explore tour and your tour will be led by one of our experienced Tour Leaders who have been handpicked and expertly trained. We believe that our Tour Leaders are the key to the success of our tours; they are passionate travellers who are bursting with first-hand local knowledge which they love to share. Your Tour Leader will also take care of all the planning and organisation throughout your journey. Their passionate approach will make this tour fun and inspiring, bringing the destination to life whether you're travelling alone or with others.

DAY 1 Arrive Belize City

Land only clients arrive to Belize City and check-in at hotel. Belize City was the capital of Belize until 1970 at which time it moved to Belmopan and is a typical Caribbean town. Parts of the town are still largely built of wood and galvanised iron, with many of the original colonial style houses in an elegant state of disrepair. There is also a canal system through the old part of town and a hand cranked colonial

swing bridge that spans the Haulover creek separating the north and south side of the city from where the local lobster fishing boats and canoes depart. Creole English is widely spoken. Clients on the group flight from London will spend this first night in the United States, usually in Miami.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel** **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: None

DAY 2 Visit Community Baboon Sanctuary. Drive to Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary

This morning is free in Belize City. We then drive along the coastal road to pick up the people joining from London at the international airport, before stopping at the Community Baboon Sanctuary. Here we have a chance of up close encounters with the world's second loudest land mammal - the Yucatecan black howler monkeys in their natural habitat and we learn about the close relationship these animals have with local people who benefit from their protection - confusingly the local people call the monkeys 'baboons'. Later in the afternoon, we arrive at Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary, an important wetland habitat where we settle down for two nights enjoying the hospitality of our local hosts on the shores of the Crooked Tree Lagoon. If the weather is fine we may take a sunset cruise on the lagoon in search of Green Iguanas and countless birds.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Included Meals: Dinner

DAY 3 Boat trip to jungle Mayan site of Lamanai

If we failed to do the sunset cruise yesterday we can rise early this morning to explore the lagoon by boat if we were unable to the day before. In this birdwatchers paradise we may spot wood stork, boat-billed heron, vultures, kingfishers, grebes, hawks, snail kites, jacanas and, perhaps most notable of all, the rare jabiru - the largest flying bird in the hemisphere with a wingspan of up to 4 metres. We return to the lodge for breakfast and then set off by vehicle to the New River and Tower Hill bridge for the boat ride upstream to the 2000 year old jungle ruins of Lamanai. Water birds are abundant in the ancient rainforest cover and freshwater crocodiles may be spotted lurking along the river bank. Lamanai, the original name of these Maya ruins, means 'Submerged Crocodile', which helps to explain the numerous carved crocodile representations at the site. The ruins are only partially cleared, most of the structures are still consumed by the surrounding rainforest with its thick canopy of huge trees, the humid atmosphere adds an aura of mystery to the scattered and overgrown relics. There is some evidence that the Maya practised human sacrifice here.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4 Walk trails around Crooked Tree and lagoon. Visit Belize Zoo. Drive to San Ignacio

This morning we can explore Crooked Tree village further, walking some of the lagoon and village trails. This was one of the first settlements the British made in the area in the early 17th century. Testimony to this is the many Scottish titles and surnames that still exist! The extraction of logwood for textile dyes is what brought the original settlers here and we can still see the logwood tree growing commonly along the shores today. After breakfast we leave by bus and travel west via the Belize Zoo, home to many of the regions exotic animals. The Zoo is a rescue centre for sick and injured as well as illegally confiscated animals. It is a wonderful opportunity to get up close to many of the forest's more elusive animals and learn about their behavior and habitat. We then continue on to San Ignacio, a traditional Belizean town and an ideal place to base ourselves for the next couple of days. Straddling the Macal River which was once a critical transportation artery for the Maya and later the European settlers, it is now a centre for visiting ancient Mayan sites, caves and canoeing which are all on offer from this scenic town surrounded by jungle.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel** **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5 In San Ignacio; visit to Xunantunich

Today we make a visit to the great classical Maya site of Xunantunich, Mayan for 'Rock Stone Maiden'. We travel the short distance to the area by bus, then cross the River Macal by traditional hand-winched ferry to arrive at the site. Occupied until about 850 AD, the main plaza is dominated by an awesome structure called El Castillo - a massive pyramid which rises to 40 metres. On the top is a partially restored stucco frieze representing the Sun God and astronomical signs of the Moon and Venus. The superb view from the summit looks out over the forest with the Maya mountains to the south and the lowlands of Guatemala to the west. The afterrnoon is free to explore the local area, including the Mayan underworld on an optional cave canoeing adventure.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel** **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6 Free day with optional tours around the area including Tikal, a UNESCO World Herital Site

San Ignacio is at the heart of Belize's (small) inland tourism and offers many different activities. Today you can choose from several different optional tours in the surrounding area. The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Tikal just over the border in Guatemala is one of those options. Set in one of the America's greatest forest reserves known as "The Maya Biosphere", Tikal and the surrounding forest are also home to many endangered animal species that are often seen here, living amongst one of the most impressive archaeological sites in the world. Abandoned in the 10th century and rediscovered 900 years later, this huge site lies amongst an example of more than 1000 years of undisturbed tropical forest regrowth. Other optional tours include a visit to the archaeological site of Cahal Pech or a trip through the Mountain Pine Ridge area includes stops at beautiful waterfalls and pools for swimming as well as informative walks through the jungle. You may wish to visit the Belize botanical gardens and jungle lodge where we can tour the gardens, lunch, and then paddle back to San Ignacio along the Macal river, rich in birdlife, butterflies and iguanas

Overnight: **Standard Hotel** **Swimming Pool Available**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 7 Travel to Placencia via the Blue Hole National Park and Green Valley Project Organic Farm

Today we head south along one of Central America's most scenic highways - the Hummingbird highway. Our first stop will be at the Blue Hole National Park operated and run by the Belize Audobon conservation society, here broad leaf semi deciduous rainforests cover the limestone cliffs and many of the caves in the region, we hope to be able to visit a large cave complex and swim in a crystal clear limestone sink hole surrounded by lush jungle. Continuing along the highway through orange and cacao groves we will stop at a local organic farm and tree planting project for lunch. We can learn about local food products and may even have the opportunity to plant a tree on our visit and help to keep Belize green. Our final destination is the beach resort of Placencia, a laid back town and gateway to the Belize barrier reef for snorkel opportunities.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 8 Free day with optional trips including snorkelling in the Belize barrier reef system

Placencia is a small, pleasant beach resort, located on a narrow peninsula between the Maya Mountains and a freshwater lagoon, with a broad protected bay and sandy beach. Optional trips include visiting the small coral cayes, such as the Laughing Bird Caye atoll, that lie off the coast and offer excellent snorkeling in the World Heritage Site of the Belize barrier reef system. Monkey River, once an important banana port where ships loaded from the village travelled across the Atlantic to Southampton England, is also close by. Today the river today is home to diverse wildlife and a small coastal community.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Included Meals: None

DAY 9 To Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Reserve, home of jaguar. Walk reserve trails and stay in jungle lodge

Southern Belize has a low population density and high forest cover, ideal conditions for one of the world's rarest big cats - the Jaguar. The reserve is the only one of a few throughout the world, and is a protected area designated especially for the protection of this elusive creature. It is thought that the area is home to one the densist populations of Jaguars in the America's. Although we are unlikely to see them their prints are commonly found and numerous other animals make the National Park their home. Staying in the heart of this jungle environment is a unique experience, getting to know both the forest and the local Mopan Maya population that today protect it and benefit from the tourist industry around the park.

Overnight: **Simple Lodge**

Included Meals: Lunch, Dinner

DAY 10 Cockscomb Basin Jaguar Sanctuary

Today we explore the park and its numerous trails. The park is considered the best inland national park in the country owing in part to the extensive network of trails through out. There are marked trails as short as 15 minutes and as long as four days in length! We intend to explore a number of the trails along the creeks and rivers as well as climbing to view points that offer stunning views of the expanse of green tropical forest throughout this mountainous area. In the evening we will explore by night through this enchanting location. As we walk we will be looking for the wildlife hiding amongst the vegetation and searching for jaguar footprints.

Overnight: **Simple Lodge**

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 11 Drive to Belize City, water taxi to Caye Caulker

We leave the park this morning and head towards Belize City to take a water taxi to Caye Caulker. Once a pirate lair, this tiny but enchanting tropical island lies 34km northeast of Belize City and about 1.6km inside the greatest barrier reef in the western hemisphere. The water taxi transfer takes about an hour and is a highlight in itself, speeding through the turquoise waters. The island remains uncrowded and unluxurious, with relatively modest prices in restaurants and bars, owned and run by the friendliest of local people. The local fishermen catch lobster, conch, fish and crab to supply the domestic and foreign markets, so fresh seafood is readily available. (Lobster is the best buy when in season from Jun to Feb). There's time to relax - our hotel has a small beach with can accommdate volley ball and basketball courts. The location is ideal to enjoy a number of optional trips. You may take a snorkelling trip out to the nearby Hol Chan Marine Reserve & 'Shark and Ray Alley', or take a full day trip out to Swallow Caye to observe the manatees in their natural mangrove habitat. Scuba diving is also available. (All optional).

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 12 Free time on Caye Caulker

A free day to do as much or as little as you wish, and enjoy the relaxed atmosphere of Caye Caulker.The island remains uncrowded and unluxurious, and the local fishermen catch lobster, conch, fish and crab to supply domestic and foreign markets. It's a popular place with backpackers, so there is a proliferation of good, reasonably priced restaurants. There's time to relax or enjoy a number of optional trips. You may take a snorkelling trip out to the nearby Hol Chan Marine Reserve and Shark and Ray Alley, or take a full-day trip out to the Manatee Reserve to observe manatee in their natural mangrove habitat. Scuba diving is also available.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Included Meals: None

DAY 13 Free time in Caye Caulker

Another free day to relax or enjoy the optional activities available. Although the hotel does not have a restaurant, cafes, bakeries and shops are all a short walk away in the town itself. You have to choice to dine here or return to the hotel with its beach front location from where you can eat while watching the stunning views of the Caribbean Sea and white sandy beaches.

Overnight: **Standard Hotel**

Included Meals: None

DAY 14 Tour ends Belize City

Today we return in the morning to Belize City by water taxi, where our tour ends.

Included Meals: None

Ability to swim required

An ability to swim is essential for your safe enjoyment of the water based activities on this trip. If you wish to participate in these activities then we insist that you are able to swim.

Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation Rating

Our first few days' accommodation in Belize is located on the shores of the Crooked Tree Lagoon in one of the oldest European settlements in Belize. This area is rich in wildlife and especially birds. All of the rooms are ensuite and have air conditioning and fans with included meals served at the lodge. We then head to the Cahal Pech Resort for three nights which is perched on top of a hill and next to an ancient Mayan site. The location offers beautiful views of the lush rolling hills of the Maya Mountains and San Ignacio. The hotel is set in manicured tropical gardens with two swimming pools, outdoor bar and dining area. All of the rooms have balconies and are ensuite with air conditioning and fans. Days 7 and 8 are in Placencia where our hotel is located right next to the Caribbean Sea which is just a few feet away from your room!. The rooms all have private facilities and air conditioning. Our most basic and adventurous accommodation is in the Cockscomb Basin Jaguar Reserve on Days 9 and 10 which is a protected area that is thought to have one of the densest populations of cat species in the America's. Our accommodation is in bunk houses deep within the forest at the parks head-quarters. The lodge has a number of rooms which have three bunk beds per room with shared facilities. While in the jungle, local Mayan ladies cook delicious meals in the kitchen while we explore the forest, rivers and waterfalls. We then drive back to Belize City, using the local water taxi, to the Coral Caye Island of Caye Caulker. This charming island is 32 miles north east of Belize City and just a mile away from the breaking waves on the world's second longest barrier reef. Our hotel for three nights is set

in a quiet location with a private beach and complete with hammocks, sun loungers, a thatched shade area, beach volley ball and a basketball court. A pier leads to deeper water which is ideal for cooling off or perhaps fishing. All rooms have fridges and microwaves, ensuite facilities, air conditioning and fans, balconies and outside seating. A perfect location for the end of the tour and to relax at the beach or take snorkelling excursions before returning by water tax to Belize City.

Food & Drink

Included meals: 7 breakfasts, 4 lunches,4 dinners included in the price of this tour. Please be prepared to pay for non-included meals. Please note that costs for drinks and meals can vary depending on location.

Budgeting for your Tour

You will need some extra money to cover meals and drinks not included in the tour price, any optional sightseeing, souvenirs and items of a personal nature such as laundry.

Food

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide.Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Belize

Lunch £: 13.00

Dinner £: 20.00

Drink

The prices for drinks can vary greatly depending upon location and the prices detailed below are an average guide. In general you would expect that drinks purchased in a supermarket or local bar to be less expensive, whilst drinks in an upmarket bar or restaurant may be more expensive.

Belize

Bottle of Beer £: 1.50

Water £: 1.00

Other Sightseeing & Activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations.

Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Optional Excursions

San Ignacio - Cahal Pech archaeological site $5USD (Day 6) non escorted/non guided; full day trip to Belize Botanical Gardens $60 (Day 6) visit gardens, lunch included, and paddle on the River Macal; Iguana breeding programme US$10; Full day trip to Tikal inc. transport, entry, guide and lunch - US$145 (based in min. 3 pers)

Placencia - Visit Laughing Bird Caye, snorkel trip and lunch $75USD (Day 8) Full day including lunch and snorkel stops

Caye Caulker - 1/2 day Caye Caulker Marine reserve snorkel Trip. $40USD (Day 12) or boat trip to Hol Chan Marine Reserve and snorkel Trip $70USD plus Sea kayaking 10USD, Full day Manatree Reserve and snorkel $85

Tipping - Tour Leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Tipping - Local Crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Tour Leaders may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the tour.
Accordingly, you should allow US$40 for group tipping. 10-15% is expected in restaurants.

Foreign Exchange

Belize

ATM Availability: Available in Major towns. Always have some cash as back-up as they are not always reliable

Credit Card Acceptance: Credit cards are useful and can be used in many places, but may be subject to a 10% service charge

Travellers Cheques: We do not recommend Travellers cheques, they are difficult to exchange.

Local Currency: Belize Dollar

Recommended Currency for Exchange: Carry all your funds in US cash NOT Sterling or Travellers Cheques which are more difficult to exchange. We recommend to take a minimum of US$500 of your total spending money in cash, in mixed denominations. Notes should be in good condition otherwise they might be difficult to exchange. USD is legal currency in Belize

Where to Exchange: Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival.

Joining your Tour

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a ‘flight inclusive’ package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific ‘Joining Instructions’ prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found on our website at www.explore.co.uk, in the tour specific dates and prices section.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer. For more information please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the ‘Land Only’ arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer please refer to https://www.explore.co.uk/transfers.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Important Information

Travel Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

EXPLORE!
The Adventure Travel Experts

CAMPBELL IRVINE
DIRECT TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel Insurance is essential. If you have not already arranged cover, please contact our recommended Travel Insurance providers www.campbellirvinedirect.com/Explore who offer Travel Insurance specifically designed to cover travel with Explore or call **Campbell Irvine Direct** on Tel: 020 7938 1734

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Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Visa Information

Belize: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canadian citizens.

Guatemala: Visas are not required for UK, New Zealand, Australian, US and Canadian citizens.

Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

USA (If flights transit): According to US law, passengers will have to disembark, collect luggage and clear immigration before re-boarding for the onward flight.

Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, Canada and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). This applies if you enter the country by sea or by air on a carrier participating in the visa waiver scheme, holding a return/ onward ticket. The passport requirements are that it must be machine readable, and must contain a digital photograph of the holder and also an integrated circuit chip that stores biographic information.

All passengers travelling to the USA under the Visa Waiver Programme must provide their details online no later than 72 hours prior to travel. British travellers who have not registered before their trip are likely to be detained and sent home.

When completing an application for transit you should enter the words 'In Transit' with your final destination location in the address line. Anyone applying for an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ESTA) to travel under the Visa Waiver system will be charged a fee of 14USD (9GBP).

For more information, and to apply online, please visit the following website at https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov. Once obtained, the application will be valid for a period of two years, or for the validity of your passport (whichever is shorter).

For more information about who is eligible for the VWP, or any other questions you may have regarding your eligibility, or machine readable passports, please contact your local consular office, or visit www.usembassy.org.uk

Belize: Visas not required by UK, USA, AUS, NZ and CAN citizens. Other nationalities should consult the relevant consulate. Tax to leave Belize
overland is US$18.75.

Lone Parents

Belize

Single parents or other adults travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries require documentation confirming that the individual has authority to travel with the minor. It is crucial that you contact the Belize embassy for further information on exactly what may be required.

Vaccinations & Protection

Belize

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against malaria, typhoid, tetanus, TB, infectious hepatitis and polio. Consult your travel clinic for latest advice on different prophylaxis available against Malaria The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at http://www.explore.co.uk/Travelhealth/ and from your local healthcare provider.

Preparing for your Tour

Climate

Belize

Sub-tropical with a brisk prevailing wind from the Caribbean. Summer highs are rarely above 35°C, winter lows rarely below 15°C. Annual rainfall ranges from 107cm in the north to 364cm in the south and humidity can be high at any time of year. The rainy season extends from June through October with a short dry period in August, but some rain can be expected throughout the year.

Clothing

Bring lightweight, informal clothing. A jumper or fleece is advisable for cool evenings and you'll need a good lightweight waterproof jacket all year round or a poncho or small umbrella. Long sleeved shirts/snorkel shirt and long trousers give protection against thick forest growth and insects on jungle walks. A swimming costume and sun hat are essential.

Equipment

Insect repellent, a torch, water bottle, and suncream. Binoculars are essential for bird and animal watching.

Footwear

Lightweight trail boots are preferable for jungle paths, and you'll want to bring sandals. Bring shoes you don't mind getting wet for exploring caves and wet beach landings.

Luggage: On Tour

One main piece of luggage and a daysack. Remember, you are expected to carry your own baggage so don't overload yourself.

Luggage allowance on tour: 20kg

General Information

Country details

Belize

Population: 333,200

Size of Country: 22,966

Major Language: English

Religion: Christian

Time Difference to GMT: -6

Electric Supply & Plugs

Belize

2 Pin Flat

Why Choose Explore

We've been creating award-winning pioneering adventure holidays for over 30 years, earning the trust of thousands of delighted customers, who feel safe in our hands. Our tour leaders have expert local knowledge and our tours are designed to take you off the beaten track to see the most exotic, inspiring and dramatic places in the world.

- With over 30 years' experience, we are passionate about what we do.
- Pioneering small group adventures, self-guided, private journeys & tailormade holidays.
- Award winning tour leaders who you can trust.
- Responsible travel is and always has been one the driving principles of Explore.

Our adventure holidays are full of exciting things to see and do, exploring in small groups travelling by bus, boat, plane, rickshaw, camel, elephant, or any number of unusual forms of transport . Often you will stay in family run hotels and village houses and enjoy authentic local cuisine. In this way, it's easy to discover the true heart of the people and the place you travel to – and make some new friends along the way. Each tour is uniquely different, so please feel free to browse through our tours to see what may whet your appetite.

Our commitment to the environment

We are passionate about sustainable travel and work hard to create tours where your holiday delivers real benefits to the local communities. We minimise our impact by travelling in small groups, respecting local cultures and traditional, reducing waste and offsetting 100% of the CO2 from our flights.

When you travel with Explore, you are directly contributing to local economies and helping empower the people you meet. We currently support a range of charities and good causes, including: Toilet Twinning (helping to flush away poverty), Lone Buffalo Foundation (a community project based in Laos providing creative skills for young people), Dekamer (a turtle rescue centre in Turkey) and Kids Saving the Rainforest (a wildlife rescue centre in Costa Rica supported through the LATA foundation). We also care passionately about the world's wildlife. We are patrons of the Born Free Organisation and Friends of Conservation.

Cool Earth

Explore are proud to support Cool Earth in their effort to reduce global carbon dioxide levels through the prevention of deforestation in the South America rainforest. Cool Earth focus on areas in immediate danger of deforestation, supporting local communities to be forest guardians. To date 350,000 acres of rainforest has been protected. Saving rainforest also protects rare animals and plants, allows local forest communities to maintain their way of life, and protects a major source of oxygen and fresh water. When you travel on an Explore holiday we make a donation to Cool Earth that exceeds the impact of our customers flights each year.

Earth Matters

- The Travel Foundation

  Explore are active members and supporters of the Travel Foundation which has established a variety of sustainable tourism projects in destinations and works with industry to improve practice. Visit their website www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk
- Tourism Concern

  Explore support the work of Tourism Concern who campaign for fairly and ethically traded tourism, and are part of its Ethical Tour Operator Group www.tourismconcern.org.uk
- For further information on responsible travel go to www.explore.co.uk/ResponsibleTourism/

Know before you go

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Advice follow the link at www.explore.co.uk/travel-safety

Booking Your Holiday

Peace of mind - book with confidence

You can book your Explore holiday with confidence, as all monies paid to us for your trip are fully protected. Explore is a fully bonded tour operator licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) and by ABTOT.

The air holiday packages (Tours including flights) that we advertise are ATOL protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's LicenceÂ granted by the Civil Aviation Authority.Â Our ATOL number is ATOL 2595. In addition, As a member of the Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT), Explore has provided a bond to meet the requirements of the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992. Please note that packages booked outside the UK are only protected when purchased directly with Explore.

Reserving your place

To reserve your place on this tour you will need to check availability on the Explore website or through our dedicated call centre based in the UK where you can. Our tours can fill up quickly so you are advised to book as early as possible. If your chosen date is ‘Available’ or ‘Guaranteed’ we will be able to provisionally hold you a space for up to 48 hours.

For Self-Guided holidays and Private Journeys simply choose your date of travel and let us know so we can confirm all ground services.

The easiest way to confirm your booking is through our website. When you are ready to book, we normally require a 10% non-refundable deposit, but for some holidays this may be more to cover such items as permit fees, internal flights or other non-refundable services. If your travel starts within 60 days of booking, full payment will be required at the time of booking

100% No Surcharge Guarantee

The price paid for our holidays is no longer subject to change. Once booked and confirmed we will guarantee the price you pay will not increase, whatever the circumstances. You will not be approached to pay fuel surcharges unlike the vast majority of other adventure tour operators. The price guarantee applies to all new bookings departing between 1st January 2014 and 31st December 2015.

Tour Itinerary Versions

Itinerary details may vary depending on departure date and alternative itineraries for this tour may exist. Please refer to the dates and prices page on our website to check which itinerary operates on each departure date.

Please ensure that you have an up-to-date copy of these tour notes immediately before you travel, as from time to time our itineraries may be amended, either for operational reasons or in response to feedback from customers. You will be informed of any major changes to your tour but small changes may just be added to these tour notes.

Please note: 2015 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing in 2015. 2016/17 itinerary versions are applicable to tours departing from 1st January to 31st December 2016.

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