

EXPLORING BELIZE



Travel Guide Book

Maple League Course

Indigenous Cultures of Belize

**PRESERVING INDIGENOUS CULTURE &
HERITAGE**

Through Decolonizing the Narrative

May 7th-16th, 2023



● INSTRUCTORS ●



GENNER

Genner is acting as the faculty supervisor for the tour, working with the Galen team to support the academic part of the visit.

Juan Carlos

Juan Cralos is the logicstician during this entire tour. He is assisting in coordination of all activities, and will help with spur of the moment decisions.



● INSTRUCTORS ●



Krista

Krista is the Indigenous support person who will work hand in hand with students to provide culturally appropriate support and make connections between the indigenous experience in Belize and Canada.

Sylvia Batty

Sylvia is Galen's instructor for this program - she has years of community engagement, especially with indigenous communities in her capacity as community outreach officer and archaeologist at the Institute of Archaeology.





WELCOME TO BELIZE



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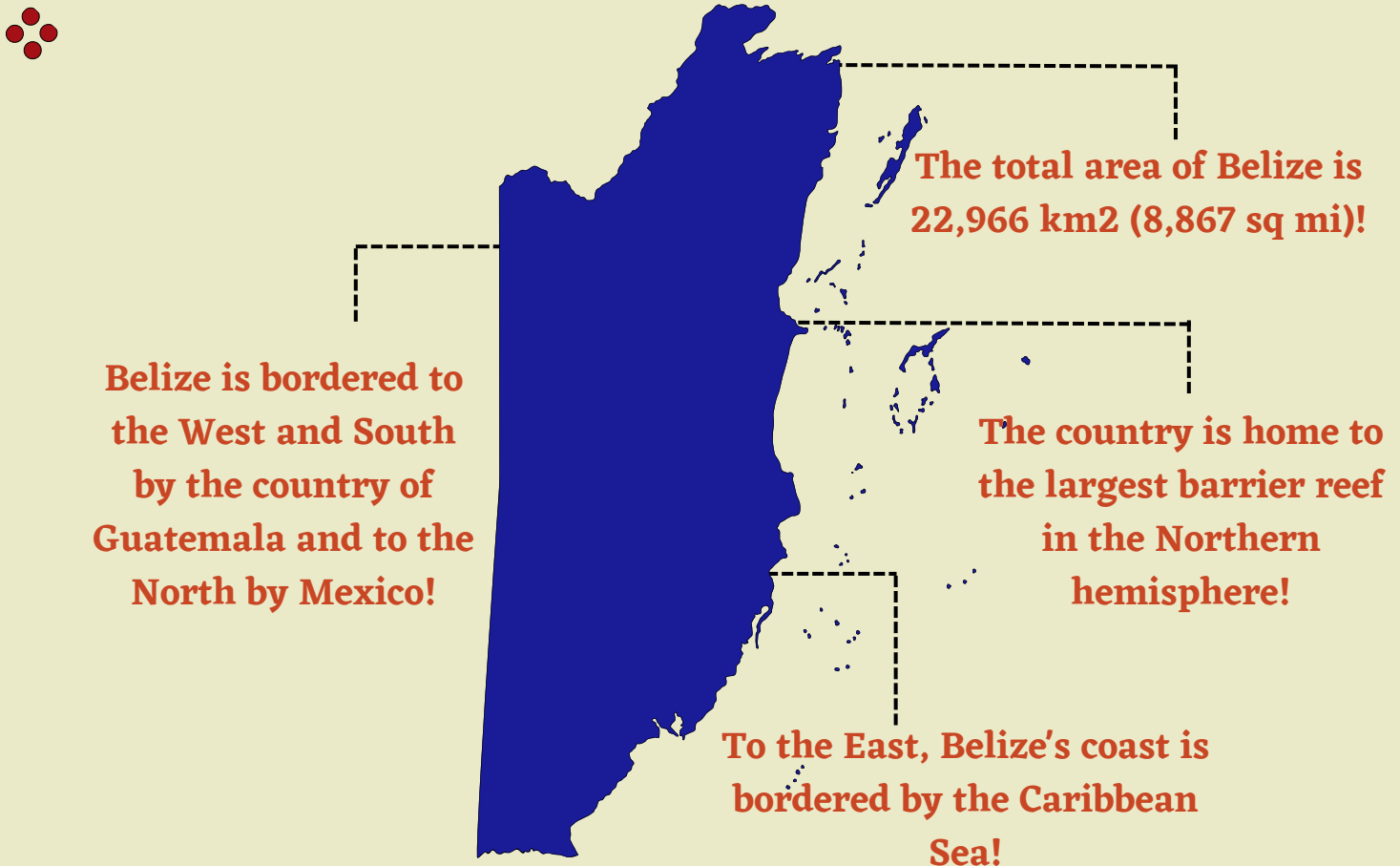
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BELIZE

❖ FACTS ❖



Facts about Belize :

- Belize is divided into 6 districts: Corozal, Orange Walk, Cayo, Belize, Stann Creek and Toledo.
- The country has 201 recognized municipalities: 2 cities, 7 towns, and 192 villages
- Belize is home to the world's ONLY jaguar reserve: the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary.
- Uniquely, the country is a part of the region of Central America as well as the Caribbean region.



POPULAR FOOD



Rice & Beans

Rice & Beans is a Belizean staple, some would go as far as saying it is the country's national dish! It is common across all cultural identities within the country, and found on the menu in most culinary establishments often served with stewed chicken, fried plantain and potato salad..



Corn Tortillas



Corn tortillas are another staple in Belizean cuisines. It is traditionally made using a 'masa' mix that includes corn as its main ingredient as well as lime powder. Corn tortillas are a staple part of the Maya & Mestizo cultures of Belize, but has been adopted across most of the country.



Pibil

Pibil is popular amongst Belizeans near and far for its rich meaty texture with a smoked taste to it. It is a traditional Maya dish that involves slow roasting a marinated pig that is wrapped in banana leaves in a stone pit. The meat is commonly served as a taco with tortillas and fresh vegetables.



POPULAR FOOD



Belizean Chimole ❖

This soup is known locally as 'Black Dinna'. The dish originated from the Mestizo culture, and is popular for its pitch black appearance. The main ingredients are chicken, beef-balls, boiled eggs, and the black recado spice.



Escabeche

Escabeche is another soup that is rooted deeply in the Maya & Mestizo Cultures of Northern Belize. The soup's main ingredients include chicken, spices and onions. It is served with a side of corn tortillas.



Hudut ❖

The dish is a popular soup that originated from the Garifuna culture. It includes fish that is cooked in a rich coconut broth and served with a side of mashed plantains. Hudut is common in the southern region of Belize.

POPULAR FOOD



Tamales



Tamales is also locally known as bollos and it is a traditional Mestizo dish. This is a meal that consists of seasoned meat (chicken or pork) that is wrapped in masa (soft corn dough) and steamed in plantain or banana leaves.



Salbutes

Salbutes is a Belizean fast-food staple, and it is a great option for a snack or if you're on the go. Salbutes are made from deep fried hand-made corn tortillas, topped off with shredded chicken and freshly chopped vegetables.



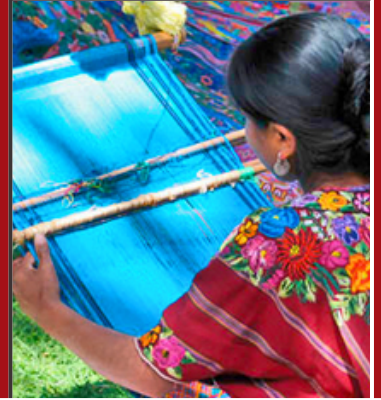
Chicken Tacos



Another Belizean fast food staple is Chicken Tacos. The Belizean Chicken taco is a simple meal which mainly consists of corn tortillas, shredded chicken and aspic onion and cabbage sauce.



**The next 15
days
guarantees
self
exploration
through
exposures
to
indigenous
lived
realities in
Belize!**



DAY 1-3



DAY 1: Belize City to San Ignacio Town

Welcome to beautiful Belize! You have finally arrived to your destination: Belize City! Once you have checked out of the airport, we will be making our way to San Ignacio Town where you will spend the next 3 days.

DAY 2: Cahal Pech

The first stop will be at the Archeological Site of Cahal Pech. Along with some students of Galen University, you will explore the grounds before heading back to the hotel to relax and receive a debrief of the days to come!



DAY 3: San Antonio Village

A productive day awaits you at the village of San Antonio in the Cayo District. Situated nicely in a valley, you can expect to meet and learn from new people as well as participate in activities.



DAY 1: ARRIVAL

LONG DAY AHEAD!

- Arrive at the Philip Goldson International Airport in Belize City
- After checking out of the airport, you will be boarding a shuttle
- The shuttle will take you from Belize City to San Ignacio Town
- Check in to the hotel: [Cahal Pech Resort](#)
- Supper will be served
- Thereafter, you are free to retire for the evening, relax, and prepare for Day 2!

Food Options:

Cahal Pech: see menu [here](#)



Resource Link to know more about San Ignacio:

<https://www.cahalpech.com/9-interesting-things-about-san-ignacio-cayo/>

DAY 2: CAHAL PECH

EASY DAY AHEAD!

- Breakfast at Cahal Pech Resort
- Take a 5 minute walk to the Cahal Pech Archeological Site for a self-guided tour along with some Galen students
- 12:30 PM: Lunch at Cahal Pech Resort
- Meet with Filiberto Penados
- Rest & Relaxation: Enjoy the Pool
- Debrief on the days ahead
- Supper at Cahal Pech Resort
- Discussion with Aurelio Sho
- Prepare for Day 3!



Resource Link to know more about Cahal Pech:

<https://www.themayanruinswebsite.com/cahal-pech-1.html>

Food Options:
Cahal Pech: see menu [here](#)

DAY 3: SAN ANTONIO

REGULAR DAY AHEAD!

- Breakfast at Cahal Pech Resort, be ready to leave by 8:30AM
- Arrive in San Antonio Village (30 min Drive)
- Meet with Delmer Tzib, Another day in San Antonio - Cultural Fair
- Meet with San Antonio Women's Cooperative, Cultural Tourism
- Lunch at San Antonio Village
- Afternoon with Ajtz'ib Masewal - Revitalizing Hieroglyphs
- Supper at Cahal Pech Resort and Debrief
- Prepare for Day 4: Be sure to pack, because you're traveling to another destination in the morning!



Resource Link to know more about Ajtz'ib Masewal:
<http://ajtzib.com/>
<https://www.heritagebelize.org/>

Food Options:
Cahal Pech: see menu [here](#)

DAY 4-5

DAY 4:

Travel Day + Stop at the Belize Zoo



The day is dedicated to traveling from San Ignacio Town, Cayo District to Hopkins Village, Stann Creek District. The scenery along the way is second to none. A stop is expected at the Belize Zoo!

DAY 5: Maya Center

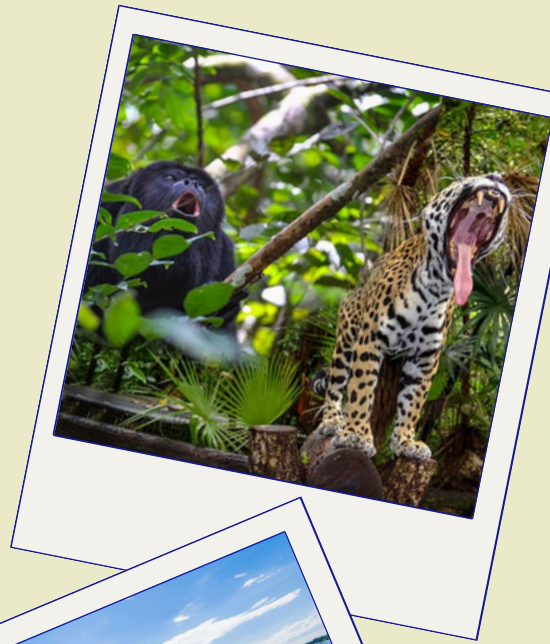
While in Stann Creek, a trip to the Maya Center will serve as one of the many cultural learning experiences you can expect to have during this time. The Maya Center will offer a diverse set of attractions and act as an interactive museum on the Maya culture. Live demonstrations, locally-made products and handcrafts are just some of the things you can expect to encounter. After that, the Cockscomb Basin Forest Reserve will be visited.



DAY 4: BELIZE ZOO

TRAVELLING DAY

- Breakfast at Cahal Pech Resort, be ready to leave by 8:30AM
- Visit the Belize Zoo
- Lunch at Cheers Restaurant
- Arrive in Hopkins Village, Stann Creek District around early evening
- Your stay will be at Hopkins Bay Resort
- Supper at Hopkins Bay Resort, rest & relaxation.



Food Options:

Cahal Pech: see menu [here](#)

Cheers Restaurant menu [here](#)

Hopkins Bay menu [here](#)

Resource Link to know more about Hopkins Village:

<https://www.hopkinsbaybelize.com/about-hopkins>

THE BELIZE ZOO & TROPICAL EDUCATION CENTER

The Best Little Zoo in The World!

The Belize Zoo started out as a 'backyard zoo' in 1983, as a last ditch effort to provide a home for a collection of wild animals which had been used in making documentary films about tropical forests.

The late Sharon Matola was the founding director of the Belize Zoo and Tropical Education Center.

Here, you will meet over 150 native animals within 29 acres of forest.

All the animals have a unique story of either being orphaned, rescued, born at the zoo, rehabilitated, or sent to us as donations from other zoological institutions. The zoo's primary mission is centered around wildlife conservation.

This information was adopted from the official website for the Belize Zoo. Click [here](#) to visit and find out more about their various initiatives.

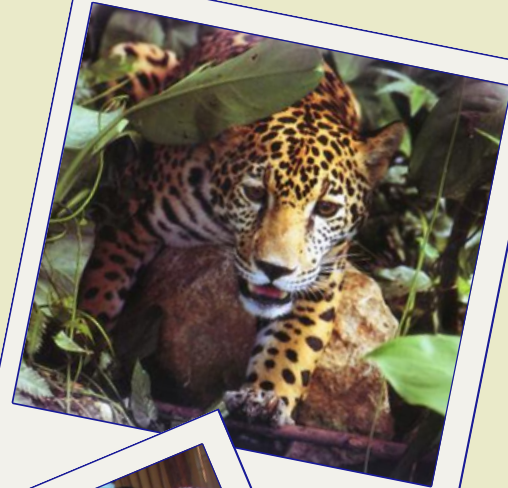


DAY 5: MAYA CENTER

EASY DAY AHEAD!

- Breakfast at Hopkins Bay Resort
- Be sure to pack a swim suit! There may be a waterfall!
- 20 minute drive to the Maya Center
- Cacao Farm Tour
- Lunch at Che'il Chocolate
- Visit the Cockscomb Basin Reserve
- Supper at Hopkins Bay Resort, rest & relaxation.
- Be sure to pack, because you're traveling to another destination in the morning!

Food Options:
Hopkins Bay menu [here](#)



Resource Link to know more about the Belize Audubon Society:

<https://belizeaudubon.org>

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DAY 6-8



DAY 6: Hopkins to Punta Gorda Town

On this day, the group will travel from Hopkins Village in the Stann Creek district, to Punta Gorda Town in the Toledo district. The Toledo Cacao Growers Association will be visited on this day as well.

DAY 7: Visiting indigenous activists & organizations

The day in Punta Gorda will start out with a visit to a leader of the Maya community in southern Belize, Christina Coc. Thereafter, SATIIM, which is an indigenous management NGO will be visited. along with a visit to its sister company Xe'il Maya clothing brand.



DAY 8: Snorkeling with TIDE Belize

Enjoy a fun in the sun with TIDE Belize by going snorkeling in the Caribbean Sea. This fun experience is sure to also be an educational one as well with TIDE representatives talking about their various initiatives and projects.



DAY 6: HOPKINS-P.G.

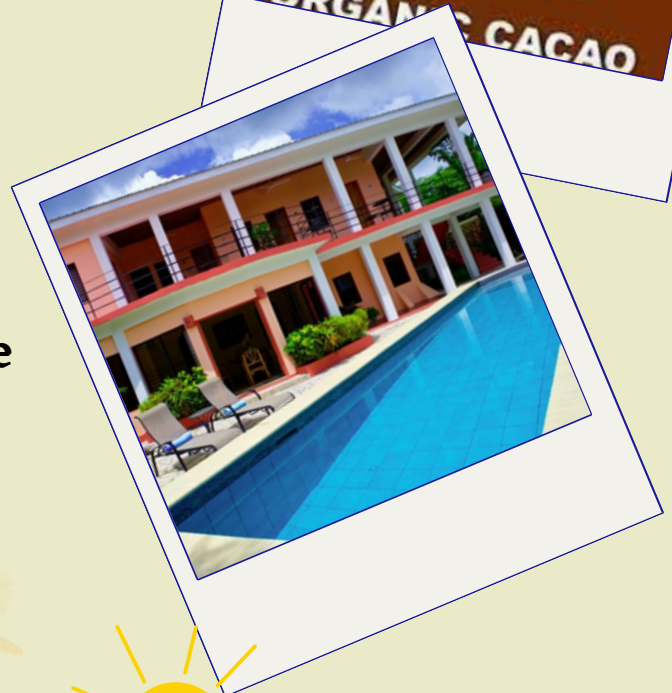
TRAVELLING DAY

- Breakfast at Hopkins Bay Resort
- Visit the Toledo Cacao Growers Association (TCGA)
- Lunch - TCGA
- Arrive in Punta Gorda Town, Toledo District
- Your stay will be at Coral House Inn & Blue Belize
- Supper at 'A Piece of Ground' restaurant
- Rest & relaxation.

Food Options:

Hopkins Bay menu [here](#)

'A Piece of Ground' menu [here](#)



Resource Link to know more about TCGA:

<https://www.belizecga.com/>

DAY 7: NGOS & ACTIVISTS

EASY DAY

- Complimentary breakfast served at your respective accommodation sites
- Visit Pablo Mis, executive director of the Julian Cho Society - (NGO - Indigenous Rights)
- Lunch will be at Bayside Buffet
- Visit NGO: SATIIM and Maya clothing brand company Xe'il
- Supper at Happy kitchen Restaurant
- Rest & relaxation.



Food Options:

Bayside Buffet menu [here](#)

Happy kitchen Restaurant menu [here](#)

Resource Link to know more about Julian Cho Society:

<https://www.jcsbelize.org/pages/home.php>

SATIIM & XE'IL CLOTHING

Sarstoon Temash Institute for Indigenous Management

SARSTOON TEMASH INSTITUTE FOR
INDIGENOUS MANAGEMENT

www.satiim.wixsite.com/satiim

SATIIM is an NGO that was created in 1997 when Maya and Garifuna communities in southern Belize discovered that three years earlier, the government had turned their ancestral lands into a national park. Not much later they awoke to the sound of dynamite blasting seismic paths in preparation for oil drilling in this 'protected area.' The paths, wide enough for jeeps, ushered in new, illegal traffic into this unique ecosystem recognized by the RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands.

Since then, SATIIM has developed into an internationally recognized pioneer in Indigenous rights, as well as Indigenous-led environmental defense and sustainable development.

Not too long ago, SATIIM launched Xe'il Belize which is a meaningful clothing brand designed to economically empower Maya women and showcase a new fashion. On their royal tour to Belize in 2022 Catherine, Princess of Wales wore a piece created by [Xe'il Belize](#).

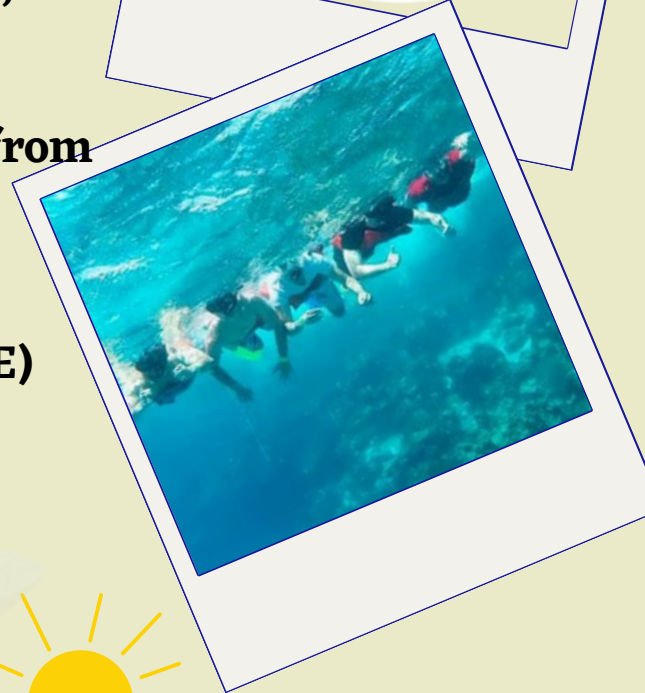


This information was adopted from the official website for SATIIM. Click [here](#) to visit and find out more about their various initiatives.

DAY 8: SUN & SEA DAY

LONG DAY

- Bring your sunscreen along for this day!
- Complimentary breakfast served at your respective accommodation sites
- Pack for an active day and boat rides, include swimming clothes
- Meet up with the snorkeling guides from TIDE Belize
- Short lecture on Toledo Institute for Development and Environment (TIDE)
- Snorkeling - West Snake Caye
- Lunch - at Punta Negra Community
- Snorkeling - West Snake Caye
- Supper, Rest & relaxation
- Be sure to pack, because you're traveling to another destination in the morning!



Resource Link to know more about TIDE Belize:

<https://tidebelize.org/>

DAY 9-10



DAY 9: Tumul K'in

An educational experience awaits during this day. Tumul K'in Center of Learning is a non-governmental Maya organization that promotes sustainable development with identity through intercultural education, training and research fusing modern and Maya values, knowledge and philosophy.

DAY 10: Garifuna Food, Music & Spirituality

An informative cultural talk will take place administered by Joshua Arana. After that, a cooking session will take place followed by drumming on the beach.



DAY 9: TUMUL K'IN

LONG DAY AHEAD

- Complimentary breakfast served at your respective accommodation sites
- Check-out from your respective accommodations
- Travel to Hopkins Village
- On the way, we will visit Tumul K'in in Blue Creek Village, spend the day there
- Lunch - Tumul K'in
- Before traveling back to Hopkins, take a swim in the river at Blue Creek
- Supper at Hopkins Bay, Rest & relaxation



Resource Link to know more about Tumul K'in:

<https://www.devex.com/organizations/tumul-k-in-center-of-learning-110667>

Food Options:
Hopkins Bay menu [here](#)

DAY 10:

GARIFUNA

FOOD, MUSIC & SPIRITUALITY

EASY DAY AHEAD

- Breakfast at Hopkins Bay
- Meet with Joshua Arana
- Short Tour of Hopkins
- Meal Preparation, on the beach
- Offering to the Ancestors
- Lunch
- Drum Making
- Supper, Rest & relaxation.
- Be sure to pack, because you're traveling to another destination in the morning!

Food Options:
Hopkins Bay menu [here](#)



Resource Link to know more about Joshua Arana:

https://www.ted.com/talks/joshua_arana_how_drumming_made_me_a_feminist

DAY 11-13



DAY 11: Hopkins to Orange Walk Town

As the trip winds down, the next destination will be Orange Walk Town located in the northern region of Belize. On your way there, the group will have the honor to meet with Belize's Governor General H.E. Froyla Tzalam.

DAY 12: Lamanai Archeological Reserve

The group then travels from Orange Walk Town to the Lamanai Archeological Reserve. 'Lamanai' translates to 'submerged crocodile', and the site will be visited via a river taxi. It is known as one of the largest Mayan sites in Belize and is sure to provide the group with a historical and cultural experience like no other.



DAY 13: Yo Creek

The day will be spent in the village of Yo Creek, which is known for its dense population of people of Yucatec Maya descent. Here, the group will meet .Felicita Cantun. She is the founder of Kanan Miatsil which is an NGO that was founded to prevent traditional Maya customs and values from disappearing.



DAY 11: HOPKINS-O.W.

TRAVELLING DAY

- Breakfast at Hopkins Bay
- The group travels to Belmopan City
- The group then meets with Her Excellency Froyla Tzalam who is the Governor General of Belize.
- Lunch at Caladium
- Arrival in Orange Walk Town. Check-in to Hotel de la Fuente
- Supper at Maracas Bar & Grill, Rest & relaxation
- Prepare for an early day tomorrow as the group travels to Lamanai!

Food Options:

Hopkins Bay menu [here](#)

Caladium Restaurant menu [here](#)

Maracas Bar & Grill menu [here](#)



Resource Link to know more about Orange Walk Town:

<https://belize.com/orange-walk/>

HER EXCELLENCY FROYLA TZALAM

Governor General of Belize



H.E. Tzalam is Belize's third Governor-General and is the first Indigenous Governor-General in Commonwealth.

Born in San Antonio, Toledo, Governor-General H.E. Froyla Tzalam holds a master's degree in Rural Development from the University of Sussex, England and a bachelor's degree in Anthropology from Trinity University, Texas.

As a Mopan Maya leader, she strives to enhance awareness and acceptance and forge stronger ties between the indigenous and industrialized communities.

This information was adopted from the Government of Belize Press Office's GG profile [here](#).

DAY 12: LAMANAİ

LONG DAY AHEAD

- Complimentary Breakfast at Hotel de la Fuente
- The group travels to Lamanai Archeological Reserve via a river boat ride.
- The group spends the day at Lamanai exploring the site, its museum and places of resistance against European Colonization.
- Lunch at Lamanai
- The tour of Lamanai continues after lunch until (Museum tour)
- Supper at Cocina Sabor, Rest & relaxation

Food Options:
Cocina Sabor menu [here](#)



LAMANAI ARCHEOLOGICAL RESERVE

Translates to 'Submerged Crocodile'

Lamanai was first settled in the Early Pre-Classic (1000-800 B.C.), and was not abandoned until the late 1600's. It was still occupied upon the arrival of the Spanish making it one of the longest settled sites in the Maya World.

It is also one of a handful of Maya sites that have retained their original name. The archaeological park covers about 860 acres/384 hectares, and is the second largest site in Belize. Most of the site is unrestored.

Due to its strategic location along the New River, trade played a key role in the sites' development.

There are three main structural groups at Lamanai set around individual plazas. Other smaller groups and residential units spread out from the civic/ceremonial core, in all directions.

This information was adopted from the following website, click [here](#) to read more.



DAY 13: YO CREEK

EASY DAY AHEAD

- Complimentary Breakfast at Hotel de la Fuente
- The group travels to Yo Creek Village a Yucatec Maya community on Northern Belize
- The group then meets with Healer and Leader Felicita Cantun, founder of Kanan Miatsil.
- Lunch at Yo Creek
- Presentation by the Maya Ball Team
- Supper at Nahil Mayab Restaurant and Patio, Rest & relaxation
- Be sure to pack, because you're traveling to another destination in the morning!



Food Options:
Nahil Mayab Restaurant and
Patio menu [here](#)

Resource Link to know more
about Kanan Miatsil:

<https://www.heritagebelize.org/blog/kanan-miatsil-the-guardians-of-culture>

DAY 14-15



DAY 14: Orange Walk Town - Belize City

The last day before departure will be spent traveling from Orange Walk Town in the north to Belize City in the east. Before checking in, the last place to be visited is the Crooked Tree Museum and Cultural Heritage Center where the group will be able to learn about Belize's history and culture.

DAY 15: Departure from Belize City

To conclude, the day of departure is set for Sunday, May 21st. After breakfast, the group will make its way from the hotel to the Philip Goldson International Airport.



DAY 14: O.W.-BELIZE CITY

EASY TRAVELLING DAY

- Complimentary Breakfast at Hotel de la Fuente
- The group travels from Orange Walk Town to Belize City.
- Check-in to the Belize Biltmore Hotel.
- Lunch at the Belize Biltmore Hotel
- The group will visit the Crooked Tree Museum and Cultural Heritage Center.
- Supper at Biltmore Hotel
- Rest & relaxation
- Prepare for departure tomorrow: pack your belongings!



Resource Link to know more about the Museum:

<https://crookedtreemuseum.org/>

Food Options:
Belize Biltmore Hotel menu
[here](#)

THE CROOKED TREE MUSEUM AND CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTER

Est. 2018



The Crooked Tree Museum and Cultural Heritage Center is a community educational organization committed to sharing the deep history of the lower Belize River Watershed. Our mission is to collect, display, study, and exhibit material culture that tells the rich stories that comprise this history in order to advance knowledge and understanding of the people that have shaped Belize over time.

The museum's collection includes artifacts from pre-ceramic, ancient Maya, and contemporary Kriol culture, as well as a wide array of archival maps and images depicting life in colonial era and modern Belize. The museum also has opportunities for visitors of all ages to experience history and culture through hands-on interactive displays.

This information was adopted from their official website, click [here](#) to read more.

DAY 15: DEPARTURE DAY

- Breakfast at the Biltmore Hotel
- The group checks-out of the hotel and is driven to the Philip Goldson International Airport.
- Everyone says good bye to Loren and Sylvia!



Food Options:
Belize Biltmore Hotel menu
[here](#)



The End!
**We hope you learnt
a lot over the past
15 days, and enjoyed
them. Please feel
free to share photos
that you took
during this time,
and a message to
future students!**