

BELIZE TIKAL ADVENTURE

9 DAYS / 8 NIGHTS



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Itinerary Overview

This adventurous exploration of the ancient Mayan world and contemporary Garifuna culture of African descent embraces rainforest ecology, jungle wildlife, and the underwater world of the Belize barrier reef. Explore the rivers, caves, and rainforests of the Cayo District of Belize and the Peten lowlands of Guatemala where towering temples of the Mayan kingdoms of Tikal and Yaxha emerge through the jungle canopy habitat of monkeys and toucan. At the coastal village of Hopkins, the underwater world of coral reefs beckon snorkelers and scuba-divers. Together with your Belizean guide you connect deeply with the local people of Belize and Guatemala and become immersed in the Creole, Maya, and Garifuna cultures of this diverse and fascinating country. Well-suited to adventurous couples and families alike, accommodations include boutique rainforest lodges and breezy beach-front cabanas, and the itinerary allows time to kick-back and explore at your leisure.

DAY	OVERNIGHT	HOTEL	MEALS	HIGHLIGHTS
1	CAYO DISTRICT, BELIZE	Black Rock Lodge	D	Arrive and transfer to Black Rock Lodge (2.5 hrs)
2	CAYO DISTRICT, BELIZE	Black Rock Lodge	BLD	Tortilla making, Barton Creek Caves and Zip line tour
3	CAYO DISTRICT, BELIZE	Black Rock Lodge	BLD	Actun Tunichil Muknal
4	PETÉN, GUATEMALA	Las Lagunas Boutique Hotel	BLD	Morning birding, transfer to Peten (2.5 hrs) sunset Yaxha Mayan site tour
5	PETÉN, GUATEMALA	Las Lagunas Boutique Hotel	BLD	Tikal Mayan Ruins
6	HOPKINS, BELIZE	Almond Beach Resort	BL	Ixpanpajul hanging bridges, land transfer to Placencia (4 hrs) – optional flight
7	HOPKINS, BELIZE	Almond Beach Resort	BL	Half day barrier reef snorkeling tour, Drum making
8	HOPKINS, BELIZE	Almond Beach Resort	BL	Garifuna Cultural and Culinary Adventure, free afternoon
9	DEPARTURE	--	B	Flight back to Belize City for International flight home

Itinerary in Detail

DAY 1: CAYO DISTRICT

Arrive at the Belize International Airport and enjoy a scenic 2-hour-drive through the rolling hills of the Cayo District to the Black Rock Lodge in time to wander the rainforest trails before dinner or lounge on the expansive veranda overlooking the forest and Macal River. Overnight at **Black Rock Lodge. [D]**

DAY 2: MAYAN FAMILY— BARTON CREEK CAVE

Meet a local Mayan family in their home to learn about their life and make corn tortillas from fresh masa that is the basis of the Mayan diet. Delve deeper into the Maya underworld of Xibalba (she-bal-ba), gliding by canoe through the giant stalactites, stalagmites, and amazing calcite crystal formations of the Barton Creek cave system, with over four miles of underground tunnels. The ancient Maya once used this cave for ritual burials. Nearby in the rainforest of the Mayan Mountains Calico Jack's zip-line course phenomenal views and a variety of exhilarating routes through the canopy. Overnight at **Black Rock Lodge. [BLD]**

DAY 3: ACTUN TUNICHIL MUKNAL

Today's quest to see 'The Crystal Maiden' is reminiscent of an Indiana Jones adventure into the most famous cave in Belize, Actun Tunichil Muknal, which bears the quirky nickname of ATM. Reaching this once-sacrificial Mayan cave requires hiking through the Tapir Mountain Nature Reserve, crossing three streams, wading and swimming through parts of the cave and ascending a narrow ladder to reach the deeper, darker chambers. Your efforts are rewarded with the sight of ancient ceramics and the skeletal remains of ancient Maya including that of a young female, whose bones have completely calcified,

resulting in a sparkling appearance and inspiring the name 'Crystal Maiden'. After dinner join a night walk near the lodge in search of nocturnal creatures such as bats, owls, and fascinating insects that are most active after the sun sets. Overnight at **Black Rock Lodge. [BLD]**



DAY 4: YAXHA TEMPLE, GUATEMALA

Take an early morning bird walk on a mission to see some of the 280 species of birds that inhabit the ecosystem surrounding Black Rock Lodge. Look for the keel-billed toucan, the iridescent blue-crowned motmot, and listen for olive throated parakeets chattering in the rainforest canopy. Then drive across the Guatemala border to the remote site of Yaxha. Stroll through the ruins as you make your way to the Temple of Bats, climbing the temple steps to bask in the setting sun over the lagoon. Complete the day's journey in time to swim and overnight at **Las Lagunas Boutique Hotel** on a small lake in the rainforest. **[BLD]**

DAY 5: TIKAL

Arise early to enter Tikal, once the most powerful ancient city of the Americas, Tikal National Park is also protected rainforest for its abundance of wildlife including parrots and toucans flying overhead and monkeys cavorting in the forest canopy.

Frequently seen are howler and spider monkeys, coati, peccary, and deer. The elusive jaguar and ocelot also inhabit this pristine rainforest. Strike out with your guide to investigate the ancient ruins of this classic Maya site, which at its height supported a population upwards of 100,000 individuals over a 25-square-mile area. Your expert on-site Maya guide enlightens you with details of the archaeology and culture of numerous palaces, ball courts, plazas, temples, terraces, shrines, and stela rock carvings depicting the lives of Mayan kings. Enjoy the afternoon relaxing at your lake front accommodation and overnight at **Las Lagunas Boutique Hotel. [BLD]**

DAY 6: IXPANPAJUL NATURE RESERVE--BELIZE CARIBBEAN BEACH

Enjoy a delicious Guatemalan breakfast before departing for Hopkins, a coastal village considered to be the cultural center of the Garifuna African descendants of this coast. En route, visit the Ixpanpajul Park featuring the spectacular suspension bridges and twisting paths through flourishing rainforest flora and fauna. Enjoy the afternoon relaxing at your beachfront room or cabana before dinner on your own at the resort or at a local restaurant. Overnight at **Almond Beach Resort. [BL]**



DAY 7: BELIZE BARRIER REEF AND DRUM MAKING

Explore the rich and colorful marine environment of Belize on a half-day snorkeling excursion, heading 30-40 minutes offshore to a deserted Caye, perfect for beachcombing and snorkeling near Belize Barrier Reef. Look for angel and parrot fish, sergeant majors, barracuda, eels, and occasionally stingrays or the harmless nurse shark. Visually fascinating life forms such as brain corals and hydrocorals, sea fans, feather plumes, sponges, and colorful sea cucumbers are also part of this underwater ecosystem.

Back on shore, walk into Hopkins town to meet Rudolph “Baba” Coleman, a well-established drum maker who carves some of the country's finest Garifuna drums. Sharing life in his community, he demonstrates the intensive, time-consuming process of drum making, from chiseling, planning, and sanding a solid log into shape, to preparing the deerskin hide and affixing it to the drum using jungle vines. Try your hand at any of the various stages, and you can pick up an autographed instrument on your way out. Overnight at **Almond Beach Resort. [BL]**

DAY 8: GARIFUNA CULTURAL AND CULINARY TOUR

Today is a fascinating and authentic opportunity to get to know the people of Hopkins village and experience the Garifuna Afro-Caribbean culture indigenous to Belize. Palmento Grove is an environmental and socially conscious community project on the outskirts of town that is dedicated to empowering people through the promotion and preservation of traditional cultural knowledge, history, and way of life. Your visit is an opportunity to support local families while learning about Garifuna history and culture including music, art and delicious Afro-Caribbean cuisine.

Do whatever you like this afternoon: relax, swim, take a kayak out, and ride a mountain bike, or alternately join one of the many day tours offered through the resort (not included) such as a small wildlife river boat excursion up the inland waterways, horseback riding, sailing, fishing, a Maya chocolate tour, another snorkeling outing, or possibly dive with whale sharks (in season April and May). Overnight at **Almond Beach Resort. [BL]**



DAY 9: DEPART

Enjoy one final dip in the warm Caribbean Sea and wash off the sand before packing up and returning to Placencia to board your short flight to the Belize International airport in time for your international flight home (local flight included). **[B]**

End of services

Actual routes and activities may vary. Local trip coordinators reserve the right to change accommodations to similar quality alternatives.

PRICING AND DATES:

For current pricing please click here: [Pricing](#)

For scheduled departure dates please click here: [Dates](#)

Private departures can be arranged. Please ask the Belize Program Director for more information.

INCLUDED SERVICES

- All guided tours and excursions
- Private naturalist guide days 1-8
- Internal airfare Placencia to Belize City
- Airport-hotel transfers, land and sea transportation
- Tikal National Park entrance fees
- 8 nights hotel accommodation as indicated
- Meals as indicated [B-Breakfast, L-Lunch, D-Dinner]
- Wildland Adventures travel consultation and pre-departure services

NOT INCLUDED SERVICES

- International airfare
- Tips and gratuities
- Airport departure taxes
- Drinks, alcoholic beverages, and meals other than listed above
- Personal expenses for extra services, optional activities, or changes in your itinerary for reasons beyond our control
- Travel insurance for trip cancellation, medical services, or evacuation
- Any other items not mentioned above

NOTE: Wildland Adventures, Inc. has arranged your trip utilizing the travel services of local in-country ground operators who are independent contractors. These local outfitters, lodges, hotels and other suppliers of your travel services will make every effort to conduct this trip as described in the itinerary. It is however possible that due to transportation schedule changes, weather, delays and unforeseeable acts of God, humans or nature, this itinerary may vary from what is described. Participants must assume all risks whether identified in advance or unforeseen. All optional activities are at your own risk. Extra costs due to unexpected changes in your itinerary for reasons beyond our control are not included. We highly recommend purchasing traveler's insurance for trip delay, trip cancellation, baggage, accident or sickness. Representatives are available for assistance at any time during your trip. If preferred hotels are not available, every attempt will be made to reserve alternative accommodations of similar quality. (If upgrade is necessary, higher rates may apply.) All information and services provided are subject to our Reservation Form Terms and Conditions.

Accommodations



BLACK ROCK LODGE, CAYO DISTRICT

Black Rock Lodge is nestled in the dense rainforest overlooking the Macal River in the Maya Mountains of Belize. It is the perfect base for adventure travel including access to caving, rainforest hikes, swimming, river tubing, and exploration of Mayan ruins including travel to Tikal and Caracol. The private rainforest reserve is teeming with wildlife including over 200 species of birds; it is one of the rare places in Central America where you can find all three species of toucan. It is especially ideal for a family vacation to Belize as all 14 cabanas have stunning views of Black Rock Canyon and the Macal River with great wildlife-watching from a hammock on the front porch. The cabins are

built to take advantage of the fresh mountain breezes with screened windows and high pitched rooflines, creating a bright and refreshing rainforest home for guests.



LAS LAGUNAS BOUTIQUE HOTEL, PETEN

Located in the heart of the Guatemalan jungle 1 hour from the magnificent Tikal, Uaxactun and Yaxha ruins, Las Lagunas combines the spaciousness of 200 acres of land with the comfort and intimacy of a boutique hotel. Its 19 comfortably equipped suites, all overlooking the tranquil, lovely Quexil Lagoon, offer cascade showers, a deck with a Jacuzzi, satellite TV, a telephone, mini bar, air conditioning, and an in-room safe.



ALMOND BEACH RESORT & SPA, HOPKINS

Almond Beach is an outstanding luxury resort with spa, sharing facilities with its sister resort, Jaguar Reef Lodge, on the white sands of the Caribbean. Almond Beach offers a range of accommodations from beachfront casitas to elegant beachfront veranda rooms, honeymoon casitas, and family oriented two-bedroom suites. All rooms are individually decorated and offer room service. Guests can appreciate conveniences such as refrigerators and coffee makers while other amenities include furnished balconies, TVs, spa services, 2 outdoor swimming pools. Free WIFI, a restaurant, laundry facilities and a

grocery/convenience store are other popular property highlights. Guests have free access to kayaks and rental mountain bikes for undertaking your own local excursions.

Booking your Wildland Adventure

HOW TO RESERVE A TRIP

You can book online using our [Reserve a Trip form](#) or by calling 1-800-345-4453. Your space on a trip is confirmed once we receive your reservation form and initial trip deposit. All travelers must sign and submit a [Release of Liability](#).

Deposit requirements are as follows:*

- \$1,000 per person for all trips in Central America, South America, the Middle East, Asia and the Far East, the Mediterranean, and North America.
- 20% of land cost for all trips in Africa. This deposit is generally non-refundable.

*Some trips require additional non-refundable deposits, especially when yachts have been chartered, or if permits to visit archaeological or wildlife sites have been purchased in advance.

CUSTOM TRAVEL

This trip isn't exactly what you're looking for? We are happy to design a private custom itinerary to accommodate your travel dates, interests and style of accommodations. Call us at 1-800-345-4453, send an email to info@wildland.com, or use the Ask The Program Director button on the trip itinerary page on our website.

PAYMENTS, CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS

Full payment of the trip balance is due 90 days prior to departure. If you must cancel before departure, money will be returned less the cancellation fees charged by WA Inc. plus any additional non-refundable cancellation fees and payments already advanced to airlines, hotels and local operators:

Days Prior to Departure: Fee per person

91 or more:	\$300
61-90 days:	Initial deposit amount
31-60 days:	50% of land cost
30 or less:	100% of land cost

PRE-DEPARTURE SERVICES

Upon receipt of your deposit and completed reservation form, we will send you a comprehensive Pre-departure Dossier. This contains important information to help you prepare including immunizations, visas, trip insurance, packing checklist, reading list, maps, cross-cultural information, optional trip extensions and more. You will receive a final trip packet including Final Reminders and local contact information in your destination 2-3 weeks prior to departure.

REFERENCES AND QUESTIONS

Have any questions or concerns? Call us a 1-800-345-4453 or email info@wildland.com. We're here to help and are happy to provide you with references from previous Wildland travelers.

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