



Belize and Guatemala Explorer



Learn about Mayan history and culture while caving in the jungle and exploring the ruins of Tikal in Guatemala before relaxing and snorkeling on the Belize Barrier Reef.



Abbreviated Itinerary

Dates: March 27 – April 1, 2010

DATE	ACTIVITY	ACCOMMODATION	MEALS
March 27	Depart from Home. Arrive in Belize. Transfer to Lodge.	duPlooy's Jungle Lodge	R,D
March 28	Actun Tunichil Muknal (Cave of the Stone Sepulchre) or Barton Creek Cave and Xunantunich.	duPlooy's Jungle Lodge	B,L,D
March 29	Tikal Ruins of Guatemala.	duPlooy's Jungle Lodge	B,L,D
March 30	Belize Zoo. Fly to Ambergris Caye – Beach Relaxation.	Banana Beach Resort	B,L
March 31	Ambergris Caye – Hol Chan Marine Reserve. Shark Ray Alley. Caye Caulker.	Banana Beach Resort	B,R,D
April 1	Depart for Home. Arrive Home.		B

Pricing Information

Room Type	Check Payment	Credit Card Payment
Double	\$2,995 per person	\$3,120 per person
Single	\$4,195 per person	\$4,320 per person

Includes	Does Not Include
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Adrenaline tour leader local Belizean guides airport transfers when arriving on scheduled arrival and departure dates domestic flights (Belize City – Ambergris Caye – Belize City) Guatemala border taxes accommodation as indicated in itinerary meals as indicated in itinerary (B,L,D; R=reception) bottled water on all transfers and during activities welcome reception and dinner farewell drinks and dinner activities as indicated in itinerary and entrance fees to national parks, historical sites and museums transportation as indicated in itinerary <p>Additional Inclusions for ASU Alumni Association</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 ASU host after 15 full-paying passengers (including international airfare, land costs in single accommodations and host's tips and gratuities to local guides and hotel staff) 5% commissions per full-paying passenger group photo of all ASU travelers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> international flights (approximately \$600 to \$800 for USA – Belize City – USA flights) international airport departure tax (\$35) meals not included (approximately \$50) beverages (discretionary) tips and gratuities (discretionary) travel insurance (discretionary) phone calls, laundry and other items of a purely personal nature (discretionary) <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This trip will be shared with the Ohio State Alumni Association. The school with the most registrations after the group size reaches 15 paid passengers, will send the host. print marketing not included; Global Adrenaline to supply flyer artwork, customized webpage and any copy needed for emails or e-newsletters pricing based on minimum group size of 15 pax



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Expedition Summary

Immerse yourself in Mayan history and culture on Sun Devil Destinations' "**Belize and Guatemala Explorer**" trip. Enjoy a relaxing canoe tour through **Barton Creek Cave** followed by a visit to **Xunantunich**, one of Belize's most important Mayan ruins, or for a more adventurous cave exploration, hike through the **Tapir Mountain Nature Reserve** and explore **Actun Tunichil Muknal**, the Cave of the Stone Sepulchre. Here, among beautiful stalactites and stalagmites, see numerous cultural artifacts used by the Maya in their ritual ceremonies, and view the remains of a Maya princess as she was laid to rest centuries ago. Finish up your time in the jungle with a day trip to **Tikal**, the greatest of all Classic Maya cities in **Guatemala**. End your trip on **Ambergris Caye**, a laid back island protected by the **Belize Barrier Reef**, the second largest coral reef system in the world. Snorkel in the **Hol Chan Marine Reserve** among nurse sharks and stingrays and spend an idyllic afternoon on **Caye Caulker**. This trip is a wonderful vacation packed with jungle adventure, ruins and beach relaxation -- a tantalizing taste of what Belize has to offer along with the spectacular ruins of Tikal in Guatemala.

Experience Required

This trip is rated **Easy**. No experience is required for this trip.



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Day by Day Itinerary

March 27: Depart from Home. Arrive in Belize. Transfer to Jungle Lodge.

Arrive into Belize International Airport (BZE). Meet your driver just outside the baggage collection area and drive approximately 2.5 hours to your jungle lodge. Spend the remainder of the afternoon settling into the lodge and begin to soak in the relaxed Belizean lifestyle. Enjoy welcome drinks and dinner at the jungle lodge.

Overnight: duPlooy's Jungle lodge. (R, D)

duPlooy's Jungle Lodge

duPlooy's is a small jungle lodge, where visitors feel relaxed in friendly surroundings. There are plenty of activities right on the premises - swimming in the waters of the Macal River, relaxing on a beautiful sandy beach, canoeing, horseback riding or visiting the adjacent Belize Botanic Gardens. Various bird species can be observed right from duPlooy's deck with its 200-foot canopied walkway or from the bird blind in the Belize Botanic Gardens, while walking about the property or on guided hikes. Your own private bungalow is nestled in the jungle. Treat yourself to a relaxing cup of coffee and unwind on your screened porch in a hammock and lull yourself into an unforgettable Belizean rhythm.



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March 28: Actun Tunichil Muknal (Cave of the Stone Sepulchre) - or - Barton Creek Cave and Xunantunich.

Today you have the choice of exploring one of two different caves: Actun Tunichil Muknal or Barton Creek Cave.

The Actun Tunichil Muknal tour is wonderful (see description below), but is physically demanding and involves climbing over rocks, squeezing through small spaces, walking through water up to your chest, etc. If you would prefer an easier and more relaxing cave tour, the Barton Creek Cave is a better option. Both tours are adventurous, but the Actun Tunichil Muknal cave is more physically rigorous and is definitely not for everyone.

Actun Tunichil Muknal: If you are into adventure – this is it! Actun Tunichil Muknal, the Cave of the Stone Sepulchre, is located near Teakettle Village in the Cayo District. The cave is located 1.5 hours from our lodge and requires a 45-minute nature hike to reach the entrance. The hike includes three stream crossings and goes through the Tapir Mountain Nature Reserve which is 6,700 acres in size. Witness spectacular visions of the jungle, Maya Mountains and wildlife while trekking across rivers and remote jungle trails. Wildlife in the area includes tapir, jaguar, howler monkey and the white tailed-deer. At the cave's entrance gear up with helmets and waterproof headlamps before swimming across the emerald colored water flowing from the cave's gaping mouth to start the cave journey. In this remote cave see burial chambers with calcified remains, ceremonial vessels and much more. Observe numerous cultural artifacts used by the Maya in their ritual ceremonies, and see the remains of a Maya princess as she was laid to rest centuries ago. The caves are full of beautiful stalagmites and stalactites. Because artifacts are often looted from caves following their discovery, passage through this cave remains known to only a few select guides who have permission from the Belize Department of Archaeology to take visitors into this special cave. To this day the cave has not been looted and nearly all of the cultural artifacts have remained in place as they were originally found in 1989. This tour is physically demanding and requires climbing over rocks, squeezing through small spaces, swimming short distances and walking through water up to your chest, climbing over ledges, etc. This is not a tour for anyone with a fear of heights or tight spaces.

Barton Creek Cave and Xunantunich: The trip starts with an adventurous drive toward the Mountain Pine Ridge, along the Chiquibul Road and through a picturesque Dutch Mennonite Amish farm community. Along the way, stop at the Belize Butterfly Farm to see a myriad of butterflies in an enclosed tropical garden setting. A guide from the garden explains the life cycle of these fascinating creatures and about the work that they are doing to preserve Belize's many varieties of butterflies. Once you arrive at the cave, sit back, relax and glide through a remote underground water cave system in a canoe equipped with powerful spotlights. Marvel at the amazing formations inside the huge cave believed by the Maya to be the Underworld, "Xibalba," (pronounced SheeBALba) the kingdom of their gods. Float under stalactites, see ancient skeletons and pottery and prepare to be awestruck by cathedral-like caverns. It is believed that the Maya once used this cave for ritual burials. Your guide will point out a skull, and tell you that a skeleton was found here in the kneeling position, assumed to be a young virgin kneeling as she was sacrificed to attract the rain god. Marvel at the 5 million year old speleothems over 50 feet high as your knowledgeable guide explains the Maya's beliefs about the underworld. Speleothems are cave features created after the underground chamber has been formed and are a result of slow-moving water, usually containing calcium carbonate, which has been dissolved from the limestone where the cave was formed. When this water enters the cave, a chemical change causes the calcium carbonate to harden, creating all manner of cave formations and features. From the cave's entrance it is about a mile through the cave to the stopping point. There are also wonderful views of beautiful stalactite and stalagmite formations and a chance to swim in the cave's cool waters by a small waterfall at the mouth of the cave. This is a great alternative if you would like a less physically demanding and more relaxing cave tour. In the afternoon visit Xunantunich, one of Belize's most important Mayan ruins.

After a day of caving and visiting Mayan ruins, enjoy dinner and spend the evening at the jungle lodge.

Overnight: duPlooy's Jungle lodge. (B, L, D)



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March 29: Tikal Ruins of Guatemala.

After an early morning breakfast, depart for a full day trip to Tikal, Guatemala. Tikal, the greatest of all Classic Maya cities, is located in Guatemala, about 50 miles northwest of the Belize/Guatemala border. Set in the jungle canopy, the site consists of over 3,000 buildings, including a handful of impressively tall temples that tower above the forest. The ancient Maya began building Tikal around 600 B.C. At one point an estimated 100,000 Maya thrived in this ancient city. Tikal was one of the greatest centers of Maya culture and sprawled over 46 square miles. It was an important religious, scientific, and political center. Pyramids to honor dead kings were built, administrative buildings rose, storage houses appeared and houses for royalty were carved out of the jungle.

The site of Tikal is a national park, where the native flora and fauna still flourish relatively undisturbed. In addition to its numerous well-excavated temples and pyramids, Tikal presents an excellent opportunity for animal and bird watching. Today, the pristine forest engulfing the ruined city is home to howler and spider monkeys, white-lipped peccary, brocket deer, gray foxes, coatimundis, toucans, scarlet macaws, parrots, ocelots, red coatis and the seldom seen jaguar. The combination of archaeological remains and the natural environment of the Petén Jungle prompted the UNESCO World Heritage group to declare Tikal both a Natural and Cultural Heritage Site for Humanity.

Return to the jungle lodge for dinner and one last night in the jungle.

Overnight: duPlooy's Jungle lodge. (B, L, D)

March 30: Belize Zoo, Transfer to Ambergris Caye – Beach Relaxation.

After breakfast, visit the Belize Zoo, home to over 125 animals native to Belize. Many of the animals were orphaned or rescued and the zoo's mission is to educate people about the importance of protecting the natural habitats that sustain these animals in the wild.

Drive to the Belize City Municipal Airport and enjoy a boxed lunch before taking a 15-minute flight over the crystal Caribbean waters to Ambergris Caye. Transfer to an idyllic beach resort and enjoy the remainder of the afternoon at leisure, relaxing on the beautiful white-sand beach or exploring the laid-back town of San Pedro.

Overnight: Banana Beach Resort. (B, L)

Banana Beach Resort

This casual resort is located on the Caribbean shores of Ambergris Caye, on a white-sand beach just far enough away from the town of San Pedro to ensure true tranquility. Banana Bay's all-suite accommodations are decorated with rattan furniture made in Belize and decorated with ceramic art and hand-woven tapestries from the Yucatan. Take a golf-cart or taxi-ride to the laid-back town of San Pedro where you'll find fresh island fare and souvenirs. Go on snorkeling adventures or relax on the beach.

March 31: Ambergris Caye – Hol Chan Marine Reserve. Shark Ray Alley. Caye Caulker.

Spend the day on a snorkeling excursion to the Hol Chan Marine Reserve, Shark Ray Alley and nearby Caye Caulker. After breakfast, start the day's activities with snorkeling at the Hol Chan Marine Reserve and Shark Ray Alley, known to have the most prolific fish-life on the reef. Nurse sharks and stingrays were originally attracted to this site where fishermen used to clean their catch. The underwater world includes sea turtles, eagle rays, nurse sharks and hundreds of species of fish, coral, and sponges that create one of the world's most diverse underwater ecosystems. Continue on to Caye Caulker for lunch on your own and free time to relax on the beach or stroll through the lobster-fishing village. Return to Ambergris Caye in the mid-afternoon, stopping at one additional spot to snorkel on the way. Enjoy a farewell drink and dinner with the group.

Overnight: Banana Beach Resort. (B, R, D)



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April 1: Return Home.

Enjoy a relaxing morning on Ambergris Caye before departing for the San Pedro Airport for your flight to the Belize International Airport to connect to international flights home.

(B)



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