

ULTIMATE ADVENTURE



Best of Belize: Maya Mountains to Glover's Reef

Duration:	10 nights	2016/2017 Departures
Starts:	Belize City	Nov 17
Finishes:	Belize City	
Guides:	2-6 leaders	
Price:	\$2409US + \$290 Taxes & Fees \$2639Cdn + \$350 Taxes & Fees	
Habitats:	Tropical Savannah, Rainforest, Glover's Reef Atoll, Barrier Reef	
Activity level:	3/5 No experience required	
Web address:	www.ultimateadventure.travel	

Activities: Sea Kayaking (paddling and sailing), Snorkeling, Fishing, Caving, Whitewater River Paddling, Hiking, Birding, Photography, Natural History Interpretation, Stand Up Paddleboarding. (Optional, cost not included in trip price – scuba, nocturnal zoo tour).

Accommodations: Tropical Education Center, Tobacco Caye island lodge, Glover's Reef Basecamp, Lodge at Big Falls, jungle camping, Belize Biltmore Hotel.

The Ultimate Adventure is a multisport journey taking you off-the-beaten path from Belize's rich coral reefs to its jungle rainforests. Begin with an overnight stay at the Belize Zoo's Tropical Educational Center and an optional specially arranged nocturnal zoo tour. Venture into the Mayan underworld of Actun Tunichil Muknal (ATM cave) before heading out to a remote island group on the Southern Barrier Reef. Paddle and snorkel among turquoise waters and coral reefs, staying first at an island lodge on Tobacco Caye, then on to our marine Basecamp at Glover's Reef Atoll. Returning to the mainland we travel west from the coast deep into the Maya Mountains and the 'Wild South' of Belize. We embark on an exhilarating four day paddling trip into the rainforest valleys of the Moho River, jungle camping and visiting Mayan villages far removed from the outside world. Ideal for those looking for an active, adventurous vacation that encompasses the best of Belize.

Typical Daily Itinerary:

Day 0: Arrive at the Belize International Airport where you will be met by an Island Expeditions' representative and transferred to the Tropical Education Center, adjacent to the Belize Zoo. After checking into our accommodations we enjoy a welcome dinner and have a chance to meet our fellow travelers. We are able to experience the surrounding tropical pine savannah habitat through a network of trails and raised wildlife viewing platforms. We also have a unique and exclusive nocturnal tour of the Belize Zoo (optional by donation) with one of the senior zookeepers, which helps us understand the diverse ecology of Belize and is an ideal starting point for the adventure ahead.

This day is your day to arrive before the trip starts, meet your fellow travelers, and acclimatize to your new tropical environment. Scheduled transfers from the airport to the lodging are included.

Accommodation: Lodge

Meals: Dinner is included

Day 1: We rise early to start today's extraordinary journey which takes us deep into the Mayan underworld known as Xibalba (shil-balba), a mythical realm inhabited by spirits and powerful gods - an underworld of untold fears and dreams where Mayan shaman, in supposition to the gods, ventured into darkness to conduct their secretive rituals. As we venture underground into the caves, we learn from our guides how the caves played an important role in the ancient Maya civilization and about ongoing archaeological research taking place underground in Belize. After our cave visit we travel the Hummingbird Route to meet up with our motor charter on the coast by the town of Dangriga. We head out to the Southern Barrier Reef and arrive at Paradise Lodge on Tobacco Caye in time to settle in, have dinner, and plan our next two days on the Barrier Reef.

Accommodation: Island Lodge

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 2: We rise early for a breakfast on the beach. We then focus on our introduction to sea kayaking and get comfortable with the gear. We start by teaching and reviewing the fundamentals of sea kayaking and introduce everyone to ocean touring techniques. We test our new found skills with a paddle out to the main reef to snorkel along the inner reef wall or patch reefs. Depending on sea conditions, a snorkel along the outside reef edge may be possible. Our paddle back to Tobacco Caye takes us past mangrove ranges and protected lagoons. Out on the reef, our guides share their knowledge of Belize, the marine environments, and local culture.

Accommodation: Island Lodge

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 3: After breakfast and a morning of paddling and snorkeling, our motor charter returns to take us 20 miles east of the main Barrier Reef to Glover's Reef Atoll, a National Marine Park and designated World Heritage site. We land at park headquarters on Middle Caye, with boats rigged and ready to sail. We sail our kayaks along the eastern reef wall to our Basecamp at Southwest Caye at the southern end of the Atoll, surrounded by rich coral reefs and beautiful turquoise waters. Tonight we enjoy an island feast of mixed grilled fresh seafood and vegetables topped with Belizean coconut baking and tropical fruits. **Accommodation:** Basecamp

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 4 & 5: Glover's is one of only four atolls in the Caribbean Sea and is truly one of the most spectacular marine environments in Belize. Due to its isolation from the mainland the waters are exceptionally clear with an incredibly rich reef system that offers some of the best kayaking, snorkeling, and diving in the Caribbean. Our days are flexible in order to respond to both group and individual desires and abilities. Activities include: sea kayaking, snorkeling the inner and outer walls of the reef, and kayak sailing. For those who are certified divers we can also arrange dives on the outer walls. If all this sounds a little too busy, you always have the choice of just kicking back in a hammock and relaxing with a good book and a cold drink. On the afternoon of Day 5 we transfer back to the mainland and continue south to our Jungle Lodge in the Toledo district of Belize to begin the next leg of our journey.

Accommodation: Basecamp/Lodge at Big Falls

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 6, 7, 8: The Lodge at Big Falls is situated on the banks of the Rio Grande river in Belize's southern Toledo District, a region of isolated villages lying amongst an unspoiled tropical wilderness. Our location is superb. The lodge property is located on a meander of the river with almost a mile of river frontage. There are views towards the Maya Mountains to the northwest while the south eastern bank faces the small village of Big Falls. In the afternoon we drive further south from Big Falls to our put-in point on the Moho River, stopping for lunch at the traditional Maya village of Santa Theresa. Once on the river our guides provide a brief boat and river orientation, and we take as much time as we need to learn and practice our new boat-handling skills, enabling us to safely navigate the rapids and pour-overs. We then begin our journey along one of Belize's most beautiful rivers through some pristine rainforest to our first river camp.

For these next days we break contact completely with the outside world and become a part of the mist-shrouded rainforest as we follow the Moho River through canyons and lush rainforest. Each bend reveals the dynamic nature of the river - from calm meandering water that reflects the intense green of the jungle to stretches of rapids, pour-overs and spectacular waterfalls as the river descends from the Maya Mountains to the sea. Depending on water levels, some days we may reach our bush-camp by mid-afternoon and switch to land based activities. Hiking through the forest, birding, plant and animal identification, and photography are some of the many activities we engage in. During the trip, with our Mayan guides and North American leaders, we emphasize understanding the ecology of the rainforest, learning about the habits of the wildlife, and gaining an appreciation for the rich Mayan folklore which adds so much to our experience in the jungle.

Accommodation: Camping

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 9: We continue paddling downstream and arrive to the river pull-out in the afternoon, where we are met by IE staff. We have a final lunch in the Mayan Mennonite village of Jordan, followed by a transfer back to Dangriga. Here we board a domestic flight to the Belize Municipal Airport and then proceed to our accommodations to enjoy a well-deserved hot shower.

Accommodation: Hotel (Biltmore Plaza Hotel)

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

Note: This is one of our most adventurous trips. It takes place in remote wilderness regions of Belize. Weather conditions can greatly affect water levels and may increase the level of difficulty. Due to the changing nature of water levels, the river we run on the inland component of trip may vary. We also believe that the remoteness and variability of conditions are what make this trip the best of its kind in Belize.

Please visit www.ultimateadventure.travel for further trip details and images.