



# BELIZE

Leading the way to adventure since 1987

## Your Trip Preparation Guide



PREPARING FOR YOUR TRIP TO BELIZE

# Welcome Aboard

Your Belize adventure is just beginning, and we're excited to officially welcome you to our Island Expeditions Community.

This Essential Trip Preparation Guide is designed to prepare for your upcoming journey. Inside, you'll find everything from trip logistics and travel planning to packing recommendations and health considerations.

Whether you're heading into the rainforest, out to the barrier reef, or both, we want you to feel confident and well-prepared for the adventure of a lifetime.

This is more than just a vacation - it's an opportunity to experience a style of travel that inspires growth, sparks curiosity, and leaves you with stories that stay long after the trip ends.

Let's make this trip  
**Un-Belize-able.**



# Get Ready for your Trip

## A step by step guide



### ✓ Step 1: Read Your Pre-Trip Information

Download this Trip Preparation Guide to get all key details: packing tips, travel advice, health info, and more. You can print it or save it on your phone.

### ✈ Step 2: Book Your Flights

Make sure you book your international flight according to your start and end of your trip. Some trips require you to arrive a day before or leave a day after.

Need help booking your international flight or domestic flights within Belize? Just give us a call, we're happy to help!

Visit our [website](#) for tips on planning your travel to Belize.

### 🛡 Step 3: Get Travel Insurance

We require you have Medical, Evacuation, and strongly recommend Trip Cancellation Insurance for your trip.

Already covered?  
You can skip this step.

Need help choosing a provider?  
Visit our [Travel Insurance Page](#) for recommendations.

### 📝 Step 4: Complete Your Travel Forms

Each traveler must fill out our [Travel Info & Medical + Waiver Form](#) at least 30 days before the trip.

#### Underage travelers:

For underage children, a parent or guardian must complete and sign the form. Please log in using the parent's name and fill in the child's name where needed.



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# Passports & Travel Documents

## Passports

A current passport with 6 months of validity is required to enter Belize.

We suggest you also carry a paper or a digital copy (photos on your phone) of your passport.

For more info visit: [Travel Belize](#)

## Entry to Belize - Digital Immigration Declaration Form

You can now fill out your entry and exit forms digitally in advance of travel.

Travelers are encouraged to visit the web portal at [Belize Digital Forms](#) to complete these forms. This is the same document that you normally fill out on the plane, upon arrival into Belize.

[Click for: Immigration Declaration Form](#)



## Travel Consent for Minors

Children traveling with one parent require a notarized letter of authority from the other parent indicating travel consent.

Also, if you are travelling with children as part of a custom group you will require full documentation as well as a notarized Consent Letter (Canadians) or Minor Travel Consent Form (Americans) from the absent parent(s) or guardian approving out-of-country travel.

[Canadian Travel Consent Letter](#)

[US Minor Travel Consent Form](#)

Children traveling with a parent with a different last name, at times have been asked for a copy of birth certificate to authenticate parentage.

Please make digital copies (on your phone) of children's birth certificates, if this is the case.

If you need additional information please contact your Trip Planner.



# Arrival & Departure

## Arrival at the Belize International Airport

The Philip S. W. Goldson International Airport in Belize City (BZE) is small and easy to navigate.

- You will disembark directly onto the tarmac and be guided into the terminal for Immigration.
- After your passport is stamped, collect your baggage and proceed through Customs.
- Once cleared, you can exit the airport or connect to your onward destination.

Wi-Fi is available throughout the airport, with both free and paid options.

If you need any assistance upon arrival in Belize, contact our **Dangriga Office at 522-3328** locally, or refer to your Emergency Contact Information

## Taxis

There is currently no Uber in Belize city. However, you will find taxis, which look like regular cars but have a distinct green license plate. Fares should be negotiated before entering the cab, and fares are paid in cash.

The airport taxis have a fixed posted rate into anywhere in Belize City.

## Domestic flights connections

After clearing customs, head to the departures terminal and look for the Maya Island Air desk (or Tropic Air if you booked directly).

Present your passport and the staff will check you in for your pre-booked domestic flight to Dangriga (or any other destination)

## Flight Delays or Lost Luggage

Island Expeditions is not responsible for costs related to delayed arrivals or lost luggage. To seek reimbursement from your travel insurance or airline, be sure to keep all receipts for any extra expenses.

**PRO TIP:** We recommend carrying a contingency fund of \$200 USD per person for unexpected situations.

## Departing Belize

Allow at least 2 hours before your international departure (especially if you are checking luggage). The airport is small but can be busy, and only a couple desk workers are processing documentation.

# Travel Insurance & Health Considerations

## Travel, Medical & Evacuation Insurance

We require you to obtain a traveler's medical insurance policy in case of accident or illness for the duration of your travel period.

This policy should cover all emergency medical and evacuation expenses for the duration of your international travel.

Check with your credit card provider, to see if you have travel insurance benefits.

We also highly recommend a **trip cancellation policy**. Generally, cancellation insurance should be purchased **within 72 hours** of your trip registration date. Check with your specific provider

If you do not have a travel insurance provider, visit our [Travel Insurance Page](#) for recommendations.

## Medical Guidelines

Our Island Expeditions [Travel Information Form + Liability & Waiver](#) must be completed prior to your trip departure



Though not rigorous, our trips can be physically challenging at times; however, all activities are optional

Consult a medical professional prior to your trip regarding any health considerations, precautions and appropriate vaccinations for your trip to Belize.

## Trip Conditioning

Although not strenuous, Island Expeditions are generally quite active and a base level of fitness is recommended.

If you're a bit out of practice, it's a good idea to do some light exercising a few weeks prior to your departure.

For those interested in kayaking, the longest tour we do is approx. 8 nautical miles, although we do a variety of much shorter tours as well.

Our snorkels last anywhere from 30 minutes to several hours depending on the interest and ability of the group.

Here is a great video on [Stretching to Prevent Kayaking Injuries](#)

## Shots and Vaccinations

There are no mandatory vaccination requirements for entering Belize; however, we encourage you to consult with your doctor before travelling.

**We encourage you to travel with an up to date Tetanus inoculation, and consider a solution for Hepatitis A.**

**Tetanus** - A current tetanus inoculation is **strongly recommended** for any of our trips.

**Hepatitis A** - Transmitted mostly through contaminated food or water.

HAVRIX is a series of two inoculations: the first covers you for 1 year and the second is good for up to 20 years. TWINRIX is another option which covers you for Hepatitis A & B

### NOTE:

If you experience any unusual symptoms after returning home from your trip please call our office and let us know what's happening as we may have information that will be helpful to you and your medical professional.

## Traveling with a CPAP Machine

Let us know in advance of your arrival. Most accommodations in Belize will have 110V outlets in the rooms.

For basecamp stays at Glover's Reef or Lighthouse Reef:

**We will provide a 12 volt battery for your stay.**

**Check your machine's power supply** for the technical specifications and if it has a 12 volt option.

If your system does not have 12V you will need to bring a small inverter to switch the current from 12V to 110V. Most CPAP machines operate in the 2 to 5 Amp range, or require at least 100W-200W capacity.

**You will need to make sure you have the appropriate connections to attach your power supply to these 12V terminals using alligator clips.**

[Click here for an example of an inverter on Amazon](#)

[Here are some other Resources regarding traveling with a CPAP Machines](#)

# Personal Spending Money & Tipping

## Cash

\$USD is accepted everywhere in Belize at a fixed rate of \$1USD = \$2BZD.

We recommend you bring a combination of smaller and larger bills and separate your cash so you're not carrying it all in the same place. \$1USD notes are no longer accepted in many parts of Belize.

There are Bank machines (ATM's) in Belize and most are now connected to the North American banks.

Credit Cards are accepted at most shops, hotels and restaurants in major towns and cities

## Emergency Spending

It is good practice to carry an amount of emergency cash in the \$200-\$400USD range.

This is to help with unexpected travel expenses such as missed connections, lost luggage, and other circumstances beyond anyone's control.

## Cash is King!

USD or BZD bills in a variety of denominations are handy, especially in remote locations. Some locations have the ability to charge credit cards; however, this is not the preferred method.



## How Much Should I Tip?

Tipping in Belize is similar to what you'd expect in North America — it's customary and appreciated, unlike in many parts of Europe where it may not be standard.

A good rule of thumb is to budget 5–15% of your total trip cost for gratuities.

This can vary depending on your level of satisfaction and the length or complexity of your itinerary

### For example:

For a \$3,000 USD trip, allocating \$150–\$450 USD for tipping is considered appropriate.

## Tipping on Multi-Stop Itineraries (Including Adventure Basecamps)

Depending on your trip, you're likely to meet different sets of guides and staff across various locations. If you would like to leave a tip for them, you should do so before moving on to your next location. Here are two common approaches:

### Pooled/General Tip (Recommended):

Give one general tip per location, and it will be divided proportionally among Island Expeditions guides, cooks, and support staff. Some locations divide tips among all team members; others may share primarily among guides. Feel free to ask if you aren't sure

### Individual Tipping:

If someone really stood out and went above and beyond – feel free to give them a personal tip. This is in addition to their share of the Pooled/General Tip. Personal tips are always appreciated and truly make staff feel special for a job well done!

## Behind the Scenes and Office Staff

At our basecamp locations, 10% of the Pooled/General Tip is sent back to the Dangriga operations office to be divided between those who work behind the scenes to make your trip a success.

## Other locations

Some restaurants may include a basic service charge, but you're always welcome to tip extra if you feel the service was great, a 10-20% is standard.

For tour guides (other than Island Expedition guides) a 10–15% tip on the value of the tour is standard (\$10-20 pp avg)

For taxi drivers, even a few dollars is appreciated and goes a long way!

**Pro Tip:** Consider how many days you're spending in each location, and divide your tip budget accordingly.

**By budgeting for gratuities and tipping thoughtfully, you're directly supporting the incredible people of Belize—our local guides, lodge staff, boat captains, and cooks—who make your adventure truly unforgettable.**



# Electricity, Internet, Cell Phones, & Devices

## Electricity

Belize has the same 110v system as North America. You will not need any sort of adapters to travel to Belize

### Glover's Reef and Lighthouse Reef Adventure Basecamps

110V power available between 5-10pm in common areas.

### Bocawina Rainforest Resort

110v available in all rooms and common areas 24/7

### Tobacco Caye Paradise

110v available in all rooms and common areas 24/7

### All Other Lodges

110v available in all rooms and common areas 24/7

#### Disclaimer:

Island Expeditions is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage to personal items. It's up to each traveler to properly secure and weatherproof their electronics, documents, and valuables throughout the trip



## Electronic Devices

Belize's tropical environment—high humidity, heat, salty air, and sand—can be tough on valuables. To help protect your gear, keep the following in mind:

Use waterproof cases or dry bags to protect electronics from the elements. Even heavy-duty ziplocks can be helpful

Store devices properly when not in use, and double-bag important items like passports or documents.

**Pro Tip:** Travel smart and avoid leaving valuables or electronics unattended at any time during your trip



## Using your Cell Phone in Belize

Cellular data is available in most parts of the country, but less so while on tours in remote locations. Here are 3 options for your travels:

Check with your service provider for travel or roaming packages to be used in Belize. This would be the easiest option for travel.

Next consider an ESIM data plan. This is usually the least expensive option for roaming data, but does require purchasing a new plan and setting up a new number in your phone.

Alternatively, you can purchase a local SIM card and data quite easily. We suggest using [DigiCell](#)

**“WhatsApp” is used widely throughout Belize. We suggest downloading this app prior to travel. You can use this app to phone people and businesses throughout the country using either WiFi or cellular data.**

## WiFi on your trip

WiFi is becoming widely available in Belize; however, speeds at some locations might be slower than you’re used to.

Note: If you are travelling while on business or if WiFi speed is an important need, please let us know.

## Wifi and Cellular Service

### Inland Connectivity

On the mainland, WiFi and cellular service is becoming widely available. All of our trips locations have WiFi and cellular service. Some exceptions are:

- Bocawina Rainforest Eco-Resort - Limited WiFi, no cellular service
- Moho River Expedition- No WiFi, very limited cellular service
- Chaa Creek Macal River Camp - No WiFi, no cellular service

### Reef Connectivity

- Tobacco Caye - WiFi & Cellular
- Thatch Cate - WiFi & Cellular
- Glover’s Reef Basecamp - No WiFi, cellular service only. Consider a plan with your carrier or a [Local SIM card](#).
- Lighthouse Reef Basecamp - Limited WiFi (\$5 BZD per day), no cellular service
- Billy Hawk Caye - No WiFi, cellular service only

# Water, Washing & Toilet Facilities

## Drinking Water

Bring a re-usable water bottle, which you can refill. Safe drinking water will be supplied to you on your Island Expeditions trip.

The water system in Belize is normally potable and safe to drink in large towns and cities.

Water in small villages is not considered safe to drink. However, if you are traveling with Island Expeditions, safe drinking water will be provided.

Water is also readily available for purchase throughout the country while you are on the road. Most hotels and facilities have filtered water to refill your refillable bottle.



## Washing and Bathing

Each place you stay will have slightly different water systems and rules.

Fresh water is at a premium out on the CAYES. Most of the fresh water is from rain catchment systems.

Everything we do, from washing to cleaning, is done in a way to conserve fresh water.

## Toilet Facilities

Many of the lodges we use have a mixture of ensuite and shared bathroom facilities.

Island Lodges generally have flushing toilets, with some exceptions.

Glover's and Lighthouse Basecamps use composting toilets with private stalls, running tap water, and private showers.

Island Expeditions Moho River Expedition uses low-impact pit toilets with thatch walls.

# Soaps, Shampoos & Sunscreen

## Soaps & Shampoo

Biodegradable body wash / shampoo are highly recommended as a way to protect the delicate areas we operate in. Camp Suds and Dr.Bronners are both popular choices

Our lodges and basecamps provide biodegradable hand-soap.

## The Sun & Sunscreen

**Protection from the Sun and sunscreen are important considerations for your trip.**

The use of buffs (neck gaiters), SPF clothing, sun hats, and rash guards is our first line of protection against the sun.

Certain chemicals in some sunscreens and skincare products are harmful to marine and coral life.



Biodegradable and "Reef Safe" sunscreen is mandatory. Please check your other skincare products as well.

The best place to find these products are at outdoor stores like MEC, REI, and at health food stores

Even "Reef Safe" can be misleading. Especially in the use of "nano particles" of otherwise safe ingredients

The chemicals that you want to avoid are:

- Oxybenzone
- Octinoxate
- Nano-Zinc oxide (not to be confused with regular zinc oxide)
- Nano- Titanium oxide
- OD-PABA
- Benzophenone-8 & Benzophenone-1
- Octocrylene
- 4-Methylbenzylidene camphor
- 3-Benzylidene camphor



Learn more about how sunscreen chemicals affect ocean ecosystems on the [NOAA website](#).



# General Packing Tips

## Marine Plastics + Ocean Debris

The world's oceans are full of plastic and marine debris. Belize is no exception.

Wind and currents can cause excessive build up of sea-debris along our beaches and shorelines.

We do our best to clean it up as it comes in; however, this is a worldwide issue that is getting worse.

Island Expeditions organizes clean up crews throughout the year to clean up the areas we operate in and beyond.

If you see plastic or debris along your trip, feel free to lend a hand and pick up along the way.

Learn more about marine plastics and ocean debris on the [NOAA website](#)

### Packing Basics

Soft luggage is preferred over hard-shelled suitcases. Hard suit cases generally don't travel on boats and small planes as easily.

Carry essentials and a change of clothes in your carry-on in luggage, in case your checked bag gets delayed.

While on tour our staff will instruct you on how to prepare for travel between locations and for certain weather conditions.

We provide storage for extra bags when necessary and depending on what trip you're on.

Having at least one small (10-20L) durable waterproof bag for essentials is important.

Be aware that electronics like cameras, computers, phones must be fully waterproofed especially on boat rides.

Wrapping sensitive items in garbage bags inside your luggage for boat rides, is a great way to add extra waterproofing to your packing system.

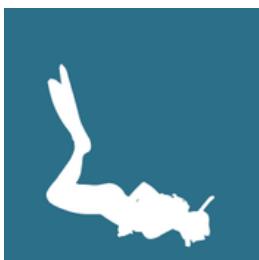
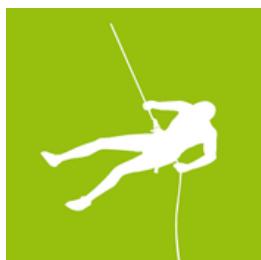
# Packing List

Everybody packs for a vacation differently, so please ensure you have enough clothes for the duration of your trip. Here is a general checklist of items that you can reference when packing for any Island Expeditions vacation.

**Lightweight, quick-drying, and moisture wicking clothing is essential for all trips to Belize**

## Essential Items

- Cell Phone / Chargers
- Passport
- Photo Copy of Passport
- Families Traveling with children, see note on consent letters and birth certificates
- Credit / Bank Cards
- Cash
- List of Medications
- Emergency Contacts List
- Travel Insurance Cards
- Refillable Water Bottle



## General Clothing

- Underwear
- Socks
- Sleepwear
- T-shirts / Blouse / Tanktops
- Belt
- Quickdry Long Sleeve Shirt (for sun protection / bugs)
- Quickdry Long Pants (for sun protection / bugs)
- Quickdry Shorts
- Cotton / Casual Shorts (for the evening)
- Dresses / Skirts / Sarongs
- Sweatshirt or Lightweight Fleece (100 weight)
- Swimwear (at least 2)
- Breathable Rainjacket (doubles as a windbreaker)
- Wide-Brimmed Sun Hat or Baseball Cap
- Hiking / Comfortable Walking Shoes

## Miscellaneous

- Tablet / E-Reader / Books
- Portable Power Bank
- Headphones
- Travel Pillow
- Eye Mask
- Ear Plugs
- Glasses / Contact Lenses
- Disinfecting Wipes
- Sunglasses / Croakies (eyewear retainers)
- Few Extra Snacks
- Waterproof Camera (GoPro, etc) / Memory Cards (optional)
- Luggage Lock (optional)

**Please bring bio-degradable items wherever possible**



## Suggested Toiletries

- Reef Safe Sunscreen
- Aloe Vera, Skincare Creams / Lotions
- Insect Repellent (20-100% Deet)
- Caladryl / AfterBite / Benadryl Cream or Antihistamines (to ease itching from bug bites)
- Toothbrush / Toothpaste / Dental Floss
- Biodegradable Liquid Soap
- Deodorant
- Biodegradable Shampoo / Conditioner
- Hair Brush
- Contact Lens Solution
- Reef Safe Sunscreen
- Shaving Kit
- Menstrual Products
- Hair Ties
- Antibiotics for Traveler's Diarrhea / Rehydration Drink Packs)
- Small First Aid Kit / Bandaids / Bandages / Blister Kit
- Epi Pen (if applicable)
- Motion Sickness Medication (for boat rides - if applicable)
- Hand Sanitizer
- Pain Medication
- Tweezers
- Nail Clippers
- Lip Balm

# Basecamps & Reef Essentials

In addition to the items listed in the general packing list, we highly recommend you incorporate the following items for your time in the reef / beach:

## Essentials

- Sport Sandals / Water Shoes (thick sole, closed heel)
- Sandals or Flip-Flops (for the evening)
- Long-sleeve sun shirts
- Long-sleeve rash guards (for sun protection while in the water)
- Paddling / Bike Gloves for Paddling
- Headlamp with Spare Batteries
- Small / Medium Dry Bag (one or two, for essentials)
- Beach Towel (might consider “travel size” light travel quick dry) /
- Sorong
- Shower Towel (might consider “travel size” light travel quick dry)
- Reef Safe sunscreen
- 2-3 Garbage bags for extra waterproofing and wet clothing (“contractor” strength works the best)
- Buff or Neck Gaiters (Essential for sun protection)

## Optional

- Lycra skin-suit (great for sun protection and adds a bit of warmth)
- Vaseline (essential for snorkeling with facial hair)
- Socks (especially if renting snorkeling fins)
- Fishing Rod and Tackle (Either Spin or Fly) [\[Click for more fishing information\]](#)
- Sun Sleeves - If you have a short sleeve rash guard (Outdoor Research or similar, for sun protection)
- Shortie wetsuit - (3mm) especially for kids (not essential but water temperatures can be cooler from Dec-Feb)
- Personal snorkel gear (mask, fins snorkel)

**The clothing that works the best for the marine environment is lightweight and quick drying. Cotton is great for the evenings, but not during the day when you're in and out of the water.**

# Rainforest & Inland Essentials

In addition to the items in the general packing list, we highly recommend you incorporate the following items for your time in the rainforest/jungle:

## Essentials

- Sturdy Hiking / Walking Shoes
- Small daypack for hiking/tours with waterproof cover
- Moho Trip - Cotton Sheet
- Moho Trip - Fleece Blanket
- Moho Trip - Pillow Case

## Optional

- Camera gear and waterpr
- Binoculars
- Drybag

The clothing that works best for the rainforest is lightweight and quick drying. It can be very humid in the jungle.

# Beach Resort Essentials

You'll spend time by the pool, at the beach, and exploring local attractions so pack accordingly. Pack breezy, light, comfortable beach clothes. Don't forget to bring an outfit for a nice dinner or a night out in town.

## Essentials

- Swimwear
- Comfortable lightweight clothes
- Sandals
- Comfortable walking shoes
- Wide brimmed sunhat/ball-cap
- Sunglasses
- Refillable water-bottle
- Sunscreen

The clothing that works the best for beach locations such as Placencia, Hopkins, Thatch Caye is light comfortable resort wear.

Exposure to insects, hydration, and lightweight/breathable clothing are the biggest packing considerations .

# Make Space in your Case



## Donate School Supplies to Students in Belize

Our "Make Space in your Case" initiative gives you the opportunity to donate school supplies to students in Belize. Use any extra space in your suitcase/luggage for school materials and we'll make sure they get to the kids and teachers in Belize who need it the most.

### Suggested Donations

- Children's story books in English or Spanish, Learning to read books
- Notebooks, Maps
- Arts and crafts materials:
  - Ballpoint Pens,
  - Crayons,
  - Carbon Paper,
  - Erasers,
  - Markers, Pencils,
  - Rulers,
  - Scissors,
  - Stencils,
  - Strong Paper/Cardboard Glue,
  - Coloured Pencils,
  - Watercolour Paint and Brushes,
  - Glue Gun and Glue Sticks
- Solar Calculators
- Pencil bags
- Backpacks
- Soccer balls, cleats, other sporting gear - can be used if still in good condition

### Drop off locations

- Island Expeditions Dangriga
- Bocawina Rainforest Resort
- Toacco Caye Paradise
- Lighthouse Reef Belize Docks



**Make  
Space  
in your  
case**



# Useful Information for your Trip

## Weather in the Tropics

Belize is Subtropical with a temperature range from 60F (16C) to 95F (32C)

November to June is considered the dry season with conditions that are usually clear, sunny, and warm

November and December are generally slightly cooler with a bit more chance of rain compared to January-May

From December to March there can be an infrequent "Northerly" which blows cool air down from the Gulf of Mexico. These cold fronts can bring heavy winds and rain but only last a few days.

July-October is considered "shoulder season" but can also be a great time to visit Belize. There is more consistent rain during these months but clear, sunny, and warm days are plentiful. The ambient temperature does not change much throughout the year.

Our travelling philosophy in Belize is that "All Weather is Good Weather", we like to "Prepare for the worst, and hope for the best". There are almost always great adventure options no matter what mother nature presents us.

## Insects

Yes, we also have them in Belize! Weather and proximity to the previous rainy season affect the amount of biting insects found at our basecamps and inland lodges

**The best defence is to cover up.**

- On the mainland where Mosquitos and Botlas (small no-see-ums) are more prevalent. We recommend loose-fitting clothing, socks, and closed shoes.
- On the cayes, the Sandfly is the main culprit. When the winds blow, they are not apparent, but as the wind dies down, we recommend covering up with loose fitting quick dry long sleeve tops, and pants. Also, you may consider socks as well.

Insect repellent with 20%+ Deet can be helpful for bare skin especially when in the rainforest, but can also be useful on the caye.

If you are extremely susceptible to biting insects there is special clothing you can buy at MEC, REI or your local outdoor store.

We also recommend Afterbite or Calamine lotion to help with itching and swelling from any bites you may encounter.

# Paddling & Snorkeling in the Tropics

## Sea Kayaking in the Tropics with Island Expeditions

A general comfort in the water is highly recommended; however, no previous experience is necessary. We'll teach you everything you need to know.

- You can paddle as much as you want at either of our basecamp locations.
- We access some of our snorkel spots exclusively by sea kayak.
- Our main concern while paddling is sun protection, so please make sure you have good protective clothing, hats, buffs (neck gaiters) and "reef safe" sunscreen.
- Gloves to protect your hands are also recommended while paddling.
- Our tandem sea kayaks are all fitted to be able to sail. This is a unique activity that Island Expeditions pioneered in Belize, and something you'll get a chance to experience on your trip with us.



If you'd like to learn more about basic kayaking skills, check out these YouTube links below:

- [3 Golden Rules of Sea-Kayaking](#)
- [Sea-Kayak Technique- The Bow Draw](#)
- [How to Re-Enter a Kayak](#)
- [The Ideal Forward Stroke](#)

## Snorkeling in the Tropic with Island Expeditions

On Island Expeditions reef trips, we snorkel a lot! Like, every day. Often multiple times a day!

A general comfort in water is highly recommended; however, no previous experience is necessary. We'll teach you everything you need to know.

We usually start in shallow water and work our way to deeper water.

We access many of our snorkel sites by kayak or motorboat.

- On kayaks we use a scissor kick technique to get back into the boat, but we also carry daisy chain ladders made of webbing to assist.
- On motor boats, we use a boarding ladder to get back into the boat.

We do our utmost to protect the coral reefs and educate our guests on how they can help

If you get cold easily, 3mm wetsuit or shortie is recommended. Long underwear and rashguard shirts or Lycra skin suits can help as well.

Children should wear wetsuits to prevent them getting cold.

## Snorkel Equipment Rental Information

Masks, snorkels, and short fins are available for rent at all of our reef locations.

If you plan to rent, please let us know ahead of time

We have two styles of masks available, sized small or large. We have several sizes of fins that are adjustable to certain foot sizes.

We only have one style of children's mask for rental. You may want to consider sourcing and testing a mask for your child before your trip.

## Tips for Purchasing Snorkel Gear

The most important piece of snorkeling gear is a mask that will seal properly to your face

If you wear glasses, you might want to consider custom corrective lens' or wear contacts

Generally speaking, when trying on a mask you should: press it to your face and slightly inhale through your nose. **Do not put the straps around your head.** If the mask fits, it should stay on your head even when you wiggle your head around.



# Scuba Diving on your Trip

## If You Plan to Scuba Dive

Bring Your certification card (or a copy of it)

Bring a Credit Card for payment

BCD sizes need to be submitted to Island Expeditions ahead of time

If a wetsuit rental is needed, sizes will need to be submitted ahead of time

Your own snorkel and mask is highly recommended, but you may use your IE gear or rent from the operator.

Diving costs will be paid directly to the dive operator

**Lighthouse Reef Divers please be aware that to dive the Great Blue Hole, an Advanced Open Water Diver certification is needed as well as a check-out dive. If you have questions you must speak with the dive operator directly**

You may be required to pay a fuel surcharge for us to transport you to the dive operator at both Glover's Reef and Lighthouse Reef. Your guides will explain the details.

## What to Expect

The Belize Barrier Reef System offers world-class diving and stunning marine life. From dramatic walls to gentle slopes, there's something for every comfort level.

Diving for certified scuba divers is available at Grovers Reef, Lighthouse Reef and Tobacco Caye but is not operated by Island Expeditions.

We will do our best to accommodate through our partners; however, we can not guarantee availability on every departure.

All equipment is readily available for rent.

Please let us know in advance and we will do our best to arrange diving on your trip.

# Fishing on the Cayes

No previous experience is needed to catch fish on your Island Expeditions trip.

## Hand-Line Fishing "Fish like a Local"

While on your Island Expedition's trip you may get the opportunity to try traditional Belizean hand-line fishing. No fancy rods and reels, just pure fun. Throw your line over the boat, wait for it to hit the bottom, feel the nibbles, set the hook. It's as simple as that.

We start with diving for conch or use some bait collected previously.

Then we start "drop fishing" or handline fishing for smaller species including Snapper, Jacks, and Grunt.

Next, we use these smaller species to troll for bigger fish on bigger hand-lines. We target Barracuda or Grouper to bring back to camp for dinner.

Truly a fun experience for all. Guides will outfit you with all the gear you need for this. Bring sun protection, water, and a pair of gloves are handy for the trolling part!



## Spear-Fishing

There's nothing quite like the experience of hunting for fish underwater! A real way of life in Belize!

Accompany your guides as they free dive for Lion-fish, Lobster (in season), Conchs, and a variety of tasty reef fish.

We use Hawaiian slings or pole spears and a "hook-stick" while on these exhilarating hunts and we love it when our guests join in.

**Note: Please leave your spear fishing guns at home. These are not legally used in Belize by foreigners. Hawaiian Slings are the only option for travellers.**

## Fly-Fishing the "Big-Three"

**Bonefish, Tarpon, and Permit are all protected species. Angling for these species is Catch and release only**

**We don't supply Fly-fishing rods at our basecamps**

**We recommend Glover's Reef for fly fishing anglers.**

**Fly-fishing at our Lighthouse Reef basecamp is forbidden**, as there is a one mile square protected area / no fishing zone around Halfmoon Caye, however we do handline fishing outside park boundaries.

### Bonefish

Glover's Reef is like Bonefish heaven. Schools of resident Bonefish swim back and forth directly off the shore of our island.

The Bonefish diet consists of small shrimps, crabs, and other crustaceans. They love pink colour and flies that imitate these species.

- For a list of the best Bonefish flies you can [visit this Website](#)
- For more information on how to fly for Bonefish, [watch this video](#)



### Tarpon

Glover's Reef has a sheltered mangrove area between our's and our neighbour's island. A school of resident Tarpon feed here in the evening

The Tarpon diet changes depending on their stage of life cycle; however, typically they feed on small fish and larger crustaceans and bigger insects. They love flies that imitate these species.

- For a list of the best Tarpon flies you can [visit this website](#)
- For more information on how to fly for Tarpon, [watch this video](#)

### Permit

The Permit of Glover's Reef tend to swim up and down the fore-reef or "rubble zone" in waist deep water

The Permit diet consists of crabs, shrimp and smaller fish. Similar to Bonefish, they love pink colour and flies that imitate these species.

- For a list of the best Permit flies you can [visit this website](#)
- For more information on how to fly for Permit, [watch this video](#)



## Birdwatching in Belize

You can see incredible bird life just about anywhere in Belize; however, here are a few spots that really stand out and where we will take you there is some of our inland trips.

- **Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary** - wide variety of resident and migratory birds including the incredible Jabiru Stork
- **Cockscomb Basin Forest Reserve** - primarily rainforest dwellers including the majestic Scarlet Macaw
- **Mayflower Bocawina National Park** - over 300 species and the only lodge located inside a national park in Belize
- **Half Moon Caye, Lighthouse Reef** - the best place to see the large nesting site for the Red-footed Booby

We highly recommend bringing your own binoculars, and consider the [Bird's of Belize, by H. Lee Jones](#), along with your Life List, and Local Check List.

## Hiking, Jungle Adventures, Mayan sites

There are multiple Mayan archaeological sites in Belize, during your trip you may have the opportunity to see Mayan ruins, artifacts and caves.

Most archeological sites have local site guides available to hire after you check in. If you are traveling independently, it is a great way to gain extra insight to

Cell service can be limited in remote areas, so be sure to bring a printed map to help navigate safely on your own.

The weather throughout mainland Belize can be hot and humid depending on the time of year. wear a sun hat, lightweight clothes, sunscreen, bug spray and bring a bottle of water.

Be mindful of wildlife, do not approach nor try to pet wild animals.

Be mindful of artifacts or any items you find during your exploration.

Take only photos (if allowed).  
NOTE: Actun Tunichil Muknal (ATM) cave does not allow cameras inside.

# Photography

## Point & Shoot Digital Cameras & Phones

GoPro / Insta360 or any other waterproof sports cameras are great options for any of our itineraries.

Batteries can be charged in the evenings at our basecamp locations

You can charge batteries at lodges and hotels any time of the day

There is no power source for charging on our Moho River Expedition. Please bring a power bank to charge your devices.



## For the Serious

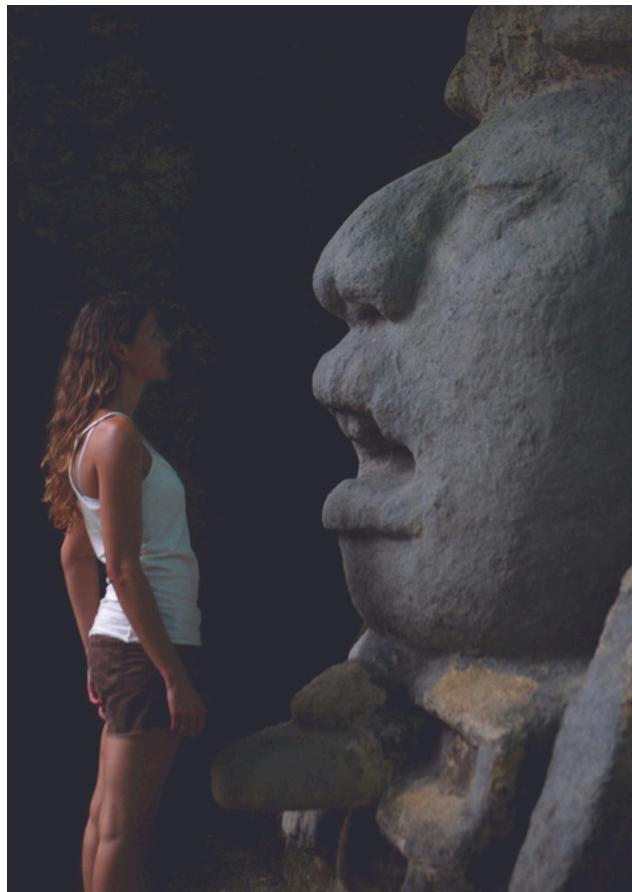
DSLR with a wide (24mm,28mm) and zoom (28-70mm) or telephoto lens (35-80mm, 70-210mm) are good combinations

A universal lens (28-150mm) with macro is very helpful

Wide-angle coverage flash is very helpful for filling in shadows and reducing high light contrast

For wildlife photographers a 300mm or longer lens is needed

**Waterproofing is extremely important due to the climate in Belize. Island Expeditions is not responsible for any camera gear or electronics that are water damaged. It is advisable to have your camera equipment insured before travelling.**



# Recommended Reading

Research Belize before you arrive, or you may find a selection of these books in our basecamp libraries. If you are interested in diving deeper, here is a list of books that we recommend on the region:

## **Maya Culture**

- *The Ancient Maya: New Perspectives*, Heather McKillop
- *Belize: A Concise History*, P.B.A Thomson
- *Time Among the Maya: Travels in Belize, Guatemala, and Mexico*, Ronald Wright
- *The Popol Vuh: The Mythic and Heroic Sagas of the Kiches of Central America*, Lewis Spence & Paul Tice
- *Popol Vuh: A Sacred Book of the Maya*, Victor Montejo, Luis Garay & David Unger

## **Archeology & History of Belize**

- *In the Realm of Nachan Kan: Postclassic Maya Archaeology at Laguna De On, Belize*. Marilyn A Masson, University Press Of Colorado
- *An Archaeological Guide to Northern Central America: Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, & El Salvador*, Joyce Kelly, University of Oklahoma

## **Flora & Fauna**

- *Orchids Of Guatemala And Belize*, Oakes Ames, Dover Publications, Incorporated
- *A Field Guide to the Amphibians and Reptiles of the Maya World: The Lowlands of Mexico, Northern Guatemala, and Belize*, Julian C. LeeCornell University Press
- *A Neotropical Companion: An Introduction to the Animals, Plants, and Ecosystems of the New World Tropics*, 2nd Edition, John Kricher
- *An Introduction to the Animals, Plants, & Ecosystems of the New World Tropics*, John Kricher
- *Neotropical Rainforest Mammals, A Field Guide*, Second Edition, Louise H. Emmons
- *Jaguar: One Man's Struggle to Establish the World's First Jaguar Preserve*, Alan Rabinowitz
- *Belize & Northern Guatemala: Traveller's Wildlife Guides*. Les Beletsky
- *Birds of Belize*, H. Lee Jones

## **Mangroves & Coral Reefs**

- *The Biology of Mangroves*, Peter J. Hogarth, Oxford University Press Uk
- *Coral Reefs*, Sylvia Earle, Simon & Schuster
- *Living Mirrors: Coral Reefs of the World*, Jack Stephens, Jean-Michel Cousteau, Powerhouse Books
- *World Atlas Of Coral Reefs*, Mark Spalding, University Of California Press

# Emergency Contact Info

## Before Arrival in Belize

**1 (800) 667-1630**

or

(604) 894-2312

Weekdays 9am to 5pm PST

Emergency  
After Hours | Anytime  
**+1 (604) 894-2312**

**If you reach our  
voicemail**  
Please leave a detailed  
message. We'll return  
your call as soon as  
possible.



## After Arrival in Belize

Dialing from a North  
American number?  
Use prefix **011-501** or **+501**

Dangriga Office  
522-3328 / 522-0078  
Daily 8am to 5pm

Manager's Cell (Wasani)  
**WhatsApp / Call / Text**  
Anytime  
**+501 630-2815**

[wasani@belizeadventuregroup.com](mailto:wasani@belizeadventuregroup.com)

**In Case of Emergency:**  
If your family or friends need to  
reach you while you're in Belize,  
they can contact our Dangriga  
Office. We'll make sure any  
message gets passed along to you  
in the field



Dialing from a North American number? Use prefix 011-501 or +501

**PRO TIP: WhatsApp is the most reliable way to communicate while in Belize. We recommend downloading the app on your phone**

# Other Numbers in Belize

Maya Island Air 223-1140  
 US Embassy 822-4011  
 Canadian Consulate 223-1060  
 UK Embassy: 822-2147

## Our Partner Lodges

Biltmore Plaza Hotel 223-2302  
 Pelican Beach Resort 522-2044  
 Bocawina Front Desk 580-8019  
 Pal's Guest House 634-1882  
 Tobacco Caye Paradise 532-7209  
 Crystal Paradise Resort 615-9361  
 Birds Eye View Lodge 615-0496  
 Cahal Pech Front Desk 824-3740



**Have an  
Un-Belize-able  
Journey!**

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**Tag your Photos!  
#IslandExpeditions**

✉ [www.islandExpeditions.com](http://www.islandExpeditions.com)  
✉ [info@islandexpeditions.com](mailto:info@islandexpeditions.com)

**1800 667 1630**

