



# Maya Reef Explorer

Explore the rich coral reefs and white sand cayes of Lighthouse Atoll plus the Maya World of Lamanai and the Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary

**Duration:** 7 Nights

**Starts:** Belize City

**Finishes:** Belize City

**Seasonal Trip:** December to April

**Habitats:** Tropical Lowland Wetlands - Caribbean Pine Savannah - Barrier Reef - Lighthouse Atoll

**Activity level:** ●●○○○ [2] No experience required

**Activities:** Walk-in Snorkeling, Hand-Line Fishing, Sea-Kayaking, Kayak-Sailing, Stand-up Paddle Boarding. Birdwatching, Wildlife Encounters, Mayan Ruins Exploration, Hiking,

**Optional:** Scuba diving -fees apply

**Package includes:**

- 1-night Belize City Hotel Accommodation
- 3-night safari style “basecamp” accommodations
- 3-night accommodation Crooked Tree Village
- Meals (as per itinerary)
- Land and boat transfers (as per itinerary)
- Guided activities and equipment (as per itinerary)
- Park fees and taxes

**Accommodations:** Belize City Biltmore Plaza, Lighthouse Reef Basecamp on Half Moon Caye, Bird’s Eye View Lodge at Crooked Tree

**Package does not include:** airfare, gratuities, medical/travel insurance, snorkel/scuba gear, additional activities (scuba), costs incurred by flight delays

**Trip Highlights:** The Great Blue Hole, outstanding birdwatching, walk-off snorkeling, night snorkel, private island glamping, fishing for dinner, explore the magnificent frigate bird rookery and red-footed booby colony Lamanai and Altun Ha ruins,

**Recommended for:** solo travellers, couples, off-grid adventurers, families, digital detox, birdwatchers, wildlife enthusiasts, history buffs

**Pairs well with:** Bocawina Rainforest Resort, Cayo Caves & Temples Extension, Sacred Temples & Caves Extension

Pricing based on Double Room Occupancy. Single supplement subject to availability. Contact our Trip Planners for details.



## Overview:

Travel to Belize's most remote island group at Lighthouse Reef Atoll - a marine protected area and UNESCO world heritage site. Stay at our exclusive basecamp on Half Moon Caye, and spend your days exploring both above and below the water, including the famous Great Blue Hole.

**Basecamping:** Involves sleeping in wall-tented cabanas. These spacious safari-style tents have ample headroom to walk around, are on raised wooden floors, and have real wood-framed beds (6-inch foam mattresses). Tents can be configured with either double or single beds. All bed linen is provided.

**Lighthouse Reef:** Due to its isolated location from the mainland, the waters of Lighthouse Reef are exceptionally clear with the most abundant fish populations in Belize. This rich ecosystem offers access to some of the best snorkeling (as well as scuba diving) in the Caribbean.

**Half Moon Caye:** Managed by the Belize Audubon Society, HMC is an incredible 45-acre nature preserve hosting Belize's oldest site of wildlife conservation - a bird sanctuary for the Red-footed booby and Magnificent frigate bird. The island is host to a rare littoral forest (more common to the interior of the mainland), an endemic species of gecko (Leaf-towed), and a variety of other flora and fauna.

Journey inland to **Birds Eye View Lodge** in the **Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary**. Enjoy a full day river cruise adventure to the Maya World of **Lamanai**. Next, enjoy world-class birding and explore the local mayan ruins of **Altun Ha**.

**Marine Activity Notes:** This itinerary is designed to be "Snorkelling Focused". Kayaks and SUP's are available for use; however, our guides will be utilized mostly for snorkelling sessions. If you'd like more guided kayaking and SUP check out our Glover's trips, Lighthouse Reef 5 Night, Lighthouse Reef 8 Night, or Double Atoll Adventure.

## Typical Daily Itinerary:

**Day 1:** Arrive in Belize City International Airport (BZE), and be met with an IE representative, where we will transfer you to the Belize Biltmore Plaza. Check into your your first night's accommodation and acclimatize to your new environment. Meals are on your own, and can be purchased at the hotel. You will meet other travellers in the lobby the following morning.

**Accommodation: Biltmore Plaza**

**Meals: N/A**

**Day 2:** Meet an Island Expeditions representative at 8:30 am in the Biltmore hotel lobby, make a quick stop at a local shop for last minute snacks and provisions then head to our awaiting motor boat charter for a 10:00AM departure. We travel by boat 56 miles out to sea, passing through mangrove ranges and white sand cayes before arriving at Belize's furthest island group. Expect the boat ride to take 2-3 hours. Upon arriving at Half Moon Caye, your guide team will orient you to the island and settle you into your accommodations. You will enjoy a late lunch and then an intro session of walk-in snorkeling at one of our local reefs.

**Accommodation: Half Moon Basecamp**

**Meals: Lunch, Dinner**

All itineraries are subject to change depending on weather and safety considerations.

As our international guest, flexibility is key to an unforgettable and un-BELIZE-able experience.

*My husband caught 2 barracuda. The cooks then prepared the barracuda for our group for lunch and we were all able to share in the stories! Wonderful memorable experience thanks to these folks!  
Bravo!*

*Karen - MB Canada  
Maya Reef Explorer*

## Itinerary Contd.

**Days 3-4:** Over the course of the next few days, we will give you the chance to discover all of our local walk-off snorkel sites. In between snorkels we host information sessions on the history of Belize, its unique marine ecosystem and the local culture. We will also travel to the famous snorkel site "The Aquarium" and world renowned "Great Blue Hole". A huge collapsed sinkhole that was discovered and made famous by ocean explorer, Jacques Cousteau. This perfectly circular formation is jeweled with an array of hard and soft coral and a wide variety of colorful reef fish. This is a great place to practice more advanced snorkeling techniques or observe others doing so from the surface. All guided sessions are optional and laying in a hammock is considered an "official" activity. Evenings at our basecamps are filled with happy hour gatherings, delicious dinners, beach games, star gazing, cold beverages, cultural presentations, and incredible Caribbean sunsets.

**Accommodation: Half Moon Basecamp**

**Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

**Day 5:** The choice is yours for your last morning at Lighthouse Reef Atoll. Snorkel your favorite patch reef, walk the island trails, and swing in a hammock or beach comb along the island shores. After lunch, a motorboat charter picks everyone up for the return trip to the mainland, and arrives in Belize City mid-late afternoon. From here, transfer north-west to Bird's Eye View Lodge in the Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary. You have time to settle in before enjoying dinner at the lodge restaurant.

**Accommodation: Bird's Eye View Lodge**

**Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

**Day 6:** Full day of exploration as you travel north by road, then west by river to the Mayan ruins of Lamanai and down the New River, making stops to view wildlife along the way. Iguanas, Parrots, Toucans, Aracaris, and Morelet's Crocodiles are frequently seen. Once we reach the shores of Lamanai, we explore the many temples, plazas and palaces within the park's boundaries. We have lunch at the site, and continue to the colonial sugar mill built at the Mayan site. In the afternoon, we depart Lamanai by riverboat, and return to toast a spectacular sunset over the lagoon at Bird's Eye View Lodge.

**Accommodation: Bird's Eye View Lodge**

**Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

**Day 7:** Today's adventure starts with a morning birding tour on the lagoon, with some down time at the lodge. After lunch, we head to the Mayan ruins of Altun Ha, then return to the lodge for an evening sunset over the lagoon and our final dinner in Crook Tree Village.

**Accommodation: Bird's Eye View Lodge**

**Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

**Day 8:** Birdlife and wildlife abound, and early mornings are the most active. Wake to a coffee, grab your binoculars and spend a quiet hour watching wildlife. Your morning transfer time will be set based on your next rendezvous or international flight time.

**Accommodation: None**

**Meals: Breakfast**

