

# Holistic Journeys 2019 *UnBelizable* Adventure! From Rainforest to Reef February 23<sup>rd</sup> -March 5<sup>th</sup> 2019

## Itinerary

*You Betta Belize it!*



**Did I say UnBelizable, I meant it!** Your travel destinations include 'Nature at its Best' and immersion into the cultures, history and places that make Belize a destination jewel. Prepare for *Adventure, Culture, Fun and a lot of Ahhhh!* Holistic Journeys Reef to Rainforest Adventure begins when folks from Crystal Paradise pick us up for

transfer to their river side Belizean owned hotel on the Macal River. Our accommodations are located just outside of San Ignacio near the Village of Cristo Rey allowing access to all the natural and cultural wonders of Western Belize.

(<http://www.crystalparadise.com/photo-gallery/crystal-paradise-resort>). **Day 1-Sat. Feb. 23** Please book your flight to arrive at the Philip SW Goldson International Airport in **Belize by 2:00 pm**. Most scheduled international flights will get you there between 12:30 and



1:30 pm. Immigration is usually a quick process, but even quicker if you pack light and have all your documents ready and handy! *Please* keep luggage or backpacks to 1 easy to carry (and don't forget yoga mat, towel or tropical yoga blanket, I suggest a full-size camping or EZ dry towel). Remember there are many shops that will have anything you forget or think you need. This is a chance to travel light....and free! We will arrive and settle in to our tropical accommodations (doubles unless you have booked a single) and take a walk

about the grounds, relax and go over our schedule and tour options as we sip a cool tropical cocktail. D and gentle yoga/meditation will end our first travel day.



**Day 2 -Sun. Feb. 24** Enjoy a birding morning to review species, short yoga/ stretch then B. Prepare for a full day of River exploration and L at the Belize Botanical Gardens. We will paddle the Macal River by canoe (sorry no kayaks) hopefully up and float back down depending on river level. But be prepared to be astounded by the beauty and quiet of the Macal River and the trails, viewing tower, exotic flora and



spectacular L at duPlooy's Botanical Gardens ([www.duplooy.org](http://www.duplooy.org)). After our fill we will venture back down river, relax around Crystal Paradise and enjoy a Belizean D and discussion. **Day 3-Mon.-Feb. 25** Yoga , B then get ready for more adventure and culture. We will load up early to venture off to Caracol Ruins, Rio Frio Cave and Rio On Pools- This is a unique tour of Belize's Mountain Pine Ridge, a unique uplifted batholith with endemic species of birds and flora. You will walk through time as you explore ancient Maya Ruins of Caracol, feel the mystery and secrets of

the underworld **Xibalba** as we hike into Rio Frio cave system strewn with stalactites and troglodytes, swim in the clear boulder strewn pools of Rio On and picnic on its shores. Caracol is one of Belize's largest Maya Archeological sites situated deep in the Mountain Pine Ridge, so yes, it's a ride, but we will stop in villages along the way and see what we may find. As we enter Caracol and its museum will walk among the giant buttresses of the **Tree of Life**, the giant *Ceiba* and can discover why it's considered the *Axis Munda* (Center of the World) and sacred to the Maya. We will return to Crystal Paradise, tired and ready for a great diner with much to discuss and influence our tropical dreams.

**Day 4-Tue. Feb. 26** Early morning Yoga, Nature Mediation (don't forget your binoculars just in case). It's up to you but we have the town of San Ignacio, its market and two amazing Archeological sites to discover or choose to tour Poustinia Land Art Park ([www.poustinialardart.com](http://www.poustinialardart.com)) near the Guatemala boarder. It may be possible to do all if you're game, Market, Xunantunich and Poustinia Land Art Park, let's see what the group thinks.





We will return to Crystal Paradise and fall into a deep jungle sleep then arise for another Belizean Breakfast and transfer to the 'Best Little Zoo' in Belize.

**Day 5- Wed. Feb. 27** Enjoy the short 1.5 hour ride to the Belize Zoo then meander on your own through the various exhibits. The Belize Zoo ([www.belizezoo.org](http://www.belizezoo.org)) and Tropical Education Center is located some 29 miles (47 km) west of Belize City on the Western Highway. Set in 29 acres (12 ha), the zoo was founded in 1983 by Sharon Matola. It's about 1/2 way between Crystal Paradise and our next destination, the Bird's Eye View hotel ([www.birdseyeviewbelize.com/new](http://www.birdseyeviewbelize.com/new)) in the village of Crooked Tree. We will snack here or grab L and then be transferred by our hosts at the Bird's Eye View.



The Belize Zoo is home to more than 175 animals all native to Belize. The *natural* environment of Belize is left entirely intact within the zoo. The dense, natural vegetation is separated only by gravel trails through the forest. The Belize Zoo and Tropical Education Center receives over 68,000 visitors annually, with 15,000 being students, teachers, and parents. The Belize Zoo focuses on educating visitors about the wildlife of Belize through encountering the animals in their natural habitat. The aim is to instill appreciation and pride, and a desire to protect and conserve. Over the

next few days we will not only experience some of the best birding in Belize but will visit traditional Maya, Garifuna and Creole villages, taste their specialty dishes and secret spices and discover the unique crafts (slate carvings, basket making, drum making) that weave the cultural fabric of Belize. We might even experience the *Food of the Gods*, Cacao from pod to mouthwatering chocolate. Once will arrive at our hotel destination just inside the Creole Village of Crooked Tree mid to late afternoon, just enough time to relax, settle in and be amazed at the avian life abounding on our lagoon side accommodations.



**Day 6-Thurs. Feb. 28** Oh what to choose. After yoga and B we will take advantage of a guided tour on the Lagoon by canoe or launch. If it's birds you desire, this is it. We will also stop off at an archeological site being excavated on the far end of the lagoon

before returning for L and then set out to explore the village and Audubon Center on the Lagoon. The Village of Crooked Tree hosts the annual Cashew Wine Festival. After D art or music are in store for the evening.

**Day 7- Friday March 1** We have to choose between Lamanai , Cerro and Altun Ha all amazing Maya Ruins with somethings special to share. Lamanai has one of the longest histories of all the Mayan sites. It was continuously occupied from around 500 BC, for which there is ceramic evidence, until 1675 or perhaps even later. At its peak it may have supported up to 35,000 people.

It was both a ceremonial and a trade center, and many copper objects were found here that came from western and central Mexico and lower Central America. Less is known about what Lamanai exported. It is also uncertain why Lamanai continued as an important center while other Maya sites in the region collapsed during the Postclassic period. Each site has its own special history and mystery, which one will be choose?



**Day 8- Saturday March 2** Bird, Yoga B and No time to Monkey around as we travel to the near by *Community Baboon Sanctuary*, home to more than 2,000 howler



monkeys, over 250 bird species, and a wide array of other animals that frequent the area. The Community Baboon Sanctuary Visitor Center and Museum invites you to observe fascinating creatures in their natural habitat. The sanctuary, which stretches for over 51 sq km (20 sq mi), is one of the first of its kind in the world. It came about thanks to over 200 land owners from seven villages, who pledged their land to protect the endangered monkey species. You can speak to

knowledgeable guides who take you through the nature preserve and teach you about the local animal and plant life. ([www.inspirock.com/belize/belize-district/community-baboon-sanctuary-visitor-center-and-museum](http://www.inspirock.com/belize/belize-district/community-baboon-sanctuary-visitor-center-and-museum))



**Day 9- Sunday March 3** After B and yoga we will travel to the Garifuna Town of Dangriga. Choose to tour Marie Sharp's Hot Sauce factory or tour the Drum Museum and have a traditional Garifuna lunch before departing to South Water Caye (SWC) and our final host IZE, International Zoological Expeditions. Our 40 minute water taxi will join us on the river side docks and transport us across an ocean so blue it will seem surreal. Remember to hold on to your hats or better yet

have it tied down. Upon arriving you can relax, kayak or snorkel off shore before we enjoy an amazing SWC homemade dinner. We will take some time to sit out and enjoy the stars in a sky so dark it will seem you can reach up and touch the milky way. Bring your star gazing app and we will have some fun searching the night sky over the Caribbean Sea. ([www.infoIZEBELIZE.com](http://www.infoIZEBELIZE.com)).

**Day 10- Monday March 4 (SWC):** Enjoy a full day of snorkeling the reef and birding at Bird Caye, if the waters are calm and we are lucky we might even see a Manatee in the nearby ocean lagoon.



**Day 11-Tue. March 5 (Departure Day):** Leaving is always the hardest part. Enjoy your final goodbyes through your boat charter back to the mainland and arrive at the Belize International Airport soon after. We will leave after B and travel by Launch back to Dangriga, we transported by taxi to the small airport for an view of Belize by air and a 35 flight to the check in area of the International airport. Again there are usually two regular flights per day into and out of Belize. We have never had any difficulty getting to any late morning or early afternoon flights so plan accordingly.

Please save and carry a hard copy of this iteniary and a digital copy, thanks, feel free to share...*It's Time to Take Time, Rebecca!*

**740-590-3954 | [www.hopewoodholistichealth.org](http://www.hopewoodholistichealth.org) | [becaherbtravel@gmail.com](mailto:becaherbtravel@gmail.com)**