



AN EXPEDITION TO REEFS AND RAINFORESTS

BELIZE

2010

This small country, nestled between Mexico and Guatemala, has a Caribbean flavor and rich heritage as both a former British Colony and a melting pot of cultural diversity. Belize's original inhabitants, the Maya, offer a rich history combined with modern day population dynamics. Belize boasts a variety of unspoiled natural habitats. Among the many treasures are the hemisphere's longest coral reef, hundreds of sandy offshore islands, 250 varieties of wild orchids, and 500 species of birds found within its tropical forest. This 8 day program invites you to investigate the impressive Maya ruins while exploring the rich biodiversity and conservation measures underway. Compare and contrast tropical rainforest environments to the extraordinary diversity of the marine ecosystems. Participants will collaborate with the Wildlife Conservation Society's Glover Reef Reserve and Marine Research Station. A perfect mix of environmental, cultural, and educational themes tied to research.

TRIP DETAILS

TOUR LENGTH

9 days

SUGGESTED TOUR MONTHS

All Year

LAND PRICING

Low Season -

5/1/10 - 10/31/10

7+1 free \$2147

14+2 free \$1897

21+3 free \$1897

High Season -

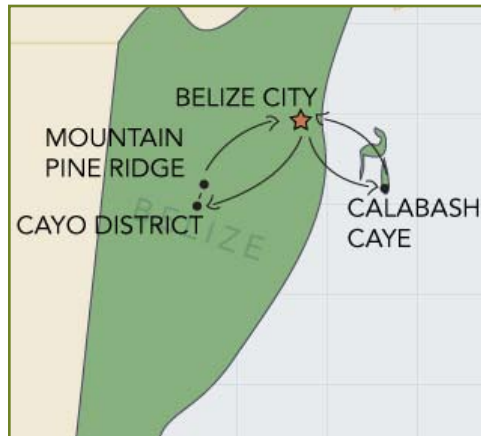
11/1/09 - 4/30/10

7+ 1 free \$2297

14+2 free \$1997

21+3 free \$1997

Price is land only



EDUCATIONAL CONNECTIONS:

- Archeology
- Cultural Studies
- Social Studies
- Marine Science
- Interdisciplinary Studies
- Human Geography
- Natural History

HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore the rainforests of the Pook's Hill Reserve
- Discover the fascinating world of tropical birds
- Explore the depths of the Tunichil Muknal cave
- Float along the Roaring River in search of wildlife
- Learn about medicinal rainforest plants and Maya culture
- Watch the sunrise from the top of a Maya temple
- Explore the world famous Maya ruins of Tikal or Caracol
- Learn about the Maya people - past and present
- Snorkel the pristine waters of the Belize Barrier Reef
- Learn about the Belize Barrier Reef ecosystem and abundant wildlife
- Live on-site at the University of Belize Institute of Marine Studies' dorms
- Enjoy the beautiful island and crystal waters of Calabash Caye

**To replace the visit to Caracol with a visit to Tikal ruins in Guatemala, please add \$100.00 per person to seasonal rates. Rates are based on triple and quadruple occupancy on the mainland and dormitory accommodations on Calabash Caye. Complimentary leader accommodations are based on single and double occupancy; complimentary leaders of same gender are expected to share rooms. Accommodations on Middle Caye are dorm style. Holiday surcharges may apply. Program may incur unforeseen fuel surcharges. A \$200.00 per person deposit and enrollment form is due upon booking and no later than four months prior to departure. This deposit is refundable until 95 days prior to departure excluding a \$100.00 cancellation fee. Final payments are due no later than 95 days prior to departure. Cancellations received less than 95 days prior to departure are not refundable. Travel/trip cancellation insurance is strongly recommended. For more information call 800-243-3174. Holbrook's agency number is 15849.



This program is Carbon Neutral via a carbon offset through Holbrook's partnership with ClimateSafe.

www.holbrooktravel.com . travel@holbrooktravel.com . 1-800-451-7111



Day 1 Cay District, Belize

You will be met at the airport in Belize City and your driver will take you southwest to Pook's Hill. Pook's Hill is a 300-acre private reserve of prime broad leaf forest, originally preserved by its remote location and later by the commitment of Svea Dietrich Ward, the founder of Tapir Mountain Nature Reserve. Bordered by the Roaring River and the Tapir Mountain Reserve, the lodge is an easily accessible and authentic jungle experience, in the Cayo District. **Orientation dinner and overnight at Pook's Hill Lodge.** (D)

Day 2 Cay District

Early this morning join your guide for bird watching. After breakfast, a short talk about "Life of the Forest" before setting off on a hike in the private reserve located adjacent to the lodge. Observe many varieties of ornamentals, palms, flowers, tropical fruits and native hardwoods. Your guide will point out medicinal plants, some of which were used by the Maya. After lunch, enjoy swimming and or floating on the Roaring River. During the trip, you may have the opportunity to see howler monkeys, iguanas, and tapir as well as a variety of bird life. Before dinner enjoy a short lecture about the Maya who lived in the Valley and their association with the cave, Tunichil Muknal. **Overnight Pook's Hill Lodge.** (BLD)

Day 3 Cay District

Today you will rise for the opportunity to do some early morning birding, followed by breakfast. Afterwards, enjoy a fascinating full tour of Tunichil Muknal, "Cave of the Crystal Sepulcher." The tour starts with a hike through the Roaring River Valley to the mouth of the cave. Spend the day exploring this fascinating underworld of the Maya. Over 1400 artifacts - pottery, tools, and ceremonial items dating from 1 to 1000 AD - including over 200 vessels, have been catalogued within the cave. This tour begins with a walk to the site, followed by hiking, and swimming within the cave. **Overnight at Pook's Hill Lodge.** (BLD)

Day 4 Mountain Pine Ridge, Belize

This morning you will transfer to Pine Ridge Lodge located in the scenic Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve. This is the largest protected area in Belize, boasting an immense rain forest and natural wildlife sanctuary. Today you will visit the famous Rio Frio Cave, where stalactites and stalagmites form an eerie backdrop to an ancient worship place. Continue to Rio On Pools and swim in the cooling crystalline waters as they cascade over granite boulders. **Overnight at the Pine Ridge Lodge.** (BLD)

Day 5 Mountain Pine Ridge – Cayo District

After breakfast, enjoy a guided excursion to the newly excavated ancient Mayan site of Caracol located deep in the Chiquibul Rainforest. This is also the site of an on-going archaeological project under the auspices of the University of Central Florida. The project has estimated that as many as 36,000 structures make up the Caracol complex and that, at its peak, the center supported a population of around 140,000 people. This is roughly twice the size of Tikal! After returning back to Pook's Hill, the remainder of the day is free to relax, swim, tube, or take an optional horseback ride at an additional cost. **Overnight at Pook's Hill Lodge.** (BLD)

Day 6 Calabash Caye, Belize

After breakfast depart for Belize City where you will take a boat to Calabash Caye. Helping to protect the ecology of the area is

the University of Belize Institute Of Marine Studies; Belize's first nationally owned and managed marine research facility. You will be staying at the Institute and learning from resident scholars. Accommodations will be rustic dorm/bunk house style with shared composting toilets, shared showers, and generator power. Please note: no towels are available at Calabash Caye, each participant should bring their own towels and wash clothes. In the evening, receive a lecture on marine ecosystems. **Overnight at the University of Belize Institute of Marine Studies, Calabash Caye.** (BLD)

Days 7-8 Calabash Caye, Belize

Spend these two days snorkeling and learning about coral reef and mangrove ecosystems. The Turneffe Atoll, Belize's largest atoll, is situated 40 km from Belize City, and consists of low-lying mangroves and sandy banks. Since the reef breaks the heavy action of the waves, it creates a shallow lagoon ideal for snorkeling. Explore habitats such as mangroves, sea grass beds, and coral reefs. Visit the Black Lagoon, which supports a unique ecosystem of sponges, upside down jellies, and tunicates. **Overnight at the University of Belize Institute of Marine Studies, Calabash Caye.** (BLD)

Day 9 Depart

Transport by boat and bus this morning to the airport for your return flight home. Holbrook was founded on the principle that travel fosters a greater understanding of our world's cultural and natural treasures and that these experiences allow individuals to become agents for global change. We hope that your experiences in Belize will remain with you forever and will challenge you to make a difference in the world we share! (B)

Tikal Option - (additional \$100)

Day 4, Tikal Option Flores, Guatemala

This morning you will journey to Flores, Guatemala, three and one-half hours from Pook's Hill. After lunch take a guided tour. Explore the stone streets flanked with handicraft stores, charming houses, many of which are small hotels, guesthouses, and restaurants. In the afternoon enjoy a boat ride on Lake Petén-Itzá, Guatemala's second-largest lake. Many of Petén's inhabitants live in towns along the lake's shore. The largest lakeside community is Santa Elena, connected to Flores by a causeway. **Overnight at Casona de Isla or Hotel Peten.** (BLD)

Day 5, Tikal Option Tikal, Guatemala - Cayo District, Belize

After an early breakfast, transfer to Tikal National Park, a famous Maya site located in the Petén Lowlands of Guatemala, to enjoy a guided hike. The magnificent ruins of Tikal remain shrouded in intrigue. Hidden deep within the rainforest, the site covers over twenty-five square miles and contains 3,000 separate structures, some currently under excavation. Your guide will explain the site's most important architectural features and what these features have revealed about classic-period Maya culture. After lunch at the national park, you will return to San Ignacio. The remainder of the day is free to relax, swim, tube, or take an optional horseback ride at an additional cost. **Overnight at Pook's Hill Lodge.** (BLD)