

Art of the Itinerary



Belize

San Ignacio: Ziplining • Cave Tubing • The Green Iguana Project
Cahal Pech Archeological • San Ignacio Market • Day Trip to Tikal, Guatemala

Ambergris Caye: San Pedro • Fishing Charter • Secret Beach • Truck Stop

April 2019



BELIZE

This itinerary was created in April 2019 and all of the information included was correct at that time to the best of our knowledge. For a detailed post about this trip and our personal experiences read our blog post [What to do in Belize - Experience the Best of Both Worlds](#) We hope you enjoy your trip to Belize as much as we did, and we would love to hear feedback on how our itinerary worked for you. Good luck and Safe Travels! — The Hoffman Family

The Best of Both Worlds

Belize is one of those countries that seems to inhabit two different worlds. It boasts beautiful white sand beaches and world-class diving along its massive barrier reef. But just a few hours inland, the country's Cayo region is a place of abundant jungles, adventure tours and ancient ruins. When deciding what to do in Belize, we suggest planning for the best of both worlds.

Day 1

- **Pickup Rental Car at Airport** We rented a car from Budget Rent-a-Car at the airport in Belize City for \$323 (for 5 days) and it was worth every penny. The car was definitely a little worse for wear, but considering the road conditions it's not surprising. Driving in Belize is pretty straight forward, but most of the roads are a mix of dirt and gravel. They're wide, and in relatively good repair, but there's not a lot of signage so having GPS or MAPS.ME is a good idea.

- **Drive from Belize City to San Ignacio**

The drive from Belize City to San Ignacio is a straight shot on the Western Highway. Also known as George Price Highway, the Western Highway is a paved two-lane road that runs 78 miles between Belize City and the Guatemala border. **Be on the lookout for the "Sleeping Police!"** There are some brutal speed bumps on this road, usually near villages. They're marked with yellow caution signs, but if you hit one without braking you're going to cause damage to your car. No joke. Mind the Bumps!

If you're like us and need a pitstop along the way, there's a restaurant called [Amigos](#) on the left-hand side about 45 minutes into the trip. It has a pirate themed exterior, but the food is Tex-Mex/American. It's a laid back atmosphere with lots of outdoor seating. The food is good and the beer is cold. It's a great place to take a break if you need one.

- **Check into AirBnB** We found the absolute best AirBnB just 15-minutes outside of San Ignacio. This [Private Riverside Farm Home](#) is easily one of our top AirBnB finds. The house is located steps from the Mopan River and affords calm, crystal-clear waters for swimming. Our boys absolutely loved ending every day with a dip in the river.
- **Swim in the Mopan River**

Day 2

- **Ziplining & Cave Tubing Adventure** with Maya Walk Tours **8 a.m. - 5 p.m.**

"You'll enjoy a thrilling aerial jungle tour flying through the rainforest canopy! Then a real-life Indiana Jones adventure as you float back in time through prehistoric caves filled with ancient crystal formations and human artifacts from centuries past. Enjoy a physically relaxing, visually exciting trip along a jungle river as you tube in and out of cave passageways in the Caves Branch river system at the Nohoch Che'en Caves Branch Archaeological Reserve." Cost of the tour is \$125/per person.

Day 3

- **Iguana Project Tour 9 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.** Tour meets in the lobby of the San Ignacio Resort Hotel located at 18 Buena Vista Street, San Ignacio, Belize. Tickets are \$11.25 per person at the front desk. The Project is a rescue center and hatchery for the threatened green iguana. Tours provide an informative and up-close experience with these fascinating and friendly reptiles. The hotel grounds include lush gardens of native fauna and medicinal plants.
- **Cahal Pech Ruins 10:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.** Located just outside of San Ignacio (about 20 minutes by car) Cahal Pech is one of the oldest Maya ruins in Belize; dating back to 1200 B.C. It's believed to be a palace settlement for Maya rulers. The grounds consists of 34 structures, spread across two acres, including temple pyramids, residence buildings, courtyards, a ceremonial altar and two ball courts. We recommend paying for a guided tour. Our tour was \$20 USD.
- **Cenaída's Belizean Food 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.** If you're looking for authentic Belizean Food for a reasonable price, we definitely recommenced stopping in to Cenaída's at 16 Bullet Tree Road in downtown San Ignacio.
- **Walk around San Ignacio 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.** Enjoy the town's colorful murals, do some shopping and make a stop for a cold beer.
- **San Ignacio Market 2:30 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.** Located on the west side of the city, across from the football stadium, San Ignacio Market is a colorful collection of local flare and flavors. Farmers, vendors and artisans from all walks of life market their goods daily between 5 a.m. and 6 p.m. The busiest (and best) day to visit is Saturday when the market attracts the most sellers.
- **Swim in the Mopan River**

Day 4

- **Day Trip: Tikal National Park, Guatemala** with Maya Walk Tours **7 a.m. - 5 p.m.** Tikal National Park is one of the few World Heritage sites that meets the designation criteria for both natural and cultural importance. The park comprises more than 142,000 acres of wetlands, savannah, and forests with thousands of architectural remains of the Maya civilization. After more than 150 years of excavation, this archaeological site is arguably the most impressive Maya site in Latin America, and rivals Manchu Picchu in Peru and Angkor Wat in Cambodia in its ancient splendor. Tikal is a must-see! The cost of the tour was \$140/per adult, \$135/per child. We highly recommend booking in advance.

Day 5

- **Drive from San Ignacio to Belize 9:30 a.m. - 10:45 a.m**
- **Return Rental Car 11 a.m.**
- **Ferry from Belize City to San Pedro, Ambergris Caye 12:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.** Ocean Ferry Belize operates 3 ferry routes between Belize City, Ambergris Caye, and Caye Caulker. The ferries run 5 times daily. Tickets are available on Ocean Ferry Belize website [here](#) and can be purchased at the terminal. Round trip tickets are \$35 USD adult, \$24 child USD.
- **Pickup Golf Cart** You will depart the ferry in San Pedro at the Caribena Pier in the heart of San Pedro. Rent a golf cart, which is the primary means of transportation on the island. There are several options available at the Pier. Prices for carts vary, but on average you should expect to pay around \$50 per day. Availability of carts also varies. We worked with our AirBnB host to book in advance.
- **Check into AirBnB** We stayed at [Mara Laguna Waterfront Lagoon Condo](#) in the Mara Laguna community. It wasn't our favorite AirBnB, but the community is quiet and its convenient to restaurants and groceries. We really liked that it has access to a community pool. The apartment itself is a little worn, but it does have a lovely lagoon view. Our 4-night stay cost \$632.24.

- **Golf Cart Cruising** San Pedro is one of Belize's most popular tourist destinations. Go cruising and enjoy this bustling little Belizean beach town full of colorful buildings and plenty of island vibe. Stop in to one of the many restaurants for meal.
- **Walk the Waterfront** Between the buildings and the sea on the east side of San Pedros there's a narrow pedestrian walk-way that provides the perfect place to take a stroll any time of day. Cruising the beach by foot, or by cart, was one of our favorite things to do in San Pedro.
- **Central Park** Make a stop at Central Park which lies at the center of town. It has a small playground, a wide sandy beach, a large plaza and public bathrooms. During the day, vendors and food carts set up along the walkways, and at night the surrounding bars become the hub of tourist nightlife.

Day 6

- **Fishing Charter** Chuck & Robbie's located on the waterfront is primarily focused on scuba diving excursions, but they can also arrange full- and half-day fishing charters. Stop by or call to arrange a charter at least one day in advance.

Day 7

- **Secret Beach** Located about 4 miles north of San Pedro on mostly paved roads, and other 4 miles west on mostly shell roads, Secret Beach is the perfect place to spend the day swimming and relaxing in the sun. Most of the bars and restaurants have large collections of lounge chairs in front of their establishments. Typically, the use of the chairs and umbrellas is free as long as you're purchasing their food and drinks. There are kayaks, paddle boards, pedal boats and float beds for rent from various locations on the beach.
- **Truck Stop** Along the route to Secret Beach there's a collection of cargo containers that have been modified into a sort of outdoor, family-friendly food court with an eclectic mix of options including Malaysian, Latin American, pizza and ice cream; along with a beer garden; an extensive assortment of outdoor games; and a swimming pool with a swim up bar and an 18-foot movie screen. Truck Stop offers live music, events, games and movies every night. This place is so unique its hard to describe, but it definitely a place not to be missed.

Day 8

- **Ferry from San Pedro, Ambergris Caye to Belize City**
- **Fly home**