

Belize Ecology: Eco-Trekking



Hike/Bike/Paddle – Sample Itinerary

Hike, bike and paddle from Belize's interior, cave-riddled rainforest out to a village settled originally by runaway slaves. Then finish off with two days of relaxation and snorkeling on quiet Caye Caulker and Belize's magnificent Barrier Reef.

- Day 1: Arrive at Belize International Airport, and transfer two hours west to San Ignacio for an evening of rest and preparation for the journey to come.
- Day 2: Depart San Ignacio by canoe down the Macal and then the Belize River for an easy all-day paddle to Teakettle, a small Creole village right on the river's bank. Spend the night camped at a small farm, and dine on some real Belizean food cooked up by the matron.
- Day 3: Take off early the next morning on mountain bikes for a 15-mile ride down some old dirt logging roads to the spectacular Tunichil Maknal cave. Don't worry about luggage because we'll transport that separately, but you can help set up a rustic camp beneath dense rainforest. Finish off the day rock climbing and caving in the footsteps of archaeologists. We'll see wildlife inside and out of the cave, Mayan pottery and stone axes exactly where they were abandoned 1,000 years ago, and human bones and skeletons everywhere.
- Day 4: We abandon camp for an all day hike up the Roaring River and then up Belize's famous 1,000 Foot Falls. All we'll be carrying is a pack lunch and lots of water. Wildlife and nature along this route is abundant. No one else does tours here. We'll be able to stop for a swim whenever we need it, and camp and dinner will be waiting for us at the 1,000 Foot Falls' semi-civilized visitor's center.
- Day 5: We depart camp early in the morning on mountain bikes to traverse 25 miles of Belize's pine forested highlands. These are the oldest land structures in all Central America, and wildlife and vegetation are completely different here. We set up camp on the barren and cool Baldy Sibun mountain top, from where nearly half of Belize's landscape can be surveyed.

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- Day 6: We descend into the Sibun Gorge in search of a stream we can float on. We'll be packing inflatable kayaks on our back, so this day is a kicker, but once we hit water deep enough to float on, the going gets nice. Geologically and ecologically, the Sibun Gorge is spectacular...one of the oldest formations in Central America, and again, a place where no other tours go. We'll go as far as we can, and set up camp wherever we feel comfortable.
- Days 7-9: Paddle the Sibun River. Here there is road access to various points along the river, so we'll have a support vehicle transporting our packs and dinner. Wildlife is abundant along this river's banks, and Belizean culture in this region is like a trip back in time. We'll camp on beaches and at riverside farms and eat organically grown vegetables and the occasional game meat hunted by our hosts.
- Days 10-11: We pull out of the Sibun River and exchange our canoes for mountain bikes and an easy 3 hour ride to the tiny coastal village of Gales Point where we rest in the unique culture of a Creole village that lives from the sea. Visit the Manatee, explore the surrounding mangrove forests, and learn to love the incessant Sambai Drumming passed down from Africa.
- Days 12-14: Sail the Caribbean and snorkel the Reef. Depart Gales Point in a 32-foot sailboat on a three-day island-hopping spree. Sail 3 - 5 hours a day, snorkel mornings and evenings as the opportunities arise, and camp out nights on deserted and inhabited cayes.
- Day 15: Return to Belize city on a one hour speed boat ride to Belize City, and to the Belize Int'l Airport for departure.