



Guatemala & Belize

Guatemala & Belize In Style

PIONEER EXPEDITIONS



DO SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY...

ITINERARY

Guatemala & Belize • In Style

17 DAYS • 16 NIGHTS

Antigua – Pacaya Volcano – Lake Atitlan – San Juan Village –
Santiago Village – Las Lagunas – Uaxactun – El Mirador –
Xunantunich – Chaa Creek – Rio Frio Cave – Palencia – Silk Cayes –
Blue Hole Floyover

HIGHLIGHTS

- 3 days whitewater rafting the rapids of the Cahabon River.
- Picnic on a live volcano
- Explore one of the most beautiful colonial cities in the world
- Discover an underwater utopia on the longest reef in the Western hemisphere
- Glamp on the rim of one of the world's most beautiful lakes
- Stay in a Francis Ford Coppola beach haven

TOUR ESSENTIALS

Tour Style	Guatemala & Belize In Style
Tour Start	Antigua
Tour End	Palencia
Accommodation	Hotel, Camping,
Included Meals	16 Breakfasts, 2 lunches, 1 Dinners
Difficulty Level	Medium

RAFTING AND MAYAN ARCHAEOLOGY



Our journey starts in the shadow of the volcanoes in one of Central America's most beautiful cities. Leaving the pastel colored houses and cobbled streets we head to the vibrant mountain market town of Chichicastenango. Your private guide will escort you to a unique setting, overlooking the beguiling Lake Atitlan. We continue to one of the most significant Mayan sites in the whole of the Mayan Kingdom – awe inspiring Tikal. Heading towards the Caribbean we take in the wildlife and culture of this small jewel of a country. The sea is as warm as the welcome as we head south to Placencia to soak up some sun and enjoy the service of one of Francis Ford Coppola's flagship properties.



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GUATEMALA, *an overview*

Guatemala ('place of many trees') lives up to its name and gives visitors an thrilling view of Central America. The country with the highest and most active volcanoes, remarkable Mayan ruins, dense jungles and an indigenous culture that flourishes through its traditional music, lively dance and colourful embroidered clothing. The Mayan heart of Central America, Guatemala borders Mexico to the north and west, Belize to the northeast and Honduras and El Salvador to the east. Scattered around this mountainous and jungle covered country, the impressive ancient Mayan ruins and colonial buildings are a reminder of Guatemala's heritage and civilised past. Until recently, Guatemala was little visited and this culturally rich, archaeologically fascinating country, with its diverse natural environment, is a one-off that must be visited to be understood. At the end of this trip you have an optional 3 day extension to visit Monterrico on the Pacific Coast. This all black sand beach is a haven for turtles and you can visit the nurseries of the Parlama turtle as well as enjoy a mangrove tour or simply relax on the beach listening to the ocean.

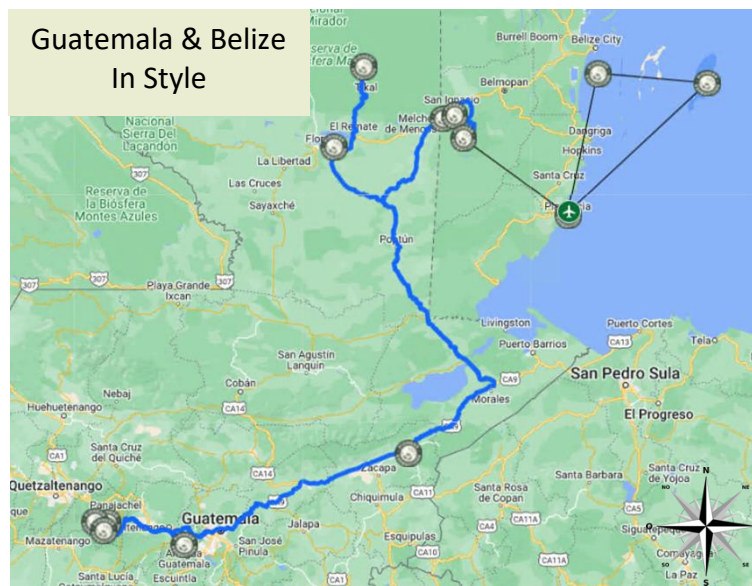
WHY PIONEER EXPEDITIONS?

Pioneer Expeditions are one of the few specialists that really *do* off the beaten track and unique adventures. The team have a real passion for wildlife and adventure travel which we love to share with our clients. We delight in searching the world for new destinations, new experiences and creating the most incredible adventures.

We like to introduce our clients to unique, the different, and the incredible. Whether it is through wildlife tracking, sea kayaking, snorkelling, trekking, rafting, cycling or observing wildlife in its natural environment, we want to give you the real Pioneer experience.

From the moment you choose to travel with Pioneer Expeditions until you return back home, you are supported by our dedicated team. We listen to what you want and can create an itinerary around your specific needs, working with your budget and with a commitment to responsible travel.

ITINERARY



DAY 1: ANTIGUA

La Antigua Guatemala is one of the most idyllic destinations in the world, with painstakingly restored Spanish colonial architecture, manicured parks, stylish hotels, superb international cuisine and a horizon shaped by three spectacular volcanoes. Nestled in a mountain valley and surrounded by evergreen forests, Antigua retains the aura of the 17th century capital that it was, while blending modern amenities that make it an internationally appealing getaway. Walking along cobblestone streets, you'll find high-end art galleries, fascinating museums, luxurious shops with international treasures, and traditional markets packed to the rafters with locally made textiles and woodcrafts. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1979, with its architecture, culture and unique setting, Antigua, quite simply, is the most charming city in all the Americas.



Overnight at *Las Cruces Boutique Hotel*



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
n/a



Distance:
Approx. 1 hour



Activities:
Travel

DAY 2: ANTIGUA STREET & EATS TOUR

Everyday Cuisine that Locals Love

This feast for the senses combines the robust flavours of Antigua's street food with this colonial city's colourful traditions, culture, and history. Shoes and appetite ready, you will begin the walking tour along charming cobblestone streets lined with brightly painted Spanish colonial architecture, stopping to learn about the history of some of Antigua's most picturesque sights. Then it's on to some of the comedores (eateries) most loved by locals. If you like you may sample delicious, authentic Guatemalan cuisine such as chuchitos (Guatemala-style tamales), pupusas (cheese-filled corn tortillas), rellenos (plantain dough filled with beans and then fried), and even pigs' feet (if you dare!). You will learn about the cultural background of these everyday delicacies as your guide leads you through Antigua's bustling community market to see, smell, touch, and taste the fresh ingredients used in their preparation. One of the best in Guatemala, the thriving market showcases rows of tasty and exotic fruits, vegetables, seeds, beans, grains, spices, meats, and fish. (Please note: This tour is for more adventurous eaters!) A Viaventure Signature Experience, this enjoyable outing provides a wonderful taste of authentic Antigua cuisine whilst you learn about the city's fascinating colonial history.



Includes: Private guide, entrances to Antigua cathedral, La Merced monastery, street food, use of tuc tucs.

Not Included: Lunch or dinner, entrances to other monuments, use of taxis.

Overnight at *Las Cruces Boutique Hotel*



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Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B



Distance:
Approx. 5hrs drive



Activities:
Explore

DAY 3: PACAYA VOLCANO HIKE WITH PICNIC

A grumbling, smoke-belching spectacle, Pacaya Volcano beckons adventure-seekers with its breathtaking display of nature's raw power. Your morning transfer delivers you to Pacaya's foothills for a trek up through a lush pine forest in a climb that's considered moderate to demanding. A widening panorama unfolds on the way up, offering views on clear days of northern volcanoes, the Pacific lowlands and all the way to El Salvador. At the base of the peak itself, a barren moonscape of loose rock and pebbles greets you, adding tricky footing to the adventure. Steam rises from numerous vents, which sometimes yield a view of bright orange magma deep inside. You'll reach a maximum of 2,289 meters (7,510 feet) above sea level with an elevation gain of 430 meters (1,411 feet) during the climb itself. In all, the total distance hiked is 6.8 kilometers (4.25 miles). This full-day expedition wraps up with a brisk walk down to the park base for your return ride to Antigua.

At Viaventure one of our core beliefs is to "ensure the protection and rights of animals and wildlife" For that reason we do not offer any horse support for this activity, and encourage anyone wanting to hike Pacaya to physically prepare for it ahead of time.

Please note: For safety reasons, and in compliance with rules issued by the Pacaya National Park, the closest guests can get to the volcano's crater is approximately 1km, and will only see the crater from afar.

This Viaventure Signature Experience rewards enthusiastic climbers with spectacular panoramic views and a delicious gourmet picnic lunch.



Includes: Private adventure guide and transfers, local guide, entrance fees, picnic lunch.

Recommended: Good hiking shoes, windbreaker, hat and sunscreen. Best to dress in layers as the weather can be unpredictable.

Overnight at Las Cruces Boutique Hotel



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B,L,D



Distance:
n/a



Activities:
Hiking

DAY 4: CHICHICASTENANGO MARKET EN ROUTE TO ATITLAN OVERLOOK CAMP

You'll be met at the hotel by your private driver and guide for the 2.5hrs drive to the highland town of Chichicastenango. Along the way you will pass through the central highland region and see the local Maya people in their traditional dress going about their daily lives working in the fields, collecting firewood, traveling between markets and selling their wares. Upon arrival at Chichicastenango, your guide will take you to explore this expansive, world-famous market. You'll visit the fruit and vegetable markets where locals buy produce and household goods, and spend time in the artisan craft area where countless stalls overflow with an endless variety of handmade textiles, carved wood, and ceramic crafts. You can



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also visit the famous St Tomas Church, where both Maya and Catholic rituals are performed in the sanctuary, reflecting the intertwining of these two diverse faiths in this region. If you wish, you can also hike up the hill to the Pascual Abaj, where you may see local shamans performing their rituals, or you can visit the cemetery on the outskirts of town, where the mausoleums are painted in vivid colours. You will have time to enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before heading to the campsite on the mountains surrounding Lake Atitlan.



DAY 1: Arrive at camp by mid-afternoon for plenty of time to explore and get settled. Over a cup of tea or coffee in the common area, your local host shares important tips so you can fully enjoy your stay. One of our trusted community contributors also shares village insights and history, and you'll learn about weaving and local foods while meeting local children as you explore. The options are endless - it depends on your interests and how deeply you'd like to get involved. Return to camp in time for sunset drinks on your private porch, then enjoy a candlelight dinner in the community tent. Mingle around the campfire with other guests before calling it a night and drifting off to sleep in the warmth of your tent.

Lake Atitlan:

With its sparkling waters watched over by three majestic, dormant volcanoes, Lake Atitlán is Guatemala's highland jewel, which motivated author Aldous Huxley to say, "It really is too much of a good thing". Surrounded by Mayan villages, the lake's timeless beauty is only equaled by the exquisitely embroidered clothing worn by the local T'zutujil and Kaqchiquel Maya people. Each lakeside village has its own character: the ceramic arts of San Antonio Palopo, San Juan's natural dyes and handwoven textiles; San Pedro's backpacker vibe; San Marcos' yoga and wellness centres; Santiago Atitlan's busy markets and shops; and Panajachel's hectic-eclectic mix of shops, hotels, and restaurants. All have one thing in common: the shimmering lake and dramatic countryside, where you can kayak and canoe, swim, fish, watch birds or just swing in a hammock.

Overnight at Atitlan Overlook Camp



Overnight:
Camping



Meals:
B



Distance:
n/a



Activities:
Camping

DAY 5: LAKESHORE HIKING & SAN JUAN VILLAGE VISIT

For early birds, watch a beautiful sunrise with a cup of coffee on your porch or take a short walk to a nearby lookout point. Or do a few sun-salutes or other basic yoga stretches to give your day a smooth and inspiring start. The morning, especially around sunrise, is often the most rewarding time for great views. In addition to the visual feast, savour a delicious traditional breakfast served in this incredible outdoor setting. After breakfast, you will be transferred to the lakeshore area to bring you close to the culture, community, and natural beauty of Lake Atitlan. You will embark on a scenic hike along the lakeshore, passing through numerous villages dotting the water's edge, where Mayan locals work in the fields, wash clothes in the lake, and fish from their hand-carved 'cayucos' (wooden boats). After lunch, you'll visit either the village of San Juan La Laguna, a quiet village dedicated to artisanal weaving, medicinal plants, delicious coffee, and small galleries and shops. After the village visit, you'll be transferred to your hotel by boat.

Overnight at Casa Palopó - Master Suite Santa Catarina



Overnight:
El Estor Lodge



Meals:
B



Distance:
Varies



Activities:
Explore



DAY 6: KAYAKING AT THE LAKESHORE & SANTIAGO VILLAGE VISIT

See Lake Atitlán from the water and town. Experience the splendor of majestic Lake Atitlán by kayaking along a portion of its sparkling surface and then exploring charming, Maya villages overlooking the lake. Your guide will meet you at your hotel for a pleasant motorboat ride to Santa Cruz La Laguna, a small Kakchiquel village surrounded by jagged mountains. Hop in a kayak and paddle out for a unique perspective of the volcanic landscape and waterfront way of life. Watch local fishermen cast lines from their "cayucos" (small fishing canoes) as water birds circle overhead. After your kayaking journey, go by boat to Santiago Atitlán, a town known for its traditions and distinctive arts and textiles. Enjoy lunch and then go on a walking tour to the market, church, and the main plaza. Your guide will also take you the house where Guatemala's favourite indigenous saint, Maximón, is housed. (Each year a different "brotherhood" has the privilege of taking care of Maximón, so his location changes). You will be back at your hotel in time for a sunset drink or a relaxing dip in the pool.

Overnight at Casa Palopó - Master Suite Santa Catarina



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B



Distance:
Approx. 07:00 hrs



Activities:
Kayaking

DAY 7: LAS LAGUNAS

Offering the luxury and comfort of a big city hotel in the middle of a wild jungle, Las Lagunas is located in Guatemala's northern department of El Petén, not far from the famous Tikal ruins. Sixteen spacious rooms overlook a rich forest and various lagoons. Waterfront suites sit right atop the latter; master suites are perched higher up, seemingly in the trees. Each suite is outfitted with first-rate amenities: Expect a satellite TV, iPod dock, air-conditioning, a private deck with a hot tub, and a bathroom boasting a cascade shower, L'Occitane products, and stellar views. The resort comprises a nature reserve (home to ocelots, deer, tapirs, and wild boars), five lagoons, an archaeological museum, an excellent restaurant serving European-style fare, and an infinity-edge pool. A dock in the center of one of the lagoons is a great place for private massages, yoga sessions, and sunset cocktails.

Overnight at Las Lagunas - Waterfront Master Suite



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B



Distance:
Varies



Activities:
Explore

DAY 8: UAXACTUN & TIKAL EXPERIENCE

This morning guests will transfer deep into the jungle to the site of Uaxactun which is famous for having the oldest complete Maya astronomical complex found and being one of the longest-occupied Maya sites. It's also the community where the "Chicleros" (gum collectors) have lived for over 100 years. Many of Uaxactun's residents nowadays make their living from gathering forest products such as chicle (exported to Japan), allspice and xate palm leaves (ornamental plant exported to the US and used for floral arrangements). After visiting the archaeological site and the community guests will enjoy a traditional lunch prepared with local ingredients. After lunch, guests will transfer to Tikal National Park where they will receive a private guided tour of this fabulous site with huge temples rising up through the jungle canopy and a variety of tropical animals and birds on show. Guests can enjoy the sights and sounds of the howler and spider monkeys as well as many colourful tropical birds and other mammals. At the end of the tour guests will be transferred to their hotel.

Overnight at Las Lagunas - Waterfront Master Suite



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B



Distance:
Varies



Activities:
Explore



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DAY 9: YAXHA & TOPOXTE SUNSET TOUR / EL MIRADOR DAY TRIP BY HELICOPTER

Yaxhá & Topoxté Sunset Tour

(Private/Guided/Minibus/Lunch)

Scale a Temple & Cruise to Island Ruins.

One of the largest Mayan complexes in Guatemala, Yaxhá contains more than 500 structures, including nine temples and one of the few twin pyramid complexes outside of Tikal. Your adventure features a climb up Temple 216 (37 metres / 121 feet), providing a 360-degree panorama of the rainforest canopy, nearby pyramids, and two shimmering lakes. You will also explore the less visited area of the site before hopping aboard a boat to visit the small island ruins at Topoxte. As the sun sets behind this post-classic site, the densely shrouded temples and structures lure your imagination back into a bygone era. Afterwards, enjoy some drinks and savor the sunset.

This Experience spotlights Yaxhá's spectacular temples with the added mystique of a sunset boat tour of unique island ruins.

Includes: Private transfers, private boat, private archaeology guide, admission fees to Yaxhá & Topoxté, restaurant lunch, sunset snacks and wine.

El Mirador Day Trip By Helicopter (Optional – Please Contact for Price)

Today, you'll take a 90-minute flight by private helicopter over the verdant jungles of Guatemala's remote, northern department of El Petén to the ancient Maya archaeological site of El Mirador. Accessible only by air or multi-day trek, the site thrived during the Maya Preclassic era but was completely abandoned for reasons unknown in 150 A.D. Excavations are ongoing, but much of what's here remains shrouded in dense jungle. El Mirador comprises the largest cluster of buildings (and the biggest pyramid) of any Maya site; indeed, the ancient city is even larger than Tikal. You'll tour the mysterious ruins with your private guide and also enjoy a picnic lunch. When you're finished exploring, you'll depart the site by helicopter. (Please note that flight times could be delayed for unforeseen climatic reasons.)

Overnight at Las Lagunas - Waterfront Master Suite



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B,L



Distance:
Approx. Varies



Activities:
Explore

DAY 10: XUNANTUNICH & MACAL RIVER CANOEING – CAYO DISTRICT – CHAA CREEK

Xunantunich & Macal River Canoeing

Explore the fascinating, riverfront site of Xunantunich, and climb its massive El Castillo temple, which soars 40 metres (130 feet) over the landscape. From the top, savour a panorama of ancient platforms and ceremonial sites bathed in lush greenery with the mountains of neighboring Guatemala visible in the distance. Meaning "stone woman" in Mayan, Xunantunich features six major plazas at its centre, surrounded by more than 25 temples and palaces. After checking out the ruins with your guide, head into the rainforest, grab a paddle and hop into a canoe for a guided river safari! Paddle and drift down the forest-draped Macal River for about two hours to reach San Ignacio. Keep an eye for tropical birds as well as giant green iguanas that thrive along the river's edge and in the foliage above. Go ashore near the historic Hawkesworth Bridge, where you'll be picked up for the ride to your hotel.

Cayo District



Rugged and remote, the Cayo District is a vast stretch of highland rainforests, cattle ranches, and pinelands. Located in western Belize and bordering on Guatemala's El Petén region, you'll find no beaches here, but you'll have countless opportunities to explore the great outdoors on foot, by horse, or via kayak, raft, or canoe. Belize's oldest and largest national park - Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve - offers caves to explore, cool rivers for swimming, and a seemingly endless forest that is home to myriad tropical birds. Cayo is also home to Chiquibul National Park, the largest intact tropical forest north of the Amazon. Here, you'll find endangered (and often elusive) animals like jaguars, Baird's tapirs, red-eyed tree frogs, and Morelet's crocodiles. Chiquibul also surrounds Belize's most expansive and popular archaeological site, Caracol. Belmopan, the country's capital, is also located in Cayo, although the real hub of the district is San Ignacio, a small town located 110 kilometers (68 miles) from Belize City. It features rustic, colonial-era streets, an eclectic mix of restaurants and shops, a lively weekly market, and Maya ruins like Cahal Pech, Xunantunich, and the caves of Actun Tunichil Muknal only a few kilometers away.

Chaa Creek

Located in the central Cayo District of Belize, Chaa Creek is a private 365-acre nature reserve set along the banks of the Macal River in the foothills of the Mayan Mountains. It offers a variety of luxury accommodations and has a top restaurant, bar and spa on the large, landscaped grounds. The lodge is famous for its medicinal plant trail and its unique Natural History Centre. The owners of the lodge are strong advocates and practitioners of sustainable tourism and the lodge has won many eco-tourism awards as well as being benchmarked by Green Globe. Its location offers excellent access to the many sights of the area and there are also a lot of on-site activities such as horseback riding, canoeing, biking, nature hikes and birdwatching that guests can enjoy. It's a very family friendly lodge with excellent packages for families.

Overnight at *Chaa Creek - Ixchel Villa - Master Suite*



Overnight:
n/a



Meals:
B



Distance:
Short flight



Activities:
Travel

DAY 11: COMPLEMENTARY ONSITE ACTIVITIES AT CHAA CREEK

For all guests, regardless of accommodation type or length of stay, enjoy at no extra charge:

- ✓ Entry into the 400-acre Rainforest Reserve
- ✓ Guided tours of the Natural History Centre and Butterfly Farm
- ✓ Access to the Ruta Maya Trail System
- ✓ Canoeing on the Macal River
- ✓ Swimming in our Eco-friendly infinity swimming pool
- ✓ Birdwatching
- ✓ A guided interpretive tour of the Rainforest Medicine Trail

Overnight at *Chaa Creek - Ixchel Villa - Master Suite*



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B



Distance:
Approx. Varies



Activities:
Explore

DAY 12: CARACOL, RIO FRIO CAVE & RIO ON POOLS

Experience two ecosystems in a long but fascinating day of exploring the largest known Maya site in Belize followed by a refreshing dip in pristine pools formed by waterfalls. The 2.5- to 3-hour drive starts out on paved road from San Ignacio in western Belize and continues off-road through the Mountain Pine Ridge Reserve, a sprawling national park featuring dramatic falls and pristine rivers and pools. Notice the change from pine forest to tropical rainforest as you enter the Chiquibul Forest Reserve, which surrounds the stunning Caracol ruins. Covering 78 square kilometres (30 square miles) of thick jungle, Caracol contains five plazas, a cosmic observatory and thousands of structures. Follow the footsteps of Maya rulers by climbing up the steps of the massive Caana pyramid and browsing the three temples sharing its lofty peak. Enjoy



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a panoramic view of rainforest canopy as you look out from 43 metres (140 feet) above the jungle floor. Because the ruins lie within the Chiquibul reserve, you may encounter exotic birds and wildlife as you meander through the ruins. On the way back to town, stop at the alluring Rio Frio Cave and take a refreshing dip in the Rio On Pools. Although the tour may take 10 hours, you'll enjoy lunch, snacks, cold beer and soft drinks, along with cold, moist washcloths to wipe your face and hands. The route threads along national borderlines, so don't be surprised with a military escort, a precautionary measure arranged for portions of the drive.

Overnight at Chaa Creek - Ixchel Villa - Master Suite



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B



Distance:
Approx. Varies



Activities:
Explore

DAY 13: ACTUN TUNICHIL MUKNAL CAVE ADVENTURE EN ROUTE TO PLACENCIA

Actun Tunichil Muknal Cave Adventure en route to Placencia

Actun Tunichil Muknal "Cave of the Stone Sepulcher" is one of the most impressive caves in the Maya lowland. Located in the heart of the Belizean Rainforest, this cave was a sacred place to the pre-Hispanic Mayas of Belize, who first began to use the entrance during the early classic period (300-600AD.) The cave system consists of a series of chambers, ending in a 300 by 50-meter Cathedral where sacrificial ceremonies once took place. Visitors to this cave have the opportunity to travel into the Maya past and witness a living museum where the human sacrifices and artifacts can be viewed in their original context. On the tour, you will drive to the trailhead and trek for 45 minutes through dense Jungle in the Tapir Mountain Nature Reserve, wading across three streams and learning about the flora and fauna of the Jungle. At the entrance of the Cave, you will be outfitted in the necessary equipment. Some swimming will be required as well as climbing and caving activity. This is a first-class caving and archaeological experience.

Please note: For this intense tour, guests must have a good level of physical fitness, including swimming ability, and be comfortable in small spaces. Children must be a mature 8 years or older and taller than 102 cm (40 "). Guests must wear comfortable, light-weight long pants or shorts and shirt that allow for easy movement and can get wet, and bring a full change of clothes. (Swimsuits are acceptable but you may get cold). Well-treaded sneakers, hiking boots, or high-quality river shoes with covered toes, and socks are required footwear. Mosquito repellent is prohibited because it washes off immediately when you get into the water to enter the cave. Cameras are strictly prohibited inside.

Placencia

Flanked on the west by a sparkling lagoon fringed with mangroves, and on the east by the turquoise Caribbean Sea, the peninsula of Placencia offers endless options for adventure and relaxation. Go diving or snorkeling along the Barrier Reef, explore mangroves and deserted cayes by kayak, spot birds and wildlife on Monkey River or at Cockscomb Nature Sanctuary, or go sport fishing for tarpon, permit, yellowfin tuna, or king mackerel. Then again, you could just stretch out with your favorite drink on the silky sands of the most spectacular beaches on the Belize mainland, listening to the waves breaking against the shore.

Turtle Inn

Turtle Inn is possibly the jewel in the crown of the three Francis Ford Coppola properties in Belize and Guatemala. Located just outside the small fishing village of Placencia the lodge features 1- and 2-bedroom picturesque thatched cottages decorated exquisitely with Asian furnishings and textiles. The lodge also features a unique 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom private Pavilion with attendant service, its own pool and more expansive accommodations which is on the hotel grounds but located to one side on the beachfront. (Not private beach). There is a beachfront bar, circular swimming pool and large open-air restaurant as well as an excellent dive shop and spa. The main consideration with this lodge is that there is no air conditioning and units are serviced by ceiling fans only. Rooms do not have telephones but have an ingenious "Shell



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Phone" which acts as an intercom with the front desk. Also, important to note that the beach line here has small waves lapping the shore and is not tranquil blue waters therefore there is sometimes sea grass visible.

Overnight at Turtle Inn - Seafront Cottage



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B



Distance:
Approx. Varies



Activities:
Explore

DAY 14: SILK CAYES SNORKEL TOUR

Grab your fins and snorkel and head out from Placencia for a day of swimming with the amazing marine life of the Belize Barrier Reef. Board a comfortable boat for the 40–60-minute ride, often accompanied by dolphins, to a beautiful collection of small coral islands known as the Silk Cayes. See lobsters, shrimp, crabs, snapper, barracuda, and lots of colourful reef fish amongst the amazing aquatic wildlife. Your expert guide will make sure you don't miss a thing! A typical day snorkeling includes an authentic Belizean lunch. As an added bonus, just before heading back to Placencia, you can join the scuba divers and head to a spot just inside the barrier reef, where fishermen clean their catch and where you can do more snorkeling with a good chance of seeing turtles, Southern sting rays, eagle rays, and nurse sharks.

Overnight at Turtle Inn - Seafront Cottage



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B



Distance:
Approx. Varies



Activities:
Explore

DAY 15: PLACENCIA SUNSET CRUISE / BLUE HOLE FLYOVER BY HELICOPTER

Placencia Sunset Cruise

(Private/1.5 Hrs./Snacks)

The sunset over the distant Maya Mountains is nothing short of spectacular and there is no better place to see it from than the calm waters of the Placencia lagoon. The cruise is generally an hour to an hour and a half long and includes hors-d'oeuvres and your choice of red or white wine. Stay on the lookout for dolphins and manatees!

Departs: 4:30 pm

Returns: 6:30PM

Blue Hole Flyover By Helicopter (Optional please contact for Price)

The only way to truly appreciate the immense beauty of The Great Blue Hole is from the air. The Blue Hole is nearly a perfect circle of sparkling sapphire-blue water that only hints at its incredible depth of about 124 metres (407 ft). Home to nurse sharks, bull sharks, Caribbean reef sharks, and other exotic sea life, this underwater cavern contains stalactites formed more than 153,000 years ago. It's no wonder that the Discovery Channel named the Great Blue Hole number one on its list, "The 10 Most Amazing Places on Earth." This remarkable journey takes off from Placencia in the morning, rising above the crystal-clear turquoise waters of the Caribbean Sea to fly along the Atlantic's largest living barrier reef. The flight passes historic St. George's Caye and some of the world's best coral dive areas - Turneffe Atoll, Half Moon Caye (a national monument and marine life reserve), and the Lighthouse Reef Atoll - before making several sweeping passes over the magnificent Great Blue Hole. Aerial views of Glovers Reef, the Booby Bird Sanctuary, shipwrecks, manatees, and more will also captivate guests of all ages during this 1-hour tour.

Overnight at Turtle Inn - Seafront Cottage



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B



Distance:
Approx. Varies



Activities:
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DAY 16: FREE DAY

Free day!

Overnight at Turtle Inn - Seafront Cottage



Overnight:
Hotel



Meals:
B



Distance:
Approx. Varies



Activities:
Explore

DAY 17: END OF EXPEDITION

This morning you have breakfast and then take a transfer to Placencia Airport.



Overnight:
N/A



Meals:
B



Distance:
Approx. Varies



Activities:
Explore



ACCOMMODATION

Subject to availability

Nights	Place	Accommodation
Nights 1, 2, 3	Antigua	Las Cruces Boutique Hotel
Nights 4	Atitlan Overlook Camp	Atitlan Overlook Camp
Nights 5, 6	Sata Catarina	Casa Palopo
Nights 7, 8, 9	Las Lagunas	Las Lagunas
Nights 10, 11, 12	Chaa Creek	Ixchel Villa
Nights 13, 14, 15, 16	Placencia	Turtle Inn

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

INCLUDED

- All breakfasts
- Other meals where indicated
- Accommodation as mentioned, double occupancy
- Tours and activities as mentioned
- Transport as mentioned, in minibus
- Domestic flights as mentioned
- Local taxes

NOT INCLUDED

- Alcoholic beverages or additional beverages with meals
- International flights
- Airport taxes
- Border fees
- Tips and gratuities for drivers and guides
- Personal expenses
- Meals not indicated



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITY DURATION	2 – 5 hours per day
SEASON	Jan - Dec
BEST TIME TO GO	Dec – May
GROUP SIZE	Max group size 4 - 8
GROUP DEPARTURE	We have a couple of annual group departures – please see website or contact us for exact dates. Alternatively we are happy to arrange tailor-made or private departures to suit – this is a great trip for a group of friends or a family.
DIFFICULTY LEVEL	Our grades have been designated based on our perception of the degree of physical activity you are likely to require to enjoy the adventure. These are only a guideline. This itinerary has a ‘Medium’ level (2 – 5 hours of activities per day). This means that you will need an average level of fitness.



THE PIONEER BOOKING PROCESS

Where do you go from here? Well, you can feel free to email us at info@pioneerexpeditions.com if you're interested in this trip, or any of our other expeditions from around the world. Visit our website www.pioneerexpeditions.com to unearth all of our other equally amazing trips and destinations.

1. Contact us -

We will be happy to answer any questions or enquiries you may have. From here we will begin to plan and put together your dream adventure holiday! Alternatively, on our website you will find our booking and enquiry forms; once filled in, we will be notified of your enquiry and will get back to you ASAP.

2. Leave everything to us -

Everything will be arranged and booked by us, but we will make sure to keep you updated every step of the way. In addition, we can arrange your international flights if needed, as we have access to competitive airfares. We can also arrange any additional tours or additional night's accommodation.

3. Wait for your adventure to begin -

Sit back and count down the days until your trip of a lifetime with Pioneer Expeditions. We'll handle all of the last minute preparations and provide you with everything you need. All practical information will be sent out to you, prior to your trip.

If you feel like altering this itinerary to suit your personal preferences, we can arrange all of that and more – just get in contact with us and let us know your requirements and wishes. From here, we can simply tailor-make your dream holiday.

