

## A Fish Fabulous Day on Ambergris Caye!

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Sylvina Moh - defining  
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Planning even more  
adventures in 2015!  
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# From the Editor *Tamara Sniffin*



Enjoying a Lizard Juice at the infamous Caye Caulker Split thus *My Beautiful Belize* was born.

Ahhh yes...it's the New Year, and what comes with the New Year...reflections and resolutions of course! They say you can do anything once you've put your mind to it, and obviously it is a tried and true observation. In December 2004 we (*The San Pedro Sun*) applied this mantra to publishing a new Visitor Guide publication which was inserted in to *The San Pedro Sun* weekly newspaper. It became a very popular and vital part of the newspaper, and each and every week the Visitor Guide contained new and engaging articles about what to see and do on La Isla Bonita and beyond. Nine years later, in January 2013 it was time to rebrand this island mainstay and grow the publication into a full color monthly magazine with a new website to compliment the printed version,

Now, as we enter our third year of publishing the only monthly visitor guide in the country, we have to pat ourselves on the back! We have grown by pages and circulation and [www.mybeautifulbelize.com](http://www.mybeautifulbelize.com) prospers as well. We LOVE it when we see tourists walking around with a copy of *My Beautiful Belize* in hand and our advertisers are delighted with the response they get from their ads. As a weekly newspaper by day, we really enjoy taking a break from reporting NEWS and covering FUN stories that include adventure, travel, great food and amazing people. We look forward to a fantastic 2015 full of discovering more about our beloved country and her amazing individuals. We are completely in love with our tropical home and we welcome you to discover *My Beautiful Belize*.

## Wolfe's Woofers

By: Dennis Wolfe

### How Was School?

"I need a favor if you can do it," Melody said.

"Sure," I said. "What's up? Something to do with Davin?"

"Can you pick him up from school for the next two days?"

The Christmas and New Year's holidays have me running around like crazy."

The next day I was waiting outside when the door to the classroom opened and a huge group of eight and nine year-olds came charging out.

"Hey, Grandpa!" Davin said, as he jumped into my golf cart.

"How was school today?" I asked.

"It was great."

"Did you get punished for anything?"

"Yes, I had to take a time out in the corner for being too loud."

"Trouble just seems to find you," I told him.

"Yes, but Robby and Gabriel got punished, too. Oh, and Britney and Susanna got scolded really real good."

"Maybe you'll have a better day tomorrow," I said.

The next day he came running out of class and jumped in the golf cart.

"Hey, Grandpa!"

"Hey, sweet boy," I said. "How was school today?"

"It was great."

"Did anybody get punished today?"

"No."

"Robby and Gabriel? Britney and Susanna? Nobody got punished?"

"No, I don't think so," he said. "Except for me."



## Weh Di Go Ahn Eena January & February?!



**January 11<sup>th</sup>:**

**What:** San Pedro Wahoo Challenge  
**Where:** Captain Morgan's Retreat, North Ambergris Caye  
**Starts:** 5AM- 5PM (Fishing Time)

**January 24<sup>th</sup>:**

**What:** Zen Arcade Tie Dye Workshop  
**Where:** Zen Arcade Wellness Center and Inn, San Pedro Town  
**Starts:** 9AM (must sign up in advance)  
**Admission:** \$60BZD



**February 14<sup>th</sup>:**

**What:** Kymani Marley Concert  
**Where:** Belize City - Riverside Tavern,  
**Starts:** Doors open 8PM  
**Admission:** \$60 (\$70 at Door)

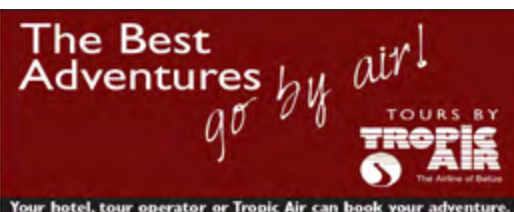
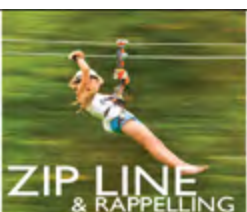


**February 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>:**

**What:** Carnival  
**Where:** San Pedro Town  
**Starts:** 3PM onwards. It is one of the most vibrant and fun cultural events of the island! Do not miss this one!

## SuDoku Time! Answers on Page 10

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	6				5		2



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Shrimp



# A fish fabulous day!

By Tamara Sniffin

Last March my nephew and his fiancée from Colorado, along with a couple of their friends from Wyoming paid me a visit here on Ambergris Caye. Apparently I had the reputation as the 'hostess with the mostest' and they playfully challenged me to out-do myself when showing them a good time. Far be it for me to balk at a challenge, especially one that involves having fun, so I pulled out all the stops, not that it's hard to find fun on Ambergris Caye! And play we did, from sun-filled days on the beach sipping Piña Coladas to fine dining and bar hopping, they toasted me to a good-time indeed, but their days in paradise were numbered and I was tasked with putting together a day that would go down in the greatest hits of island memories! Easy peasy...a fishing we a go!

On La Isla there are many tour guides and operators who offer fishing, and the level of angling is as

**Continued on Page 5**



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from Tuff E Nuff dock by Rubie's in town

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7am-midnight  
226-4000



# Fishing Fun Continued from Page 4



diverse as the day packages available. From the “we just want to have fun on the boat drinking rum punch and if we catch a fish that’s cool” group, to the hardcore fisherman who travels with his own pole and wears Patagonia Angler shirts to breakfast, the perfect day awaits you. The beauty is that with many companies if you have a group of four or more you’ve basically hired the boat and guides for the day, and what ever you are up for they are there to make sure you have a great experience.

My group of guests fell under the “let’s have fun on the boat” category, although Dan from Wyoming, a big burly outdoors man with an affection for foofy cocktails, was focused on doing some real fishin’! DONE I proclaimed, and I promptly contacted the good people at Belize Diving Adventures. We weren’t just going fishing...we would be catching fish, eating

fish and snorkeling with fish...it promised to be a fish-fabulous day!

After boarding the boat and introductions and safety formalities behind us, our guides were amicable and super attentive. With the wind in our hair and the boat slicing through the crystal clear Caribbean waters along the reef, we arrived at our fishing hole where we could do as much (or as little) as we

wanted when it came to baiting our hooks, casting, reeling in the catch and removing the fish from the hook. The waters were popping with fish of all sizes, from bite-sized grunts to pan sized snappers. Of course Dan was all about “do it yourself” fishing but the rest of us enjoyed the fishing-line babysitting we received, with our biggest challenge being reeling in feisty fish, no need to mess with that yucky

bait or removing the flapping fish, our guides took care of that! The fish were biting and everyone was having a blast battling the tugging lines and posing for photos with their Caribbean catch.

Of course with all this fishing, we had worked up an impressive appetite and thirst! Next stop: a picture perfect secluded stretch of beach with a covered palapa and a grill pit. While our guides prepared our ‘catch of the day’ for the coconut-husk BBQ, we devoured fresh ceviche they had just whipped up after harvesting a live conch just minutes before. Salty, sun-kissed and sipping rum punch, these island castaways were very happy campers indeed.

For many, eating fish this fresh is a first, and the flavor is like no other. Prepared with sweet peppers, tomatoes and onions, we piled the white, flakey filets on to thick, fresh



**Continued on Page 12**

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# Exploring South of San Pedro Town

By Mary Gonzalez

When we think of island fun in the sun with friends, most of the activities that pop up are water-based, and centrally located to the island. At least, that's how it is with me! I live outside of the busy town core, so anywhere beyond feels more residential and calm. Well, time to break that idea down – we're here to enjoy EVERY bit of La Isla!

What better way than to start by fueling up with some delicious coffee! Tamara and I jumped up on the trusty purple bug (aka her cart) and drove down the scenic (paved) southern road, past resorts and homes to our ultimate destination: Rum & Bean coffee bar. Located inside the Mahogany Bay development (which is to the right of where the paved road ends currently), Rum & Bean is an adorable coffee house that serves up hot or iced caffeinated beverages to suit your every need.



A smiling Beverly took our orders on that sunny day: an iced coconut latte for me and an iced caramel macchiato for Tamara. While she whipped up our drinks, we poked around the cozy little room, admiring the gorgeous setting and deciding if we should sit outside or inside. The sun won this round, and when our adorable mason jars full of caffeinated goodness were presented to us, we headed out where we proceeded to have a fabulous conversation and too many laughs over one of their books (free to peruse from their varied collection).

What a charming place to enjoy a lovely hour or two with friends! They even serve alcoholic beverages if you're looking for a little extra pick-me up! We stuck to just coffee, and after it perked us right up, we were raring to go! After a quick tour of Mahogany Bay development, we were back on the cart and headed out to our next stop, the fabulous Victoria House.

Victoria House is a chic tropical resort offering breathtaking views, gorgeous grounds and delicious food at their Palmilla Restaurant. But we wanted more of a snack and the quintessential michelada! So off to Admiral Nelson's bar we went! Tamara insisted that I try their fabulous wings, made sticky and sweet 'n' spicy. How could I resist? While we waited for the wings to arrive, our micheladas were served right up. Beer, spices, lime juice, salty rim – mmmmm...it was 'sip, sip... ahhh' for both of us.

Out on their dock El Gato catamaran was pulling up with happy guests, and on a beach hammock strung between two coconut trees, another read his book. This quintessential picture of beachside serenity calmed our caffeine high and had us relaxing sip by sip. Our wings arrived promptly, and let me just tell you.



I am spoiled for life. I don't know how Chef does it, but those wings were life-changing! Somehow, they were crisp, but still sticky with a gorgeous honey and spice coating, and each bite was superb. (Yes, yes...they're wings...but they're not 'just wings'...). I could have easily eaten the entire order, but I minded my manners and shared with T! Even the side slaw that came with the wings was different and delicious. Those and the michelada? I'm telling you, what a wonderful way to spend a few hours with a dear friend!



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## Make your own Michelada:

### Ingredients:

A good dash of Worcestershire Sauce  
Seasoned Salt  
Lime juice  
Marie Sharp's Hot Sauce  
Salt  
Beer of choice



### Directions:

Note: A lot of these ingredients are to taste.

Start with a tall glass rimmed with salt.

Add the sauces, salts and lime juice, then fill with ice. Serve with your choice of beer.

Of course, we recommend the king of Belize beers: Belikin!

Pour, gently stir, then sip and enjoy!

*They are also considered a perfect hangover cure!*

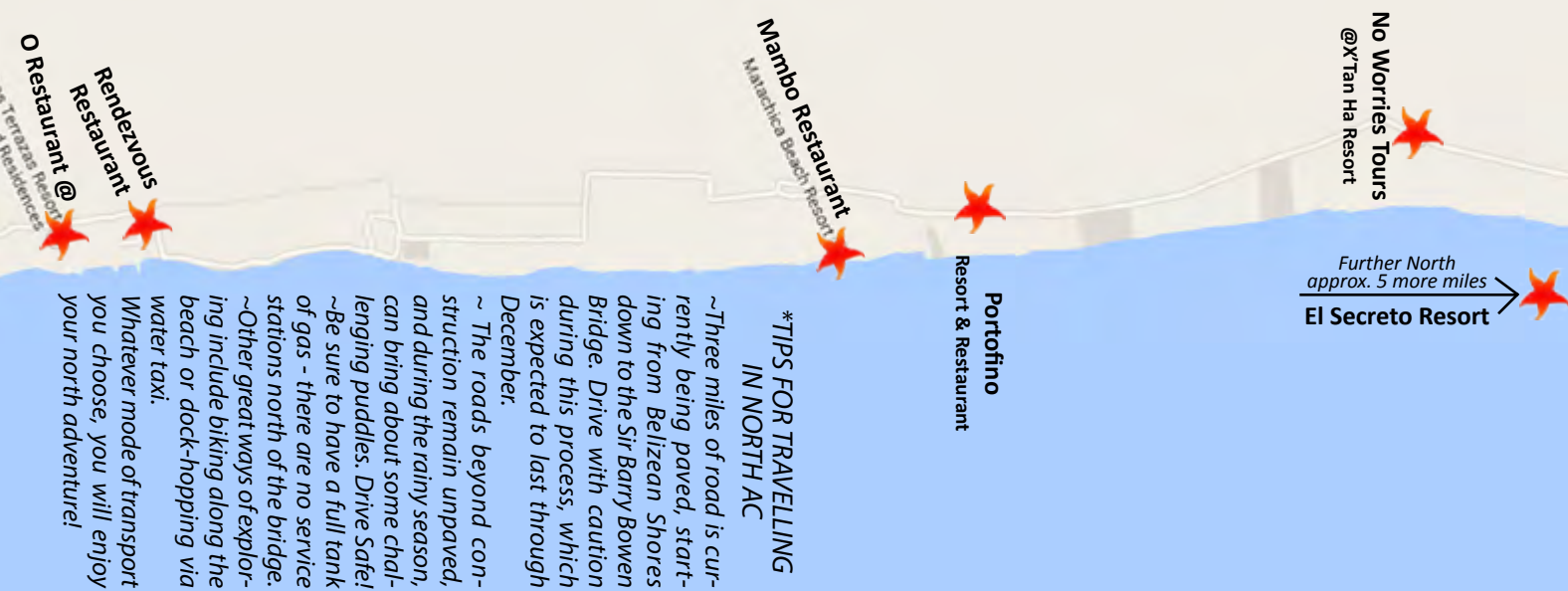
*Whatever your reason to enjoy one, we simply say, "Cheers!"*

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# North Ambergris Caye

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## \*TIPS FOR TRAVELLING IN NORTH AC

~Three miles of road is currently being paved, starting from Belizean Shores down to the Sir Barry Bowen Bridge. Drive with caution during this process, which is expected to last through December.

~The roads beyond construction remain unpaved, and during the rainy season, can bring about some challenging puddles. Drive Safe!  
~Be sure to have a full tank of gas - there are no service stations north of the bridge.  
~Other great ways of exploring include biking along the beach or dock-hopping via water taxi.  
Whatever mode of transport you choose, you will enjoy your north adventure!

## EAT RAIN RESTAURANT - Two miles north at

Grand Caribe. World cuisine, two dining atmospheres: indoor semi-formal dining and outdoor rooftop casual dining. Wine dinners every 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month. 226-4746, ext. 314 or email [info@rainbelize.com](mailto:info@rainbelize.com). Free boat transfer with reservations: pick-up at 6:15pm, return 9pm by Tuff E Nuff tours, Rubies' dock.

**PIRATE'S TREASURE** - A unique dining experience with their Chef's Table. Watch as Chef Mar prepares a fresh 3-course Belizean meal over a coconut-husk fire while you enjoy refreshing cocktails and island vibes. Regular Menu always available without reservations. Noon to 11PM. 668-2156.

**O RESTAURANT** - Central American cuisine with Caribbean flair, at Las Terrazas Resort. Breakfast, lunch, & dinner. Casual chic, or dine alfresco next to the infinity pool. 226-4249.

**RENDEZVOUS RESTAURANT & WINERY** - Charming and exotic setting on the beach, specializing in Thai and French fusion cuisine. Enjoy the signature wines we produce, from Chardonnays to Cabernet and Merlot and try our new beach bar for lunch. Closed Monday & Tuesday. Reservations recommended. Telephone 226-3426.



**PORTOFINO RESTAURANT** - Enjoy our Euro-Caribbean inspired menu and spectacular Caribbean views. Also offering a full VEGETARIAN Menu. For Reservations & Free Transportation, please call 226-5096 or 678-5096.

**MAMBO RESTAURANT** - Enjoy a unique dining experience at this award-winning restaurant at Matachica Resort. Romantic atmosphere with island ambience, offering locally inspired flavors and meals that will excite even the most seasoned palate. Complimentary transportation with reservations - call 226-5010/226-5011.

## STAY



**AK'BOL** - Yoga & Resort. 1 Mile North of Bridge. Open Daily 7AM-9PM. Drop in daily yoga classes at the end of pier + Massage + Tours. Restaurant/Bar on the beach. Thatched Cabanas. Budget rooms with shared bath. 7 night yoga retreats. 626-6296.

## PLAY



**FELIZ BAR & GRILL**: Your north side destination for sports and darts and super fast WiFi. We have 4 x 46" HDTV's and 2 dart boards, a great selection of fresh food including: burgers, paninis, pizzas, wings and much more, ice cold beers, local rum and cocktails and a nice cool breeze.



**LEGEND'S ROAD HOUSE** - Home of Tuesday JAM nights- live music starting at 7pm all musicians welcome. Now serving Texas style smoked meats and a sit down southern breakfast starting at 6am. 1/4 mile north of the bridge.



**KAMA LOUNGE**: Kama Lounge is under new ownership. We are located 1 minute across the bridge on the beach in front of Reef Village. We serve breakfast, lunch, snacks & dinner all day. Pool open. Daily happy hour from 4-7. Closed on Wednesdays.

**PALAPA BAR AND GRILL** - 1.5 Miles north of Bridge. Daily 10am - 9pm. Relax on the inner-tubes and have your bucket of ice cold beers lowered to you. Outdoor seating, awesome smoked food, cheeseburgers, seafood and tropical drinks and an astonishing view!

**NO WORRIES TOURS** - Dive. Snorkel. Jungle. Ruins. Caves. Discover the best that Belize has to offer with No Worries Tours. Experience the best of the Jungle and Sea, when you visit the mystic ruins of the ancient Maya, or snorkel the waters with nurse sharks! Book your tour today at 501-226-4831 or visit us at [www.noworriestours.com](http://www.noworriestours.com)

## TRANSPORTATION

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**CRYSTAL AUTO RENTALS** - 2 BZ locations: Philip S.W. Goldson International Airport and 5 Miles Northern Highway. Free shuttle service to and from our Belize City office to anywhere in Belize City. Tel: 011-501-223-1600 Fax: 011-501-223-1900 (direct dialing from U.S.A.) Toll Free in Belize: 0-800-777-7777 Email: [reservations@crystal-belize.com](mailto:reservations@crystal-belize.com) or visit our website at <http://crystal-belize.com>

# My Beautiful Belize

A map featuring various landmarks and business locations around town.



## EATS & TREATS



**BLACK ORCHID RESTAURANT & LOUNGE:** Come visit us; just a quick Golf Cart Ride 2 1/2 miles South of Town after the Croc Pond Lagoon and well before the Marco Gonzales Maya Site. Open Tuesday through Saturday from 11am-9pm. [www.blackorchidrestaurant.com](http://www.blackorchidrestaurant.com). Reservations Recommended (501) 206-2441.

**CASA PICASSO RESTAURANT:** Tapas dining in an artful setting. Global flavors from local ingredients...martinis, wines, cocktails. Vegetarian & gluten-free options. Open Tuesday-Saturday at 5:30pm. Last reservations 9pm...226-4443 or [reservations@casapicassobelize.com](mailto:reservations@casapicassobelize.com). Located south of town past Caribena Gas Station & Belikin Distributor. Ask about complimentary taxi pick-up/drop-off service within San Pedro Town. Check out our specials & "Tasting Thursday" menu at [facebook.com/CasaPicassoBelize](https://facebook.com/CasaPicassoBelize) & [casapicassobelize.com](http://casapicassobelize.com).

**ELVI'S KITCHEN:** The #1 "MUST VISIT" Restaurant in San Pedro for almost 40 Years! Open for lunch and dinner, Monday – Saturday, 11AM-10PM. Wednesdays: Caribbean Night with Music by Any and Pupo. Thursdays: Seafood medley & Cuban Solo Guitarist "Amaury's". Fridays: Mayan Buffet. Variety of specials every day, 226-2176.

**THE COFFEE BAR:** Bringing the Starbucks culture to Ambergris Caye, The Coffee Bar offers the best atmosphere, fastest wifi, cafe music, and a comfortable setting. They serve a wide assortment of hot and iced

coffee drinks, tea, smoothies, soft drinks as well as a light breakfast and lunch menu. 226-2233.

**MELT CAFE** at Exotic Caye Resort: Artisan Grilled Cheese and Specialty Sandwiches. Vegetarian and Healthy Options. Fresh Fruit Smoothies, Beer, Wine, Bloody Mary's, Watermelon and Orange Juice Mimosa's. Serving Breakfast and Lunch all day from 7am – 4pm. Free WiFi, closed Wednesdays.

See map for location.



**THE COCONUT CAFÉ:** The ONLY Build-Your-Own Pizza, Panini and Wrap restaurant on the Caye. Choose from over 20 fresh ingredients. Open for breakfast and lunch from 7am to 3pm (closed Sundays), on Coconut Drive across from Ramon's Village. 226-4311.

**SPICE IT UP RESTAURANT:** Boca del Rio Area, Beach Front. Open Sunday – Tuesday; 7AM - 10PM. Serving local and international cuisine. Weekend Specials Thursday through Sunday. Huge variety of scrumptious Ceviche. \$1 Wings. Happy Hour: 2PM-6PM. Call: 206-2870.



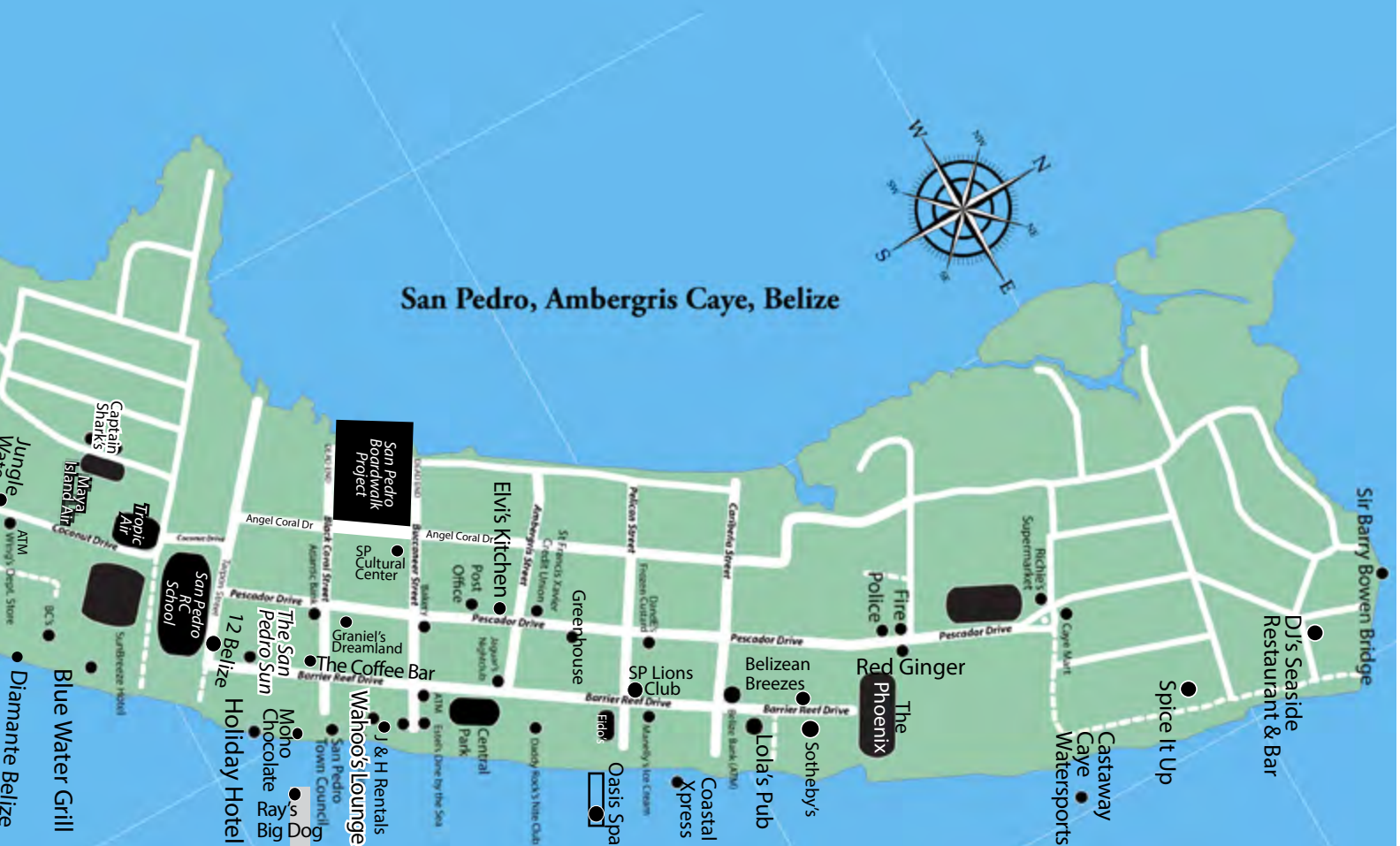
**RAY'S BIG DOG:** San Pedro's only Fast Casual palapa dining experience offers artisanal All Beef and Chicken hot dogs loaded with gourmand toppings, peel & eat shrimp growlers, and old school Ice cream floats hand made in three flavors. At the entrance of the Tacklebox dock.

**THE PALMILLA RESTAURANT AT VICTORIA HOUSE:** A casual experience with a unique mix of island seafood and continental cuisine. Relaxed and informal yet romantic. Admiral Nelson Bar is the place to be casual and relax in your swimsuit, enjoying breakfast, lunch and dinner with magnificent views. Reservations recommended: 226-2067.



# My Beautiful Belize

A map featuring various landmarks and business locations around town.



## UNIQUE OFFERINGS

### BELIZEAN BREEZES SOAP CO.:

Home to over 160 scents of All Natural, Hand Poured soaps! From Bars to guest soaps, cupcake soaps and a ton of fun! A full line of affordable and unique jewelry and gift items. A MUST see. 9PM-8PM, 671-2025.



**CAYE COFFEE ROASTING COMPANY:** Local fresh roasted coffee manufactured in San Pedro Town. Available throughout Ambergris Caye and at select locations in mainland Belize. For more information visit <http://www.cayecoffee.bz>.



**MCKOY'S PHARMACY:** Your Pharmacy that cares. Last pharmacy south of town. Best price for Viagra/ Cialis. We do special order medications and prescriptions. Services include: Checking of Pressure, Sugar/glucose, and Nebulizer treatments. Open Mon-Sat 8:30AM-8PM, 9AM-midday Sundays. 626-1240/621-1648/226-4606 bzherbalist@yahoo.com.

**GRANIEL'S DREAMLAND:** Exotic Hard Woods and Mahogany Products made locally on the island. Gift Items, indoor and outdoor furniture, carvings, and custom-made orders. Worldwide Shipping. Free Delivery to Hotel, Airport or Boat within town limits. 226-2938, Pescador Drive. [granielsdreamland2@yahoo.com](mailto:granielsdreamland2@yahoo.com), [www.granielsdreamlandbelize.com](http://www.granielsdreamlandbelize.com) Facebook: Graniels Dreamland

**MOHO CHOCOLATE COMPANY:** From bean to bar: handmade chocolate with Organic Maya Cacao. Milk & dark chocolate, truffles, skin care products and souvenirs. Black Coral Drive. 625-1980.

**OASIS SPA** – Relax, Refresh, Renew with our variety of treatments, including pre-natal massages, deep tissue, aromatherapy and more. On the pier at Fido's Courtyard. 206-2600, [oasisspabelize@gmail.com](mailto:oasisspabelize@gmail.com).

**ZEN ARCADE** - Y O G A, Pilates, Dance, Body Work, Paddle Board Yoga, meditation, fitness for all levels and interest. Plus massage, hair & nails, healthy cafe/juice bar, Rx cosmetics, childcare, serenity pool and playground all in one location! [www.zenarcadebelize.com](http://www.zenarcadebelize.com), 226-3177.



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**CASTAWAY CAYE WATERSPORTS:** Enjoy a fun day out on the water with family and friends on our Seadoo Jetskis and Banana Boats. Or get a bird's eye view as you Parasail over paradise with our professional staff. Located on Wet Willy's Dock. 671-3000.

**PARTY PARTY CRAZY CANUCKS BEACH BAR:** Beach bar located at Exotic Caye Beach Resort. Daily: 11-midnight. Bar food and daily drink specials. Mondays: Live reggae at 8pm. Thursdays: Splash 'n Paint at 2pm. Fridays: Trivia at 7pm followed by karaoke. Saturdays: Live music with Dennis Wolfe at 7pm. Sunday Funday: Live music and horseshoes at 3pm. Follow us on Facebook. Phone: 670-8001

**LOLA'S PUB** - The best stocked bar on the island! Martinis, Single Malt, Bourbon, Pickleback Shots, Tequila Shot Chillers. KARAOKE FREE ZONE. Across from Belize Bank on Front Street. 206-2120.

**DJ'S SEASIDE RESTAURANT AND BAR-** Come enjoy our signature burgers and ocean views while the kids play at the Boca del Rio park. Now featuring pool tables and dart boards. Daily food and drink specials. Live punta and reggae music on Saturday and Sundays.

**WAHOO'S LOUNGE** - We are home to the WORLD FAMOUS CHICKEN DROP! Thursday nights starting at 6PM. Drink specials, games and an amazing view of the reef. Located on the beach at the Spindrift Hotel. 226-2002.

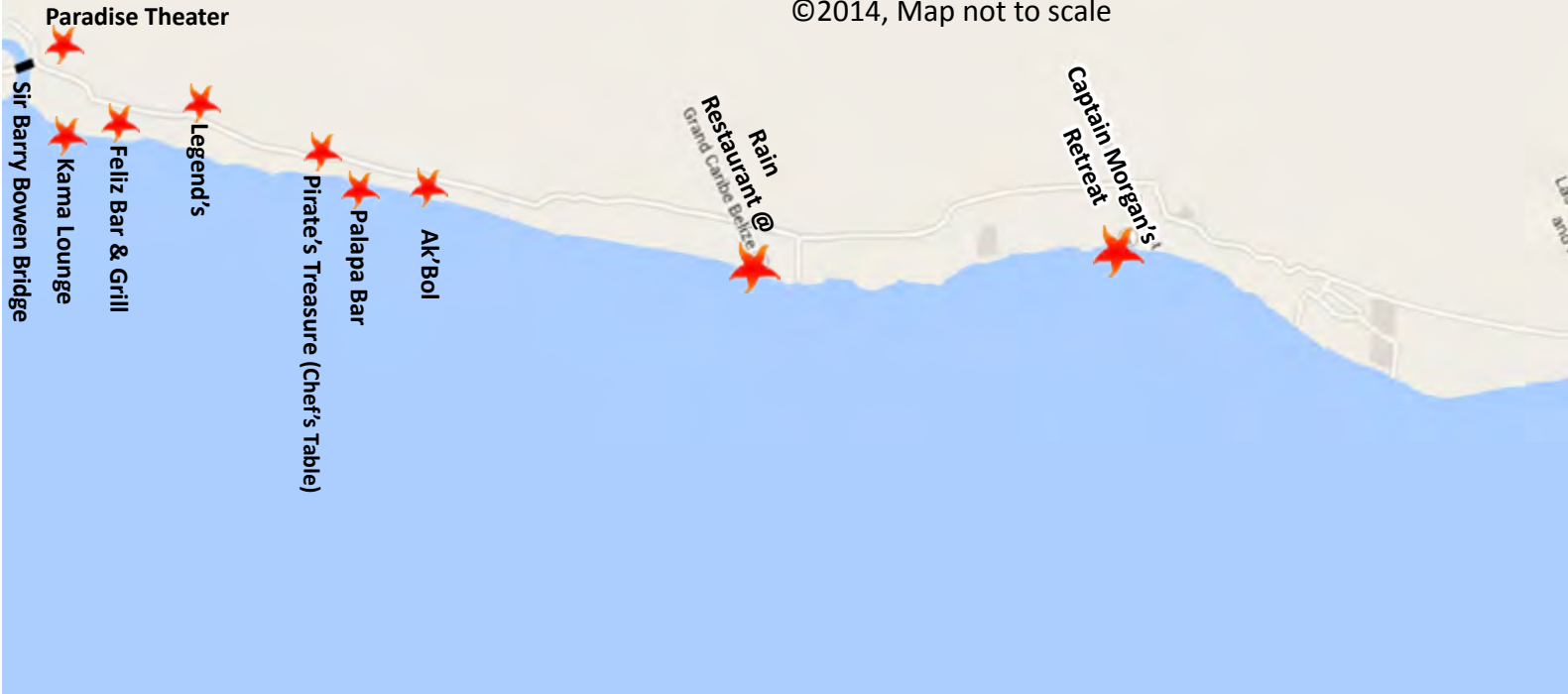


**THE SAN PEDRO LIONS CLUB** Join us on Fridays for fun bingo (7PM) and delicious chicken BBQ (from noon). All proceeds go back to assisting the community in times of need.



# North Ambergris Caye

©2014, Map not to scale



**CAPTAIN MORGAN'S RETREAT & CASINO** - Full service beach resort 3.5 miles north Ambergris Caye. Cozy thatched casitas, spacious villas, and luxury condos, 3 pools, restaurant, bar, tour center, grocery store, spa and fun casino are the perfect combination for the ultimate getaway! Call 226-2207 for reservations.

**EL SECRETO** is a barefoot luxury resort comfortably secluded just miles north of San Pedro. Dine at the most beautiful setting on the island and discover the secret flavors of Miss Miguella's kitchen! Offering a variety of international food with a Belizean touch. Call 236-5111.

## REAL ESTATE

**DIAMANTE BELIZE:** Now under construction, the luxurious Diamante will feature 5 standalone buildings of 2- and 3-bedroom condos with high-end finishes throughout. Full strata beachfront condominiums in the heart of town! Visit [diamantebelize.com](http://diamantebelize.com) to learn more!

## Tourist Information

**AA Meetings:** Tel: 627-1585. English Meetings:  
'Boca Del Rio': Mon - Sat: 6PM - 7PM (#5 Boca Del Rio Dr).  
'Clean & Serene': Tues & Fri, noon, Catholic Church Parish Hall.  
UltraMar Group (Spanish): T/W/F/Sun: 7:30PM, San Pablo Church.  
**Belize Tourism Board** - 227-2419.  
**Belize Tourism Industry Association (BTIA)** - 227-5717.  
**Belize Hotel Association** - 223-0669, [bha@btl.net](mailto:bha@btl.net)  
**San Pedro Tourist Guide Association** 226-2391.

**CRYSTAL AUTO RENTALS** - 2 BZ locations: Philip S.W. Goldson International Airport and 5 Miles Northern Highway. Free shuttle service to and from our Belize City office to anywhere in Belize City. Tel: 011-501-223-1600 Fax: 011-501-223-1900 (direct dialing from U.S.A.) Toll Free in Belize: 0-800-777-7777 Email: [reservations@crystal-belize.com](mailto:reservations@crystal-belize.com) or visit our website at <http://crystal-belize.com>  
**COASTAL XPRESS WATER TAXI** - Scheduled ferry service & water taxi for Ambergris Caye. Phone 226-3007.  
**GET TRANSFERS** - Executive transfer and tour services anywhere in Belize: Chetumal, Cancun, Quintana Roo & even Merida and Guatemala. Phone: 422-2485 (fx: 422-3511) or email: [info@gettransfers.com](mailto:info@gettransfers.com).  
**RAINBOW TAXI** - Caye Caulker golf cart, guided island tours, reliable service. 226-0123. Minerva: 661-6254 or Champ 602-8136.

## IMPORTANT #S

**Police** - 206-2022 / **Fire** - 206-2372  
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## Sudoku Answers Puzzle on Page 2

2	5	7	8	1	3	6	9	4
9	8	4	2	5	6	3	7	1
1	3	6	4	7	9	8	5	2
8	2	5	6	3	4	9	1	7
4	1	3	5	9	7	2	8	6
6	7	9	1	8	2	5	4	3
5	4	2	7	6	8	1	3	9
7	9	8	3	2	1	4	6	5
3	6	1	9	4	5	7	2	8



# Defining Dance - Sylvina Novelo de Moh

*If Belize was founded on anything, it is the heart of its people. A love of nature, a sense of patriotism that drives the desire to protect, preserve and BE Belize...these are the things that make our people the most valuable resource of our tiny Central American/Caribbean country.*

*Our historians, who hold on to stories told from generations ago and treasure souvenirs of our past, happy to share a glimpse of what was, and what made Belize who she is today...Our educators, beyond four walls of a classroom, instilling the lesson that we must never stop learning, to students taking the lead and growing up to become soldiers, tour guides, chefs, conservationists, activists, revolutionists...at times quietly, but always, driving change and betterment of our country, one person at a time.*

*These are the people we celebrate; these are the people we present to you in 2015. How did they become who they are? What do they do? When they're not at their 'job', what are they like? How can we learn from them? Enjoy learning about some of the wonderful characters that make Belize so rich and diverse!*

## Sylvina Novelo de Moh

By Janelle Cowo

They say that dancing is more than just moving one's body; it is a fundamental part of life and who a person is. Sylvina Novelo de Moh is one of the few Belizeans that has made her life revolve around dancing. But not any kind of dancing, the 63-year-old is a proud Mestizo who has been teaching traditional cultural dances for the past 26 years. Affectionately known as "Tia Cheb", she has taught many generations- including me- the traditional dances of one of Belize's most vibrant cultures!

Born on February 26 1951, Sylvina is an original resident of the village of San Jose Nuevo Palmar, located in the outskirts of Orange Walk Town. Like anyone with a rural upbringing, Sylvina learned all her skills from her mother, 99-year-old Dolores Novelo, who is also a dancer. "My mother used to tell me about her experience dancing Mestizas. I used to love hearing them, it got me excited [to dance too]."

Sylvina recalls how she got inspired to start dancing after seeing her mother practice in their kitchen and dancing in all the village fairs. "One of the most significant memories I have is that of my mom participating in the Fiesta De San Jose. She danced for three days and nights and looked simply beautiful in her Huipil (traditional Mestizo dress) with her make up on, her hair in a bun elaborately decorated with flowers and all the jewelry. She was a true Mestizo woman and I wanted to be like her!" The Fiesta De San Jose still lives on today, and is celebrated from March 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup>. The festival was also my inspiration, and I have participated in the dances since I was a little girl.

*Author Janelle was also a proud student of Mrs. Sylvina.*



January 2015



"Not one day in my life have I regretted the path I chose. Dancing is at my core, and I hope to continue teaching the next generation for many years more. To all the youth, treasure your heritage and culture as it can only live on through you." Sylvina is a true inspiration to everyone that has the opportunity to learn under her tutelage. Her passion for the dance is evident in the young children she teaches. Even as a past student, my affection, respect and awe from her remains intact and her teaching will remain with me always.



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# Fishing Fun Continued from Page 5

tortillas and inhaled the delicious meal. It just doesn't get much better than that!

After an amazing lunch, and with bellies full of fish and rum, we depart the sandy stretch of heaven for a short snorkel adventure at nearby Mexico Rocks on the way home. The water is a refreshing wake-up to a panorama of colorful reef fish and cross looking rays who glide along the shallow sea floor. Schools of fist-sized yellow and black striped Sergeant Majors give us a close inspection and escort us as we follow our guide through coral heads and deeper water channels. It is a perfect finish to a perfect day.

When we arrive back at the dock we departed from, my exuberant guests carry me on their shoulders and parade me through town like a laureled



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hero, proclaiming I'm their MOST FAVORITE auntie of all. Ok maybe I'm telling a whopper of a fish story with the parade part, but there's no fish tale here, we all had a most excellent day.

For more info about having a fish-fabulous day check with Belize Diving Adventures or ask your hotel concierge who they recommend; it is a day well worth experiencing!



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# Reflecting on 2014 and dreaming of 2015's adventures!

*Tamara*

As Old Man Time ticked towards 2015 it

was time for me to measure how 2014 rated on my good/bad/mediocre/epic/thank God-the-year-is-over meter. The best way to recall the highlights (who needs to focus on the low-lights) was to peruse through the 50+ folders of digital images I had accumulated over the year in question. I already knew it had been a pretty good one, and as I reminisced over photos of beautiful, exotic places, colorful landscapes and smiling faces I couldn't help but realize that what made the experience so special was not only the amazing locales but the special people I shared each experience with.

Last year my JOB (not a dirty word) found me paddle boarding, snorkeling, birding, sailing, dining at fabulous restaurants, weekend stays at beachside resorts, enjoying super fun lobster festivals, art festivals, September celebrations, Carnival and Holiday Lighted Boat Parades, exploring mainland destinations like Placencia, back-road adventures

*Mary*

Writing for My Beautiful Belize has been intense, but rewarding. I'm a born and bred Belizean who loves her country immensely, and I look forward to share with our readers what I see every time I step out and enjoy Belize's beauty!

In choosing a favorite activity for 2014, I remembered all resort stays, road trips, meals and landmarks. I'd do them all over again, but the one thing that stands out was the music video shoot for **Verge of Umbra**. I guess I like to party – or I'm a video vixen at heart!

Really though, it is because I LOVE our people. Time and again, I hear travelers indicate that Belize is about its people. Yes she's a beauty, but what draws in repeat travelers is the warmth of our people. To be cocooned in a group of like-minded people was like finding a batch of ready-made friends! I can't bang two sticks to a sensible rhythm, but



*Getting behind the wheel is an adventure in itself...you get that sense of "Where will we go NEXT?!"*  
Photo of idyllic Double Head Cabbage

my bucket list!

So what does 2015 have in-store for this 'workin' girl'? A repeat attempt in March at diving with **whale sharks** in Placencia perhaps? A return visit to the Toledo District for **Cacao Festival** in May? Spotting rare **Orange-Breasted Falcons** in the Pine Ridge Mountains? Who knows??? But you can bet whatever path my travels take me I'll be sharing LOTS of photos with you along the way!

I can appreciate some riffs and solos. And Verge of Umbra has that in spades. I can't wait to see if I made the cut in their video, but even if I didn't, I'll smile every time I see it, because I was there, and I know what went into the filming of it!

For 2015, I think I've come up with a decent Belize travel bucket list. It's ambitious, but even if I cross ONE off, I'll be happy! I want to join

the **Scarlet Six Biomonitoring Team** in **Chiquibul**. **Cockscomb Basin** has been calling my name as well. Maybe I'll try a **Maya home stay** and spend a weekend indulging in the village life that I miss so much from back home. When it comes to learning a new skill, I'd like to get **SCUBA** certified! Oh, and I'd love to learn to **make tamales**! Follow @tiachocolate on Twitter and tiachoco1ate on Instagram, with the hashtags #belizebucketlist, #mbbtravel and #mybeautifulbelize to see how I fare with my Belize travel dreams!



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# Reflections and resolutions

Continued from Page 14

*Janelle*

About 365 days ago I had no idea of all the amazing things that I would get to experience thanks to work.

Yes, WORK! Writing for My Beautiful Belize has allowed me the privilege to enjoy, taste, and view my country in different eyes. This unique opportunity has broadened my love for Belize and has left me wanting more... more fun, adventure, history, culture and of course more challenges!

I've been awed by a bird's-eye-view of the Blue Hole and whizzed down the Belize river by river-boat, following that up with some awesome homemade wine! But honestly my most favorite memory of the year had to be cave tubing through the Crystal Caves down in Cayo. It might be because I love sparkly objects but after my trip to Crystal Cave I'm debating on making it my wedding venue. Spectacular crystal formations cover the floors, walls and ceiling, giving it an iridescent, shimmering glow. I even forgot the cold of the waters 30 feet underground as the shine blew me away!

Looking ahead to 2015 I want to continue on this "nature" path I have been heading on and really dive into Belize. A must do in my bucket list is diving the **Cara Blanca Pools**. While not many know of it, Cara Blanca are 25 sinkholes (only eight have been explored) that hold more than 1,200 years of Maya history and ancient animal fossils.



But in order to accomplish this feat I must first become a **certified diver** - another item on my bucket list. Also in my ever-lengthening agenda is to re-join **Program for Belize**. Program for Belize carries out conservation work in the Rio Bravo Conservation and Management Area in the Orange Walk District. This place is awesome! Its 260,000 acres of sub-tropical forest and home to 200 species of trees, 390 species of birds (25 migratory species), 70 species of mammals and 39 species of conservation concern including the Jaguar, Puma, Margay, Ocelot, the Howler and Spider Monkeys. Oh, and the area was also home to Belize's first inhabitants, the Maya!

So bring it on 2015, I'm ready!



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