

# From the Editor Tamara Sniffin



Editor Tamara Sniffin (I) makes sweet talk with Ixcacao owners and chocolatiers Juan and Abelina Cho.

Some adventures involve nothing more than your taste buds...but oh my, what memories those adventures do make! In this month's issue of My Beautiful Belize, our tasty travels take us to the source of all things delicious. Be it the fresh produce showcased at the annual National Agriculture and Trade Show in Belmopan, to the transformation of chocolate from the bean to the bar at the Chocolate Festival in Punta Gorda Town, we are going

to where it all the fun begins. Not only do both of these annual events delight the mighty taste bud, they also showcase the amazing cultural diversity of Belizean talent, creativity and culinary finesse. And talk about finesse, after a four year hiatus, the best of the best will be put to the test when top chefs combine all of these wonderful local ingredients when they compete in the Belize Tourism Board's Taste of Belize in Orange Walk.

Of course adventure in our country is not limited to eating, so when we are not indulging in deliciousness we are languishing on our lazy, beautiful beaches...dreaming about what new ink we want to get at the first annual Tattoo Expo in San Pedro Town! Combine that with some serious tuneage by Belize's one and only Verge of Umbra and life just couldn't be more complete. Yes, it sounds kind of random, but hey, random is an adventure too!

April is a wonderful time of year to visit our country, the weather is fair and the winds pleasant. Wherever your taste buds take you, wherever your hammock may swing, whatever tunes are gracing your headphones, we welcome you to My Beautiful Belize!

# Weh Di Go Ahn eena April

April 10th - Belize's First Land Rover Car Show at Maracas Bar and Grill in Orange Walk Town. Noon to 3PM

April 15th - Delusion Art Exhibition to be held at Image Factory Art Foundation in Belize City starting at 7PM



April 16<sup>th</sup> – Aventura MTB to be held in Blue Creek Village at 10AM

 Belize Birding Adventure to be held at Blackbird Caye Resort starting at 6AM

 2016 Ariel Rosado Annual Bike Race starting from Central Farm, Cayo District at 7AM

 First Annual I-RaVE Music Festival at Thirsty Thursdays in San Ignacio, Cayo District. 6PM

April 17th - Belize Yoga and Drumming Retreat to be held at Hopkins Village, Stann Creek District at 11AM

April 17<sup>th</sup> – Autism Awareness 5k Marathon starting at the Central Park, San Pedro Town from 10AM

April 20th - Spay-getti and No Meat Ball Dinner Fundraiser to be held Stella's Smiles, San Pedro Town from 6PM

April 23rd - LifeLine Foundation Black and

White Gala to be held at Ramanda Belize Princes Hotel and Casino at 7PM April 23<sup>rd</sup> – Wild Flower Fashion Show to be held at the Cahal Pech Village Resort in San Ignacio Town starting

April 24th Unplug, Reflect, Reset women's Retreat to be held at Ragged Caye in Dangriga Town at 1PM



April 29th to May 2nd - National Agriculture and Trade Show to be held Belmopan City, all-day event (See Page 12)



May 1st - Forward Movement Street Festival to be held at Arthur Street, Orange Walk Town from noon to 6PM

May 14th - Taste of Belize Festival

to be held at Orange Walk Town, all-day For more details on the listed events visit www.mybeautifulbelize.com

#### SuDoku Time! Answers on Page 5 4 6 6 9 1 4 8 3 7 9 8 7 4 8 2 3 2 1 6 1 8 2 4 1 9

# Wolfe's Woofers

By: Dennis Wolfe

## A Shot of Rum



"You had a phone call while you were out," Sherry said.

"Who was it?"

"It was Ms. Lourdes, Don Julio's wife."

"I hope he didn't pass away," I said. "He's been sick a long time now and he's almost ninety years old."

"Ms. Lourdes says he is nearly done for," Sherry said. "She wants you to come see him one more time.'

"Don Julio, how are you?" I asked, when Ms. Lourdes took me into the

"Not bad," he said, "considering that I'm eighty-nine years old and every part of my body is trying to quit on me."

"Is there anything I can do for you?" I asked, when she left the room.

"Yes. You know I've always liked your stories. Tell me some good jokes and make me feel better like that."

For the next forty-five minutes I told jokes while Don Julio cackled like an old hen and drank shots of rum. Ms. Lourdes came back in and said, "Old man, you look tired. Do you need a nap?"

"Hell no," he said. "I can sleep when I'm dead. Just a few more jokes."

"Do you want a shot of rum?" he asked me.

"No, thank you."

"Well, I guess I'll have to drink two shots," he said. "One for me and one for you."

He reached for the bottle but Ms. Lourdes grabbed it first and smacked his hand.

"No more for you," she said. "If you keep drinking like this there won't be any left for the wake."













Ahh, the beach...it calls to you daily - teasing and tempting with the sound of waves crashing ashore...shimmering shades of blue and green waters warm enough to lounge in for hours (SPF please), trade winds blowing, perhaps the simple addition of a refreshing beverage or two, a good book or trashy novel...hey, even a hammock between two coconut trees or at the end of a rickety wooden dock. However, Belize's shorelines are different from the postcard visuals most visitors expect.

Ambergris Caye doesn't have a typical 'beach' scene with rows of white sand edging blue waters as far as the eye can see. There are some spots like that, but our waters are home to turtle grass, where fish and rays can play close to shore. Our Barrier Reef protects us from large crashing waves, so docks line our shores where you can jump in and play with the wild marine life.





Oh, but now when we talk about the leeward side of the island, where the waters are flatter and calmer, you can find some amazing spots. If you're really lucky, you'll find a guide worth his salt, who'll take you off to a sandbar where no-one can bother you. Pack a delicious picnic, along with cool drinks

and lots of sunscreen (wide-brimmed hat would be fun too), because on these bits of heavenly sand, you'll be partially submerged in salt water and there are no trees. You are literally walking from a boat to a tiny stretch of shore, where your day can only be classified as magic.









# Life's a Beach continued from Page 4

Now take Caye Caulker, our sister island. She recently unveiled some reclaimed beach that all and sundry can enjoy. Already known as the go-slow island, the additional beach probably bumps that slogan to 'go-lie-down' island! From the world-famous split, to cleared beaches interspersed with untouched mangroves and old rickety docks, Caye Caulker is the bomb for beach bums.

While the two islands mentioned have soft, powdery sand, the ones further down south of the country, such as in Hopkins and Placencia are completely different! Their sand is brown, almost sugar-like granules that stretch as far as the eye can see. As development hasn't quite taken over the beaches, you can walk a good mile before encountering a dock! If you do this barefoot, your tootsies will be properly exfoliated in the process too! Talk about a win-win situation!

If the beaches get too crowded for you, there's always the option to





string a hammock up and sway in the cool sea breeze...nothing to stop you... now excuse me, I'm off to find my perfect beach spot!







RAIN RESTAURANT - 2 Miles North at Grand Caribe. World cuisine, two dining atmospheres: indoor semi-formal and outdoor rooftop casual dining. Serving from 7AM - LATE! Happy Hour: 1-3PM, Mon-Sun. 226-4000 or email

reservations@rainbelize.com.



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 coconuthusk fire while you enjoy

refreshing cocktails and island vibes. Regular Menu always available without reservations. Noon to 11PM. 668-2156.



THE TRUCK STOP: Belize's first shipping container food park. Come try the different exciting options from our food trucks, play backyard

games, or cool off with a sundae from our ice cream shop. Pig roast & cornhole tournament every Sunday!

**STELLA'S SMILE** is a lagoon-front boutique wine cafe just one mile north of the bridge. Not the traditional "beach bar", Stella's offers

#### PLAY



MARBUCKS COFFEE HOUSE - Specialty Coffee Drinks - both hot & cold; fresh fruit smoothies and baked goods. Join us for

Thursday Wine Fun, 4PM-7PM and our delicious Sunday brunch (with mimosas!). Located just off the main road across from the Palapa Bar. Like us on Facebook and keep up with the fun!



COCO LOCOS BEACH BAR: 1st Beach Bar North of Bridge. Swim up Bar. Monday 4PM Cribbage Tournament and BBQ. Trivia Tuesdays 7PM.

Daily Happy Hour 4 – 6. Bocce ball, Giant Jenga. Pizza & Pulled Pork Sandwiches. Open Every day 12 noon – 10PM. Like us on facebook.com /cocolocosbz.



FELIZ BAR & GRILL: THE Sports Bar across the bridge, with four 43" flat screen TVs, delicious thin crust pizza, wings and burgers. Play

corn hole, catch the game, and try our Wednesday dart challenge! 1PM-11PM, closed on Tuesdays. At the Cloisters.

# THE BAR

#### THE DIVE BAR:

Snorkel/dive with us at SeaStar Belize and then unwind over great drinks, great food and

a great time at The Dive Bar. Enjoy beachfront views and complementary water toys, just 1/2mile North of the bridge. 226-3365/625-3364

# SHOP MATA GRANDE GROCERY The biggest little grocery

 The biggest little grocery store in San Pedro, located

4.5 miles North it's a must see! Stop by for breakfast or lunch at Aurora's Grill (local food). Open Mon-Sat8AM-5PM; Sun 10AM-5PM. Order online at www.matagrandegrocery.com or call us at 226-4290....we DELIVER!

a distinctive portfolio of wines and authentic cuisine in a relaxed setting. Call 602-5284 or visit www.stellasmile.com.

**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.

JOHN'S ESCAPE!!! Run away and get served lunch and dinner daily. Pizzas, Nachos, Burgers, Quesadillas, Burritos, Fajitas, Ceviche, Chicken Wings (to die for!) and much more!! Happy Hour 2pm-5pm; closed on Tuesday.

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.



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.

### STAY

**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 Miguela's kitchen! Offering a variety of International food with a Belizean touch. Call 236-5111.



**AK'BOL YOGA RESORT** - Truly unique. Built in the cultural fashion, of old Belize.

Seven beach cabanas on the island's most beautiful natural beaches. YOGA classes served up daily at 9AM, along with delicious Belizean cuisine, also vegetarian and fish dishes. Website: akbol.com

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

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 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.

**RAINBOW TAXI** – Caye Caulker golf cart; guided island tours; reliable service. 226-0123. Minerva: 661-6254 or Champ 602-8136.





# EATS & TREATS



#### **HURRICANE'S CEVICHE BAR & GRILL:**

The ceviche house! Fine outdoor dining and delicious tropical drinks. Full lunch and dinner menu, seafood specials and pastas. Restaurant open 10am - 9:30pm. Bar open

until 10pm Monday to Saturday, closed on Sundays. We also run Tanisha Eco-Tours – and the best Lamanai Tour in Belize! Call 226-2314.



JAMBEL'S JERK PIT: Specializing in Jamaican-Belizean Cuisine. Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner: 7AM – 9PM Daily. Wednesdays: 6-9PM - ALL YOU CAN EAT BUFETT with Live Reggae Music! Saturday Nights – Live

Music! Swing by for that IRIE DINING EXPERIENCE! 226-3515. Located off the Beach at the Sun Breeze Suites. Like us on Facebook.

MELT CAFÉ AND BEACH BAR: Across from the Wet Willy's Dock on the Boca Del Rio Beachfront. Open 7 days a week, 7am-midnight, serving Breakfast and Lunch until 10pm. Large Breakfast selection includes our Famous



Huevos Rancheros, Lunch includes Artisan Grilled Cheese Sandwiches and more. Full bar, HD TV's and free WiFi.



**FIDO'S COURTYARD:** Fun every day, starting with breakfast and a fabulous view under the island's largest palapa. Enjoy refreshing cocktails, lunches and

dinners, with a side of live music. Island life doesn't get any

better than this! Located in the heart of town on Barrier Reef Drive.

**THE NOOK:** A restaurant and cocktail BARtique, offering fun fusion cocktails and tasty nibbles and main dishes. Happy Hour and a Half from 5PM - 6:30PM at the funky and relaxed lounge on the beach, by Coastal Express.

Caribbean and Latin American cuisine. Seafood, pupusas, lobster burritos, regional favorites and much more. Serving San Pedro since 2000. Find us on TripAdvisor! Located on Buccaneer and Black Coral Street. 206-2893.



**EL FOGON**: Authentic Belizean Cuisine prepared on a fire hearth. Featuring dishes that represent the diversity of our Belizean culture. Lunch menu and daily dinner specials. Open Mon. – Sat. 11AM – 9PM 206-2121/610-1277 See map for our location!

#### TRANSPORTATION



**DC ISLAND SCOOTER:** We are located on Barrier Reef Dr (Front Street), right across from the Thomas Hotel and Island Movie. We offer scooter rentals by the hour, day, and week. There are no restrictions on where the

scooter can go (except the water). Stop by, ride the breeze and explore Isla Bonita. 652-0307.

# REAL ESTATE BELIZE SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY is a full-

service firm offering sales, vacation rentals, and property management in Belize (Ambergris Caye & Placencia Peninsula). We are service oriented and will ensure that our clients' needs are met and exceeded. Belizesir.com



### 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. 9AM-8PM, 671-2025.



BeLIZe™ сносогате сомрану

BELIZE CHOCOLATE COMPANY: The first ever chocolate boutique in Belize, makes bean to bar chocolate on Ambergris Caye, together with delicious truffles, tasty hot and cold chocolate drinks and unique chocolate gifts. Located on Front Street. Call 226 3015.

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, www. granielsdreamlandbelize.com Facebook: Graniels Dreamland



"12" is the only shop in Belize that features only Belizean made luxury products & gifts suitable for both locals and tourists. Featuring exclusive items from around the country from soaps & scrubs to handbags & sauces, we ship same day throughout Belize. www.12belize.com

670-5272.

BELIZEAN ARTS GALLERY - Largest collection of paintings in Belize. Featuring contemporary, native and realistic works by leading and on the rise artists. Gold and silver artisan jewelry, ceramics, fabrics and more. Open daily 9am to 10pm. Deep inside Fido's Courtyard. 226-3019.

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. 226-4252, oasisspabelize@gmail.com. ISLAND DREAM TOURS: Specializing in Sunset Dinner Cruises (Gourmet, Buffet) Booze Cruise and Private Charters – you design your own dream on-the-water tour! Cruise includes wine, fresh fruits and hand-crafted cocktails! Join the Fun!! 615-9656! Like us on facebook. com/islanddreamtours

### Party Party



the beach in San Pedro. Drink, Dance, Party, Get Loca! Serving a wide variety of tropical cocktails. Saturday Night: Free To Be @ Luna Loca. Mon - Tue: 11:00 am - 12:00 am, Thu - Sun: 11:00 am - 12:00 am.

**LUNA LOCA-**

Coolest place

637-2412. WAHOO'S LOUNGE - We are home t o 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.

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

WANT RUM? **GOT IT!** 100% Belizean Rums. Travellers Liquors FACTORY **OUTLET** and showroom!



Home of world class and award winning rums. Wholesale and retail. Daily complementary rum tastings of over 25 products! #15 Pescador Drive 226-4690. www. facebook.com/wantrum

PALAPA BAR AND GRILL - On the Wet Willy's Dock. 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!



## IMPOR'

Police - 206-2022 / Fire - 206-2372 South Police Sub-Station - 610-4911

Emergency - 911

Crimestoppers - 800 922-TIPS

Dr. Otto Rodriguez San Pedro Polyclinic II - 226-2536.

**Emergency:** 660-2871 **US Embassy** - 822-4011 Canadian Consulate - 223-1060

British High Commissioner – 822-2146



## 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 Gonzalez Maya Site. Open Tuesday through Saturday; Happy Hour: 3PM-5PM, Dinner: 5:30-9PM. www.blackorchidrestaurant.com. Reservations Recommended (501) 206-2441.

THE COCONUT CAFÉ: Life's better when it's made from scratch! The Coconut Cafe offers breakfast all day, as well as pizzas, paninis and burritos/wraps. We make all of our own breads, pies and cinnamon rolls from scratch. Open daily from 7-3, closed Wednesdays. Located just south of town, on Coconut Drive, across from Road Kill Bar. 226-4311.





**HIDDEN TREASURE RESTAURANT:** Serving Latin American & Caribbean cuisine in an enchanting atmosphere. Serving dinner only from 5:00pm - 9:00pm, closed on Tuesdays, located in the Escalante neighborhood. Live music on Thursdays! Free shuttle service to customers in town. Contact us

226-4111/4236, www.hiddentreasurebelize.com



ISLAND TIME BEACH BAR: South eastern corner of Royal Caribbean Resort; offers a fun time to all. Serving Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner. Local & International Cuisine. Hours Mon - Sun: 7:00 am - 9:00 pm. Visa, Mastercard and Cash accepted. Parking Provided. 629 2551

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.



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 9:00pm. 226-4443 or reservations@casapicassobelize.com. Located south of town past Caribeña Gas Station & Belikin Distributor. Check out our specials & weekly

"Tasting Thursday" menu at facebook.com/CasaPicassoBelize & casapicassobelize.com.



**EI DIVINO** CARIBBEAN STEAKHOUSE & MARTINI BAR: Banana Beach's signature restaurant, featuring indoor and outdoor dining and sports lounge. Large selection of cocktails and wines. Serving USDA meats, wood fired

pizza, fresh seafood, pastas and more. Locals LOVE our ceviche! Daily dinner and drink specials, Happy Hour from 3-7pm 226-2444.

## Party Party!

CRAZY CANUCKS BEACH BAR: Beach bar located at Exotic Caye Beach Resort. Open daily11am-midnight. Bar food and daily drink specials. Mondays: Live reggae @8pm Tuesdays: Live Music & Hermit Crab Racing @6:30pm Thursdays: Paint n Splash @2pm Fridays: Trivia @7pm Karaoke @8:30pm Sundays: Live music/horseshoes @3pm Follow us on Facebook. Phone: 670-8001



**AVERAGE JOE'S:** World Famous Wings with 26 different flavors to choose from! Fully stocked bar and cold beer. Join our Karaoke Party Sundays 8pm. Free Pool table. Open 4-midnight. Closed Mondays. Located next to south gas station. 601-2969 Facebook: Average Joes.

## Unique Offerings



**CAYE COFFEE ROASTING COMPANY:** Local fresh roasted coffee manufactured in San Pedro Town. Available throughout Ambergris Caye and countrywide. M-F: 8:30-4:30, Sat: 8:30-noon. ONLINE WEB STORE, NOW OPEN!!! For more information visit http://www.cayecoffee.bz.

## **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

San Pedro Tourist Guide Association 226-2391.

By Mary Gonzalez

#### **No Choice But Radio**

We had no electricity growing up in my home village of San Antonio, Cayo; therefore our battery operated radio was under the control of the elders. The one radio station we all had access to was Radio Belize. and we would often listen to the morning show/news, followed by evening news. On Saturdays, cleaning days, the deejay would play 'lively' music that would get our bodies shaking and laundry, chores and more would get done faster by the 'housewives'. On Sundays, we would listen to some sermon or the other, and as we drifted off to sleep (once the sun went down, we all prepared to go to bed), Patrick Jones would play country music. There was no metal - no hard rock. Nothing but whatever the deejays and very conservative management at the radio station deemed was right for our listening ears.

#### **Gettin' Over Country**

Fast track to high school, and my best friend at the time introduced me to Nirvana. Something clicked, and I just couldn't get enough. She showed me videos, we listened to her varied collection, and pretty soon, I had graduated to finding my own sounds. Access to electricity and television in San Pedro Town offered so much more, and pretty soon, my village routine was over. Everything else suddenly was grating on my nerves, and I was done for...I had found my kind of music.

#### Verge of Umbra:

I met bassist Lowell in Belize City while attending Junior College, and even though I spent three years there, but I never got to actually listen to him play. But I have sure made up for it now - in fact, I even get a tiny blink-and-you'll-miss-it feature in their video The Meditation!

I attended the filming, and the premiere, and finally, their grand reveal! I have the CD, the shirt.











the ticket stubs, and so many fond memories of my time spent with like-minded fans watching the guys do what they do best: make music! A sound like no other in Belize

The sound of drums, screaming guitars and hard driving bass, is punctuated by two lilting voices spitting out conscious lyrics in harmony, despite their different sound - rap and melody. Verge of Umbra is a self-described "rap meets metal and cheats on reggae" Belizean band, but they are so much more than that. Together, vocalists Jenko Veli, Nello Player, guitarist Andres Pineda, bassist Lowell Gillet and drummer Faith Madubuko form Verge. On March 12th, they independently released their debut album V.O.U. during a

phenomenal party that included a live performance.

In a landscape that celebrates cultural music almost exclusively, it could feel as though they are

shouting into the void. After all, metal and rap are more synonymous with America and Europe - anywhere but Central America.





# Verge of Umbra continued from Page 11

However, there is a core of dedicated fans who show up to support and listen to self-made men who stuck to their passion, creating a style that is unique and different.

Their album is an amalgamation of sounds — unique, loud, filled with lyrics that make you stop and think. It's astonishing to hear some private thoughts put to words, backed by a sound like no other, and I think it's why I am so proud of these gentlemen for going above and beyond to produce something so tangible. Belize should be proud.

#### Performing Live at Tattoo Expo Belize



On the weekend of May 28–29, 2016, Belizean Ink Tattoo shop is hosting the first ever Tattoo Expo at the San Pedro High School Auditorium. International tattoo artists from Mexico, Guatemala, Bolivia, the United States of America, and Costa Rica as well as Belize will be inking tattoo lovers on La Isla Bonita. Naturally, a festival of this magnitude requires a soundtrack, and what better sound than Verge of Umbra's!

Catch the band live on Saturday the

28th after 7:30PM, alongside cover band Almost 7.

Tickets for the expo are \$20 per day – and if you're up for it, you can get inked by some of the best international artists! Check the show's Facebook page for ticket information and updates under "Expo Tattoo Belize". See you there!







One thing we can say with conviction is that a visit to Belize is a treat to your palate. With no large restaurant chains, you can bet that our small establishments are serving up the freshest of produce. As a Belizean – and a foodie – I can assure you can't get fresher produce than what is skilfully turned into culinary masterpieces across the county. After all, Belize's main and most vibrant industry is agriculture, and we pride ourselves in it.

From meats to veggies and seafood to fruits, agriculture is a way of life in Belize. With fertile soils and a bountiful sea, there is no shortage of fresh produce. We Belizeans have been doing 'farm to table' long before it was trendy!



In typical Belizean style, we have to celebrate that which makes us so special, and what better way to do so than with a three-day festival? For years the National Agriculture and Trade Show (affectionately known by Belizeans as the Agric) has been a highlight on Belizeans' calendars. Since its establishment in 1970, the show has grown by leaps and bounds, featuring all aspects of Belize's agriculture industry. The main objective of the show is to educate the public on the importance of agriculture and its contribution to the Belizean economy and food security.

This show is so monumental that the show grounds was created specifically for the Agric – talk about important! Each year during the Labour Day weekend, the grounds at the northern entrance of Belmopan City come alive with general display areas for produce, a rodeo area, stables, and a main stage area for entertainment.

One of the main reasons why I attend the Agric is for the food. Be prepared to break that diet, because you will be in for a feeding frenzy! From freshly prepared cuts of meat – grilled, smoked

# Belize Agriculture Show Continued from Page 12

and fried – to sweet treats like ice cream – in a million and ten flavours – your taste buds will go wild! Oh and let's not forget the drinks! Only at the Agric can you get a 'yarda' (oversized tumbler) of freshly squeezed OJ with your favourite local rum – only if you are 18 and older – for chump change.

If that still has not convinced you to attend, bear in mind this show is the place where you can get some of the best deals on furniture, cell phones, plants, flowers, and even commercial equipment. And for the cowboys and cowgirls in all of us, there is a rodeo! It is one of the most anticipated events, and takes place on both Saturday and Sunday. Another highlight of the show is the judging of crops and livestock displays; commercial and industrial display booths; tractor operation contest; coconut husking contest, musical entertainment by local musicians/groups; horseback riding; honouring the Farmer of Year; dog show; and the motocross competition. It's a lot happening at once, but man is it a blast!

This year, NATS is being held from Friday, April 29th to Sunday, May 1st. With an overload of produce, livestock, plants, food, drinks, music and live entertainment, this is a "can't miss" event. For more information about the National Agriculture and Trade Show in Belize, visit http://agriculture.gov.bz/nats/index.html



# Taste of Belize is back!

If you just can't get enough of Belize's amazing cuisine, then best make plans to attend Taste of Belize. After a four-year hiatus, Belize Tourism Board's culinary festival is back and it promises an exceptional showing of local beverages and food.

Seeking to develop and recognize the best in the culinary arts of Belize, the day will include food and beverage competitions in categories such as of the Pro Chef, Bartending and Cake Decorating. Just think of all the tasty treats available to those in attendance!

Slated for Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, it will take place in the heart of the north – Orange Walk Town. Taste of Belize is an event you don't want to miss!



For more information on the event contact BTB at 501-227-2420 or visit their website at http://btb.travelbelize.org/btb









Reservations recommended 226-4249 www.orestaurantbelize.com







Cacao is more than chocolate; it is a way of life for many Maya families in the southern district of Toledo. The cultivation and processing of cacao is a family tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation, often with little changes made to the ancient practice. Steeped within the Maya culture, and a revered commodity that only the privileged hierarchy of the civilization were once allowed to indulge in, chocolate is now a sweet treat that thankfully all of us are allowed to enjoy and celebrate...and celebrate we do!

In honor of this exquisite pod of powerful flavor, the first Toledo Cacao Festival was held in 2007 in Punta Gorda Town, and a few years ago its name was changed to the Chocolate Festival of Belize. It is celebrated each year on the same Commonwealth Day weekend, which this year falls over the weekend of May 20th. This delicious festival grows larger each year and attracts hundreds of visitors from around Belize as well as overseas.

A Wine and Chocolate reception kicks off the festival on Friday evening with live music, fine wine, hors d'oeuvres, Belizean chocolate, and Belikin's specially brewed Chocolate Stout. How can it be a more perfect paring? Guests enjoy a night of socializing while sampling a wide variety of chocolate delicacies along with gourmet wines. Lively music sets the stage for a great night of indulging and dancing off some of those chocolate calories! This year Belizean boutique chocolate makers — Kakaw, Goss Chocolate,







Cotton Tree Chocolate, and Ixcacao will be showcasing their amazing chocolates. Have you ever tried chocolate with bacon? Or better yet, chocolate laced with habanero pepper? Oh, so many to choose from...just say no to the diet!

The following day is the Taste of Toledo street fair, held on Front Street in Punta Gorda town which is closed to traffic during the fair. Cultural displays and areas showcasing Toledo's five main ethnic groups: Kriol, Maya, Garifuna, Mestizo and East Indian are featured at the event. Attendees are immersed within the art, food and music from each culture. With a bounty of booths to explore, shopping for local crafts and unique products are many. Some of my favorite items include cacao-based body care products, lotions, bath scrubs and soaps. Other booths vary from demonstrating the lengthy process cacao goes through before it's a chocolate bar to impressive local non-profits such as the Drums Not Guns program that mentors young children through the art of drumming. Of course sampling the variety of foods available is a mouthwatering treat, and you'll be surprised how yummy the Belikin Chocolate Stout is! Children also have the opportunity to enjoy the many activities offered by Cacao for Kids, such as painting, puppet show, finger painting, jewelry making and games.

The festival finale is held on Sunday with live performances throughout the day. From the Maya harp groups, to Garifuna drumming as well as dances by the Maya groups from the area, the colorful cultural performances are rare glimpses of our rich Belizean heritage. Food stalls offer a variety of drinks made from cacao combined with corn or pepper and other ingredients as well as ethnic Maya

dishes. Local craft booths also showcase the unique talents of basket makers, wood carvers and more.

If you plan to attend this culturally captivating festival, it is recommended you book your accommodations sooner than later, as the local establishments are usually filled to capacity during that time. Exploring the Toledo District is a rare adventure, and be sure to add to your stay a visit to a local cacao plantation, the Maya House of Cacao and Chocolate Museum, nearby Maya archeological sites and the impressive waterfalls. The area is beautiful and rural Belize at its most authentic. For more information about the Chocolate Festival please visit their website at http://www.chocolatefestivalofbelize.com.





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Sudoku Answers Puzzle on Page 2

ruzzie dii rage z	9	7	1	4	5	2	3	6	8
	5	6	3	8	7	9	1	2	4
	8	2	4	1	3	6	5	7	9
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	1	4	7	3	9	8	6	5	2
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	6	9	8	2	4	3	7	1	5
	7	3	2	5	8	1	9	4	6





N. 18° 05' W .87° 88'

ReservationsComplimentary Transfer Available

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