



My Beautiful Belize

V I S I T O R G U I D E

| JANUARY 2016 | VOL. 04 #01 | FREE |

The wonders of Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary

- * Reconnecting with nature at Glover's Reef Atoll
- * A bit of indulgence at Oasis Spa
- * Cheers to the New Year!

From the Editor *Tamara Sniffin*



Did you know that the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary in Belize is recognized as the world's first jaguar preserve? More than thirty years ago conservationists in our country had the foresight to protect one of our most cherished animals, while preserving vital habitat for a host of other flora and fauna. And, did you know that you can easily explore this enchanted area? No need for a huge expedition, even a simple afternoon walk can immerse you in a jungle wonderland unlike no other.

With an abundance of land and marine protected areas throughout the country, Belize is truly a wild jewel worthy of exploring. In this issue of My Beautiful Belize we also take to the sea, discovering the underwater beauty and island serenity of Glover's Reef Marine Reserve.

We can all appreciate the importance of preservation, and this month we also take a look at the pampering side of 'restoration'...perhaps after a night of sampling cocktails from our Cheers to the New Year list? Oasis Day Spa is just the place to regain that 'human feeling,' and they are sure to work their soothing magic on whatever ails you. Be it a massage, facial or a mani-pedi, a new person you will be after you've been properly spoiled by their skilled staff.

As a guest in our country we warmly welcome you to My Beautiful Belize, may your adventures be grand and your relaxation be sublime.



For advertising and story opportunities, email us at: hello@mybeautifulbelize.com

Be sure to visit our website for detailed stories and many more beautiful photos: www.mybeautifulbelize.com
Published by *The San Pedro Sun LTD.*

SuDoku Time! *Answers on Page 10*

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Wolfe's Woofers

By: Dennis Wolfe

Goldfish Funeral



"Hey, it's late," Sherry called. "Time to get up."

"What time is it?" I asked.

"It's almost 8:30."

"Leave me alone for now," I said. "We're playing music at Melt Café to-night and I don't have to be anywhere until then. I'm sleeping in."

"Suit yourself."

Just then my phone rang and Sherry picked it up and said, "Hi, Melody. No; he's asleep."

"I'll take it," I said. "What's up sweetheart?"

"Davin's goldfish died and he wants you to come to the funeral."

"What time do I have to be there?"

"Any time this morning."

When I got to his house Davin told me, "Goldy's dead, Grandpa,"

Sure enough, the little outside goldfish pond was empty. Davin was digging a hole next to it with a beach shovel.

"Here kitty, kitty, kitty!"

Melody's next door neighbor came around the corner calling for his cat. He saw Davin working away and stopped to investigate.

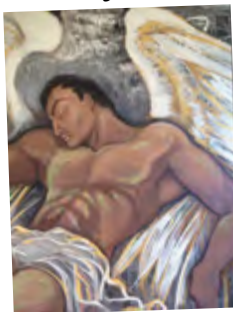
"What are you digging, Davin?"

"My goldfish died and I couldn't flush him down the toilet. I'm digging a hole to bury him."

"That's a very big hole for a tiny little goldfish," the neighbor said. "Why is it so big?"

Davin said, "Because he's in your cat."

Weh Di Go Ahn December on La Isla Bonita



Through January 22nd

Katrina Ancona

Art Exhibition

Venue: *San Pedro*

House of Culture

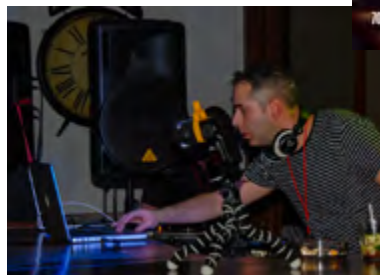
January 16th:

Saga Night Fever!

7PM until 11PM. Support Saga Humane Society and have a groovy time!

For tickets, please call Sandie at 620-1124 or purchase tickets at Casa Picasso or Pampered Paws. Limited Seats.

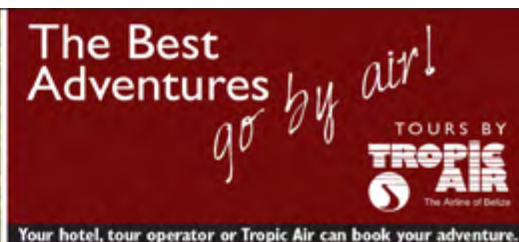
Venue: *Casa Picasso*



January 29th -31st:

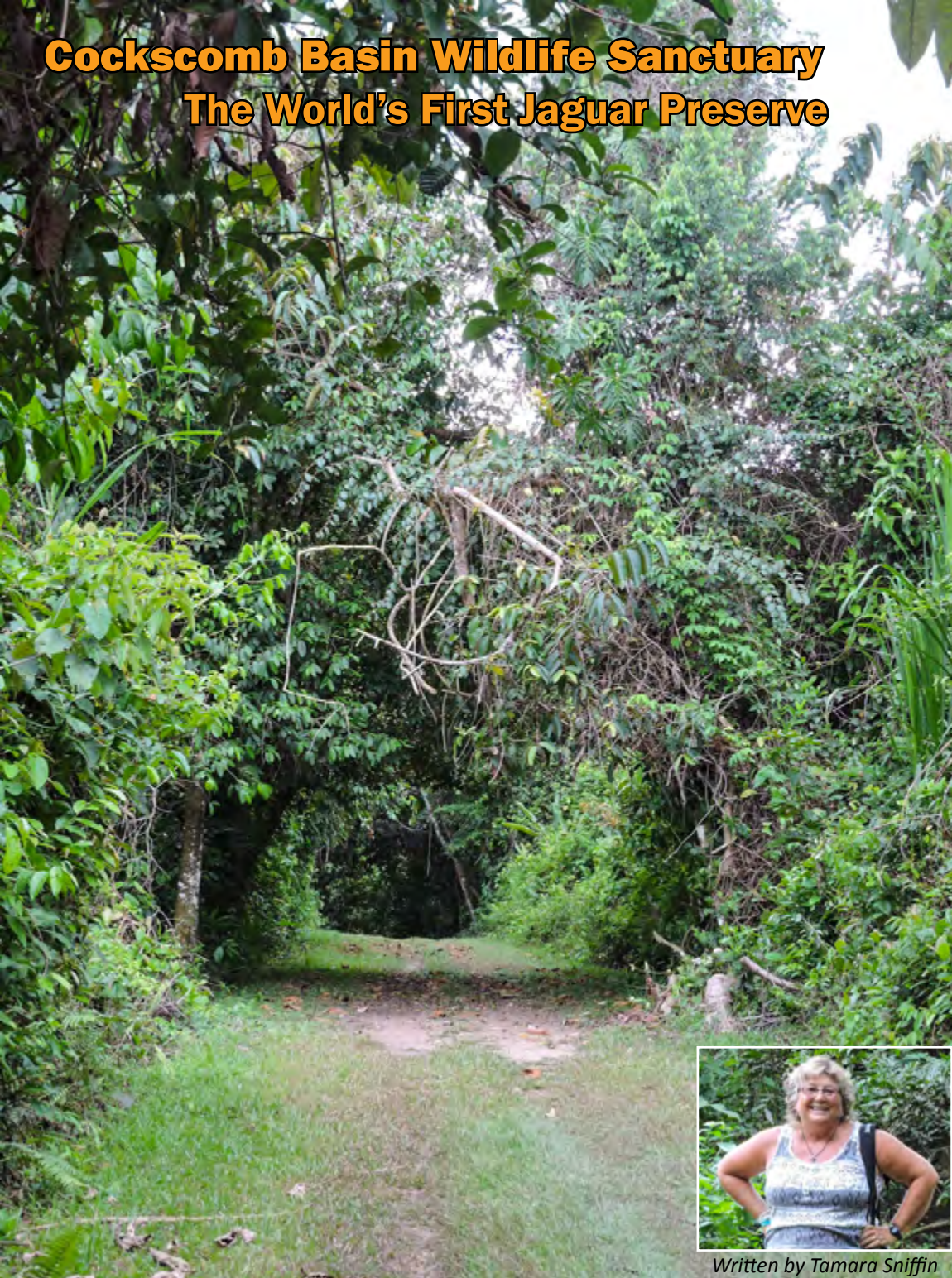
Belize Electronic Festival

Venue: *Placencia*



Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary

The World's First Jaguar Preserve



Written by Tamara Sniffin

Have you ever wondered how Alice felt when she fell down the rabbit hole in the "Alice in Wonderland" fairytale? In the story, Alice is enchanted by the unknown, and such is the mesmerizing spell the jungle of the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary and Jaguar Reserve in the Stann Creek District casts upon those who venture into her canopied burrow. Enveloped by dense forest alive with bird song and the buzz of busy bugs, your imagination is sure to run as wild as your surroundings. Chances are you won't spot the elusive jaguar while exploring the wilderness, but it's not hard to imagine one softly padding through the jungle, nothing but a shimmer of dappled color within the dense undergrowth of the forest. 'Perhaps a wild cat has steady eyes on me

right now,' my mind races...or maybe I will surprise one right around the next corner, my heart skipping a beat at the thought!

You don't have to be a seasoned survivalist to venture into this magical sanctuary, and options for exploring are endless, offering hiking and biking trails for all abilities and levels. Upon arriving at the main entrance of the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary there is an inviting welcome area complete with a picnic area, open grounds, visitor center, a small museum and even bikes to rent. With detailed signage informing you of your hiking and biking options, you can easily determine what route is best for you.

Continued on Page 4




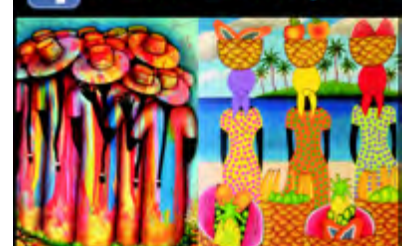
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Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary

Continued from Page 3



On our afternoon adventure, we are simply equipped for a leisurely stroll through the jungle, nothing too strenuous or challenging, gosh forbid! We are fortunate to have Ernesto Saqui with us as our guide, who graciously offered to escort us during

our stay at Nu'uk Cheil Cottages in nearby Maya Center, which he owns with his wife Aurora. Little did we know that our soft spoken guide was an avid conservationist and former director of the jaguar reserve for 15 years, what luck! We were with a true expert who

knew the area like the back of his hand! Along our walk on the River Overlook Trail, Ernesto pointed out areas where jaguars had scratched spots in the dirt, marking their territory. And what's that? A mushroom the size of a large dinner plate! From getting

a close-up view of nesting Boat-billed Herons with adorable fuzzy babies, to trees that produce the Lucky Nuts we find washed up miles away on the beach, there was something fantastic to marvel at with every turn!

Continued on Page 6

JOHN'S ESCAPE

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Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary

Continued from Page 4

So how is it that this amazing area became the first jaguar preserve in the world? 34 years ago, concerned about overhunting by trophy hunters and locals protecting their livestock, the Belize Audubon Society asked the New York Zoological Society to assess jaguar populations in Belize and identify a suitable area for a reserve. Dr. Allan Rabinowitz, who was a graduate student at the time and is now considered one of the world's leading big cat experts, was commissioned to conduct the study. Over the course of his two years of research Rabinowitz determined that the Cockscomb Basin had a healthy population of jaguars, and was an ideal location for the reserve. In 1984 the area was initially declared a forest reserve with a "No Hunting" ordinance to protect the jaguar population and other important wildlife in the area. In 1986 a small portion of the reserve was declared a wildlife sanctuary. Over the years, the sanctuary expanded from 3,600 acres to 128,000 acres. The Maya Mountain extension in the south connects Cockscomb with Bladen Nature Reserve. This makes a continuous corridor of protected areas totaling 250,000 acres.



Today, Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary supports approximately 200 jaguars and is home to a total of five endangered cats: jaguar, jaguarundi, ocelot, puma and margay. The area was also designated to protect the upper watersheds of important river systems and is home to hundreds of species of exotic plants, unique insects, tropical reptiles, amphibians and other wildlife, including Howler monkeys, Tapir, Peccary, Paca, Brocket Deer, Tayra, Otters, and Coatimundi to name a few. Over 300 species of neo-tropical birds call the area home and the reserve is also known for its spectacular waterfalls, mountain views and nature trails, most notably one leading to Victoria Peak. At 3,675 feet at the summit, the peak is the second highest point in Belize, which is located on the northern edge of the sanctuary.

While visiting the Stann Creek District, a visit to Cockscomb is a must. The park even has cabins and campgrounds for overnight visitors, or you can stay at nearby Maya Center. The sanctuary is located off the Southern Highway, approximately 20 miles south of Dangriga. Visitors can drive, hike into the park or hire a local taxi from the village. For more information, please visit the Belize Audubon website at www.belizeaudubon.org.

For more great photos read this story online at www.mybeautifulbelize.com

Belize

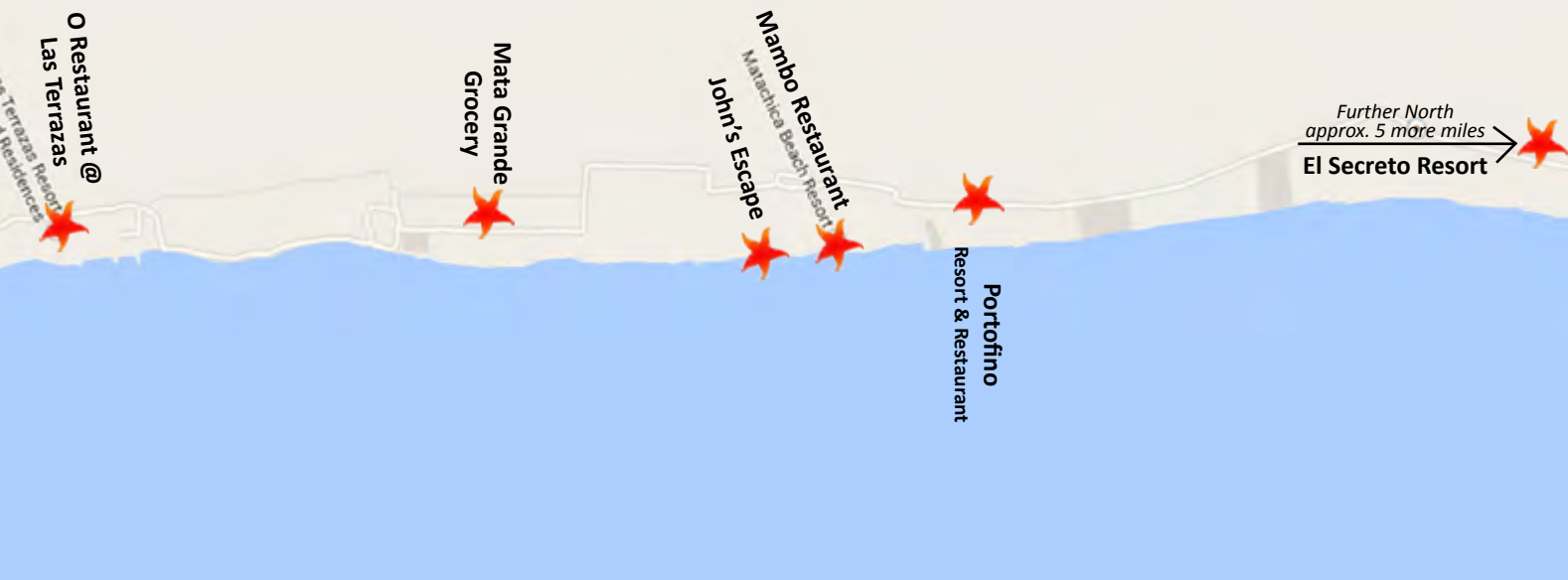
A DESTINATION LIKE NO OTHER ... WWW.BELIZESIR.COM

Belize

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

North Ambergris Caye

©2015, Map not to scale



EAT

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 coconut-husk fire while you enjoy refreshing cocktails and reservations. 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 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.

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 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 1/2 mile North of the bridge. 226-3365/625-3364

SHOP

MATA GRANDE 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-Sat 8AM-5PM; Sun 10AM-5PM. Order online at www.matagrandegrocery.com or call us at 226-4290...we DELIVER!

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>



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.



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.



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.



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.

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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.

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.



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



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.



MY SECRET DELI: "Discover the Secrets of Good Taste" With over 10 years of serving San Pedro and all its visitors, My Secret Deli is the #1 place to get a taste of local cuisine that meets international taste. Choose from a full menu of local/international dishes, steaks, salads and soups. 226-3223.

My Beautiful Belize

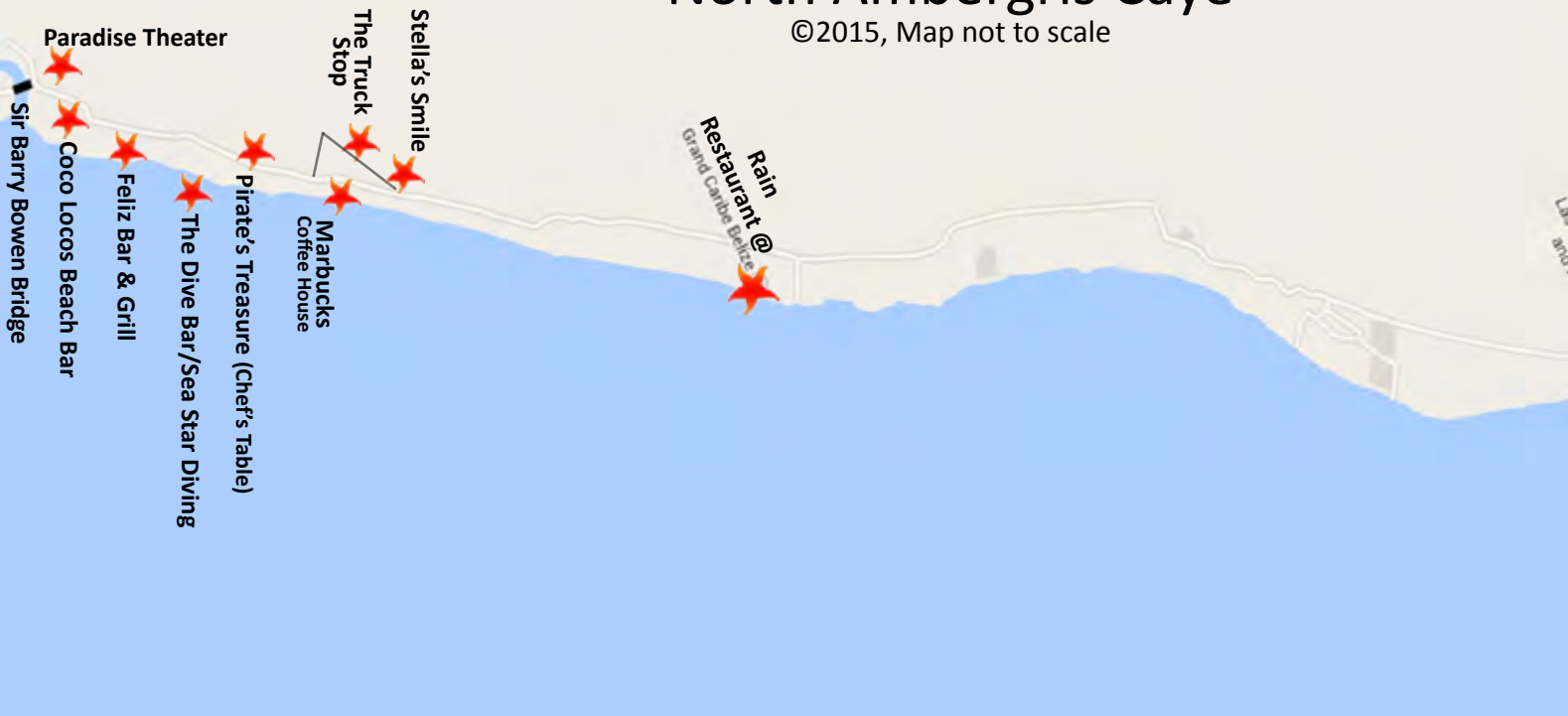
A map featuring various landmarks and business locations around town.

Map NOT to scale

My Beautiful Belize, A Visitor's Guide - San Pedro, Ambergris Caye, Belize Page 9

North Ambergris Caye

©2015, Map not to scale



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

LA SIRENE RESORT AND SPA: Located on the southern tip of Ambergris Caye and now under construction, La Sirene which is expected to be a luxury resort and spa offering utmost security and exclusivity. La Sirene is where the island ends and your new life begins! For more information visit www.lasirene.bz

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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.

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Be sure to visit our website for detailed stories and many more beautiful photos:
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Tourist Information

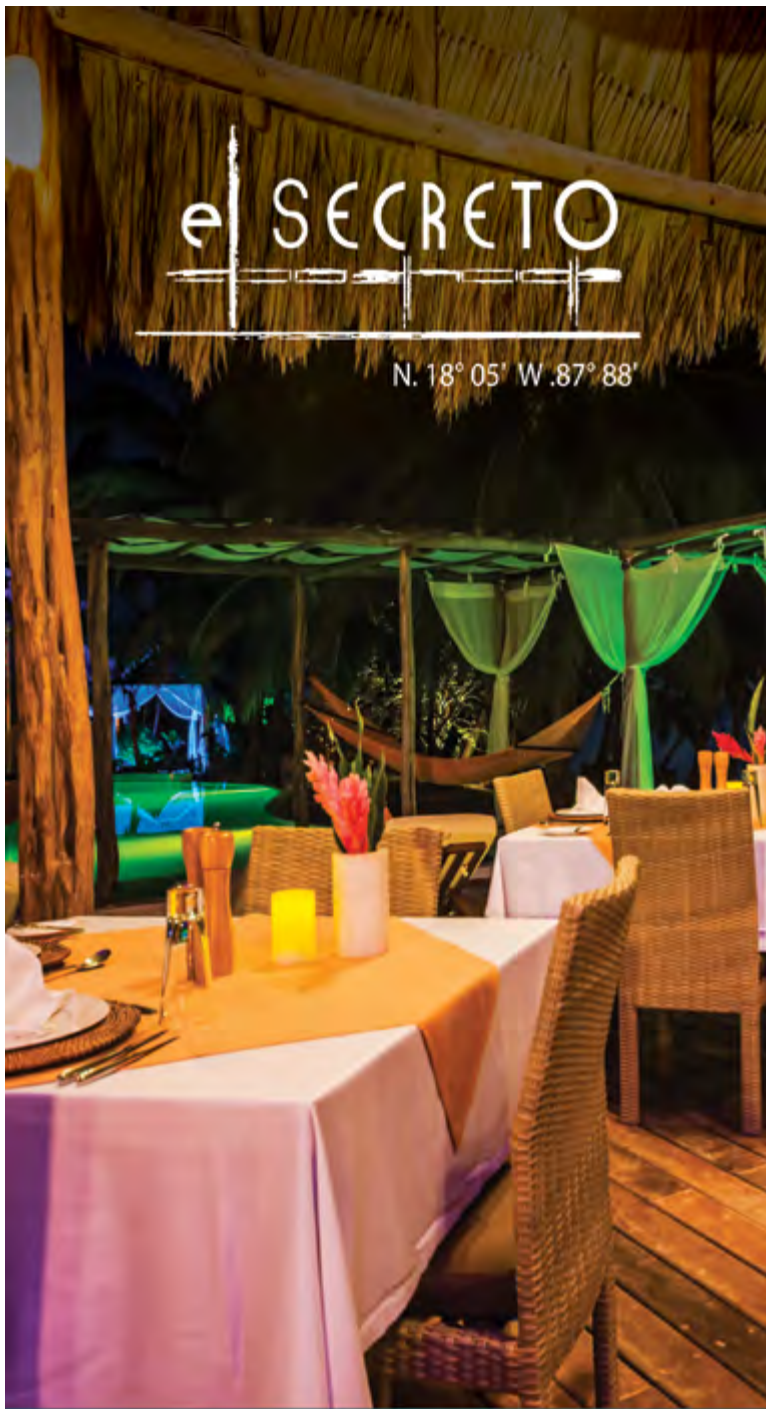
AA Meetings: Tel: 627-1585. English Meetings: 'Boca Del Rio': Mon - Sat: 6PM - 7PM (#5 Boca Del Rio Dr). 'Clean & Serene': Tues & Fri, noon, Catholic Church Parish Hall. UltraMar Group (Spanish): T/W/F/Sun: 7:30PM, San Pablo Church.
Belize Tourism Board - 227-2419.
Belize Tourism Industry Association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

IMPORTANT #S

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

Sudoku Answers Puzzle on Page 2

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



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Glover's Reef: A haven of tropical beauty in Southern Belize



*Written by
Dion Vansen*

After my first visit to the Glover's Reef Marine Research Station some years ago, I remember saying to myself "I need to come back!" This amazing, secluded piece of paradise had captured my heart, and even though I did not know when I'd make it back, I vowed to do so. That long awaited second visit finally took place, when an unexpected invitation came from the management of the station. I was beyond thrilled with my dream trip underway, excited to explore even further.

The Glover's Reef Atoll is made up of three coral islands that were discovered in the 1750's by the pirate brothers John and Rodger Glover. It was established as a national protected area in 1993. One of the islands where the research station is located is owned by the Wildlife Conservation Society. It is equipped with sleeping quarters, a full kitchen, library, friendly staff, an observation tower, and even Wi-Fi! The sixteen acre island runs on solar and wind energy, collects rain water, has eco-restrooms and their boats even have eco engines. It is indeed a sustainable station!

The reserve is mainly open to scholars and marine scientists who visit the area throughout the year, so an invitation to visit is a must, even just to visit the station's facilities. Fortunately there are two beautiful resorts on the neighboring islands: Glover's Atoll Resort and Isla Marisol Resort. Any of these island resorts guarantee an experience of a lifetime at one of the four true atolls in the western hemisphere.

I was beyond excited when a group of friends and I were ferried from Sittee River in Southern Belize for an incredible two-day visit to this Belizean wonder. The weather was perfect, and the sea, lazily calm. After a quick two- hour smooth boat ride, we touched down on one of the most spectacular reef formations in the world... *Yes, finally, I was back at Glover's Reef!*

Its beauty can be almost overwhelming in its unspoiled glory. It truly is one of Belize's prime destinations for explorers of the Caribbean. The area also harbors some of the greatest diversity in coral reefs in the western Caribbean.

Continued on Page 12



Glover's Reef: A haven of tropical beauty in Southern Belize



My first adventure as soon as we were settled in involved jumping into the Caribbean Sea! I had waited so long to snorkel among the many reef patches around the island. Oh man! The variety of corals, the colorful fish... it was a living aquarium, so pristine and untouched! Everything looked so vivid and bright, thick coral heads teemed with wildlife: eagle rays, angel fish, parrot fish, damsels... oh so much variety and colors! I couldn't get enough, but, eventually had to get out of the sea.

I toured the tiny, picturesque island, with its diverse environment: thick mangroves, to sandy beaches, vibrant coconut palms, and even a private lagoon overflowing with schools of bone fish. My adventure would not be complete without the exhilarating panoramic vistas from the observation tower. I was in the middle of nowhere, just the feeling of refreshing breeze and a magnificent view of the endless blue surrounding the tiny speck I stood on... at night, I breathed in the sight of a billion stars blanketing the dark sky. Once again, two days were not enough. Once again, "I'll be back."

Everyone needs a dose of Glover's Reef, for the restoration of the mind, body, and soul.

For more information on the Glover's Reef Marine Research Station contact them at (501) 532-2153 or via email at grmrs@wcs.org.



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VICTORIA HOUSE
AMBERGRIS CAYE BELIZE

The Palmilla Restaurant
& Admiral Nelson's Bar
Dinner Reservations: 226-2067

An Oasis of calm and relaxation



Written by
Mary Gonzalez

While we live in paradise, there are still every day stresses that we deal with.

"What beachside restaurant should I have breakfast at...?"

"Which cocktail sounds like a good idea today...?"

...okay, maybe more like, "oh dear it's deadline already? Eek...!!"

So, to say we feel a little bit of stress on our slice of heaven is not too farfetched of a statement. Luckily, there's just the spot to get away for a bit, and emerge renewed and refreshed. It's an oasis of calm perched right over the water. With filmy curtains blowing in a cool breeze, massage table covered in crisp white linens, lotions, oils and creams at the ready, therapists at the ready to bring the best in relaxation...Oasis Spa provides some comfort and divine relief.

To properly relax before the hectic holiday weeks hit, I indulged in a massage and cleansing facial. I made the quick trek on the dock in front of Fido's, ready to be pampered and coddled!

Jessica, my appointed massage therapist, showed me to the room where I'd be hopefully zoning out. Once down to my swimsuit, I was ready for some blissful moments. With refreshingly scented oils, a gentle touch on especially tender parts, and deeper massage on my tired muscles, I was soon knocked out, only awaking when my aching weight-lifter's biceps felt the strength of Jessica's fingers. She stayed in the gentle zone, working on relaxing me instead of pummeling my muscles into submission. That was very much appreciated! :)

An hour of kneading stressed out, sore and aching muscles, and I was like a new woman. I could have easily napped for a few more minutes, but my face was going to get a proper scrubbing! Samira was in charge of revealing a more youthful glow on my face – poor thing, she had her work cut out for her! Teehee...

After wiping my face down gently, Sam began the slow, luxurious process of exfoliating, rinsing, and applying a masque. While the masque hardened, doing its job at removing impurities and cleansing my pores, she paid some special attention to my hands and arms. Now Sam, though she be little, she is mighty! She found the knots on my triceps



and biceps, forearms and even my palms! With my help, (because I am kind of a wuss), we got DEEP into those muscles, unraveling knots I was completely unaware of.

Another fabulous unveiling was my baby-smooth face, once the masque was removed with a warm, wet washcloth. A bit of honey (all the better to sweeten my face with) followed by a quick rinse, and I was ready to face the world – newly invigorated, with happy muscles and a brighter face.

Outside, Dion my coworker got the treat of his life: a pedicure. Real men get pedis! His only words after a proper soak, file and sugar scrub were "I need to do this more often!" Yes, we need to do a lot more for ourselves more often! Massages, facials, manicures, pedicures... something that feels indulgent but in fact lasts a lot longer than the hour it takes – those are the treats our bodies need. Oasis Spa is ready to provide that service to you.

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Cheers to the New Year!

A dedicated drink tour of La Isla Bonita

It's the New Year! Yup, we survived 2015 and to celebrate such an achievement we are toasting to the closing of a spectacular chapter and the beginning of a new one on La Isla Bonita. In classic San Pedro style, we will not be toasting with champagne but rather with a few iconic cocktails from some of our island's fabulous bars. From creamy and sweet, to sweet and sour, we've compiled a list that will surely please any palate.

Our first stop in the must-do 2016 booze tour is the Truck Stop. The talented bartender at the newly inaugurated shipping container food park and beer garden, Orville, fixed us up one of their best sellers: the VIP. This drink consisted of vodka infused pineapple juice and fresh soursop juice. Doesn't that just sound heavenly?

Properly initiated, we made our way to another new installation at North Ambergris Caye: The Dive Bar! There, bartender Tua serves us up their house Coco Loco. This one is a classic drink across the island, but the different preparation methods make each one unique. Tua uses gin, coconut water, mint, lime juice plus a secret ingredient, all shaken, not stirred, to make an exceptionally refreshing drink. Cheers!



Time for the third drink! We headed on over to Coco Locos Beach Bar, just north of Sir Barry Bowen Bridge to sample bartender Sarika's Mango Tango. A combination of white rum, coconut rum, mango juice and cranberry juice, the

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Cheers to the New Year!

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Mango Tango definitely packs a kick. Needless to say the combination of three distinct cocktails had us feeling pretty happy!

With our journey up north complete, we head down south to Crazy Canucks Beach Bar. There owner Rob and bartender Ronny await us with their specialty drink, Bacalar Chica, all ready for sampling. This drink is for those ginger lovers! A combination of either white rum or vodka, a secret ginger syrup and a splash of ginger ale makes for one tasty cocktail! Our palates appreciate this refreshing drink, and suddenly, we were rejuvenated, ready to taste test some more, you know, for you, our loyal readers!

Things really got turned up at Palapa Bar. Now relocated to the Wet Willy's Dock, and still featuring our favorite bartenders, Ivan, Abner and Dennis, the Palapa makes us want to have two drinks instead of one! The skillful Ivan prepares for us two of Palapa's specialties, the Kiwi Cooler and the Banango. While the Kiwi Cooler is more of a light, refreshing cocktail, the Banango is a creamy decadent treat. But both are perfect to sip while admiring San Pedro's beautiful coastline!

Next up, we stumble over to Caprice Bar and Grill for some Dragon Fruit Margaritas. Oh! How I love this pretty purple drink, and the tequila in it! Prepared by Edwin, the Dragon Fruit Margarita is a Caprice specialty and I highly recommend everyone try it!

Our last stop is over at the Nook Restaurant and Cocktail Bartique located on the beach! We meet up with Nook's owner, Erin who tells us how their specialty drink came to be. We may have gotten the story, but by then, the ingredients list became fuzzy; we have to say though, that Breaking Amish is one spectacular cocktail. And the story behind it is even more so!

Don't these drinks sound like they deserve a try? I don't know about you, but I will be sampling many of these drinks throughout 2016 – especially since according to my horoscope, 2016 will be my most sociable year yet!



Written by your very dedicated reporter: Janelle Cowo (r). She was accompanied on this taxing journey by her fabulous sidekick Monique Smith (l).

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