



My Beautiful Belize

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

| JUNE 2016 | VOL. 04 #06 | FREE |

- * VIVA BELIZE - Adventure Packages for everyone!
- * Almond Beach Resort - a romantic getaway
- * Benque to celebrate its Golden Fiesta!
- * Belize Archaeology and Anthropology Symposium is coming!
- * The beautiful Black Orchid, Belize's National Flower

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Stella's
SUNSET WINE BAR
TUESDAY ON YOUR

Where is next?



Following the map north of the bridge on
Ambergris Caye

From the Editor *Tamara Sniffin*

Oh the places you'll go when you explore the country of Belize! No matter which area of My Beautiful Belize your travels may take you, expect the unexpected. Years ago, adventure on Ambergris Caye was limited to time spent in our Caribbean waters; be it swimming, snorkeling, diving, fishing, sailing or playing on water toys. Landlubbers enjoyed time on the beach, sunbathing, beach combing and frequenting the handful of thatch-roofed bars that lined the beach; island simplicity at it's best! Fast forward to life on La Isla Bonita in 2016, and now not only can you enjoy the amenities of years ago, but entire days can be spent on a golf cart exploring the southern and northern areas of the island while on a culinary and libation quest. The choices and variety of eateries are vast, and I'm not exaggerating when I say it could take days to sample them all!

In this June issue of *My Beautiful Belize*, we've taken on the arduous task of exploring a few fine food and fun establishments, and even highlighted a few of our favorites.

However, there's no way we can share them all with you, so why not take your own journey north or south of San Pedro Town? Expect the unexpected. In all honesty, the restaurants and bars on the island are totally worth checking out!

As you explore the sights and savor the cuisine of My Beautiful Belize we welcome you to a Belizean vacation you won't soon forget.



My Beautiful Belize Editors Tamara Sniffin (l) and Mary Gonzalez (r) quench their mighty thirst with a delicious Paleta Plunge at Rojo Beach Bar.

SuDoku Time! *Answers on Page 17*

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Wolfe's Woofers

By: Dennis Wolfe

Old Boots

I was reading and drinking my coffee on the deck at the Holiday Hotel. Two local men that I knew for a long time got a beer and sat down at the table next to me.

As they began talking I didn't pay any attention until Raul said, "Javi, I'm going to Belize City tomorrow. The next time you see me I will be a divorced man."

"What?!" Javier said. "You're divorcing Lupe?"

"I sure am. Enough is enough."



"What are you talking about? You and Lupe been together a long time. She's beautiful and everybody thinks you make a great pair. Why are you divorcing her?"

"It's like this," Raul said. "See these boots I got on? What do you think of them?"

"I always told you I've never seen a prettier pair of boots in my life. They look good on you," Javi said.

"Do you know how long I've had them?" Raul asked.

"You've had them since we met twelve years ago."

"Do you know how long I been married to Lupe?"

"Yeah. I was your best man ten years ago."

"Well, there you go."

"What do you mean?"

"Javi, in the twelve years I been wearing these boots I never told anybody they feel like they pinching my damn toes off."



Weh di go ahn eena June & July

June 11th – Soca vs Dancehall Party at Hour Bar, Belize City from 9PM until
June 17th – National Individual Time Trial Championship at Burrell Boom/Hattieville Circuit, Belize District from 6AM

June 18th – Saga Strides for Strays at Saga Humane Society, San Pedro Town from 7:30AM



June 19th – National Road Championship at Silk Grass/Belemopan/Northern Highway Circuit from 6AM



* 3rd Annual Summer Solstice, 10AM, on site at the Marco Gonzalez Archaeological Reserve, 5.25 miles south of downtown San Pedro. Maya Priest Martin Choc returning from Toledo District. Entertainment; food and beverages available. Tour of the site included in price of admission. Park Fees apply: \$20BZ non-resident; \$10BZ Resident. (Special Fathers Day blessing to be given for dads)



June 15th – June 26th – San Pedro Lobster Fest 2016

June 25th – San Pedro Lobster Block Party at Central Park, San Pedro Town from 5PM until

June 24th – 26th – Placencia Lobster Festival. Activities start 10AM daily

June 25th – Rainbow Summer Splash LGBT Pride at Gran's Farm, 13.5 miles Western Highway, Hattieville Village, Belize District from 9PM to 4PM

June 28th to July 1st – Belize Archaeology and Anthropology Symposium (See Page 18)

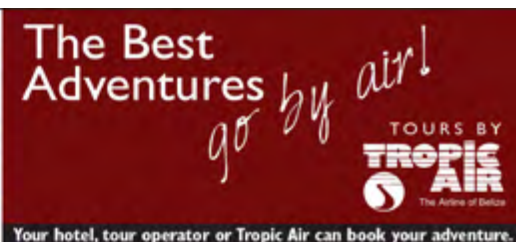


June 29th – Dia de San Pedro Religious Celebration at San Pedro Roman Catholic Church, San Pedro Town from 5AM

July 1st – Dia de San Pedro Festival at Honourable Louis Sylvester Sporting Complex, San Pedro Town from 7PM

July 1st to 3rd – Caye Caulker Lobster Festival at Palapa Gardens, Caye Caulker Village activities start from 10AM daily

July 9th – Taste of Belize Festival at Muffles College Auditorium, Orange Walk Town from 9PM



Eat & Drink Your Way North of the Bridge!



Feliz Bar & Grill

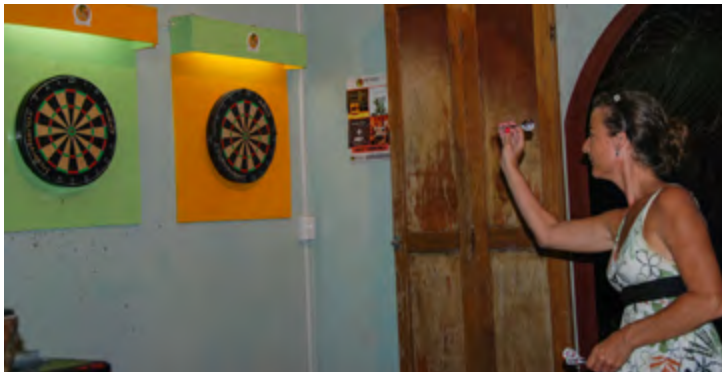
By Janelle Cowo

Wednesday – AKA - Hump Day, signals that the weekend is near and sometimes reaching the middle of the week is a perfect reason to make party. Needless to say that's when I decide to head on over to Feliz Bar for their Wednesday night darts competition!

Just a short drive north of Sir Barry Bowen Bridge, Feliz is the only sports bar on Northern Ambergris Caye. And, if you bring your paid bridge pass, you get a free rum drink – what a great bonus! Located at The Cloisters Condominium Complex, Feliz offers a relaxed, comfortable environment where one can truly “hang out” with friends.

During their darts competition night, the place is usually jam packed with patrons from all walks of life, ready to have FUN! Of course, I'm not the best dart player – or any kind of sports player for that matter – but that doesn't mean I can't watch. After ordering their famous Felizatin - fresh watermelon juice infused with local Belizean Rums - I'm all prepped to go cheer on the competitors.

With a few drinks down, you start to get hungry. Luckily, Feliz is known to serve up great comfort food with a twist. From surf and turf burgers to chili dogs and even



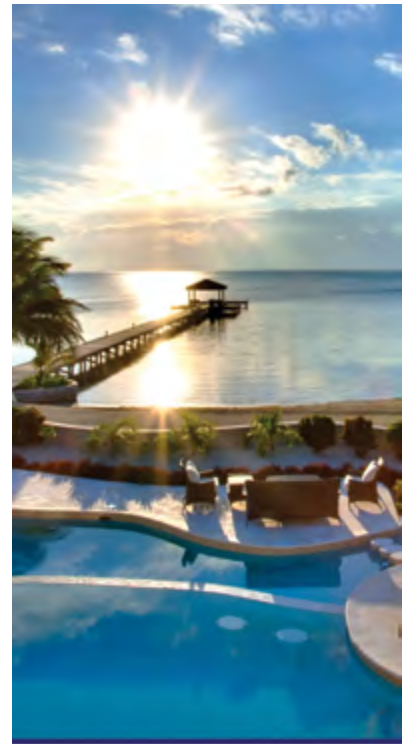
a pizza Panini, their food is just sinfully GOOD! But I wouldn't go to a sports bar without trying some wings – Feliz has THE LARGEST WINGS ON THE ISLAND, including the "When Pigs Fly" wings, wrapped in bacon and deep fried to a golden crisp. Yum!



Refreshing drinks, tasty food and live competitions? Can't ask for more – Feliz is definitely the perfect spot for a night out with friends. So stop on by and join the fun!

P.S. Thursday nights are \$1 per wing, and with the size of those wings, you are sure to get a full belly!

Continued on Page 4



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Stella's Smile

By Mary Gonzalez



Tuesday evenings used to be a race to meet deadlines, so no lovely drives or spontaneous dinners after dark. Well, we're done with that now, and we were so excited to head on over to Stella's Smile for their Burger Tuesdays. We've happily been for Mimosa Sundays, Sangria Thursdays, Wine Flight Wednesdays...you get the drift! Burgers for a Tuesday evening sounded delicious, and we hopped on the

purple lovebug (golf cart) and in a few minutes, we'd breezily made our way to Stella's. The nice new paved road sure makes getting around north of the bridge easier!

After parking the cart and led by Bruno, their uber-friendly maître d, we happily made our way to the beautifully laid out patio. Our noses twitched... oooh, what's that lovely smell? Oh, burgers on the grill! There

was Dora tending to the quarter pounder patties (to be honest, they looked a lot bigger). Shelby was flitting from table to table, taking orders and bringing beers and wines over to guests. Bartender Shawn kept the drinks coming, including some wine for us. Owners Jay and Pam are so pleased with their staff, and we could see why – no glass went empty, and food was turning out quick and fresh to the tables.

Loaded burgers were going down a treat – juicy beef on buttery buns, complemented by the crunch of lettuce and tomatoes – yum! Who says we aren't classy? Of course we washed those down with wine!

Ahead on the lagoon, the sun was setting in a splendid fashion, sending out hues of orange, reds, and pinks to paint the evening sky. Couples snuggled in

Continued on Page 5

Belize

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Stella's Smile Continued from Page 4

a little closer, pictures were taken, and all of us oohed and ahed over the grand finale.

What a fantastic little getaway...we're so glad we can take in these little pleasures every so

often. You can too! Drop in, or make your reservations at 602-6574 or online at www.stellasmile.com. Follow them on Facebook, and check out all the fun stuff they get up to!



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Police - 206-2022 / Fire - 206-2372
 South Police Sub-Station - 610-4911
 Emergency - 911
 Crimestoppers - 800 922-TIPS
 Emergency: 660-2871
 US Embassy - 822-4011
 Canadian Consulate - 223-1060
 British High Commissioner - 822-2146
 Dr. Otto Rodriguez San Pedro Polyclinic II - 226-2536
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.

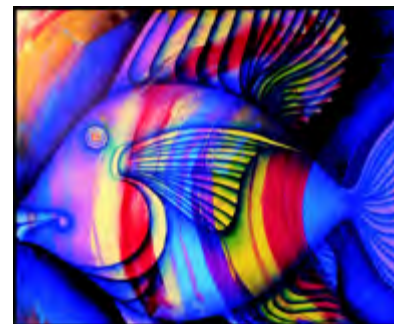
PALAPA

BAR AND GRILL

New location! Same great bar!

Over the water ~ beautiful reef view ~ buckets of beer served to you while swimming and floating in the inner tubes ~ live music Thursday & Saturday evenings ~ smoked food ~ burgers & more!

Scott, Jodie, Sunny & staff welcome you to our new location at the Wet Willy's Dock.



Belizean Arts Gallery

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 Deep Inside Fido's Courtyard
 Barrier Reef Drive, San Pedro Town



Paintings Jewelry Crafts

[belizeanarts.sanpedro](https://www.facebook.com/belizeanarts.sanpedro)





Run away to John's Escape!

By Mary Gonzalez

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YOU SET UP
A BELIZE
COMPANY?
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BELIZEAN SHORES RESORT



Just a quick turn off the main road 4.5 miles north of San Pedro Town, to where golf carts once traversed, is a hideaway that is so tranquil and beautiful, you just want to sit and enjoy. That is what we did one fine Saturday, as we took the purple lovebug (aka, the company golf cart) out for a fun afternoon of exploration. Our location for Zen and conversation? John's Escape!

Former home of *he-who-must-not-be-named*, the bright-

ly colored buildings and expansive beach views offer a relaxing atmosphere after a bit of a hot and dusty drive up. The roads are fantastic and wider, making for smooth driving, but not paved so the dust in these hot months had us thirsting for refreshment. Bartender Cookie was happy to greet us with two ice cold Belikins, and we collapsed under a palapa on the beach, sipping and refreshing ourselves.

The menu was quite tempting, so we had to order some yummy coconut shrimp to nibble on. With

a margarita and Caribbean Rum cocktail on order, we proceeded to try and finish a conversation. Well, we tried, but we kept getting distracted by the scenery - and the quiet...it was so peaceful! The loudest sound we heard was the calling of birds overhead, and the waves lapping ashore.

Food and drinks arrived and one of our many conversations halted as we enjoyed crispy sweet shrimp and sipped on some cold cocktails. We definitely could see families enjoying a great stay at John's Escape. Not only do they serve delicious food and drinks on-site, but there is a pool, serenity and fabulous quarters that take advantage of the view. We need to escape more, and we need to hideout at John's Escape!

12

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Email: info@gaiariverlodge.com

All the choices at The Truck Stop!

By Mary Gonzalez

Feeling like some spicy Asian noodle soup? Rasa is the place. Just want some ice cream? Cool Cone is your spot. How about some South American Arepas, filled with delicious meaty goodness? Try Arepa. Just here for the drinks? Well, here's a VIP for you. Where is this you may ask? Well, The Truck Stop my friend.

With plenty of spots to curl up and eat, drink or simply chillax, the container-concept business is a great place to spend some time with friends...especially those with a variety of tastes. Play a game of corn hole on Sundays while a whole pig roasts merrily away, or watch a movie



on Wednesday nights. Take in the sunsets on the days they're open (Wednesday – Sunday) from their cool dock on the lagoon. You can't go wrong pulling in at The Truck Stop.

Tasty Sushi and Paleta Plunges at Rojo Beach Bar

By Mary Gonzalez



Delicious, fresh, beautifully plated sushi on a Saturday afternoon, washed down with a unique

cocktail or two define the start of an excellent weekend. Rojo Beach Lounge is serving fantastic

sushi courtesy of Chef Bruce. Featuring fresh-caught seafood in a variety of rolls and prepared artfully, the sushi is divine. Also superb? The Paleta Plunges! Local entrepreneur Regina Sansores has come up with an incredible recipe for fresh fruit popsicles, commonly called paletas. She crafts unique combinations for Rojo, such as Pineapple Cilantro, Ginger-Lime-Honey, Juicy Red Plum, Strawberry Basil, Coconut Cinnamon, Soursop and more. Rojo's crafty bartenders then take your pick of the paleta, place in a stemless wine glass and pour the Champagne over it. Ridiculously good, and so easy to have one after the other... after the other! We heard they're now making the Sangria versions too...so guess where we're headed next?! We must... it's work...or something...

Enjoy all these fantastic treats at one of the prettiest locations on the beach, located four miles north of the bridge.



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EAT



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.



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 a lagoon-front boutique wine cafe just one mile north of the bridge, offering a distinctive portfolio of wines and authentic cuisine in a relaxed setting. Visit us every Sunday from 8am to 2pm for our famous Crepes and Bottomless Mimosa Brunch! Call 602-6574 or visit www.stellasmile.com.

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.

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.



P O R T O F I N O

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.

SHOP



MATA GRANDE

GROCERY The biggest little grocery store on Ambergris Caye, located 4.5 miles North of San Pedro Town, it's a must see! Open Monday-Saturday 8AM-5PM; Sunday 10AM-5PM. You can also order online at www.matagrandegrocery.com or call us at 226-4290....we DELIVER!

PLAY



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



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!



THE GREEN PARROT - Eats and treats. Relax on the patio, sip your favorite island drink gaze out at the azure Caribbean Sea, take a dip in the pool and enjoy our great beach bar. Friendly staff always on hand 6 miles north of town. Open daily from 9AM-9PM. For complimentary boat transportation please call 226-5096/ 678-5096.

STAY



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

BELIZEAN COVE ESTATES A collection of six luxurious beachfront vacation rentals located 3 miles north of San Pedro Town. Each villa is elegantly decorated with its own unique style and décor. Belizean Cove Estates is the ideal setting for an intimate honeymoon, large family, or group vacation.

COCO BEACH RESORT 4-star luxury beach resort, nestled 3.5 miles north on Ambergris Caye, offering the utmost in beachfront relaxation, romance, luxury and adventure. Featuring two impressive free form swimming pools, a swim-up pool bar, an in-pool hot tub and a water-slide.

BELIZEAN SHORES RESORT An affordable vacation resort located just 3 miles north on the island of Ambergris Caye. Offering a great beachfront vacation for those looking to escape and relax in a peaceful island oasis yet, it's only a short boat ride away from San Pedro Town.

X'TAN HA RESORT "The Waterfront" Resort is a secluded getaway 7.2 miles north of San Pedro on a stretch of pristine white sandy beach with beautiful turquoise waters. The resort sits on one of the finest white sand beaches on the entire island of Ambergris Caye.

ELSECRETO 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.



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.



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!



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.



WARUGUMA: Charming local restaurant featuring 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.



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.

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.

PARTY PARTY



LUNA LOCA - Coolest place to party on 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. 637-2412.



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.

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. Travelers 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 11am – 11pm. 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!

REAL ESTATE

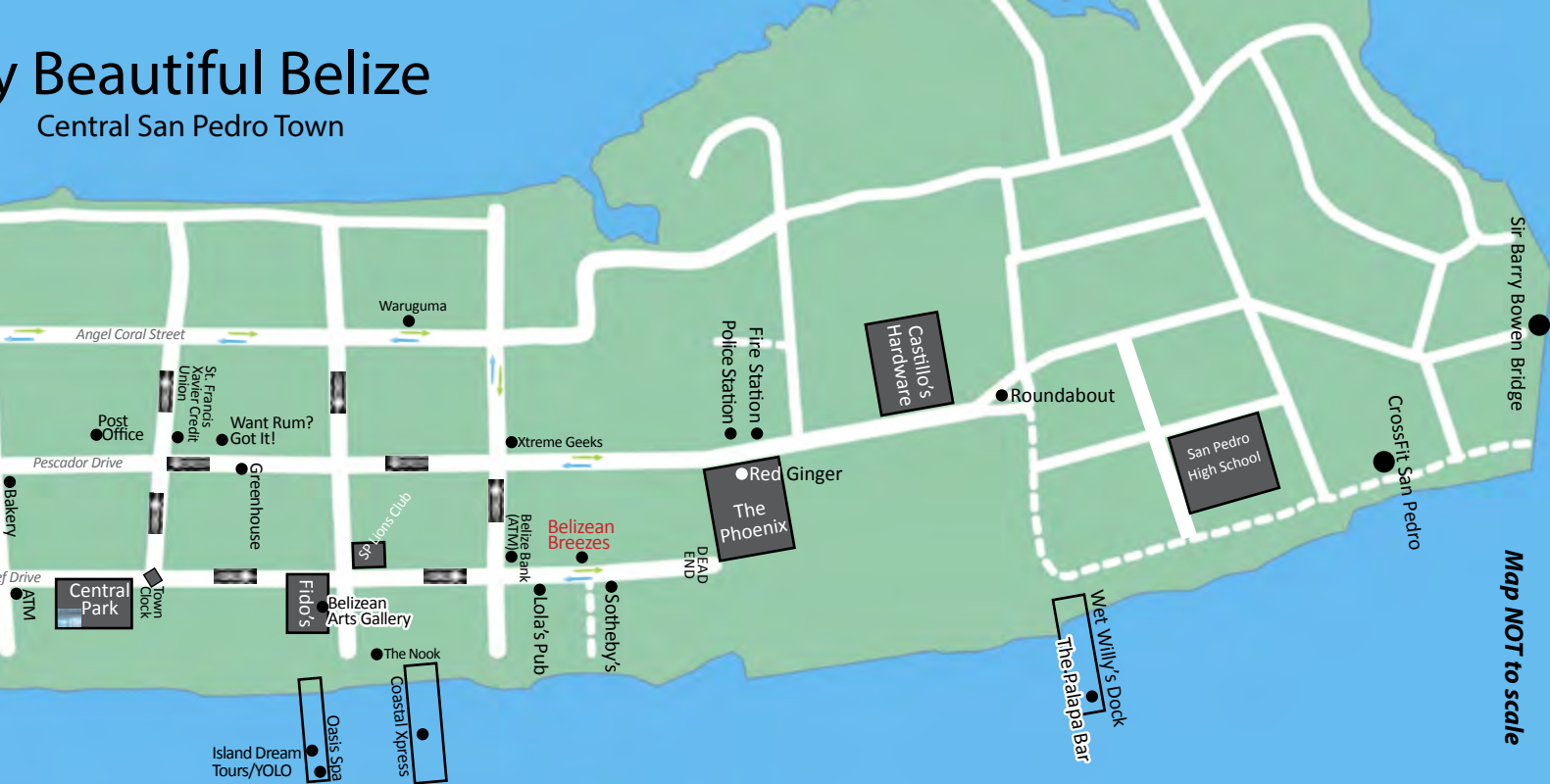
BELIZE SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY is a full-service firm offering sales, vacation rentals, and property management in Belize (Ambergris Caye & Placencia Peninsula). We are service oriented and will ensure that our clients' needs are met and exceeded. BelizeSir.com



SANDY POINT REAL ESTATE: The exclusive real estate representative for Sandy Point Resorts. These luxurious beachfront vacation resorts on Ambergris Caye allow you to purchase your dream vacation home. They also offer a number of pre-construction projects underway that will offer tremendous market appreciation and great pre-construction pricing.

My Beautiful Belize

Central San Pedro 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. 9AM-8PM, 671-2025.



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, oasissspabelize@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

AQUAFINO ISLAND RESORT AND SPA: An island resort located five minutes behind Ambergris Caye. Offering a 5-star experience, the resort offers a private gym and beach club among other amenities. Offering exclusive island residence and over the water bungalows.

PEDRO'S INN

PEDRO'S INN: Clean, Cheap, Safe and Fun. Pedro's Hotel provides a clean, comfortable and safe setting at an amazingly cheap price. Nightly events in the Bar throughout the week including Ladies Night every Wednesday.



HAVANA CIGARS BELIZE: Our walk-in humidor stocks an ever changing selection of some of the finest hand-made cigars from Cuba, Central America, and the Caribbean. We also offer an air-conditioned smoking lounge with a full bar and café. On Front Street, across from Holiday Hotel.

226-4576 Find us on TripAdvisor!

SAN PEDRO ARTISANS MARKET: Over 20 booths featuring local arts and crafts. Wood carvings, jewelry, paintings, sculptures, souvenirs and much more. Open daily from 8AM until 9PM. Located on Angel Coral Street across from the Hon. Louis Sylvestre Stadium.

TRANSPORTATION

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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.

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South of San Pedro Town



EATS & TREATS



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.



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.



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.hiddentasurebelize.com

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.



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



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.

PARTY PARTY!

CRAZY CANUCKS BEACH BAR: Beach bar located at Exotic Caye Beach Resort. Open daily 11am-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



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Your vacation
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awaits!!

By Janelle Cowo

There is more to vacationing in Belize than just lounging on the beach sipping cocktails all day. While that may sound glorious, there are countless activities that can make your time in Belize all the more memorable. From snorkelling and diving at the world's second longest Barrier Reef, to

hiking through pristine jungles and exploring the ancient world of the Maya, little Belize is the ideal playground for all types of visitors.

It is amazing experiences like these that the adventurous folks at VIVA Belize Hotel and Adventure Company are dedicated to sharing with their guests. This

leading hotel company has been offering exceptional accommodations and tours in Belize for over 20 years. With locations in the Cayo, Stann Creek Districts and even here on Ambergris Caye, VIVA Belize is the gateway to all sorts of FUN!

While staying at one of their

resorts your exploring spirit will soar with an array of exciting tours and activities to choose from. How about a cave tubing expedition through Belize's mysterious cave systems? Or maybe a trek through pristine jungles encountering an abundant variety of wildlife is

Continued on Page 14



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Viva Belize

Continued from Page 13



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what you're looking for? Time spent in the Caribbean Sea is always the way to go, whether your fishing, snorkelling, diving or just enjoying a boat ride. And, if your idea of adventure is languishing by the pool with an umbrella-garnished cocktail, look no further! Whatever appeals to your sense of escape, you are sure to find it at one of their six establishments.

When the sun sets and your day of exploring draws to an end, your resort of choice also offers a variety of services to choose from to properly un-

wind. Perhaps a massage is on your list of vacation must-does? Who doesn't love a little pampering after a hard day of having fun? Yes, you can combine luxury with adventure!

ViVa Belize is so passionate about their adventure amenities that they have launched a series of eight adventure travel videos showcasing the beauty and diversity of Belize's culture and experiences. "Belize has endless amazing adventures and activities to offer, and a ViVa BELIZE vacation makes it easy to experience them all! Says Lizbeth Casasola, Marketing Direc-

tor of ViVa BELIZE. Just seeing the first video makes me want to DIVE into the fun!

With six full-service resorts - one island resort (La Beliza Island Resort), two jungle lodges (Sleeping Giant Rainforest Lodge and Belize Tree Houses) and three southern beach resorts (Villa Margarita Belize, Jaguar Reef Lodge and Spa, and Almond Beach Resort and Spa), ViVa Belize offers a wide range of accommodations, adventures, amenities and services for a breath-taking experience. For more information please visit their website at www.vivabelize.com.

Almond Beach Resort

By Mary Gonzalez



After a day full of adventure and exploration via Viva Belize, it's always delightful to shower and crash into a soft, comfortable bed. With the heat at its peak, cooling air conditioning is a welcome relief, and an array

of pillows to snuggle into makes for the best sleep. With all the excitement and activity offered by ViVa Belize, most people would probably just end up flopping face-down on their bed and sleep the night away. Lucky for them, I have

had the chance to explore one of their three Hopkins resorts: Almond Beach Resort. I can report back that it is the ideal couple's getaway.

From the dual lounge chairs, lovingly laid out to best take advantage

Continued on Page 15



Almond Beach Continued from Page 14



of the serene beach views, to the extra-large beach hammocks to snuggle with your best buddy, a fabulous hot tub and large, swim-up pool – oh yes, this is the romantic nook embedded in between the resorts beachside at Hopkins! The interior of the buildings feature sumptuous beds and piles of pillows (enough for a fort!), a snugly couch (that can double as another bed), refrigerator to keep your wines and champagnes chilled, and a spacious bathroom. The special honeymooners' room has a fantastic en-suite tub facing the window and out to the beach. Can you imagine a full-moon soak in that tub!

Seeing as we weren't on honeymoon this time around, but rather on a girls' getaway, we ventured to the hot tub with some wine, waiting for the clouds to part on the horizon so we could watch the moon. The lights were on low, the best way to take in the night sky. The waves crashed ashore rhythmically, providing a soundtrack to our conversations. In between sips of wine, we plotted world domination as the clouds never parted for us. Our sore muscles were relieved as the hot water slowly pummeled them into submission. When we were properly toasted by the heat, we slipped into the pool for a change in temperature...and our bodies soon signaled that they were ready for bed.

I slipped into between cool, fresh sheets and nearly instantly went into the deepest sleep I'd had in months. There was no doubt that I'd recharged and renewed, as I woke up without an alarm the next day, taking in the beautiful scene of an early morning in quiet Hopkins. A hot cup of coffee from Jaguar Reef Lodge just a few hundred yards away wiped off the last vestiges of the night, and I was ready for the adventures of the new day with the girls!

About Hopkins

Hopkins is a Garifuna village on the coast of the Stann Creek District in Belize. It is considered by some to be the cultural center of the Garifuna population in Belize. The village is separated into two parts; the Northside (Baila) and the Southside (False Sittée). Hopkins is surrounded by the Maya Mountains and the Cockscomb Range inland, and the Caribbean Sea on its shore. It is also very close to the Sittée River.

Today Hopkins is a small but vibrant community of approximately 1,000 villagers who mostly make a living farming and fishing. However, recently many have found work in the growing tourist industry. They are also known for their fabulous mangoes! So much so, there's even a Mango Festival held annually. Its residents are known for their friendliness and genuine hospitality!



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Benque celebrates its Golden Fiesta!



Benque Fiesta 2015



The largest religious celebration in Belize has to be the Benque Fiesta. And this year, the festival got just a bigger! The annual extravaganza held in Benque Viejo del Carmen Town, Cayo District, honors their patron saint Our Lady of Mount Carmel (Nuestra Señora de Monte Carmelo) and this year celebrates its 50th anniversary. In honor of the golden achievement, preparations are underway for a can't-miss event.

For as long as I can remember, July meant making plans to attend the Benque Fiesta. With traditional marimba bands, local food and drinks, games, mechanical rides, cultural presentations, sports events, and dance nights, Benque Fiesta has something for everyone. The festival

attracts a host of visitors from all parts of the country, and even internationally.

The commemoration of the patron saint lasts for a period of about 16 days, starting with solemn religious celebrations prior to the main festival. The focal point of the festival is Saturday, July 16th, when there is fun for all ages.

Festivities commence with

a procession from the Benque Viejo del Carmen Roman Catholic Church to the Cancha Marshallk where the official opening ceremonies and activities are held. Once the ceremonies are over and the fair is declared open by the Mayor of the town, a truly spectacular fireworks show signals the beginning of the celebrations.

Continued on Page 17



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50 Years of Benque Fiesta

Continued from Page 16



This year's Benque Fiesta will see activities being held from Thursday, July 14th to Sunday, July 17th.



About Benque Viejo del Carmen

Benque Viejo del Carmen Town is located about 81 miles west of Belize City, near the border of Guatemala. The northern edge of the town lies along the Mopan River which also

forms the border with the Guatemalan town of Melchor de Mencos. The town was established in the 19th century, mostly by immigrants from Guatemala. Benque is mainly a suburban settlement with schools, supermarkets and other facilities. Benque Viejo del Carmen has a population of people mostly of Maya or Mestizo descent. Activities near Benque include tours of the Archeological Site Xunantunich (Maiden of the Rock), Che Chem Ha (Cave of Poisonwood Water) as well as La Capitana Pontoon Boat tour on the Mopan River.

Sudoku Answers
Puzzle on Page 2

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

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Belize Archaeology and Anthropology Symposium:

Learn about the ancient Maya culture from the experts!

Belize has been home to the Maya civilization for centuries. Although their ancient cities now lie in archeological remains, the vibrant people and culture of the Maya still lives strong within our country. With much of their history still a mystery, the exploration and discovery of this indigenous civilization is continually researched by archeologists, anthropologists, biologists and scientists worldwide. Each year their findings are shared at the annual Belize Archaeology and Anthropology Symposium held in San Ignacio, Cayo District. Be you a specialist in the field, or just someone who is fascinated by the Maya culture, this three-day symposium is an amazing opportunity to learn from the experts about the latest findings in the study of the ancient Maya culture in Belize. The Belize Archaeology and Anthropology Symposium (BAAS) is hosted by the National Institute of Culture and History (NICH) and the Belize Institute of Archaeology and will be held this year on June 28th through July 1st at the San Ignacio Resort Hotel.

One of the presentations at this year's symposium will feature findings from the Marco Gonzalez Archeological Site located on Ambergris Caye. According to Jan Brown, Co-Manager of the site, Dr. James Aimers, PhD, Professor of Anthropology, State University of New York at Geneseo, will be presenting a paper that reviews research on the pottery of Marco Gonzalez from 1986 to work conducted on two well-stratified deposits in January and February 2016. The pottery of Marco Gonzalez reflects the occupational history of the site, provides more detail about activities conducted there such as salt-production, and indicates how the site's exchange relationships changed over time.

"The Marco Gonzalez site, being one of 18 registered Maya sites on Ambergris Caye, is situated along the Coastal Trader route. What is found at the site is overwhelming in diversity and source of the items. There are similar conferences or symposiums around the globe. The one in Belize attracts professors and students who are actively working to uncover Maya details and data throughout our country. To be in the audience and hear a paper being presented which, in the Power Point, shows a picture of a burial shell jewelry piece from a mainland site which matches an exact piece found in a burial at Marco Gonzalez is thrilling. I can't wait to hear what will be presented this year at BAAS!", exclaims Brown.

Those in attendance have the opportunity to learn about the most recent findings in Belize. "I've learned about the LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) findings which increased the size of a site from a few hundred buildings to over 2,000 structures, canals, agriculture fields and roads. Pottery structure of where the clay comes from to make the item, or where the source of obsidian (volcanic glass blades) come from...to burial findings or a discussion on a new inner room of a temple which has hieroglyphics and paintings on the walls...it's



By Tamara Sniffin

like I get to go to school and learn from everyone!" commented Brown.

Special topics at this year's symposium include Architecture and Urban Design: Expressions of Kingly Power and Examining Practices and Patterns of 200 years of Education in Belize. Registration is held daily at 7:30AM. The cost is \$10bz for residents and \$20bz for non-residents. For more information about BAAS please contact the Institute of Archaeology at research@nich.org or the Institute of Social and Cultural Research at iscr@nich.org



About San Ignacio

Part of the "twin-towns" in the **Cayo District**, divided by the Macal River, and accessed via the Hawkesworth Bridge, San Ignacio is a bustling municipality located in western Belize. Mostly known for its lush rainforests and robust marketplace, San Ignacio is one of the more popular tourism destinations. It has a population of over 16,800 people whose ethnicity includes mostly the Maya and Mestizo. The town offers visitors a host of activities such as horseback riding, dining, night life, swimming, cave-tubing, bird-watching and Maya Archaeological Site excursions.

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Ambergris Caye

Photography by Olivera Rusu

www.rainbelize.com

Our National Flower



The Black Orchid

Belize is full of fascinating cultures, flora, fauna and a history that is varied and colorful. Of course we have equally cool National Symbols to go along with it! They include a flower, a tree, a bird, a large mammal, and of course, our flag and its coat of arms. The Encyclia Cochleatum – or Black Orchid, is our national flower.

It is a tiny cluster of bulb-like stems that grow up to half a foot long, with few leaves. The flowers bloom nearly all year round, and the petals and sepals are a mixture of green and yellow, with a purple base. The shape of the flower is similar to a clam shell valve, and is deep purple – almost black – with showy purple veins.

It is native to Central America, the West Indies, Colombia, Venezuela, and southern Florida. The little cluster of blooms is almost un-noticeable as they are tiny, but once you've seen them, it's hard to look away. For as long as I've lived in Belize (all my life), I have been told that I cannot purchase a Black Orchid – as it is illegal to sell or trade them. Thus, finding them – whether in the wild or in some lucky owner's yard – is a joy!

The next time you see a Black Orchid, know that you are in the presence of a little, but mighty flower.

Photo by Caves Branch Jungle Lodge Botanical Gardens

June 2016



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