



My *Beautiful* Belize

TRAVEL PUBLICATION

| APRIL 2017 | VOL. 05 #04 | FREE |

We are wild
about turtles!

From the Editor *Tamara Sniffin*

When hiking in the jungles of Belize, sometimes it is hard to see the forest for the trees. Although you know wildlife surrounds you, it can take some serious scouting to spot the creatures who live there. Thankfully, birds at least announce their presence with a song! However, while snorkeling or diving our gorgeous Mesoamerican Barrier Reef, the resident marine creatures often go about their busy day without paying much attention to the humans who float by. This is why discovering the underwater world is so fun! It's like dropping in on your favorite subaquatic friends and hanging out for a while!



In this issue of My Beautiful Belize we are wild about turtles, but please don't think we are playing favorites (well maybe just a little bit). There's plenty of room in our hearts for all marine life, and we know that not only is it a joy to experience, but recognize the economic value it has with our tourism industry. It is vital that we conserve and protect our undersea habitats so that generations of marine life and coral thrive.

While exploring Belize, be it above or below our Caribbean Sea, we invite you to marvel in the magnificence of My Beautiful Belize, and thank you for doing your part in protecting her wild habitats.

About the cover photo:

A green turtle is shadowed by a nurse shark at Mexico Rocks Marine Reserve off of Ambergris Caye.

Important Information

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.

Dr. Otto Rodriguez San Pedro PolyClinic II: 226-2536

AA Meetings: Monday – Saturday, 6PM, #5 Boca Del Rio. 226-2020. Every Tuesday & Friday, 12 noon at the Catholic parish hall. Front street, 630-0752.

Al-Anon Meetings: Wednesdays, 5:30PM, SP Catholic Church Hall. 608-3924 / islabon-itaalanon@yahoo.com

Narcotics Anonymous: By request at 623-0316.

Emergency veterinarian care: 610-3647

American Crocodile Education Sanctuary/ACES – Don't take matters into your own hands. Call 623-7920 for crocodile problems.

Saga Society A non-profit "humane society" to address the stray cat and dog population in San Pedro. Phone 226-3266.

SP Town Library - 206-2028.

SP Post Office - 206-2260.

National Aids Commission Island Committee (NACIC) - HIV Testing/ Treatment/Stigma and Discrimination and Pre and Post Test Counseling. 650-7021.

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.

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Showing the love for sea turtles:

Did you know the green turtle gets its name from the color of its fat?! Learn this and more in our story about the fabulous sea turtles of Belize. P. 3

Mexican + Caribbean = CALIENTE!

One of the must-visit eateries on the island has a winning combination of delicious food, drinks and warm service. P. 7

More than produce - Mahogany Bay Market Day:

Stock up while you enjoy live music, eat delicious food, and drink cold beverages. Market Day is jamming! P. 8

Souvenir Shopping:

Just how much can you pack, to make your Belize experience last a little longer?! P. 14

Chocolate Festival of Belize:

CHOCOLATE. Need we say more? Trace its origins at the annual Chocolate Festival in May! P. 16

Belize Tattoo Expo:

International artists, a variety of styles, music, individual expression - it's all at the Tattoo Festival this May. P. 18



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.



Here's what's happening in April!



April 6th – Opening Moon Party at Luna Loca Beach Bar from 9PM to midnight

April 7th – Sun Party at SandBar Dock, San Pedro Town starting at 1PM

April 8th – Sun and Moon Festival at Captain Morgan's Retreat, North Ambergris Caye from midday to midnight

– Pancake Bunny Brunch at Lions Den, San Pedro Town starting at 9AM

– Basketball game between San Pedro Tiger Sharks and Dangriga Dream Ballaz at Angel Nuñez Auditorium, San Pedro Town starting at 9PM

April 9th – Strong Man Competition at BTL Park, Belize City starting at 10AM

April 9th – Recovery Sun Party at SandBar Dock, San Pedro Town from 4PM to 8PM

April 9th – Closing Moon Party at Palapa Bar and Grill, San Pedro Town from 8PM to midnight from 3PM

April 14th – Way of the Cross at Benque Roman Catholic Church, Benque Viejo del Carmen Town starting

April 15th – Easter One Love Beach Party at Ella's Cool Spot, Hopkins Village starting at 10AM

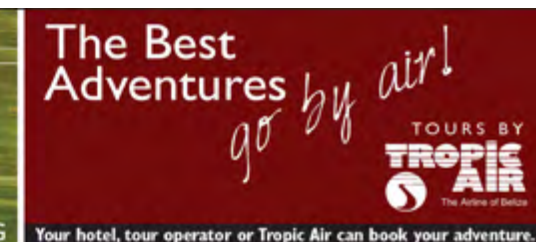
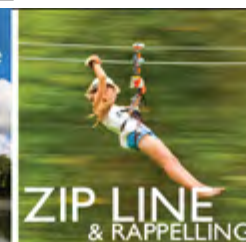
April 15th – Holy Saturday Cross Country Cycling Classic at Mile 2, George Price Highway starting at 6AM

April 15th & 16th – Holiday Hotel Easter Fest at Caprice Bar and Grill, San Pedro Town starting from 3PM on both days

– International Parranda Music Festival at Palmento Grove Cultural and Fishing Lodge, Hopkins Village starting at 10AM on both days

April 21st – Basketball game between San Pedro Tiger Sharks and Belize City No Limits at Belize Elementary School, Belize City starting at 9PM

April 29th – Forward Movements Street Festival at Dt. Cairns Market, Orange Walk Town starting at 4PM



A person wearing a blue snorkel mask and a blue life vest is swimming underwater. Below them, a large sea turtle is swimming, and several smaller fish are visible in the background.

Wild for Sea Turtles

By Tamara Sniffin

You would think that for someone who's passion is exploring and mapping uncharted caves, they might be hard to impress when it comes to adventure. But for Brad Barcom, a speleologist visiting Belize from Indiana, USA, jumping into the warm, clear Caribbean water to snorkel at the Mexico Rocks Marine Reserve was an off-the-charts experience. "Who needs bats and dark crevices when you can swim with turtles?!" he exclaimed.

Of course, I agree with Brad. I'm not nearly the thrill seeker Mr. Barcom may be, but when I'm indulging in my favorite marine pastime, I couldn't be more excited. I have a mental checklist that quantifies if it was a good day snorkeling. Spotted eagle ray? Check! Nurse sharks? Check! Angelfish? Check! Flamingo Tongues? Check! Christmas Tree worms? Check! Turtles? BINGO!!! My day is now complete!

Not only are sea turtles gorgeous to see as they graze on the seabed or effortlessly glide through the water, their beauty is more than shell deep. When sharing the sea with a turtle I can't help but marvel at the fact that I'm swimming with a true survivor. Against all odds, this creature first hatched on a sandy beach and flippered into the sea (if something didn't eat him first), then survived the perils of the oceanic food chain and man's mess of garbage and obstacles. What makes

Continued on Page 4

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Wild about turtles

Continued from Page 3

seeing these creatures even more incredible is knowing that all three varieties of sea turtles that nest in Belize are Red-Listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). How often can you hang out with an endangered species in their wild habitat?

At most of the marine reserves off Ambergris Caye, the turtle most commonly seen is the Green turtle, which is considered Endangered by the IUCN. Green turtles aren't really green, but their fat is! That's probably how they got their name. These beauties are the second largest sea turtle (next to the Leatherback, which is sometimes seen in southern Belize) and can weigh up to 500 pounds. These vegetarians eat turtle grass (thus the name), and are often seen doing just that, grazing! Juveniles and adults can be found on reefs and over seagrass beds throughout Belize, eating turtle grass or manatee's grass.

Listed as Critically Endangered by the IUCN, Hawksbill turtles are considered the most abundant in Belize per the Sea Turtle Census. In all my years of underwater adventure I have only seen one, and that was at the Hol Chan Marine Reserve. I was so excited I almost swallowed my snorkel! Hawksbill sea turtles were once harvested for their shell which was

used to make jewelry, eye glass frames and other items which is known as tortoise shell. They are normally found near reefs rich in the sponges they like to feed on. Hawksbills are omnivorous and will also eat mollusks, marine algae, crustaceans, sea urchins, fish, and jellyfish.

Last, but not least is the Loggerhead turtle, which is easily distinguished by their large head. I've snorkeled with two over the years, once at Chato's Graveyard near Hol Chan, where conch fishermen clean their catch, and one when looking for whale sharks near the Gladden Split Area. To me these turtles look like the old men of the sea, with big crabby faces and barnacles often attached to their shells. Listed as Endangered by the ICUN, adult loggerhead sea turtles are seen cruising coral reefs looking for crustaceans and mollusks.

No matter what you consider adventure, chances are you'll never forget swimming with turtles. When snorkeling or diving with turtles please admire them from a respectful distance, and never touch or pester them. It is an honor and a privilege to share the sea with these gentle creatures, and as stewards we need to do our best to protect these endangered species.

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BELIZEAN SHORES RESORT

Tracking our turtles with the Ambergris Caye Marine Turtle Program

By Tamara Shiffin



The nesting grounds of Robles and Rocky Point beaches on Ambergris Caye are considered one of the most active turtle nesting areas in the entire country. The Ambergris Caye Marine Turtle Monitoring Program at Hol Chan Marine Reserve has been monitoring the area, and gaining consistent data since 2009.

Two types of turtles are known to nest on Ambergris Caye; Loggerhead and Green turtles. When it's time to lay eggs, sea turtles are known to return to nest on the same beach where they were hatched. Depending on the species, a mature female turtle can lay from 70 to 190 eggs, and it takes a span of six to ten weeks for the hatchlings to emerge.

After the eggs hatch, the young turtles must make their way the sea, in hopes of reaching maturity. It's estimated that only one in 1,000 hatchlings will survive to adulthood. Turtles nest every two years, and female turtles are believed to nest up to three times in one nesting season. Despite the little that is known about the migratory behavior of turtles between birth and sexual adulthood, it is estimated that they can live up to 80 years in their natural environment.

According to the 2015 Turtle Report compiled by the Ambergris Caye Marine Turtle Monitoring Program, the turtle nesting season began in April, when the first turtle was reported to crawl up to its nest, and the season continued until the last week of November, when the last clutch hatched. Most of the clutches were from Loggerhead (70) and Green turtles (39), along with two Hawksbill turtle nests, which are rare on the island.



In Belize, sea turtles have been a protected species since 1993, and the disturbing of turtle nests or possession of sea turtles is illegal. The selling or trafficking of any sea turtle can constitute an infraction that can result in a fine of up to \$1,000 and up to one year's imprisonment.

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Do you have a favorite restaurant that you go to because you know it's consistently good and you just love everything about it? On Ambergris Caye I have a few places I always recommend, and you know if I'm telling you to go there, I eat there too!

For the last several years Caliente, located on the beach at the Spindrift Hotel in the heart of San Pedro Town, has been one of my "go to" places. From the days when the original owners ran it, to when Melly Sanchez took over management in 2008 and eventually purchased it a few years ago, the dining experience has always been one of the best. For Melly, owning and running Caliente with her family is a dream come true, and you can taste the spicy dash of love they have added to their Mexican and Caribbean dishes.

During the lunch hour their Enchiladas de Mole Chicken are my favorite. Corn tortillas filled with cheese and chicken, topped with a spicy-sweet Mexican mole sauce makes my mouth water just thinking about it. Add one of their signature Margaritas to the mix and you have the perfect combo! Then again, what Mexican dish doesn't beg for a side of tequila? If mole isn't your thing, choose your type of meat or veggie option, and enjoy Enchiladas Rojas, Quesadillas, Tostadas, flour tortilla Gringas or grilled flour and corn tortilla Gorditas. Another favorite is their tacos. Filled with grilled steak, pork, shrimp, fish or chicken, these soft-shell corn tortillas served with onions, cilantro, and salsa Mexicana explode with fresh, authentic flavor. And, if you're lucky enough to be there on a Friday, tacos are offered at a special price and Margaritas are half off! What a perfect way to start off your weekend...ándale!

Although the food is the star at Caliente, the location is priceless.



By Tamara Sniffin



With two beachfront patios, you can indulge in a picture-perfect view of the Caribbean while watching island life walk, boat or sail by. It truly is one of the best spots to chillax while indulging in great food and cool refreshing cocktails.

Their dinner menu offers a great variety as well, with snapper served whole, blackened, Mexicano (filet breaded and fried) or Maya Mar with special seasonings. Other favorites include lobster when in season, an amazing Coconut Shrimp or Chicken or try their spicy coconut Caribbean

curry with your choice of snapper, shrimp, chicken or veggie. It's hard to pick a favorite but I gravitate to either the Jalisco Chicken with chunks of boneless chicken breast marinated in tequila and sautéed with chile chipotle, tomatoes, onions, bell peppers and cilantro or the Ginger Rum Shrimp. How can you resist shrimp wrapped in bacon, grilled, and glazed with their original ginger rum sauce? Sweet, salty and tangy, this is one delicious meal!

Wednesday's at Caliente mean fresh made salbutes! Made with premium masa (corn dough), sal-

butes are round discs fried to perfection and topped with shredded chicken, tomatoes, jalapenos and their special slaw. On Tuesday and Wednesday nights they also have live music in the evenings to add to the ambience, and Sunday's they offer a rice and beans special with fried chicken, a true Belizean favorite!

When in San Pedro you are sure to enjoy this casual, island original. From the views to the food and great service, you are in for a real treat. Check out Caliente at their website at www.calientebelize.com

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Market Day at Mahogany Bay Village, so much more than produce!

Mahogany Bay Village has rapidly developed into a charming, true village-style community. With several new businesses on board and providing unique services to guests and locals alike, MBV has even extended to a bi-monthly market day. But this isn't your average produce-picking, grab some groceries type of market. Nope; MBV Market Day is a chance to grab farm-fresh and locally sourced produce and fresh breads, while eating delicious treats and drinking refreshing beverages all while live music plays. It's a fun few hours to mingle, get to know the vendors at the village, and even nab some souvenir items to take back home, if you're a visitor!

One of our visits even introduced us to a delightful sake ice cream, courtesy of Chef Toshiya of the soon-to-be-opened Jyoto Japanese/Sushi restaurant. Besides the made-on-the-spot sushi rolls available for sale, his booth offered the ice cream and sake for sale. Tamara opted for Tracy's Pierogis, thrilled to have a taste of home. Filling and delicious, the pierogis can be accompanied by a glass of wine perhaps (I mean...why not?!), and enjoyed on one of the picnic tables available for lounging and taking in the great vibes.



By Mary Gonzalez

Other vendors include the on-site businesses like Science and Soul Wellness – their gorgeous beach wraps are a sight to behold! The Hive offers healthy grain bowls and refreshing sangria, and of course, Ian Anderson's Farmhouse Deli proffers its delicious cheeses, breads, organic eggs, cured meats, produce and more. For the adventurous one in your life, Blue Bonefish (fishing shack) has great shirts, water bottles, hats, and flies to reel you in. Belizean Melody also proffers her unique artwork and jewelry, and heck; Saga Humane Society could hook you up with the ultimate souvenir: a Belizean pet!

It's all about variety: from the food to the produce, to the products and businesses on display. Held on the second and fourth Saturday of each month from 11am – 2pm, Mahogany Bay Market Day is a must-do event!

Mahogany Bay Village is located south of town, just before the water tower, where the paved road ends.

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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!



- Belizean Comfort Foods and Gourmet Seafood. One Mile North of the Bridge, at the island's only Yoga Center. Fresh, is the order of the day! Gourmet Dishes by Master Chef JoVannie Rowland, menu changes daily. Imported Wines, Seafood and Pasta. 7 days.

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PIRATE'S NOT SO SECRET BEACH BAR & GRILL: The newest trending destination; adventure to SECRET BEACH! Soak up the sun or take a dip in crystal clear shallow waters accompanied with island music, refreshing cocktails, gourmet lunch menu by AWARD WINNING CHEF. Credit Cards Accepted. Open daily 10am to SUNSET!

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MAMBO RESTAURANT - Enjoy a unique dining experience at this award-winning restaurant at Matchica 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.



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](https://www.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

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 in Tres Cocos, before the Truck

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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

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.

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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!



EATS & TREATS



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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.

SANDBAR: BEST PIZZAS ON THE ISLAND! Sandbar hosts an amazing happy hour special: \$10BZD wood-fired pizzas and 2-for-1 rums on weekdays (3-6PM) and beer and wing specials on the weekend (11am-4pm). Enjoy your afternoon or evening at the bar, tables, or chaise lounges on the beach!

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.



EL PATIO GRILL: Serving Belizean and Caribbean Cuisine in a gorgeous outdoor patio setting. Home of the famous stuffed jalapeños. Open from 11AM to 10PM - Sunday's, dinner only 5PM-10PM. Closed Tuesdays. Daily lunch & dinner specials. Sunday Live Music! Phone: 226-3898/6243589. Corner Barrier Reef Drive & Black Coral Street.



BELLA ITALIA: Craving delicious pastas and Italian pizza? Well, enjoy authentic Italian cuisines right here on Ambergris Caye. Come in and grab a seat or take advantage of our free delivery (in town.) Come see what we have to offer! 637-3798.

CALIENTE: On the beach at Spindrift, Caliente Restaurant serves delicious

Caribbean and Mexican cuisine. Try our Jalisco chicken, or our awesome ceviche and don't skip the fabulous margaritas (half-off on Fridays!) Indoor and outdoor dining available. Locally owned/family run. 226-2170.

PARADISE CREAM: We are an ice cream shop serving great homemade ice cream, milk shakes and malts. There are about 30 flavors to choose from - always adding new flavors. Ice cream pies available for special occasion! Located on Coconut Drive at Wings Complex. 610-9585



MESA CAFE: Relax in comfortable

A/C while enjoying a full range of coffee drinks and healthy, delicious dishes. Open for breakfast and lunch, our menu includes a mix of locally sourced European, Mediterranean, and island inspired flavors. Come experience Mesa!



BOOMERS: Fabulous new Cafe' Bar and Grill in the Wings building near Tropic Air. Serving American and Belizean breakfast, lunch, dinner and daily specials. 226-2299.

PARTY PARTY



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. 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

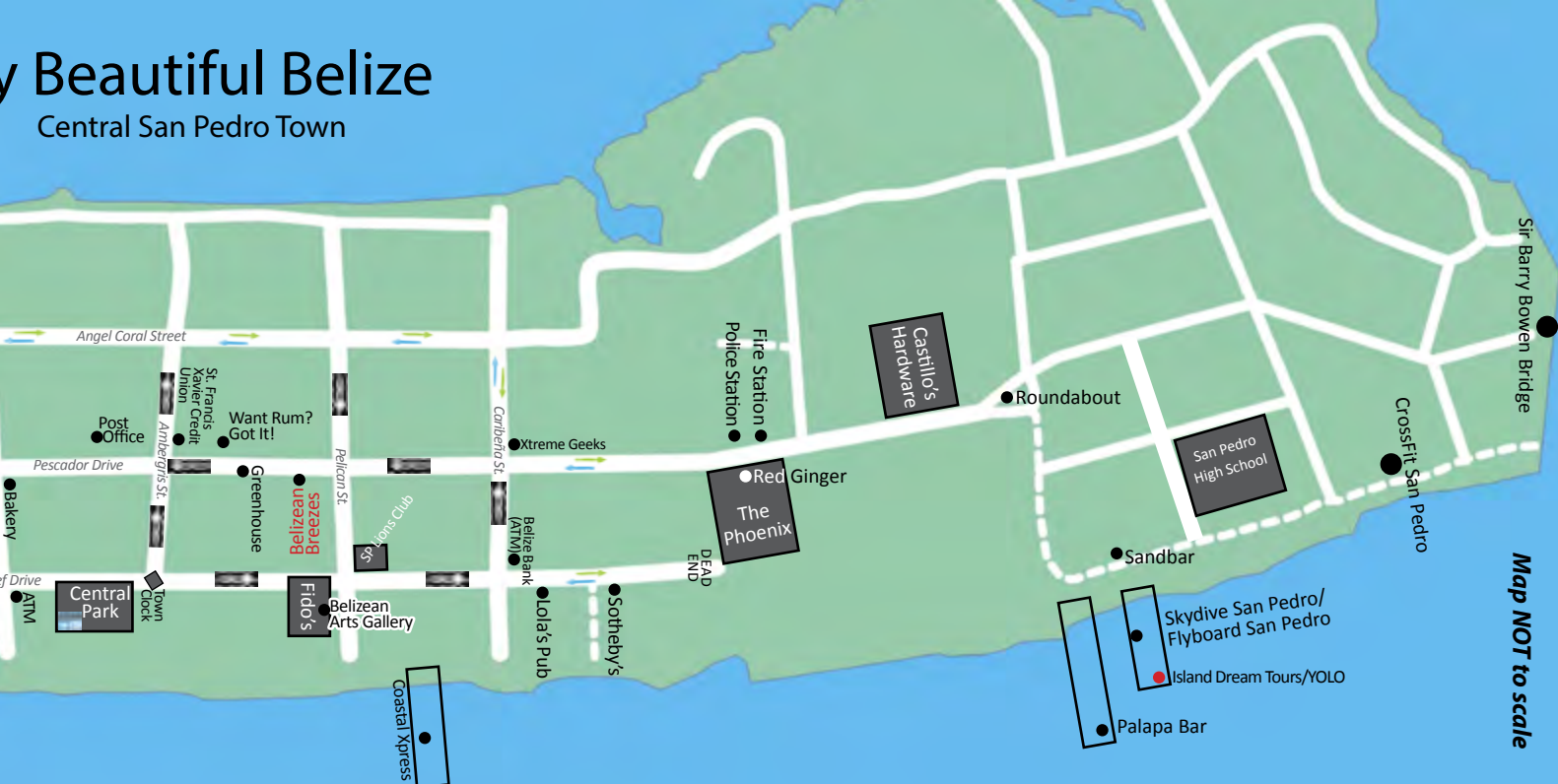
PALAPA BAR AND GRILL – On the Wet Willy's Dock. Daily 11am – 11pm. Relax on the inner-tubes and have your bucket of ice cold beers lowered to you. Outdoor seating, awesome smoked food, cheeseburgers, seafood and tropical drinks and an astonishing view!

Sudoku Answers Puzzle on Page 16

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

My Beautiful Belize

Central San Pedro Town



UNIQUE OFFERINGS

BELIZEAN BREEZES SOAP CO.:

We have moved! Come see us in our New Location! You asked for more all natural products so we needed the space to add them all. From bars to guest soaps, cupcake soaps and ton of fun! A full line of affordable and unique jewellery and gift items. 9AM-9AM; Mon-Sat; 226-4322



BELIZE CHOCOLATE COMPANY: The first ever chocolate boutique in Belize, makes bean to bar chocolate on Ambergis 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. 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.

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

FLYBOARD SAN PEDRO: EXPERIENCE THE FREEDOM OF FLIGHT! Come fly with Flyboard San Pedro! Soar over the beautiful waters of the Caribbean in style! Experience the newest sport to hit San Pedro! Located at the Skydive San Pedro shop over the water across from Sandbar Hostel & Restaurant on the beach.

ACQUAFINO ISLAND RESORT AND SPA: An island resort located five minutes behind Ambergis 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.



ZEN BELIZE: purpose-built rooftop fitness studio, featuring yoga, pilates, kickboxing, krav maga and bootcamp, overlooking the trees and sea, close to downtown. Daily classes, all levels, internationally certified instructors. Drop-in \$20bz, incl. equipment.

See facebook for our daily schedule.

REAL ESTATE

BELIZE SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY

is a full-service firm offering sales, vacation rentals, and property management in Belize (Ambergis 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 Ambergis 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.

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: *Nominated for Restaurant of the Year 2016 by BTB!* Banana Beach's signature restaurant, featuring indoor and outdoor dining and sports lounge. Serving USDA meats, wood fired pizza, fresh seafood, pastas... 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.hiddentreasurebelize.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.



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

UNIQUE OFFERINGS



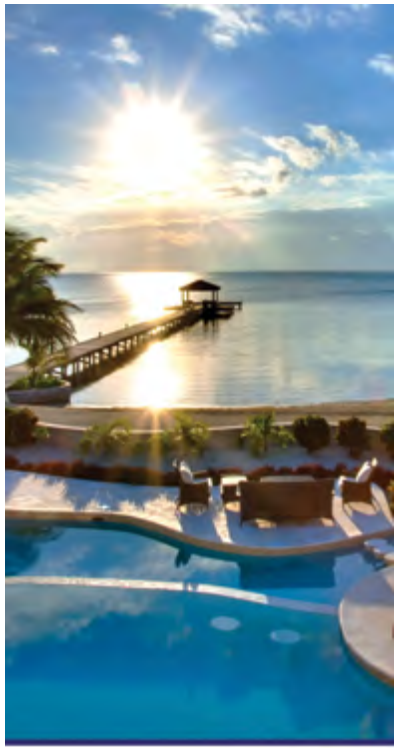
CARIBBEAN VILLAS: Great Value on the Beach. Bar & Restaurant, Waterslide, Sailing Center, Dive Shop. Far enough from town for peace and quiet but a short walk along the beach to San Pedro. Book Weddings and Events. Home of Sunday Family Funday.



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>.

SCIENCE & SOUL WELLNESS: A sanctuary for body, mind and spirit that caters to the local community, guests and residents of Mahogany Bay Village. Offering therapeutic facials, group and private yoga, aerial yoga and energy healing sessions via the world's most exceptional Yoga, Ayurveda and Macrobiotic practitioners and teachers. www.scienceandsoulwellness.com Ph: 615-0089.

MAHOGANY BAY VILLAGE: A fresh and energized take on the conventional resort community that pulls from the culture, values and architecture of Belize. Featuring a four-star resort, private homes, a burgeoning townlet, Bay and Beach Clubs, and a Spa, the development offers up a 360-degree travel experience unlike any other in Belize. Learn more at www.mahoganybayvillage.com



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Passed down from one generation to the next: Belizean Folklores

By Janelle Cowo

Folklore—they are traditions, beliefs and stories passed from one generation to the next. Belizeans have their fair share of these tales, from omens to luck rituals, to creatures straight out of your nightmares! Growing up, we were told these stories and taught to believe in them.

While some of the stories may sound a bit farfetched, how couldn't you believe it when even your "chichi" (grandmother) or "tati" (grandfather) claimed to have personally experienced them! Even with the passing of time, these folklores remain a vital aspect of our culture, defining who we are as Belizeans.

Much like our melting pot of cultures, the folk tales we share are intertwined. The Mestizo believe in evil spirits such as "El Duende" and "La Llorona", while the Creole are believers of "obeah" (dark magic). Most often, these tales were used as a means of disciplining children from doing wrong. I mean some stories were so scary that they were a lesson we did not want to learn first-hand! Of course we are a curious people, and sometimes we tried to test out these theories, only to realize its best to heed our elders' warnings, thus aborting the mission.

One of my favourite folktales passed down to me by my grandmother was that of "La Xtabai" (La Ish-tah-bai). For years, the tale of La Xtabai had me making sure I was inside the house before the clock struck 9 at night!

But what is La Xtabai you may ask? Well, SHE is every misbehaving kid and drunk man's nightmare!

La Xtabai is supposed to be this gorgeous woman with striking long black hair who lurks at the edge of the bushes. Bear in mind that Belize is still pretty much covered in foliage, and villages in particular are often surrounded by thick forests. While her appearance is that of a goddess, she's really a monster with goat legs and claws that can rip a person apart — at least that's what I was told!

What makes her so terrifying, is that she is an enchantress, luring people to their death. According to the story, La Xtabai targets children who do not obey their parents and are out late at night. She also preys on drunk men, luring them to her embrace.

My grandmother used to tell me that there was no escape from La Xtabai. Even if you evade her at your first encounter, once you have seen her, you are sure to disappear within the next 48 hours. The only way to prevent this is by offering a sacred prayer and receiving a blessing from your local priest or bush doctor.

Although this tale may be farfetched, it certainly helped parents get their children to behave. There are many Belizeans who swear relatives and acquaintances have been abducted by La Xtabai.

With each generation that passes, the stories begin to sound more unbelievable. One thing is for sure, these folk tales are what makes us uniquely Belize!



Take home that Belizean experience with a memorable souvenir!

By Janelle Cowo

You came to Belize for the vacation of a lifetime, looking forward to all the incredible fun to be had. You fall in love with its landscape, people, culture, food and then, before you know it, it's over. How can you possibly extend your Belize experience back home? How can your vacation last a little longer? Well, by picking up some authentic Belizean made goods!

So what can you take? This question all depends on what you like. One of the most common "take-back-home" products made in Belize has to be a bottle of Marie Sharp's pepper sauce - we Belizeans love our spice, and Marie Sharp has just the right kick. Chances are you saw (and sampled) it at pretty much every restaurant you ate at, and hopefully the spice-meter didn't

keep you from trying it! Grab a few bottles and share that taste of Belize with friends back home, and be sure to keep some for yourself! If you close your eyes, you could almost pretend you're at your favourite restaurant in Belize again.

For me, the real taste of Belize lies within her rums, wines and spirits. Traveller's Liquors Limited has been leading the distillery industry in Belize since 1953! Over the years they have perfected their unique blends of Belizean made rums, brandy, vodka, wines, gin, liqueurs and bitters.

The most recent product in Traveller's line is the Belizean Rum - appropriately named for being made with 100% Belizean ingredients! The Belizean Rum



12 Belize features items from Belizean artisans ALL over the country!



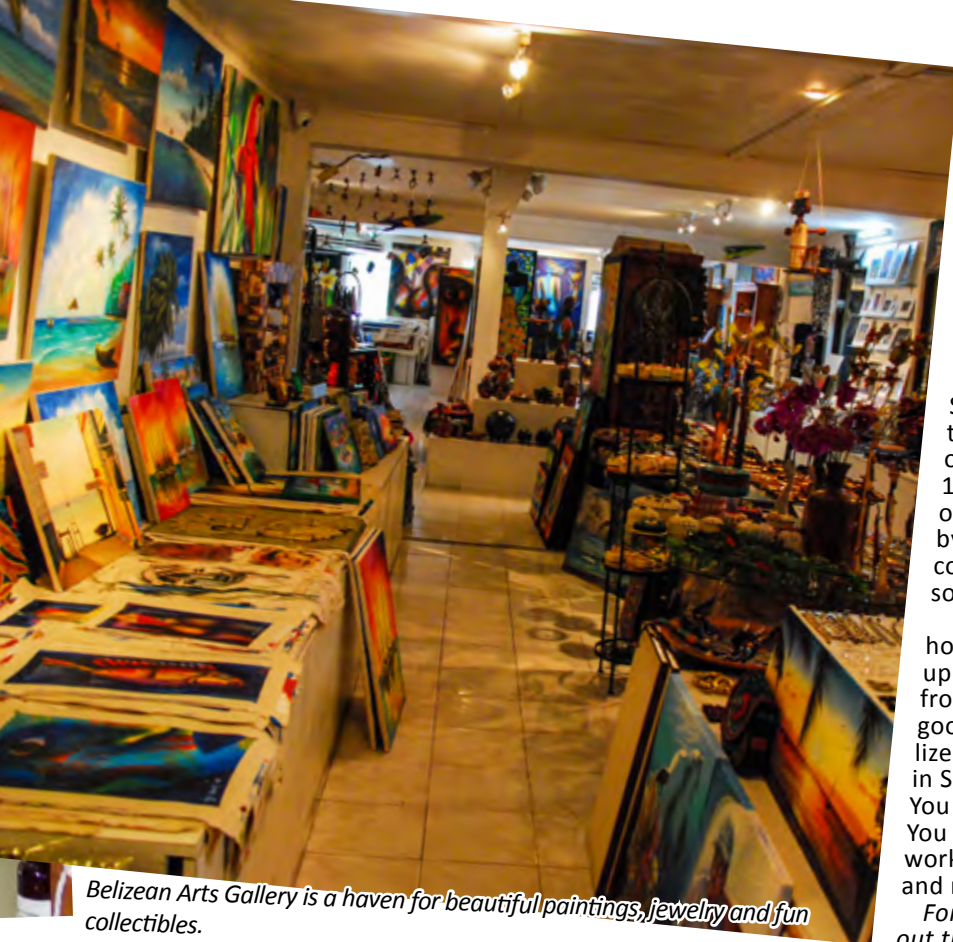


THE SPORTS BAR NORTH OF THE BRIDGE

Four 43" flat screen TVs
Fastest WiFi on the island
Large variety of wings
Homemade thin crust pizza
Awesome Burgers
Corn Hole
Wednesday Feliz Dart Challenge

Open from 1PM - 11PM

1/2 mile north of the bridge @ The Cloisters, San Pedro, Belize



Belizean Arts Gallery is a haven for beautiful paintings, jewelry and fun collectibles.

celebrates the natural wonders of this magnificent land with labels depicting the Great Blue Hole, Xunantunich Maya Archaeological Site, the Paslow Building and the beautiful jaguar. It is a premium rum, blended from the most mature and finest aged barrels available at Traveller's Liquors. With a great taste that can be paired with just about anything from natural juices to sodas, and gorgeous labelling, this Belizean rum can be that perfect gift for family and friends back home (that is if they are over the legal drinking age). The rum is available in 0.75 litre bottles, 1 litre bottles, 1.75 litre bottle and 2.5 litre (AKA Elephant Foot) bottles, and even a fun travel pack.

Traveller's also offers tasting and samplings at their Show Room here in San Pedro Town and their main factory in Belize City. The San Pedro Town outlet is located on Pescador Drive and is open from 8AM to midday and 1PM to 6PM, Monday to Saturday. If you want a full tour of the company's factory, book the Heritage Center Tour by calling 223-2855 or emailing history@onebarrelrum.com. The distillery is located 2 ½ miles on the Philip Goldson Highway.

But there is more than spice and liquor to take back home! Till your next vacation rolls around, why not stock up on chocolate from Moho Chocolate Company, coffee from Caye Coffee Roasting Company, or any of the fabulous goods at 12 Belize? Featuring items from over a dozen Belizean micro-businesses, this is the only specialty boutique in San Pedro exclusively featuring Belizean made products. You cannot go wrong with items from this fabulous shop! You can also check out Graniel's Dreamland for great woodwork, Belizean Arts and Belizean Breezes (for yummy soaps and more)!

For locations of all mentioned establishments, please check out the My Beautiful Belize map of San Pedro in this issue.



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San Pedro

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Only one coupon per table
coupons cannot be combined with any
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Closed Mondays
Reservations: 226-2170
Beachfront at Spindrift Hotel

Chocolate Festival of Belize; a sweet celebration!



By Tamara Sniffin

For the last ten years, chocolate has been celebrated in Punta Gorda Town. Traditionally held over the Commonwealth Holiday weekend (mid-May), what began as the Toledo Cacao Festival later evolved into the Chocolate Festival of Belize, and does anyone need to ask why all the fuss? 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 can enjoy and celebrate...and celebrate we do! This delicious festival grows larger each year and attracts hundreds of visitors from around Belize as well as overseas. This year, the event kicks off with guests enjoying a night of socializing while sampling a wide variety of chocolate delicacies along with

gourmet wines at Garbutt's Marina on Friday, May 19th. Lively music sets the stage for a great night of indulging and dancing off some of those chocolate calories!

The following day is the Chocolate Street Fair, held on Front

Street in Punta Gorda town which is closed to traffic during the fair. With a bounty of booths to explore, shopping for local crafts and unique products is a must! Of course, sampling the variety of foods available is a mouthwatering treat as well. The three-day event ends at the nearby Nim Li Punit site, where Maya dancing and culture captivates the day. If you plan to attend this festival it is recommended you book your accommodations sooner than later, as local establishments are usually filled 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 chocolatefestivalofbelize.com.



Wolfe's Woofers Crocodiles



By Dennis Wolfe

"How do the people in these little Mayan villages survive?"

"Each village has its own way of making money," Allen Davies told me. "This one we're coming to grows vegetables."

"Where do they sell them out here in the jungle?"

"Each village usually trades or sells their specialty to the nearby villages."

While I was visiting Allen in Guatemala he had decided to give me a river tour of the Rio Dulce. His last words to me as we got in the boat were, "The river is full of huge, mean crocodiles so don't fall into

the water."

"Let's stop at the next town and try to find something cold to drink," I said.

As we drew near the village I noticed the water was filled with people who had waded out into it with their fishing nets and poles.

Allen stopped the boat next to the first fisherman we came to.

"Is there a place in the village where we can get a beer?" he asked.

"No, señor," the old man said. "All we have in this place is fish. We make our living fishing the river. Fishing is our specialty."

"What about the crocodiles?" I asked. "Don't they ever bother you?"

"Si, señor. They attack us all the time."

We thought about this for a few moments and then Allen

asked, "Where do you sell your fish?"

"We trade all of our fish to the next village," the old fisherman told us. "They need fish and they have what we need."

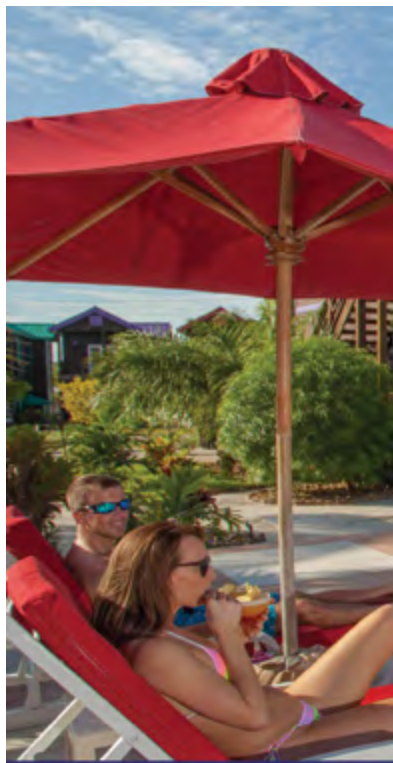
"What is the specialty in the next village?" I asked him.

"They make wooden legs."

SuDoku Time!

Answers on Page 10

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



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Permanently yours, from the Belize Tattoo Expo

By Mary Gonzalez

Getting ink permanently etched on skin is a major decision, and having the right artist can make a huge difference. Lucky for us tattoo lovers, Belizean Ink Tattoo Shop is once again hosting an expo after the runaway success of last year's. From May 26th to May 28th, artists from all over Belize, Central and South America, and even the USA, will convene at the San Pedro High School auditorium for a great weekend of art, performance, ink and camaraderie. Whether it's your

first tattoo or you're scrounging for space on your skin for another bit of ink, you cannot miss this event!

The word tattoo comes from the Tahitian "tatu" which means "to mark something." Tattooing has been practiced across the globe since at least the Neolithic times, as evidenced by mummified preserved skin, ancient art, and archaeological records. Nowadays, the variety of art forms that take their permanent place on our skin are an expression of individuality,

emotion, beliefs and sometimes, not much else other than, 'I want ink'.

My first tattoo came about during a night out with friends. One of them had a homemade machine, and I was easily swayed, the fuzz of alcohol numbing my senses. I looked at the wall of images available, and like a typical first-timer, pointed to a butterfly outline, and away we went. For a few years, I bore the mark of a memorable evening spent in the

company of people who I still call friends.

Perhaps you're thinking of your first bit of ink, or if you're looking to add one to your body canvas, for whatever your reason, when you do decide to go for it, the right artist makes all the difference. And at Tattoo Expo Belize, there will be opportunities to get inked in a range of styles by masters of the craft. If it's anything like last year's event, there will be some amazing artwork!

THE DIVE BAR BELIZE

Elegant meals accompanied by refreshing island cocktails,
Mon-Sun: 7:00 am - 12:00 am

226-3365, 1/2 MILE NORTH OF THE BRIDGE

Full-service Scuba Diving Facility
Mon-Sun: 7:00 am - 5:00 pm
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SEA STAR BELIZE
Get Wet, Get Sucky!



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Ownership is
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Organizer and owner of Belizean Ink, Wimpas Sosa says this year will be even bolder and bigger! Apart from the highly anticipated freak show performance of Victor Max on both nights of the expo, rap artist from Los Angeles, CA, Spanky Loco will be providing some entertainment on Saturday, May 27th.

Perhaps one of the most anticipated dates for artists looking to learn new techniques will be the seminar held on Friday, May 26th at Banana Beach Resort's Presidential Room. During the seminar, there will be ink masters sharing tips and tricks of the trade. Teaching lettering will be Brazilian William Ferramosca, and Robin Carpio will teach realism in color. Adolfo Rubio's seminar will cover black and grey techniques, and Semi Mendoza, organizer of the Mexicali Expo will be back once more as a special guest.



Prepare for an EPIC freak show featuring
Victor Max!

Live music will be courtesy of LA Rap artist
Spanky Loco



Then, on Saturday and Sunday, it's TIME. TO. GET. INKED!!!

Can you tell I'm excited? Last year's event was jam-packed from start to finish, with the sound of machines buzzing, music and laughter filling the air for two days straight. Customers walked out smiling, thrilled with their new art pieces, artists submitted their work for judging, and on the final night, after Victor Max's freak show, winners were announced. But the real winners were all of us who formed part of a community, a collaboration of unique individuals together for a common good: art, ink, fun.

See you at the 2017 Expo!

For more information, and to keep updated on the featured artists headed to La Isla Bonita, follow the expo's Facebook page at Expo Tattoo Belize.



MAHOGANY BAY VILLAGE



Mahogany Bay Village is a new evolution in resort community living, offering specialty retail, yoga & massage, artisanal dining, bi-monthly Saturday markets, and adventure tours to be enjoyed by all. An entire village of experience awaits!

The **60-acre property** feature exclusive **Coastal Living® lifestyle residences**, and a **Curio Collection by Hilton® hotel**. Full ownership real estate opportunities and walk-in tours available. Located just 1.5 miles south of Tropic Air.

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Mahogany Bay Market Day

Food festival & market

the 2nd & 4th Saturday of the month, 11am - 2pm

Shaken Sunset Bar

Now Open

Wednesday - Sunday from 11am - 8pm

at The Great House, Mahogany Bay Village

www.mahoganybayvillage.com

