

An aerial photograph of the Great Blue Hole, a large, circular underwater cave opening in the sea floor. The water is a deep, vibrant blue, and the surrounding reef is visible in shades of green and brown. The sky is a clear, pale blue with a few wispy clouds.

My Beautiful Belize

TRAVEL PUBLICATION

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Discover the many ways to
experience the Great Blue Hole

From the Editor *Tamara Sniffin*

We all have favorite times of the year... for some it's certain holidays, and for others it can be a season. Here in Belize, we even find a reason to celebrate a season, like when mangos are ripe in May, and lobsters can be harvested starting mid-June. Lobster season is one of my favorite times of the year. It's not just about enjoying this tasty crustacean, but the fun that comes with the festivals.

Each year the lobster season closes on February 15th, and for five months these little buggers are busy making babies. When the season opens on June 15th, there are three different festivals country-wide just waiting to celebrate the occasion. If you are near Ambergris Caye, Caye Caulker or Placencia during this time of year, you are in for a treat! From beauty pageants, to concerts, block parties, food competitions for the best lobster dishes and more, each festival has a fun and unique way of celebrating.

One season that we don't celebrate in Belize is the rainy season, which historically runs from June through November. If you are visiting our country this time of year, you might be in for a little weather. Depending where you are, that rain can last for days at a time. In this issue we take a visit to a jungle lodge during the rainy season, and find out how we can make the best of a soggy situation. It was still an adventure well worth taking!

Regardless of what season you are visiting our home, you are sure to have a memorable time. We welcome you to My Beautiful Belize...and don't forget to pack an umbrella.



Tamara with entertainer Ernestine Carballo at the Caye Caulker Lobster Festival 2016.



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.*



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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One of the most famous landmarks in Belize, the Blue Hole can be experienced a variety of ways...learn how! P. 3

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This store on North Ambergris Caye stocks up on the essentials and surprises you never knew you needed on your road trip. P. 6

Authentic Belizean Smiles:

We all have our favorite Belizean people - and their vibrant personalities are what make the biggest impression. P. 6

Romantic dining at Aji Tapa Bar:

Beachside dining under twinkling lights, fabulous Spanish cuisine, wine...ahhh, romance! P. 11

Celebrating Belize's Lobster Festivals:

From San Pedro to Placencia to Caye Caulker, Belize will be celebrating the Spiny Lobster come June 15th onward. Each destination has its own unique, tasty way of celebrating. P. 12

Pook's Hill Lodge:

A rain-soaked getaway in the jungle forces us to relax during a vacation...what a concept! P. 14

About the cover photo: *Tropic Air's aerial tour of the Great Blue Hole offers a fantastic opportunity to take in one of Belize's greatest landmarks.*

Here's what's happening in June!

June 6th – Annual Steak, Scotch and Wine Dinner at Casa Picasso starting at 6:30PM

June 17th – Captain Sharks Dorado Rodeo at Caribbean Villas Resort, San Pedro Town, all day event

June 17th – International Day of Yoga at the Radisson Fort George Hotel and Marina, Belize City starting at 8AM

June 15th to June 23rd – San Pedro Lobster Crawl (for full schedule visit www.sanpedrolobsterfest.com)

June 23rd to June 25th – Placencia Lobster Fest at the beach besides Topsy Tuna Bar and Grill, Placencia Peninsula, all day event

June 24th – San Pedro Lobster Fest Block Party at Central Park, San Pedro Town starting at 4PM

– Miss African Queen Pageant at the Bliss Center for Performing Arts, Belize City starting at 7PM

– Belize Rubber Duck Race at San Ignacio Town Square from 10AM to 3PM

June 25th – San Pedro Lobster Fest after Party at Caribbean Villas Resort, San Pedro Town starting at 11AM

June 29th – Dia de San Pedro Mass at the San Pedro Roman Catholic Church, San Pedro Town starting at 4PM

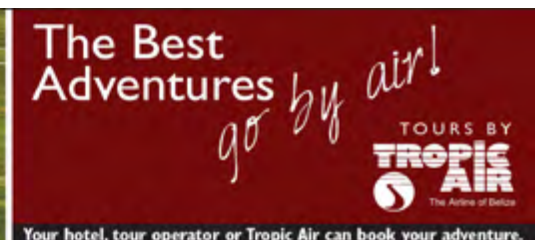
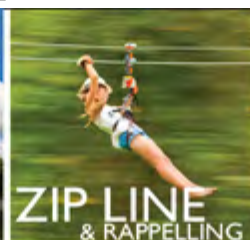
June 29th – Dia de San Pedro at the Honourable Louis Sylvester Sporting Complex, San Pedro Town starting

at 8PM

June 30th – Dia de San Pedro Festival at the Honourable Louis Sylvester Sporting Complex, San Pedro Town starting at 7PM

June 30th – Miss Caye Caulker Pageant at Palapa Gardens, Caye Caulker Village starting at 7PM

July 1st to July 2nd – Caye Caulker Lobster Fest at Palapa Gardens, Caye Caulker Village, all day event



Of the many wonders of Belize, perhaps we are most synonymous with the Great Blue Hole. The world's largest natural formation of its kind, the Blue Hole is part of the Meso-American Barrier Reef Reserve System, a World Heritage Site of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It is a world-class destination that lands on the bucket list for many around the world.

Scuba divers are particularly attracted to this site for its abundance of marine life species and clear waters. Home to nurse sharks, giant groupers and sharks like the blacktip and Caribbean reef, as well as really cool formations and caves throughout its 300-meter width and 125-meter depth, the Blue Hole is a must-visit spot if you are in the country.

There are so many ways to enjoy this spectacular formation, and to be honest, you don't even have to be a diver!

SNORKEL:

For many, the 4AM wake-up call to get on a large vessel, the 2-hour+ bumpy ride and all day excursion, is worth it just for the snorkeling possibility.

Imagine traversing the rim of this incredible sink-hole and looking down deep into the unknown, floating peacefully atop one of the most sought-after locales in Belize?

For those who have not yet made the leap into diving, snorkeling is possible, and just as exciting!

Continued on Page 5

The Belize Blue Hole Experience

by Mary Gonzalez



- Ashiatsu Poolside Massage
- Healing Ayurvedic Spa
- Pilates Mat Classes
- Wellness Retreats
- SUP Beach Yoga
- Aerial Yoga Arts
- Trainings

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Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve
Cayo District, Belize C.A.
Tel: 501-834-4005
Email: info@gaiariverlodge.com

The Blue Hole Experience

DIVE:

Of course, we recommend diving the Blue Hole!

Chance encounters with sharks, giant fish, incredible coral formations, snaking through cavernous spaces and canyons...there is just no denying that exploring the inside is an experience of a lifetime!

Check with your tour company of choice, and book the adventure of a lifetime.

SKYDIVE:

Is diving just not giving you the thrills you seek? Well, hook up with the right company, and try jumping out of a plane and into the Blue Hole then!

It's been done, and the iconic photo is proof that there are some who have experienced the double-whammy excitement. Skydive Belize offers this exclusive adventure weekly, from December to April, straight out of San Pedro Town, Ambergris Caye. Check availability online at www.skydivebelize.com!



AERIAL TOUR:

Not quite ready to leave the comfort and confines of a plane and into the wild blue yonder? That's okay, because Tropic Air has you covered! When diving or snorkeling, you can't actually see the iconic circular formation prevalent on all promotional imagery, so Tropic Air offers an aerial tour for you to observe the sinkhole "the way it was meant to be seen...from the air". The 1-hour flyover tour shows you some of the most spectacular sights of Belize's gorgeous waters, and is highlighted by the views of the beautiful

Blue Hole in all her glory.

The tour departs San Pedro/Caye Caulker every Tuesday & Thursday at 11AM, returning at 12PM. Flights are subject to weather conditions, and private tour charters are available. Book online at tropicalair.com!



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Barrier Reef Drive, San Pedro Town



Paintings Jewelry Crafts



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Belize

Sotheby's
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Mata Grande Grocery;

North AC's best little shop

North Ambergris Caye has expanded significantly, and with roads taking us further up the coast of this island, chances are you'll get thirsty or a bit hungry along the way. Maybe you jumped on your golf cart too quickly, and forgot a few essentials, like, water and snacks. Have no fear... Mata Grande Grocery has you covered. From cookies, chips, COLD beers, water, juices and sodas and even a bathroom for a quick roadside break, this is a life-saving little shop!

Owners Tami and Justin Romsa moved their shop to best fit the new road, and even expanded with a shady palapa and picnic tables. Hot and thirsty travelers can take a little break under the shade, sipping a refreshing beverage or two or nibble on a snack before continuing on their journey.

The Romsas have thought of everything, and as I discovered one random Sunday outing ago,



they even had sparkling wine for a quick mimosa break! (Yes, we're classy like that...HA!) Between the hammocks strung under the thatched palapa and

the picnic tables perfect to spread out some snacks and beverages, friends and I made our own little party.

When you're driving up the north

road, be sure to stop by and stock up on necessities for your journey! Check them out online at matagrandegrocery.com or call 226-4290.

By Mary Gonzalez

Authentic Belizean Smiles

By Mary Gonzalez

Visitors often tell us that their favorite part of Belize is her people. They talk about how friendly and open Belizeans are, welcoming them warmly to our shores and showing them the absolute best of Belize. With that in mind, we present to you some of those friendly favorites.

Chances are, you will meet them during your travels and experience the warmth and hospitality that make them stand out to us too!



Jorge Cunil Acosta

One of the friendliest waiters at Ramon's Village Resort, Jorge is from the Corozal District in Northern Belize. His favorite thing about his job is being able to make people happy.

"I like when people come into the restaurant and ask for suggestions. They always enjoy our recommendations, and their smiles make me happy," says Acosta. As for his favorites at Pineapples Restaurant (his workplace), he highly recommends the Pesto Fish, and for dessert, the pineapple cheesecake.

As a front-line person, he is often tasked to give suggestions to visitors wanting to explore more of the island. He suggests that they take a day to explore the north side of the island. "Rent a cart and drive up north. The roads are SO much better now, and that means you can reach the many bars and restaurants that way. The beaches are great for a quick dip, and you can really get to know the rest of the island beyond the center of town. You will love it!"

CAIENTE

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Latin American & Caribbean Cuisine
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South San Pedro Town, Escalante Neighborhood Open Daily: 5PM - 9PM
Tel: 501-226-4111/226-4236



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!



- 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.



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.

EVOO: With the only hand crafted pastas, home-made mozzarella cheeses and chocolate fondue in the country, EVOO's distinct menu complements its captivating and intimate bistro decor. As the one and only Gin House in Belize, EVOO provides exclusive imported Gins & Tonics. 226-4001

AJI TAPA BAR RESTAURANT: Beachfront dining in a romantic setting. One of a kind 5-Star Tapa Bar and Restaurant situated on the enchanting island of Ambergris Caye. Have a cocktail in our bar, or bring the family to dine in our outdoor beachfront restaurant. Open Mon to Wed 5PM-10PM +501-226-4047 for reservations



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!

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.

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 1/2 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 Stop. 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.

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!

SuDoku Time!

Answers on Page 14

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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.



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!



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 Sprindrift, 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.

PARADICE 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 Cafe' Bar and Grill serving American and Belizean breakfast, lunch, dinner and daily specials. Now in a great NEW LOCATION at Carlo & Ernie's Runway Bar. Same great food and service that you have come to love! 226-2299.



MAXI'S: Like a fan said, "A little epicurean art for a fraction of the price! Everything is simply amazing; it's difficult to have a favorite." Maxi's offers tasty eats and fantastic drinks. Tuesday – Saturday, 7AM-11AM/ 3PM-12AM. Sundays, 10AM-10PM. Breakfasts: 7AM – 11AM Tuesday-Saturday, 10AM-1PM Sundays. Barrier Reef Drive, 226-2052.



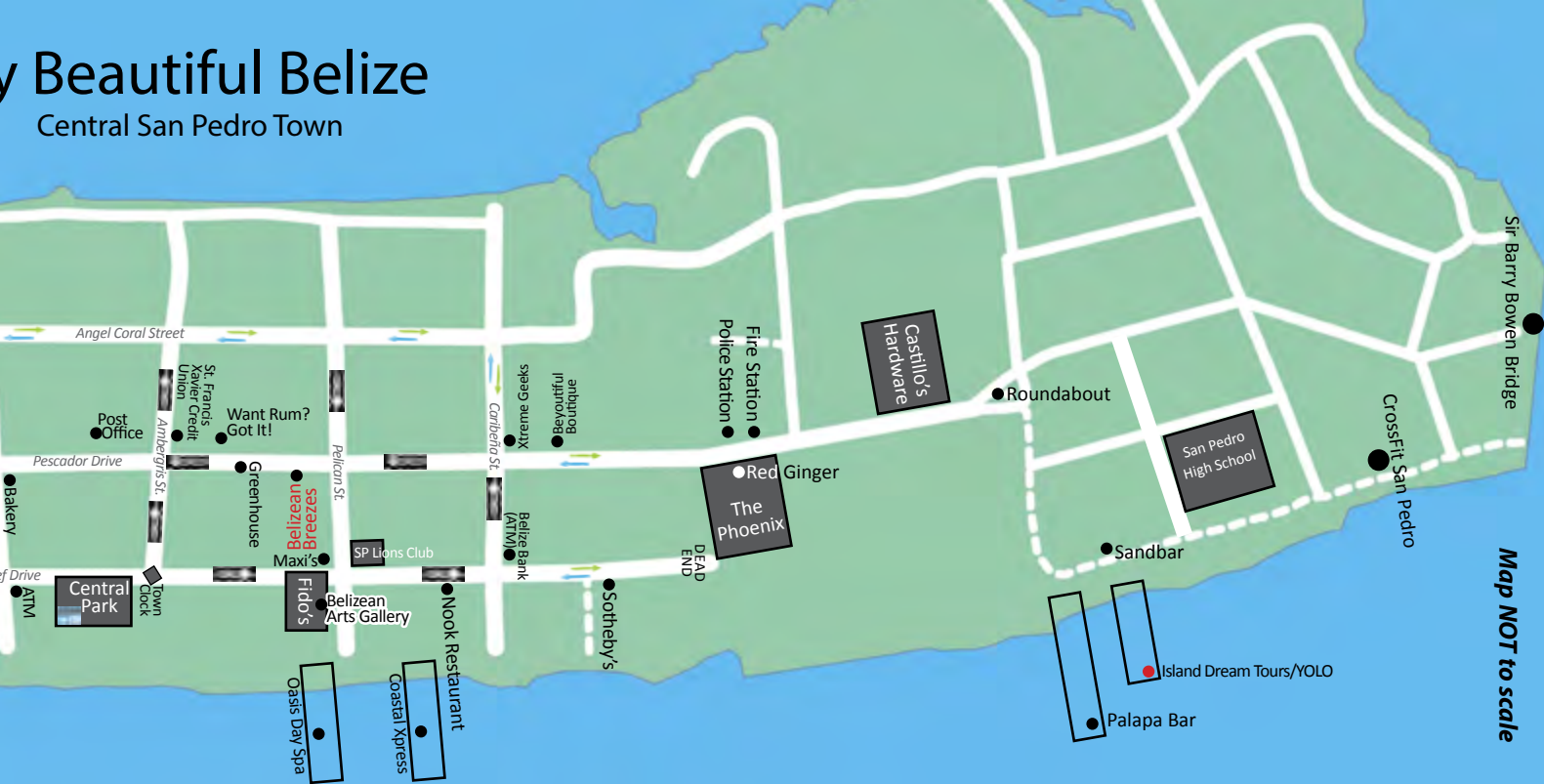
THE SAN PEDRO LIONS CLUB Join us on Fridays for fun bingo (7PM) and delicious chicken BBQ (from noon). All proceeds go back to assisting the community in times of need.



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

My Beautiful Belize

Central San Pedro Town



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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.



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!



BEYOUTIFUL BOUTIQUE: The latest in fabulous fashion and accessories for the most fashionable Mommy and Baby! Elegant dresses, rompers, swimsuits, handbags, perfumes, makeup and more. Baby essentials, cute clothing and accessories! Visit us on Pescador Drive next to Xtreme Geeks. Mon-Sat, 9AM-7PM

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



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.

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.

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.



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, oasisppabelize@gmail.com.

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.



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!

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. Reservations Recommended (501) 206-2441. www.blackorchidrestaurant.com.

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



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



Romantic Dining at Aji Tapa Bar and Restaurant

By Janelle Cowo



The blues of the Caribbean Sea, edged by our Mesoamerican Barrier Reef to the east, and a verdant lagoon-mangrove ecosystem to the west – these are the views at Aji Tapa Bar and Restaurant. Behold the magical environment! Now, add great food, exotic drinks and a starry night, and your night

at Aji is off to a great start.

Whether you are travelling, or call Ambergris Caye your home, chances are that you're looking for that perfect spot to have a fabulous date with your significant other. Aji, located about 2.5 miles north of Sir Barry Bowen Bridge can deliver just that.

Nestled within the picturesque Bella Vista Resort, its roadside entrance features lush mangroves and tropical plants lining the pathway to the restaurant; complete with a bridge over the lagoon. Of course, the beachside entrance is pretty fun too: sandy pathways, palm trees swaying in the wind and waves crashing ashore – just getting to the restaurant is fun.

The romantic atmosphere is further enhanced by the restaurant's décor. Twinkling lights strung on trees, driftwood artfully placed across the grounds, wooden furniture and tiki torches add a sparkle.

But the food? Well, when it arrives, it takes center stage! Spanish-inspired cuisine, complemented by wines or cocktails, sure to excite the taste buds. Aji's speciality, the seafood paella, is always a great choice to share with your date. Indulge yourself and have a fantastic date night!

For reservations call 226-4047 or email ajibelize@gmail.com. Be sure to check out their website at ajibelize.com for more information. Walk-ins are welcomed, but reservations are highly recommended due to limited seating. They are open from 5PM to 1PM, Wednesday to Monday.

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A celebration of lobster: the tastiest festivals in Belize

The most anticipated series of festivals is upon us once more. Yes, it is time for Lobster Fest! A tribute to the Spiny Lobster, held in the country's top three coastal destinations, Lobster Fest is not only a culinary treat, but a celebration of Belizean culture.

Here is what you need to know about the 2017 Lobster Festivals:

San Pedro, Ambergris Caye

The fun kicks off with the San Pedro Lobster Crawl! From Thursday, June 15th to Friday, June 23rd, tour Ambergris Caye and take part in special 'lobster themed' events held at participating establishments.

The events range from beach BBQs to fine dining venues. At each stop, get your Lobster Crawl Passport stamped to enter the big San Pedro Lobster Fest Raffle. The winner gets an all-expenses paid trip to next year's festival!

San Pedro Lobster Fest ends on Saturday, June 24th with a block party of epic proportions at Central Park. The party includes an art show, live music, fire dancers, local dance performances and fantastic food. If you still can carry on after, hit the After Party on Sunday, June 25th at Caribbean Villas Resort.

By Janelle Cowo



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Placencia Peninsula

The Placencia Lobster Fest will be a three-day beach party taking place from Friday, June 23rd to Sunday, June 25th. What can we expect during this beach extravaganza? Well, how about live music by Belizean legends, lots of fun games and entertainment, art shows, refreshing cocktails and of course, lots of lobster to eat! The party goes down at the beach beside Tipsy Tuna Bar and Grill.

Caye Caulker

Topping of the crustacean celebration is the Caye Caulker Lobster Fest! The original lobster festival of Belize will take place from Friday, June 30th to Sunday, July 2nd. On the first night, witness the selection and crowning of the 2017 Miss Lobster Fest. All day beach parties continue on Saturday and Sunday. Look forward to displays of live lobsters brought in by local fishermen, competitions, live entertainment and mouth-watering lobster dishes!

For more information on the San Pedro, Placencia and Caye Caulker Lobster Festivals contact the following emails, respectively:
info@sanpedrobusiness.com,
info@placencia.com,
cckrlobsterfest@gmail.com



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Pook's Hill Lodge

visiting the rainforest during the rainy season

By Tamara Sniffin



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Sudoku Answers Puzzle on Page 7

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

Have you ever taken a vacation where the weather was determined to undo your every plan? How is it that while you are intent on doing anything BUT work, Mother Nature is busy putting in overtime, making sure she fulfills her duty of delivering blessed rain? I love you Mother...but why can't we coordinate our holiday schedules better?

Of course, good planning is important when organizing a vacation, and choosing to stay at a lodge over the Thanksgiving weekend, in the RAIN forest, during the RAINY season, probably wasn't my smartest move. However, we were up for an adventure, and thank you rain for making our excursion even more memorable!

Our destination - and one that has been on

my 'must do' list for some time: Pook's Hill Lodge. Nestled within lush jungle 5.5 miles south of Teakettle village on the Western Highway between Belmopan and San Ignacio, it's an easy drive from Belize City. If you don't have wheels, they offer transport options to and from many locations within the country.

The Pook's Hill property is a carpet of hilly, green landscape dotted with thatched cottages that remind me of hobbit homes, and the surrounding forest, busy with chirping birds and flitting butterflies is enchanting. Add the soft soundtrack of drizzling rain, and you are immersed in a jungle ambiance that almost begs for a nap.

There are a variety of cottages to choose from depending on the size of your party, and they even

Wolfe's Woofers

Raincoat



By Dennis Wolfe

"I'll be gone most of the morning," I told Sherry.

"Where are you off to?"

"Paying bills," I said. "This is the last week of the month. I'll be gone all morning for sure and maybe some of the afternoon."

"Make sure you take an umbrella," she said. "It's supposed to rain today."

I only made it to the bank when the skies opened up. I put up my umbrella and the wind immediately turned it inside out and tried to snatch it from my hand.

"Why are you back so soon?" Sherry asked, when I stumbled through the door.

"I came for my raincoat. An umbrella is useless

out there."

"Don't you remember? Mario borrowed your raincoat the last time he cleaned the yard."

I called Mario's number and his wife, Maria, answered the phone.

"Maria, Mario borrowed my raincoat," I said. "I need to come over and get it."

"He wore it when he went to work this morning, Mr. Dennis. He's doing cement work on Mr. Bruce's new building."

When I finally found Mario on the job site he was on the roof of the building. When I finally got his attention I yelled, "Mario, I came for my raincoat."

"I can't let you have it right now, Mr. Dennis," he said. "It's raining and I need it."

"So do I," I said. What am I supposed to do for a raincoat?"

"Do the same as I did," Mario said. "Borrow one."

have a couple Bird Walk cabañas that are set on platforms 20 feet above the ground, where the jungle views are spectacular. The main lodge is an open thatched building warm with hardwood floors, comfy seating area and a small bar. Guests gather there for socializing and meals, which are served buffet style in the dining room on the garden level. There's lots of chatter and laughter as everyone shares how their day of adventure went. From onsite activities such as birding, hiking and swimming, to tours that include Maya archeological sites, caving, ziplining, cave tubing and more, everyone is excited to share how their day was, even if they did get rained on!

I would give us an A for effort when it came to our own exploring. Every time the rain let up and the sun threatened to burn through the cloud cover, we would run outside for a quick hike. Many of the nearby trails were unpassable due to the flooded creeks, but we managed to slosh around and admire the rainforest in all its glory. Inevitably the heavens would again open, and we would be soaked to the bone by the time we hustled back to our cottage. This might sound like a soggy damper to our holiday, but really it wasn't all that bad considering it's a warm rain...so what if you get a little (or a lot) wet!

We still had fun, drinking wine and playing cards all afternoon, and trying to guess how many inches of rain had fallen within the last hour. We took delicious naps and read books that had been neglected for months, and we were forced to relax! Hmmm, isn't that what a vacation is for?

We loved Pook's Hill Lodge, and we will be back another time, during the dry season that is. For more info please visit their website at www.pookshilllodge.com





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