

From the Editor Tamara Sniffin

The last Belize Tattoo Festival in San Pedro Town was in 2017, and it was then that I got my first tattoo at the ripe old age of fifty-something! As one who gravitates to the sea and loves to snorkel our gorgeous Belize Barrier Reef, I knew I wanted a sea turtle tattoo. There is something magical about sharing the water with one of these amazing creatures and knowing that the turtle before me is nothing but a survivor. Green turtles can live to be 80 years old, don't reach sexual maturity until they are at least 25 and it's estimated that only one in 1,000 hatchlings will survive to adulthood. These odds are astronomical! Paired with their beauty I just knew I wanted to honor them with a lasting image. They say getting 'inked' is addictive and when I heard that the Tattoo Festival was returning to San Pedro in March, I already knew what my next design would be! Again, in celebration of creatures



who call Belize home my new tattoo is a colorful osprey. known here as a Fish Hawk. Not only do these graceful raptors gravitate to water (like me) but are found in the Rocky Mountains that I love as well. Let's just say we have a lot in common! I've gotten quite comfortable at these tattoo festivals in my 'mature' age and love that no matter how many years we may have us tattooed folks share a language now. The artists are amazingly talented and the work they do is serious business; no mistakes are allowed here! There are a lot of different ways a person can commemorate something meaningful in their life and perhaps when exploring My

Beautiful Belize, you will discover a passion for our creatures too! They say, "Take a picture, it lasts longer," but if you want to make the memory permanent come back in 2021 for the next Belize Tattoo Festival in San Pedrol

Rich in flora, Belize is home to more than 4,000 different species of flowering plants and 700 species of trees. With so many options to choose from, Belize's National Flower had to be extra special! The Encyclia Cochleatum – or Black Orchid, 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. While you may be tempted to have this intriguing orchid as part of your garden, note that as the National Flower, the Black Orchid is protected by law and therefore it is illegal to sell or trade them.

Wolfe's Woofers Art Gallery

"Here's a list of things for you to pick for me while you're in town," Sherry said, as I was leaving.
"You must think I'm stupid," I said. "This list only has three

things on it; bread milk and cheese. I don't need it."

"I asked you to pick up the same three things last week and you forgot the milk," she pointed out.

"All right," I said. "Give me the list. I'm going to visit Melody at her art gallery first, though."

"Good. You should always spend more time with your daughter."

"What do you think?" Melody asked, as she showed me around. "This is your first visit since I moved."

"It's great," I said. "I like the layout."

"What do you mean?"

"I like the way you have the paintings arranged."

"I don't really arrange them any particular way," she said. "When you paint in Belize it's almost always going to be about the sea or the jungle."

"These two are different," I said, as we walked down the aisle. "You don't usually do still life paintings."

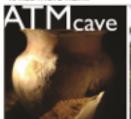
She said, "Oh, you're talking about the ones I call Lunch."

The paintings were nearly identical pictures of a table laid out for lunch. Each table had a glass of wine, two sandwich rolls, a plate of sliced ham, silverware and a jar of mustard.

"Shery would probably like one of these for the house," I said. "What's the price?" "The one on the left is one hundred dollars and the one on the right is one hundred and fifty:

"But they look almost exactly alike," I said. "Why does this cost one fifty dollars more?^

"It has more ham."









The Best The Best Adventures have

IN THIS ISSUE:

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Cool it down: Belizeans know the trick to cooling down when the temperatures start soaring! Paletas are here to save the day, P. 5

How do you Easter? Whether you want family outings, crazy parties, or simply honoring the holy week, we share some ideas on how you can spend your Easter in Belize. P. 6

A home in the jungle: Caves Branch Jungle Lodge is a beautiful jungle getaway that provides warm hospitality, beautiful accommodations, endless tour possibilities and even cheese, birding and botanical gardens! P. 11

AGRIC di come: We celebrate Belize's biggest industry - Agriculture - in grand fashion in the capital city of Belmopan. Join us! P. 15

Where Belize...

This location lies within the nature preserve owned by the Programme for Belize, a non-profit organization. La Milpa is located in the Orange Walk District. Following Caracol and Lamanai, La Milpa is the third largest site in Belize with its Main Plaza alone covering 18,000 square meters, making it one of the largest in the entire Maya region.



To join our guessing game, follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter @mybeautifulbelize, using the hashtag #whereinbelize.

You can also send us your images of mystery locations to add to our guessing game! Send them to hello@mybeautifulbelize.com and join the fun!

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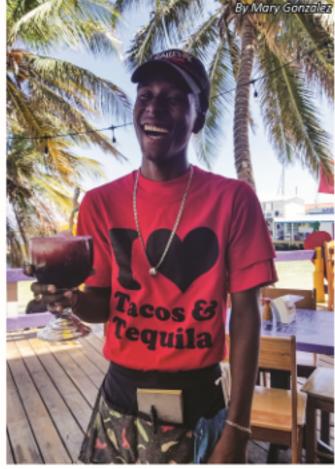
Caliente is perfect for a seaside treat!

Caliente has always been synonymous with tacos and margaritas to me. Over the years, I haven't deviated much from my order. When I do get something else, I've always enjoyed it and wondered why I didn't do it sooner! But, soon enough, there I am, ordering tacos the next time I visit.

It's easy to see why though from the moment you step onto their outdoor deck, that sea breeze hits you, and when you take in the gorgeous views from their front steps nothing sounds better than a margarita and some tacos to make you feel like you're truly on vacation!

Beyond the views, I also love that Caliente will bring you complimentary chips and salsa along with your drink. Have you ever found yourself doubting your hold on self-control when faced with fresh chips and salsa?

Dash some hot sauce on the salsa - it's made right on the premises. Once again, you will understand why my love affair with Caliente rages on. I love that their food is so authentically homemade. Behind the scenes in the kitchen is owner Melly's brother Amelio or/and his wife, and they create delicious meals that you clean off your plate! The roasted habaneros that go in the pepper sauce are fired up right in the kitchen too, and lemme tell



you, nothing quite like it! Get some to take home with you; it's worth it!

To cool you down, take nice sips of their signature margaritas, or, if you're feeling brave, their sangaritas! When you just can't decide between wine or tequila, Caliente has your back with the perfect equation: sangria + margarita!

Honestly, this family owned and operated eatery will keep

you coming back. They dote on you, take good care of you, and feed you amazing food and drinks. What's not to love?

Visit them on the beach, on the ground floor of the Spindrift Hotel, or call 226-2170.







Where the road ends on the southern tip of Ambergris Caye



Blurring the lines between indoor and out, La Sirene

makes minimalism welcoming.

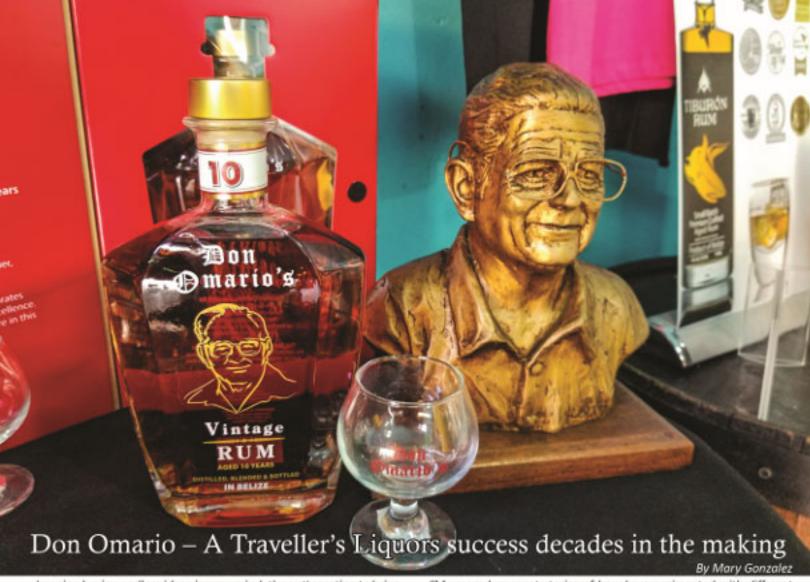




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Imagine having endless ideas in your mind, then attempting to bring them to fruition, failing time and again, with a few successes sprinkled in between. Don Omario Perdomo, founder of Traveller's Liquors, is famed for his backyard successes, his hundreds of attempts and experiments that eventually led to what is now known as a top Belizean rum distillery. We all know of the One Barrel and Five Barrel, the Kuknat Rum that goes in our famed Panti Rippas, the Belizean Rums perfect for mixers, and even wines, brandies and gin. One standout spirit is the Don Omario, and its story is one for the books indeed!

Don Omario's daughter, Her Excellency Perla Perdomo, Belize's High Commissioner to London, shared the anecdote with a rapt audience during the recent re-branding launch of the Don Omario 10-year aged rum.



"My mom has great stories of how he experimented with different products in her kitchen. He had hundreds of failed products, but he kept on trying. He was obsessive about creating markets and using products made in Belize and his mind was always going 100 miles an hour thinking of new products. This occurred even after he became ill.

On his last visit to the factory, I am told, he told my brother Mayito not to touch a few barrels that he had wanted to sit and age as he had something in mind for them. He never came back to Belize and so was never able to make that product he had in mind. Little did he know that 10 years after his death, the product that he had laid down would be bottled and packaged in his honor and called DON Omario.

I remember when I was here at Travellers, my brother Mayito coming to me and telling me 'Look we have some barrels that Daddy told me not to touch.' I immediately said, 'We need to do something special with it!'

We are fortunate that my brothers Romel and Mayito inherited his wonderful nose and were able to come up with the DON Omario blend which captured the years of experimenting and blending that my father had earned."

A little over 20 years after Don Omario's passing and 10 years after the launch of the first batch, a new presentation was launched. Don Omario's family feels that it is a product that captures the spirit of the man he was, but also does justice to the special liquid inside the bottle. They took their time to work on the packaging and its design, focusing on making it a valuable collector's item and a perfect Belizean souvenir. The spicy-smooth taste of the rum is best enjoyed neat — or at most, over ice — and its flavors are designed to be savored with good friends. It's a wonderful gift, and a reminder that despite numerous failures, over time we can achieve a dream, and even perfect it!

Don Omario retails anywhere around \$130-\$150BZ, and can be bought at the "Want Rum? Got It!" store on Pescador Drive (middle street) in San Pedro Town, or at larger supermarkets countrywide. Cheers to a wonderful entrepreneur's legacy!

Cool down with a classic: Paletas!

Despite the breeze blowing in from the Caribbean Sea, temperatures across Belize tend to soar around April and don't let up till mid-October. Belizeans are well-attuned to this weather phenomenon, and we've found ways to bear the heat. One such way is ingesting copious amounts of frozen treats, mostly homemade. I'm talking beyond ice cubes in a glass. We have figured out taking a yummy fruit juice, adding either milk or some other kind of sweet mixer, poured into small cups, even bags tied up tight and thrown in the freezer for a few hours. Soon, we have a solid flavored popsicle-like treat that we can enjoy under the shade, till the next heat wave demands we have another!

Around the globe, popsicles experienced a boost in popularity when mixologists cleverly used them as a star ingredient in craft cocktails. Ambergris Caye saw the brightly colored fruity popsicles being put in a glass, topped with prosecco for a fabulous refresher. Who says we can't be classy and kid-like in the same go?!

If you're looking to create something tropically delicious, we have one tried and true recipe that uses familiar, easy-to-access ingredients. We present to you, the **Key Lime Pie Popsicles!**

Ingredients:

- * Approximately four large regular limes or 6 to 7 several key limes
- * 1 (14-ounce) can of sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup half-and-half (or 1/2 cup heavy cream + 1/2 cup milk)
- * Pinch of salt

Directions:

- * Zest however many of the limes needed until you have 2 teaspoons total in the bottom of a medium bowl.
- * Juice limes until you have 3/4 cup fresh lime juice.
- * Add juice, condensed milk, half-and-half and salt to zest
- * Whisk together until thoroughly combined
- Pour into popsicle molds or ice cube trays
- * Freeze for about 5 hours, or until completely frozen
- * Dip in lukewarm water for 10 seconds to unmold each popsicle

You can, for a bonus, press each side into crushed cookie crymbs made with Graham Crackers or Maria Biscuits! The recipe makes 10 1/3-cup or 3-ounce popsicles (adapted from smittenkitchen.com)

If you're not up to making your own, we highly recommend giving Las Paletas by Regina Sansores a try! Regina and her helper make hundreds of paletas using fresh (seasonal) fruit with a water and cream base – churning out delicious frozen treats that sell for \$2BZ (\$1US) at her shop south across from Royal Palm on Coconut Drive, at La Divinia Providencia Store (Escalante Subdivision), Mermaid Supermarket (Coconut Drive), San Pedrano Store (front street) and Beach Basket at Grand Caribe, north of the bridge. This entrepreneurial woman is keeping a lot of people cool and happy with her tasty treats. My personal favorite is the ginger lime, just as is, or drizzled with Prosecco or a bright Vinho Verde.







Spending Easter in Belize: Fun for everyone!

Without a doubt, the Easter Holidays is one of the busiest times in Belize. Visitors and residents travel to destinations across the country looking for that perfect getaway from their everyday routine. The four day holiday begins on Good Friday (April 19th) and runs through Easter Monday (April 22nd), giving vacationers ample time to enjoy the best Belize has to offer. From beach parties to cultural and religious events, Easter in Belize has something for everyone!

A Family Adventure



With schools and many businesses closed for the Easter weekend, this means its holiday time for both you and your little ones. A short family trip is always a great way to keep curious kids entertained over the school break, as well as to strengthen family ties and create everlasting memories. There is no shortage of child-friendly destinations in Belize. Beach picnics are always a guaranteed hit with the kids. Places like Kukumba Beach at Old Belize, or Goff's Caye, just off the shore of Belize City, cater especially to families with children. Of course, the beach isn't the only place to go: inland adventure is also quite fun! From exploring the many archeological sites in Belize to chasing waterfalls along the mountain reserves, your options for Easter family fun are endless!

Sun, Sand, Sea, and Party!



For many, partying is the 'go to' activity for this long-awaited four-day holiday, and Belize serves up some raging beach parties that often run late into the night. Coastal communities such as Placencia Peninsula, Hopkins Village, Sarteneja Village, Caye Caulker Village, and San Pedro Town always see the greatest number of visitors ready to revel. Local and even international DJs provide

For More Information on Trips and Overnight Charters: 011-501-610-0226 XsiteBelize@yahoo.com

a lively environment to make the most of fun and music-fueled day on the beach. If you find yourself in San Pedro Town, a favorite Easter Party is Holiday Hotel's two-day beach fest. Taking place on Saturday, April 20th and Sunday, April 21st, this year's event will see

partygoers dancing the Easter Holidays away to the musical stylings



of DeeJay Dev and DJ Callie; it's a can't miss event!

A Cultural and Religious Affair



With all the fun parties, we often forget the reason behind the Easter Holidays. The religious aspect is one that is still strongly celebrated in Belize. To the Roman Catholic Church, Easter is the holiest of days, and many municipalities hold

elaborate festivities to celebrate the religious occasion. Bengue Viejo Del Carmen Town in the Cayo District is one of the top destinations for those looking to experience the cultural and religious side of the Easter Holiday. Each year, the Benque community puts on a recreation

of Jesus's journey to Mount Calvary where he was crucified. Taking place on Good Friday, April 19th, the elaborate "The Way of the Cross" event attracts many visitors. Another traditional event held particularly in Orange Walk, and San Pedro Town is the creation of saw dust tapestries. Volunteers use colored sawdust to create decorative images on the grounds or streets near a church. These sawdust carpets are created to greet the religious procession that takes place on Good Friday. In traditional Belizean hospitality, all are welcomed to help; it's an experience you will remember for ages.



Whatever your celebratory style may be, please be safe; follow the rules and regulations set at the destinations you visit. Also take note that Good Friday in Belize is a Dry Day, and as such, no alcoholic beverages are to be served/sold from Thursday at midnight to Friday at midnight.

Tuesday - Saturday 10am-7pm Sunday 12pm-5pm unlimited day /weekly options available f at San Cos Plaza - San Pedra Town Phone: 633-2992







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. 4PM to 10PM, 668-2156.



CROCS SUNSET SPORTS

BAR: The newest bar north of the bridge, with refreshing cocktails, bar food, killer sunset views and all the

games on large-screen TVs. Book upstairs bar for private events. Open from 11am everyday.



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.



 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. 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. Open all week, SPM-10PM, except on Tuesdays. Open Friday, Saturday & Sunday for lunch. Call +501-226-4047 for reservations.

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.

PIRATE'S NOT SO SECRET BEACH BAR &



GRILL: The island's trending destination; adventure to SECRET BEACH! Soak up the sun or take a dip in crystal clear shallow waters accompanied

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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



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baked goods. Join us for Thursday

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.

WHITE SANDS DIVE SHOP: A PADI 5 star Dive shop in San Pedro Town on Ambergris Caye teaching scuba diving and certifying divers, as well as providing daily Diving and Snorkeling adventures to the beautiful Belize Barrier Reef. Scheduled (local) departures are at 9:00AM, and they pick you up at the hotel dock. 226-2405.



MARUBA BEACH KLUB @ Secret Beach - The ultimate SOLAR / OFF the GRID beach experience! Stylish, sleek lounge chairs & bean bag floats. EAT • DRINK • SPA • SWIM •

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Ambergris Caye, located 4.5 miles North of San Pedro Town, it's a must see! Open Everyday 8AM-6PM. You can call us at 226-4290 or also order online at www.matagrandegrocery.comwe DELIVER!

SuDoku Time! Answers on Page 10

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.-Sat. 11AM - 9PM 206-2121/280ture. Lunch menu and daily dinner g dishes that represent the diversity itic Belizean Cuisine prepared on a



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available, Locally owned/family run, 226-2170. cluding our specially priced MAMARITASI Indoor wiche and don't skip the fabulous margaritas -Jisine. Try our Jalisco chicken, or our awesome estaurant serves delicious Caribbean and Mexican ALIENTE: On the beach at Sprindrift, Caliente

inges on the beach! m). Enjoy your afternoon or evening at the bar. d beer and wing specials on the weekend (11amid pizzas and 2-for-1 rums on weekdays (3-6PM) sts an amazing happy hour special: \$108ZD wood-NDBAR: BEST PIZZAS ON THE ISLAND! Sandbar

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Street, across from Holiday Hotel, 226-4576 Find smoking lounge with a full bar and cafe. On Front the Caribbean. We also offer an air-conditioned us on TripAdvisor!

i > Inside Pocoloco's on Front Street RAMENIS IN BEMZE! AUTHENTIG

South of San Pedro Island Buzz Cafe Saga Humane Society Casa Picasso Crazy Canuck's epperOni's Pizza Caye Coffee South El Divino @ Station Banana Beach Dirty Martini • Restaurant & Sushi Ba lyoto Japanese Sudoku Answers Puzzle on Page 7 4 6 3 9 5 2 6 5 8 3 1 2 7 4 9 2 6 9 5 8 3 4 7 1 2 3 9 5 8 1 6 4 7 Black Orchid Restaurant 6 7 4 9 1 8 3 2 5 2 3 7 8 6 5 4 1 9 5 8 2 7 9 3 4 6 1 6 8 3 2 5 7 1 9 4 3 9 5 6 8 4



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EI DIVINO CARIBBEAN STEAKHOUSE & MARTI-NI BAR: Banana Beach's signature restaurant, featuring indoor and outdoor dining and sports lounge. Serving USDA meats, wood fired pizza,

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THE PALMILLA RESTAURANT AT VICTORIA HOUSE: A casual experience with a unique mix of island seafood and continental cuisine. Relaxed and informal yet romantic. Admiral Nelson Bar is the place to be casual and relax in your swimsuit, enjoying breakfast, lunch and dinner with magnificent views. Reservations recommended: 226-2067.



JYOTO JAPANESE RESTAURANT AND SUSHI BAR: An authentic Japanese restaurant by native Japanese sushi chef, Toshiya Tsujimoto serving locally sourced produce and the freshest of seafood. Open Wednesdays to Mondays from 12-2:30PM and 5-9PM. For reservation email jyotorestaurant@gmail.com or call 501-628-0100

BLACK ORCHID RESTAURANT & LOUNGE: Come visitus; just a guick Golf Cart Ride 2 1/2 miles South of Town after the Croc Pond Lagoon and well before the Marco Gonzalez Maya Site. Reservations Recommended (501) 206-2441. www.blackorchidrestaurant.com.



CRAZY CANUCKS BEACH BAR: Beach PARTY! bar located at Exotic Caye Beach Resort.

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



DIRTY MARTINI: It's where we specialize in sophisticated chill. Using all types of infused liquors to create amazing and fresh new cocktails. Come relax, be with friends and get dirty. Tel. 602-8516.

Open 2-10pm weeknights, 2-12am weekends. Located in Mahogany Bay Resort. Next to Jyoto.

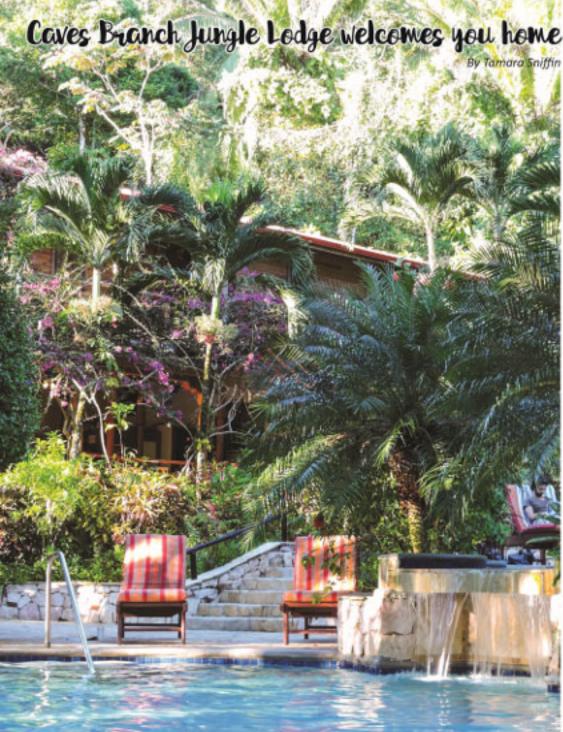


SOUTH STATION: Great People, Great Place. Located next to Ambergris Lake Villas is your quaint, Edenic and relaxing hang-out joint. Tuesdays to Sundays (Bar 11am-11pm, Restaurant 7am). Live Music and Ladies Night on Fridays; Karaoke on Saturdays, with Food and Drink

Specials, every day. Contact us at southstationsanpedrobelize@gmail.com or 601-2858.



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 www.cayecoffee.bz.



Founded by the larger-than-life lan Anderson, who was one of the first to put hospitality on the map in Belize many years ago, Caves Branch Jungle Lodge has been adored by adventure travelers for decades. Just a half-hour drive from the capital city of Belmopan along the picturesque Humming-bird Highway, the compound is nestled within a vast reserve of tropical forest along the bank of the Caves Branch River. Graced with a host of awards and recognition for excellence in the industry, from the moment you arrive, you will know why there is so much love for this jungle gem.

What makes for a fabulous stay? It's not just about the brick and mortar, which happens to be stunning, it's the people who breathe life into it

Continued on Page 12





Open Daily - Deep Inside Fido's Courtyard



Paintings Jewelry Decor Crafts



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Barrier Reef Drive, San Pedro, Ambergris Caye

Jungle Lodge.

Our small but mighty country is jam-packed with amazing discoveries thanks to our incredibly

diverse landscapes and blend of cultures. With six

districts to choose from, it may be tough deciding

where to begin, so why not start with the largest

one? The Cayo District is more than 2,000 square

miles of rolling and dramatic mountains, lush

tropical forests, verdant pastures and orchards,

winding rivers, impressive cave systems, ancient

Maya sites, colorful villages and a host of accom-

modations to choose. From quaint family-owned

abodes, to larger resorts with all the amenities you'd ever ask for while exploring Cayo, you are

sure to find the ideal place to rest after a day of

adventure. One such place, synonymous with

all that is Cayo, is Ian Anderson's Caves Branch

and make a house a home. Warm, open and inviting (just like their gracious staff), the main lodge is the heartbeat of this jungle dwelling. Overlooking the river and their sparkling swimming pool, the wooden lodge is adorned with twinkling white lights and serves as the lobby, dining hall, bar, social area with quaint seating and a small gift shop. You are greeted like a long-lost friend, and the staff is eager to get you settled into your home away from home. From navigating along an elevated walkway through lush foliage to cabañas perched on the hillside to their breathtaking 'tree house' cottages, gorgeous jungle vistas and misty mountains from afar unfold. Options also include their charming ground level bungalows, complete with a cozy porch. Comfortable and relaxing, you'll be torn whether to while your day in restful solitude or discover the

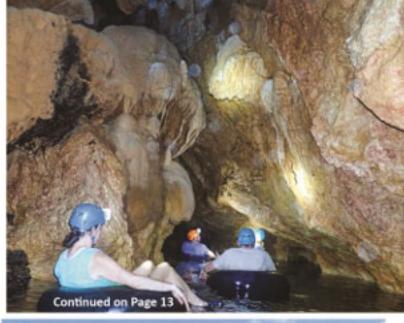
Caves Branch Jungle Lodge is renowned for the adventures they offer, and there is something for every level of intensity and area of interest. Their super friendly and knowledgeable guides are some of the best in the county and have received notable awards in the industry as well. While some of your party may be in for a day of cave tubing, extreme jungle exploration or rappelling into the Black Hole Drop others can choose to stay on the property and enjoy casual bird watching from the comfort of the jungle lodge or maybe in-

endless exploration that awaits at

your doorstep.



dulge in some pampering at their Massage Center. Want to take your taste buds on an adventure? How about sampling homemade cheese during a presentation at their onsite production house! Are you interested in learning about the exotic flora of Belize? Guests can opt for a guided tour of their amazing botanical gardens or just stroll the property on their own and learn from interpretative signage along the way. Tours are also offered to the nearby Maya archeological sites Xunantunich or Cahal Pech and other adventure options include horseback riding, hiking, advanced birdwatching, ziplining and more. So much to do, so little time!









All that fun will certainly leave you famished, and your adventure continues at the amazing buffet they offer breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Freshly prepared produce sourced from their property or nearby farms celebrate local flavors and cuisine along with a variety of international favorites. Careful thought goes into every meal with consideration of those who prefer meatless or vegan dishes. There's no way you are leaving your table hungry and of course you best leave room for dessert!

With no TV and internet limited to the lodge area, your time spent at Caves Branch Jungle Lodge is focused on the finer things in life. There's no better place to reconnect with the ones you love and make lifelong memories. In 2018 Ian and his wife Ella were awarded the Belize Tourism Board Lifetime Achievement Award for more than 25 years of outstanding contributions to the hospitality industry in Belize and during your stay at this very special place, you will quickly feel the love that is shared by so many.

For more information about Caves Branch Jungle Lodge visit their website at www.cavesbranch.com. For more photos from this story and additional articles on Caves Branch, please visit our website at www.mybeautifulbelize.com





Calendar of Events: APRIL

April 11th – Wine Down Thursdays at Marbuck's Coffee House, north Ambergris Caye starting at 4:30PM

April 12th – Road to Wacken Concert at the Belize Civic Center, Belize City starting at 7:30PM

April 13th – Bingo Night at Crazy Canucks Beach Bar, San Pedro Town starting at SPM

April 14th – Game of Thrones Premier at The Truck Stop, north Ambergris Caye starting at 7PM





April 19th – Living Way of the Cross at Benque Viejo del Carmen, Cayo District starting at 3PM

April 20th to 22th – Easter in Belize celebrated across the country with beach parties and other fun family events April 20th – Easter Maddness with Supa G at the Angel Nuñez Auditorium, San

Pedro Town starting at 9PM

April 20th – Cross Country Classic starting and ending at Belize City, race kicks off at 7AM

April 20th & 21th - Holiday Easter Bash at Holiday Hotel, San Pedro Town starting at 1PM each day

April 21st - Easter Beach Bonanza at

Goff's Caye, Belize District; boarding at Radisson's Dock at 8:30AM April 21" – Easter Regatta Fest at Sarteneja Village, Corozal District starting at 8AM



April 22* – Easter Monday Horse Race at Burrel Boom Village, Belize District starting at 9AM

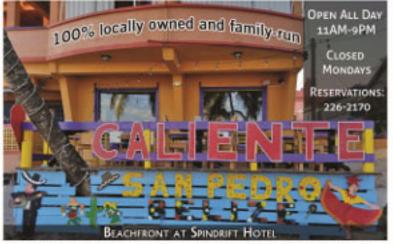
April 26" - 28" - 2019 National Agriculture and Trade Show at the Agriculture and Trade Show Grounds, Belmopan City starting at 8AM each day

April 27th – Grown-up Spelling Bee at The Truck Stop, north Ambergris Caye starting at 7PM



April 27th and 28th Corozal Bay Sail-

ing Regatta at Jam Rock, Corozal Town starting at 10:30AM each day



Cheese, Birds and Botanicals – three of the many things you can experience at Caves Branch Jungle Lodge



Artisan Cheese

Cheese, glorious cheese! Just one of the many things that are unique to Caves Branch, you are in for a treat when you learn about and sample the only handmade artisan cheeses found in Belize! Head cheese maker Claribel Gaitan walks you through the process of how they lovingly craft some of the tastiest cheeses around, using only the freshest organic full cream milk produced by Mennonites in the nearby village of Armenia. Seated at a spread of fresh fruits, toast points and a splash of wine, guests enjoy tasting Provolone, Spressa, Trappist, Old Brebrenbender, Feta and a robust Mr. Stinky Blue Cheese - all while Claribel shares how she and her team craft the cheesy creations. Absolutely no artificial ingredients, preservatives, flavoring or coloring is used, and the variety of flavors speak of patient, loving care. Next up a little tour of the aging room where the cheeses do their thing at a constant temperature of 52°F and at a humidity of 85% for up to 28 months for the perfect aroma, flavor and texture. Claribel explains that every 48 hours each round of cheese is turned to ensure a constant level of moisture and flavor. Who knew these little loaves of heaven needed so much love! YUM!



Birding

Belize is blessed with more than 500 species of birds, and in 2016 Caves Branch Jungle Lodge earned the distinction as the Best Birding Destination in Belize...need we say more? As many as 206 bird species can be identified within a 24-hour period on the property and all levels of birding, from exploring the thousands of acres of their land in search of that 'lifer' to never leaving the common area of the lodge are accommodated.





With top birding guides on staff, you don't have to be an expert to know what to look for or what you are looking at! A big bonus? You don't even have to get up at the crack of dawn to enjoy the abundant avian life in the area and from the comfort of the lodge you can enjoy colorful birds and darting hummingbirds perusing the lush landscape. If you are an early bird, the 6AM bird walk around the immediate area will delight you with an abundance of birds and during our one-hour venture right around the lodge we spotted 29 species! High on the bonus list, White Collared Manakin, Gartered and Slaty-tailed Trogan, Squirrel Cuckoo and Bare-throated Tiger Herons!



Caves Branch Botanical Gardens

Founded in 2008 by the one and only Ella Baron, who recently had a plant named after her Alsobia baroniae in recognition of her efforts in conservation of Belizean flora, this garden boasts the largest collection of native epiphytes, such as orchids and bromeliads (air plants) in the country. Carefully procured by Baron and the Caves Branch Jungle Lodge team, the vast collection also includes native plants, ranging from produce bearing ones such as coconuts, coffee, pineapple, bananas and cacao to spices like lemongrass, and Achiote, which produces the red seeds used in our popular recado spice. There are fragrant Allspice trees and even Vanilla orchids that produce the flavorful bean we use in baking! Beautiful flowering plants like gorgeous gingers in every shade of pink add to the landscape and you may even recognize as house plant or two, such as begonias. Of course, the orchid area cascades with every color and size of bloom imaginable and we marvel at the size of the world's smallest orchid bloom, so delicate! Their super knowledgeable guides Sayuri and Abner are a wealth of information and it's easy to spend well over an hour touring the garden. If you prefer to go at your own pace there's plenty of signage along the way to keep you informed!







From Friday, April 26th to Sunday, April 28th, the National Agriculture and Trade Show Grounds in Belmopan City will come alive hosting the best of Belize's agricultural industry during the largest festival in the country. Under the theme "Innovations in

Technology: Driving a Climate Resilient and Competitive Agriculture and Food Sector," this year's National Agriculture and Trade Show 2019 is primed to be the biggest yet.

Only three weeks away, preparations are well underway to prepare the grounds to welcome thousands of visitors to the most attended entertaining and educational annual event celebrated in Belize. From rodeo shows to auction sales, there is something for everyone at this fun family event. Never been to the National Agriculture and Trade Show before, do not fret we have the 101 on all the happening for you!

The National Agriculture and Trade Show is the single largest event in Belize aimed at promoting and showcasing the country's Agriculture Industry. Organized by the National Agriculture and Trade Show (NATS) Committee, under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture, the three-day event is aimed at educating the larger public about the importance of agriculture, its contribution to the Belizean economy and food security.

There will be plenty of live entertainment and competitions for visitors to enjoy! Throughout the event, attendees can peruse a variety of displays ranging from agro-processed products, art and craft, cultural food preparations, the petting zoo, crop, livestock judging, canoe race, musical performance, and the mechanical rides. Highlights of the event are without a doubt the rodeo and horse show. My favorite part of the fair is all the local cuisine calling out to my taste buds - Western Dairies Ice-cream, Running W Meats, fresh fruit juices and of course, the largest selection of local rums and wines all conveniently in one location!

Getting to the showground is also quite easy. The grounds are located at the entrance of Belmopan City and can easily be reached by land within hours when traveling from any mainland municipality. You can also hop of a flight to Belmopan from the Cayes (or any major town) for even more convenience!

Finally, here are a couple of tips for those planning to attend: Wear sun protective clothing and sunscreen, it's an outdoor event held during the day and temperatures can reach well into the high 90's "F and stay hydrated. Be cautious with children; the festival grounds are ample (60 acres to be exact) making it easy to stray away from the pack. Have cash on hand; credit cards are not accepted. Just have fun and enjoy the best Belize has to offer!







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