

From the Editor Tamara Sniffin

When visiting Belize, you are in for many firsts! Maybe it's snorkeling with sharks or rapelling down a waterfall? Or maybe it will be a culinary first, like sampling Boil Up or Hudut during the Garifuna Settlement Day celebrations or your first sip of Travellers One Barrel Rum? Other firsts? What about parasailing over the calm waters off Ambergris Caye or scaling the tallest temple (which also happens to be the tallest building) in the country at Caracol!

I had a good 'first' a couple of weeks ago when I got to scratch iguana ears. I learned that while an iguana has no external ear as we do, it does have a visible eardrum (or tympanic membrane) on both sides of its head, continuous with the skin surface. It was very odd petting an iguana, not nearly

as fun as a fluffy kitty, but when I realized the reptile was enjoying the caress, it occurred to me that all creatures can appreciate a little love. Just because they look a little rough around the edges and have long spines on their back, they still have a heart. I enjoy the wild iguanas in my yard and will now look at them differently, wondering if they would like to have their ears scratched.

Whatever your first may be while discovering *My Beautiful Belize*, we hope it's beyond memorable!

Wolfe's Woofers



"My favorite thing about Ambergris Caye is the fishing," Don said.

"The fishing's great," I said, "but Belize has a lot to offer besides fishing. Have you and the family ever spent any time on the mainland?"

My friend Don is in town this week with his wife Hannah and their twelve-year-old son, Richie. They were treating me to dinner at their hotel's restaurant.

Don said, "Not yet but this is only our fourth Belize vacation. I think maybe next year. . . ."

Richie interrupted our conversation by asking, "Dad, are bugs good to eat?"

"Be quiet Richie," his mother said. "That's disgusting and it's not polite to get into the adult's conversations at the dinner table."

"It doesn't bother me at all," I said.

"No," Don said. "Hannah's right. My dad would have slapped me off the chair for daring to interrupt him. His motto was that children should be seen at the dinner table and not heard. Keep quiet, son."

"But dad—I just wanted to. . . ."

"That's enough, Richie," Hannah said. "Don't speak until we've finished our dinner."

When we finished dinner, I ordered coffee and Don and Hannah ordered cocktails.

"All right, son," Don said to Richie. "What was so important that you wanted to butt into my conversation earlier?"

"Oh, it was nothing, Dad," Richie said. "I wanted to tell you there was a bug in your soup but it's gone now."

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Become the newest certified diver: White Sands Dive Shop works with you to ensure every moment here is spent enjoying the underwater world! P. 13

Celebrating the Garifuna: November 19th draws near. Learn about the traditions, including the making of ereba (Cassava bread) and what Boil Up is all about! P. 14-16

Always evolving: Cocktails tell a story at Gaia and Matachica, thanks to their recent revamp and training with world champion mixologist P. 17 **Save the Date:** Yes, some of us are already counting down to Christmas, starting with the annual Lighted Boat Parade! P. 18

My Beautiful Belize travels!

We honor our late friend, a longtime lover of Belize and guitar player extraordinaire, "Gonzo" as he reads an antiquated My Beautiful Belize issue dated April 2014. We thank Mar Gove for sharing this timeless photo of Gonzo perusing the MBB while in Florida USA. Gonzo was a Vietnam era Army Helicopter Pilot who served two tours in Vietnam and then went into the Marine Corp as a Helicopter Pilot. He was awarded 64 Army Air Medals, a really hard number to beat, a soldier he surely was loved by



all who knew him. Gone but never forgotten, RIP "Guitar Man now sings with the Angels."

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November 2019

Iguana love you!

As someone originally from North America, a common critter found in most yards and a raider of bird feeders are squirrels. Years ago, these bushy-tailed rodents were hunted for food, something I am not sure is still in practice. I don't recall anyone raving about the delicious wild squirrel on the menu!

In Belize, I liken the iguana to our cute but pesky squirrel. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and yes, I think iguanas are cute, even when they eat my flowers! And similarly, they have been and still are hunted and consumed by indigenous populations and remain a part of our cultural cuisine. Considered a delicacy, especially the developing eggs the female carries in March and April, the hunting season for iguanas is closed from February to June of each year as this is their breeding season. With poaching and over-hunting of the popular 'Bamboo Chicken', paired with the destruction of their natural habitat as development destroys their nesting sites, the green iguana is facing grave population loss in some areas.

Free pick up from your-dock. www.whitesandsdiveshop.com elbertgreer@fastmail.fm 226-2405

White Sands Dive Shop

Belize

Ambergris Caye

San Pedro

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By Tamara Sniffin



In response to these growing concerns, The Green Iguana Conservation Project was founded San Ignacio in the Cayo District in 1996 by Mrs. Mariam Roberson and Daniel Velasquez, to protect the species while educating individuals about these reptiles. In collaboration with Belizean primary and secondary schools, Galen University, and foreign affiliates, the Iguana Project is entirely self-sustained and offers a great field of research and education to the people of Belize and around the world by allowing individuals to interact with the green iguanas.

The Green Iguana Conservation Project interpretive site is located within the San Ignacio Resort Hotel's property so that visitors learn how vital the reptiles are to the balance of the nearby river habitat. On a recent tour, our guide Oscar explained the process behind curating, nurturing, and eventually releasing these modern-day dinosaurs.



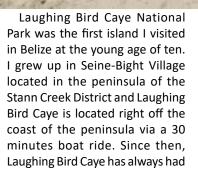
They begin by collecting iguana eggs, which they lay during March, April, and May. The females bury their eggs close to each other in sandy tunnels near the river, so when you find one clutch, chances are more are nearby. The eggs are collected and incubated for three months. It was super interesting to learn that the temperature the eggs are incubated at determine their sex. Warmer temperatures produce males, while cooler temps produce females. The Project incubates the collected eggs at a lower temperature to produce nothing but females. This ensures a lot more babies when the females are released into the wild area they were once collected from as eggs two years earlier. It is a continuous process of rearing the iguanas from the egg to the juvenile stage and later setting them free into their natural habitat. In the first years of laying, the females produce around 20-30 eggs, but as they mature, one female can lay between 40-80 eggs.

The babies are raised separately from an enclosure where mature iguanas' adults linger. Some of these adults are being rehabilitated for wild release while others, for one reason or another, will remain in captivity for the rest of their lives. Here we get to mingle with the iguanas while Oscar provides us with some leaves to hand-feed them. They beg for more, and we even get to pet them, which is a weird, scaly, bumpy feeling. It's not like scratching your dog's ears, but the iguanas seem to enjoy the experience!

The Green Iguana Conservation Project is a continuous effort that aims to conserve and look after the endangered green iguana species in Belize. Over the years, the Project has become one of the most popular attractions in San Ignacio. The San Ignacio Resort supports the project with fees charged for the tour, donations, and programs such as "Adopt an Iguana." To learn more, please visit their website at www.sanignaciobelize.com/belize-iguana-project



Laughing Bird Caye...forever in my heart!



a special place in my heart. While growing up, I made several visits to it during school trips, clean-up campaigns, and even sometimes just to enjoy all that it has to offer.

Laughing Bird Caye is the southernmost island in the central lagoon of the Belize Barrier Reef. This long, narrow isle stands on an elongated ridge of reef known



as a faro. This angular atoll on a continental shelf is also known as a shelf atoll. Like an atoll, a faro is steep-sided and encloses a central lagoon. The Laughing Bird Faro is separated from the mainland, the barrier reef, and other cayes by deep channels on all sides. The uniqueness of this structure contributes to both the abundance and variety of coral habitats and marine life. The Caye got its name from the Laughing Gull that once bred on the Caye, but due to a growing human presence, the colonies have moved to nearby undisturbed cayes. Presently, the caye is home to several birds like the brown pelican, green heron, the melodious blackbird, among others.

It had been almost three years since my last visit to the caye, and I was eager to be back, anxious to see what had changed. I just knew it was going to feel like coming back to my HOME CAYE. As we pulled up to the shore, once again, I was in awe of its unique, natural beauty. White sandy beach, scattered coconut trees, mangroves, all added up to the perfect island vibe.

Laughing Bird Caye is divided into three zones – the recreational zone, buffer zone, and the preservation zone, also known as the bird restoration zone, where no entry is allowed to guests. Due to these conservation efforts that are enforced by the park rangers living onsite, the laughing gulls have slowly started to return to the island.

After a brief history of the island by our tour guides from Splash Dive Center, we joined the rangers and headed out to snorkel around the shallow waters of the caye. While snorkeling, I am amazed



by the colorful array of coral habitats and marine life. My companions and I see turtles, rays, lobsters, barracudas, schools of fish, and even the reef restoration project being carried out by Fragments of Hope. My favorite place on earth is in the sea, either snorkeling or diving. Exploring the magical underwater world is the best feeling ever. Every time I'm submerged into the cool Caribbean waters, I n, ever want to surface! While there, I wish I could become a fish, a dolphin, a manatee, or any other sea creature so that I could explore that amazing and magical world even more. After snorkeling for more than 45 minutes, I am once again reminded why Laughing Bird Caye National Park is my HOME CAYE. This is my tenth visit to the caye, and I will continue to do so if I am able.

Due to the uniqueness of the caye, the Faro, and the abundance and diversity of marine life, the caye was declared a protected area in 1981 under the National Parks System Act. On December 21, 1991, Laughing Bird Caye National Park was declared. In 1996 the Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System was inscribed on the World Heritage List with Laughing Bird Caye National Park designated as one of the premiere protected areas within the World Heritage Site.

Some of the latest additions to the caye over the past years include a gift shop that carries beautiful Lionfish jewelry(KAJ Expression Jewelry), artifacts, and souvenirs. There are even fun marine frame walls for visitors to take fun pictures. There are many companies in the area that offer tours to the beautiful Laughing Bird Caye National Park. This gorgeous piece of paradise is an ideal base for a full day of diving, snorkeling, sea kayaking, and even picnicking. Be a Belizean traveler, and enjoy all that this piece of paradise has to offer.

To book your tour with Splash Dive Center, you can call 523- 3058 or visit their website at www.splashbelize.com.



Ambergris Caye's only rooftop restaurant with unobstructed views of the Carlbbean Sea & Lagoon

Open Everyday: 7AM-10PM For reservations: 226-4000



1 Mile North, San Pedro, Caribeville

OPEN TUESDAY TO SUNDAY 5:30PM TO 10PM Reservations at 226-4001

SUSHI EVERY WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY AND SATURDAY

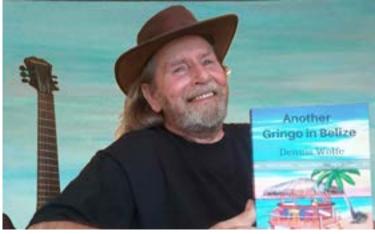




November 2019

Dennis Wolfe's "Another Gringo in Belize"

A collection of Jokes and Songs inspired by and based in Belize and her inhabitants



By Mary Gonzalez

Our parent company, The San Pedro Sun, is a weekly labor of love that takes a mix of community/local news, national stories and even press releases to make up one well rounded newspaper. Included in that mix is the weekly Wolfe's Woofer, which is a joke column featuring local, colorful characters. Sometimes, readers would come up to us and excitedly share their favorite part of the newspaper. "We love the Woofer!"

Yes...indeed, the Woofer column is a guaranteed hit. And we can see why: local characters, spiced up with some story or the other that is so uniquely Belizean, it's believable. So imagine our joy when the columnist, the Gringo himself, Dennis Wolfe, sent us an advanced copy of his book, "Another Gringo in Belize"!

We had to ask Dennis to tell us a little bit more – after all, we had to know how this all came about.

How long did you work as a musician in San Pedro?

I began in 1988 when Charlie Worthington and I moved to Ambergris Caye to play music. I retired from playing music in 2016.

A lot of the jokes somehow revolve around the local food stands... what's your favorite Belize snack/quick food item?

The food stands are where I meet up with my friends. My favorite snackies are salbutes, tamales and garnachas.

What inspired you to get this book out?

I published a small book in 1994 called Wolfe's Woofers and it sold well. Hurricane Keith took my next book along with my computer in 2000. That's when I decided to wait until I retired from music to work on the next one. **How long would you say it took you to hit that publish button?**

Nearly two years from start to finish. This is a big book with nearly 300 pages.

Which accomplishments in your career bring you the most pride?

I am very proud of my children, Melody and Dennis II who are both true San Pedrano artists. They both touch many people with their art, which assures my legacy.

What a legacy indeed! We have been chuckling to ourselves reading the book...pick any page and you will laugh out loud. Download his song which comes with the purchase of his book, and it's like you're on a beach on Ambergris Caye, the fry jacks about to land on your table, the coffee is hot and steaming, and life is good. Join in on the fun and check out the amazon link to get yours today!

https://www.amazon.com/Another-Gringo-Belize-Stories-Caribbean/ dp/1775205916

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Let's have some fun on Ambergris Caye

Every Sunday – Live Reggae Band at the Truck Stop starting at 5:30PM

Every Tuesday – Hermit Crab Race at Crazy Canucks starting at 6:30PM



Every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday – Sushi night at Aqua Belize starting at 5:30PM



Every Thursday, Friday and Saturday – Sing along with the Coconut Trio at Palapa Bar and Grill starting at 6PM

Every Thursday – Trivia Contest at the Truck Stop starting at 7:30PM

Every Thursday – Wine Down Social Mixer at Marbucks Coffee House in Tres Cocos, starting at 4:30PM

Every Friday - Wine Social at Wine de Vine in town, starting at 4PM

Every Sunday – Brunch at Marbucks Coffee House starting at 8AM





November 3rd Saga Halloween Fundraiser at Crazy Canucks. Dress your pets!!

November 16th Bingo Night at Crazy Canucks Beach Bar starting at 5PM



Currelivle Beleann Inspired Cuisine made with organic products syroun locally, offering you a farm to table driving experience.



November 2019



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.



AQUA: Open Tuesday to Sunday from 5:30Pm to 10PM, Aqua Belize offers an elevate

seafood and steakhouse dining experience. Located 1 mile north of San Pedro Town inside Caribeville. Sushi nights on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Reservation highly recommended: 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. Breakfast: 8AM-10:30AM, Dinner: 5PM-10PM, every day except 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 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.



RAIN: Located 1 mile north of San Pedro Town inside Caribeville, Rain Restaurant and Rooftop Terrace offers unobstructed views of the

Caribbean Sea and Lagoon for the perfect atmosphere to dine. Open daily from 7AM to 10PM serving breakfast, lunch and dinner.

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. 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 • SUN-

SETS. Open 11-5PM 4 miles from main road. BOAT TRANSFERS available by reservation, 9am - 4pm. Call 610-3775/9

MEDICAL SERVICE



GROOERY

Offering day time medical services including physician consultations, full clinical laboratory, full pharmacy, digital

X-rays and ultrasound services; walk-ins are welcome. Open Monday to Saturday from 8AM to 5PM. Located 1 mile north of San Pedro Town. Contact info: 226-2262 and 226-2721

Shop

The biggest little 🖓 grocery store on 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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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 206-2121/280-2626 See map for our location!





IGUANA JUAN'S: Thoughtful burgers, killer vegetarian, creative cocktails and more, served with an eclectic vibe overlooking Back Street! Specializing in American and Central

American dishes. We're 'Conveniently' Located Upstairs, of an Old Building, on a Back Street, on an Island, in Central America... Come Find Us!



MELT - NEW LOCATION over the water in town at the Tackle Box Pier!! Live music & karaoke every night. 7AM – midnight; food served till 10PM. Specializing in MELT-y grilled cheese sandwiches - tons of delicious variety. Visit us!

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.



TRANSPORTATION

CRYSTAL AUTO RENTALS - 2 BZ locations: Philip S.W. Goldson International Airport and 5 Miles Northern Highway. Free shuttle service to and from our Belize City office to anywhere in Belize City. Tel: 011-501-223-1600 Fax: 011-501-223-1900 (direct dialing from U.S.A.) Toll Free in Belize: 0-800-777-7777 Email: reservations@crystal-belize.com or visit our website at http://crystal-belize.com

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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WAH WORL day ni games

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!

www.facebook.com/wantrum #15 Pescador Drive 226-4690.



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!

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Sudoku Answers Puzzle on Page 9								
3	1	8	2	4	6	5	7	9
9	2	6	7	3	5	4	1	8
7	4	5	9	1	8	2	3	6
5	3	4	1	8	9	6	2	7

2

8 9

2

7

4

3 8

18

1

9

5

6

3





UNIQUE OFFERINGS BELIZEAN ARTS GALLERY - Largest collection

of original 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.



BELIZE CHOCOLATE COMPANY: The first ever chocolate boutique in Belize, makes bean to bar chocolate on Ambergris Caye, together with delicious truffles, tasty hot and cold chocolate

drinks and unique chocolate gifts. Located on Front Street. Call 226 3015.

GRANIEL'S DREAMLAND: Exotic Hard Woods and Mahogany Products made locally. Gift Items, indoor and outdoor



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"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. Closed through October 8th for vacation!

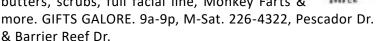
HAVANA CIGARS BELIZE: Our walk-in humidor stocks an ever changing selection of some of the finest hand-made cigars from Cuba, Central America, and the Caribbean. We also offer an air-conditioned smoking lounge with a full bar



and café. On Front Street, across from Holiday Hotel. 226-4576 Find us on TripAdvisor!

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

BELIZEAN BREEZES SOAP CO.: San Pedro's ONLY and ORIGINAL all-natural soap company! With 2 locations, there's something for everyone. Soaps, butters, scrubs, full facial line, Monkey Farts &



KIDTOPIA: Located on the second floor of Sancas Realty Plaza (Unit #13) on Coconut Drive, downtown San Pedro, Kidtopia is a kids club/drop-off center for children between

the ages of four to fourteen. Open Tuesdays-Saturdays from 10AM-7PM, and on Sundays from 12PM-5PM.

GEORGIE'S CRUST & CRUMBS: located inside "The Gallery" of San Pedro. The best Gourmet Pies from the "Pie Queen" with First Class Fresh The Generation of the Piese P Ingredients alongside The Largest Collection of Paintings in Belize. 2 1/2 blocks North of the Roundabout. Pies: 615-9327 Art: 226-4304.



XSITE BELIZE SAILING AND



ADVENTURES: Come sail on our live aboard catamaran. For more information on Day Sailing Trips, One Night Sailing w/Camping & Fishing and Multiple

Day Charters, contact 501-610-0226 or xsitebelize@yahoo.com.



LA SIRENE is located at the southern tip of the island. Currently in the development aSRENE phase, La Sirene's model home located on Coconut Drive is open to the public.

Open from Monday to Saturday from 9AM to 5PM. For more information visit www.lasirene.bz



EATS & TREATS



CASA PICASSO RESTAURANT: Artfully creating Belizean inspired cuisine with local products for a farm to table experience. Open Tuesday - Saturday, Happy Hour 2pm-5pm, appetizers, dinner service 5pm-9pm. Full bar with global wine list. 226-4443 for reservations. Located just south of town on Coconut Drive.

PEPPERONI'S PIZZA: The island's most delectable combination of traditional Italian crafted pizzas with Belizean influences. Handmade, local, and fresh ingredients made daily along with good vibes, music, and service. Dine-in, carry-out, & delivery offered. Open 7 days a week at 4:30pm-10:00pm and Friday-Sunday from 10:30am-2:30pm. 501-226-4515





EL DIVINO CARIBBEAN STEAKHOUSE & MARTINI BAR: 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.

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



Jnique Offerings



SALT LIFE VILLAGE BELIZE will encompass all the comforts of home with a full service resort and fly fishing lodge, an east side beach club, estate homes, restaurants, bars and retail outlets throughout the development. For more information email sales@saltlifebelize.com

Party Party!

CRAZY CANUCKS BEACH BAR: Beach 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

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Will you be the world's newest diver?

White Sands Dive Center showcases the Newest Diver in the World

Have you thought about getting your diving certification but didn't want to waste precious vacation time sitting in a classroom learning the required material before getting into the water? Now you can arrive all your diving/vacation destination with a lot of that education already under your belt through the online Professional Association Diving Instructors (PADI) eLearning program.

According to PADI Instructor and Ambergris Caye based White Sands Dive Shop owner Elbert Greer, completing knowledge development online is different from using the open water book, with the online portion of the course enhanced with audio presentations, graphics and Today's Newest Diver in the World. animations as well as interactive assessments with Greer as your virtual instructor. Student divers register for the online class at www.scubalessonsbelize.com, and from that point, Greer can interact with the student via phone, email, or chats depending on the student's preference. This one-on-one interaction allows Greer to answer questions, provide information about local diving, discuss equipment or address any concerns the novice may have, assuring that they feel comfortable, confident, and well prepared before moving on with their diving certification in Belize.

As students progress through each section of the online course, they answer Quick Quiz questions to ensure they are meeting the learning objectives, and in the end, they complete a Knowledge Review. To reinforce learning, the program provides the correct answers



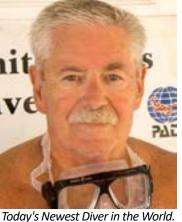
Today's Newest Diver in the World. Congrats Alison!



Congrats Owen!



Today's Newest Diver in the World. Congrats Tiffany!



Congrats Scott!

elbertgreer@fastmail.fm

By Tamara Sniffin When they are ready, students

take a quiz for that section and receive prescriptive feedback for any incorrect answer, assuring that they achieve 100% mastery of the subject before moving on to the next section. Students are linked to interactive tutorials and online Reading Dive Planner (RDP) versions. Greer tracks the progress of each student diver and assists along the way. The students also have access to an online version of the PADI Open Water Diver Manuel for reference during and after training.

"In my twenty-plus years of experience certifying tourists for SCUBA Diving in Belize, I've learned that the difficult part is not getting my students to jump into the warm, clear Caribbean water with a tank on their back, it's getting them to read and study the manual or sit and watch a DVD in the classroom while they are distracted by being on vacation! Instructors call this bookwork and study part of the course Knowledge Development, and it's the hardest part of my job. With this online method, student divers will have done this part of the course at home with me guiding them through as an instructor, wasting no time after arriving before they get into the warm water," commented Greer.

White Sands Dive Shop is a full service 5 Star PADI Dive Shop specializing in daily diving, SCUBA instruction, and snorkeling. They conveniently pick you up from the dock at or nearest to your hotel and are fully equipped with the best in dive and snorkel gear. For more information, please visit their website at www.whitesandsdiveshop. com or email Elbert Greer at





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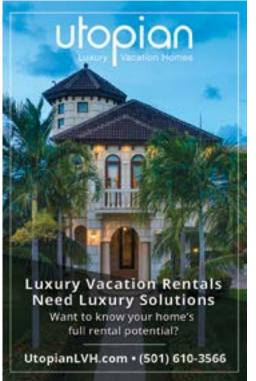
along with further explanations and reviews. November 2019

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To the sounds of beating drums and festive dancing, we annually celebrate Garifuna Settlement Day on November 19th. A day set to honor the arrival of the Garifuna culture to our Belizeans shores in dugout canoes back in 1802, the holiday celebrates with much pride and revelry.

This year the celebration falls on a Tuesday,



and throughout the country, local Garinagu communities host events in honor of Garifuna Settlement Day. From an early morning reenactment of their arrival on the beach to a ceremonial mass, the day's events are rooted in tradition and aim to keep the Garifuna culture alive in today's ever-changing society.

In San Pedro Town, the local branch of the National Garifuna Council has prepared a vibrant calendar of activities under this year's national theme: "Lererun Garifuna Laguchabei Labagaridun Garifunaduau! - Garifuna Language is the Foundation of Garifuna Survival!" Festivities will peak



on Monday, November 18th, the eve of the 186th anniversary of Garifuna Settlement Day with the crowning of the Miss Garifuna San Pedro 2019, live cultural presentations, music, and of course drumming all night long to bring in the 19th. The fun takes place at the San Pedro Central Park starting at, and everyone is invited to come out and join the celebration. On Tuesday, November 19th, the festivities start with the official Yurumein (the reenactment of the arrival of the Garifuna to Belize) at the crack of dawn. This will be followed by a parade through the streets of San Pedro Town, ending at Central Park, where an all-day festival will be held with lots of cultural eats and live music!

Recommendation: If your interest is piqued about the Garifuna Culture and you are eager to immerse yourself in this holiday, head down to the Stann Creek District, the hub of the Garinagu. Having the largest Garifuna population, communities like Hopkins Village, Seine Beight Village, and Dangriga Town host some of the most unforgettable Garifuna Settlement Day celebrations. Here you can truly be one with the culture and have an experience you won't soon forget!

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Cassava Bread A Garifuna staple made by hand at Sabal's Farm

By Hamerlin Flores

My Beautiful Belize recently had the unique opportunity to visit Sabal's Cassava Farm as part of the 2019 Belize Tourism Board media familiarization trip on the southeast coast of Belize. Located at mile three on the Hummingbird Highway, right outside of Dangriga Town, this family-owned business has been operating since 1987 and produces cassava bread, starch, juice, and other deliciousness. The farm's premier product - the cassava - is an essential part of Garifuna culinary culture, and the Sabals take it from the root to the dinner table. The best part is that they open that process to visitors who can tour the farm and observe the processing of the root vegetable, and the actual making of cassava bread, "Ereba" in the Garifuna language.

We had the special opportunity to experience the entire process of making Ereba, thanks



to the owner Cyril Sabal. The process usually starts at 6AM, when farmers go to fields and uproot the tuber. Some can weigh up to 1,000 pounds! They bring the cassava to a shed, where it is peeled, washed, grated, dried, drained, sieved, and baked. I joined my colleagues in the grating process, feeling first-hand the hard work that the Sabal's put into making the cassava bread.

The last and most breathtaking part is the baking of the bread. The grains jump and coalesce over a hot comal (special flat pan for baking). High heat is necessary, so the cassava doesn't crumble, and baking on the comal harkens back to the long-held traditions of the Garinagu people.

These recipes are cultural elements passed down through generations for culinary continuity. They also represent the community,

Continued on Page 16



Continued from Page 15

because preparing this unique cultural dish requires teamwork and soul, integral elements of the Garifuna culture.

Cassava is used in multiple ways. The Garifuna culture has cornered the Ereba market, but they also make sweet desserts like cassava pudding- known as plastic bread, due to its rubbery consistency. Cassava is made into stews, candy, and sweetened drinks like Sahou.



After the tour, we were treated to some fresh, delicious cassava bread, washed down with Sahou juice, another Garifuna Staple. Sahou is made of cassava, coconut milk, cinnamon and sugar, mostly enjoyed as a dessert since it is a sweet thick drink. Sabal's food products can be bought in most of the stores in Dangriga Town and parts of Belize. If you are looking for a cultural and unique adventure when in the Stann Creek District, the Sabal's Cassava Farm is a must. For more information on how to book a tour, you contact them at 532-2067.



Sabal's Cassava Farm Tasting my first Boil Up

I'll be honest; when I wrote down my list of foods to try out, I legitimately was dreading the thought of Boil Up. Individually, each ground food is not my favorite. All-together, talk about overdose of least favorites. Then throw in fish? And dumplings (or boiled cake). Talk about nothing I would ever order for myself because of pre-conceived notions and experiences.

That, however, was the point of a food bucket list. I had to try it. I had to give it a good bite, to decide for myself by actually tasting. Since some of my items are specialty foods cooked during a particular season, I decided to try Boil Up, in honor of Garifuna Settlement Day. To hear that I've not had it, you'd think I didn't have a DROP of Garifuna blood in me...yet I do!

Virginia Melendez has been cooking for 20 years, and as the proud owner of Itza Belizean Place eatery in downtown San Pedro, provides special items like hudut, boil up and more. With her repertoire and reputation preceding her, it made sense to taste her version of the boil up. Taught by her mother to make this dish, Virginia served up a beautiful plate complete with whole fish, some ground food, a sauce and the classic boiled cake.

The moment of truth came, and, I took a bite of each item separately. YUM! Okay, I was missing out...time to taste it all together, and feel the full effect. More bites for me, and I realized that I had let my own previous prejudices against the humble ground food stop me from indulging in a really rich meal. No wonder my friends were all surprised that I'd not tasted this dish – they knew what was up!!

A combination of tomatoes, coconut oil, fish, root vegetables, a surprisingly light dough disc that had been boiled to perfection, and years of tradition, all came together for a 'boil up'. There really is no better name that that, because that's just what it is! I can't wait to hit up some more items now!

rschool fun! Tuesday - Saturday ork help! Aft SAN PEDRO'S 10am-7pm Sunday 12pm-5pm unlimited day /weekly options available scaled at San Cas Plaza - San Pedro Town Phone: 633-2992



Ingredients: 2 lbs. fish 1 lb. pigtail 4 eggs 2 yams 2 cassavas 4 large sweet potatoes 4 ripe plantains 6 green bananas 4 cups of water

Directions:

Boil Cake:

-Combine the flour, baking powder and water to create the dough for the boil cakes. -Separate the dough into 4 inch balls and flatten each. Ground food:

-Peel and chop your yams, cassavas, sweet potatoes into chunks, and the ripe plantains and green bananas into two or three slices.

-Boil your ground food in a pot

1/2 cup of water, as well as a large pot of water 6 tomatoes 2 onions 2 green peppers 4 cups flour Salt and pepper Tomato sauce

4 tsp baking powder

and boil the flattened dough on top of the ground food right before its ready. -Boil the eggs -Boil/fry the fish -Boil the piqtail Sauce:

-Cut up your tomatoes, onions and green peppers and sauté with tomato sauce. Add salt and black pepper to taste.

Combine the different food groups to create your own Belizean Boil Up.



By Mary Gonzalez

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Mixology at Matachica and Gaia tell the story of Belize's unique flavors via cocktails

By Mary Gonzalez

Six bartenders, five judges, several bottles of liquor, and lots of Belizean ingredients set the stage for a fun afternoon at Matachica Resort. The occasion? An impromptu bartending competition initiated by Lawrence Picard, a three-time winner of GQ/Bombay Sapphire's Most Imaginative Bartender Competition in Las Vegas, Nevada USA.

Owner of Nectar and Mixologie in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, Picard has been working alongside Matachica and her sister property Gaia's bartenders, revamping, strengthening their skills and training them in the fine art of mixology. Picard was on hand, training the gentlemen to seek out local rums, understand its history and makeup, then studying global trends and flavors, adapting using ingredients readily available to produce unique cocktails for guests. Gilbert, Adam, Alfred, Derby, Edwardo, and Edwin took to the task, focusing on originality, aesthetic, flavor, and technique to present a unique cocktail to be judged.

It was a relaxed affair and fun to witness the participants as they applied their lessons, listening to their casual banter, and exchanging stories about the ingredients and choice of liquor. Owner of Matachica and Gaia, Daniel Lighter was on hand judging, and he was proud to witness the efforts that each bartender put towards improving their craft. "It's not just about redesigning the décor, boats, or revamping our casitas. We also want to focus on our staff, making an investment in them. I am investing in Belize, kind of saying, 'let's step it up.' We all benefit." And benefit we all did, as delicious cocktail after the other landed before us, ready for sipping and enjoying.

At the end of the action, a discussion determined the three standouts. Walking away with bragging rights and even a little cash prize for their efforts was Adam, who took third place with "The Anti-Oxidant." Adam shared that he studied the current trends, seeing how bitters and health consciousness is prevailing in the cocktail industry and opted for something similar. Derby took second place with his "Ginger Star" – a refreshing mix of fresh Starfruit and Ginger puree that hints at the tropics and gentle rainforest breezes. With his drink titled "The Hummingbird," Edwin walked away with the grand prize. A sweet cocktail, using Traveller's Liquors Nance liqueur, The Hummingbird was a sip of home - reminiscent of the craboo fruit that grows in Grandma's back yard – telling the uniquely Belizean story that most travelers seek out. **It's not just a cocktail**

Lawrence Picard also worked with the bartenders at Gaia to establish a Farm to Bar movement, aiming to make Gaia stand out in her location in the rainforests of Belize. Similarly, Matachica's bar will be focused on providing the best of Belize via its ingredients, personalities, and history. "We want to tell the story of Belize, its people, and its culture... The mix of Creole and Maya world is stunning, and we need to export that to the world."



To the back, L-R: Lawrence Picard and Adam Front Row, L-R: Edwardo, Alfred, Gilbert, Edwin and Derby November 2019





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Save the Date!

The 2019 San Pedro Holiday Boat Parade is set to illuminate the Caribbean Coast



Can we start counting the days until Christmas yet? With just around 50 days left for the most festive season, we can safely start planning for gifts, holiday parties, and even a holiday vacation. You also may want to Save the Date for the 2019 San Pedro Holiday Boat Parade – the colorful island tradition that lights up the coast of Ambergris Caye.

Scheduled for Saturday, **December 7**th starting from 6PM, the merry journey from Wayo's Beach Bar south to Crazy Canucks Beach Bar (and back) brings much seasonal joy to our little Caribbean island. All are welcome to this spectacular light show of decorated boats in Christmas décor. The parade ends at SandBar Beach Hostel and Restaurant with a grand award ceremony where prizes are awarded in four different categories. There will also be several viewing locations on the beach along the parade route offering special Christmas treats.

But it's not just a parade, in the true spirit of Christmas, as the San Pedro Holiday Boat Parade serves as a fundraising event for charitable organizations on the island. Participation is open to locals and tourists alike; for our visiting friends, organizers can assist with the allocation of a boat.

For morning information email: **hopehavenbelize@gmail.com**. So, save the date, start making plans, and usher in the Christmas season in our little slice of paradise!



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