

A man with curly hair, wearing a white t-shirt and khaki pants, is kneeling on a concrete floor. He is holding a young child in his arms. They are both looking at a crocodile in a large, shallow enclosure. The enclosure has a yellow border and a black metal fence. The background shows lush greenery and a large log. The text "My Beautiful Belize" is written in a stylized font at the top, with "My" in blue, "Beautiful" in a rainbow gradient, and "Belize" in green. Below it, "TRAVEL PUBLICATION" is written in blue capital letters. A yellow sun icon is to the right of the title. The word "FREE" is written in white capital letters on the right side.

My Beautiful Belize

TRAVEL PUBLICATION

FREE

**Caring for & Connecting
with our Belizean Wildlife**

From the Editor: Tamara Sniffin

We aren't known for curbing our enthusiasm when it comes to all things Belize, but we are full-on WILD in this issue! One of Belize's finest features is its wildlife, and we admire the many non-profit organizations dedicated to protecting, conserving, and rescuing our precious fauna. Credit and kudos are well deserved.



While we remind our visitors that our creatures are protected under laws restricting feeding or interfering with their feral ways, we can still enjoy them from afar and under the guidance of skilled guides. And, if you want a close encounter of the wild kind, there's no better place than The Belize Zoo. Here you can enjoy creatures in their natural habitat while learning about their critical roles in our unique ecosystems.

As hard as we try to keep our wildlife safe, they can encounter mishaps. When this happens, Belize is blessed with a handful of organizations specializing in recovery and rehab. The Belize Zoo is one, along with another organization we feature this month, Aces Wildlife Rescue on Ambergris Caye. Many will be surprised to read about the variety of wildlife that run into trouble here on the island and their heartwarming success stories.

Whatever your adventure will be while discovering My Beautiful Belize, we wish you a wild time!

Where do you Read My Beautiful Belize?

Located at the confluence of the Moselle and the Rhine River in Koblenz, Germany, Paul and Carrie Guschewsky read My Beautiful Belize in front of the equestrian statue of German Emperor William I.



During World War II, the sculpture was destroyed by US artillery and taken down. It was reconstructed and, in 1993, re-erected at its original site at Deutsche Eck.

At high tide, the memorial is surrounded by water.

Have a great picture of you reading My Beautiful Belize? Send it to us at hello@mybeautifulbelize.com to be featured!!



Welcome Message San Pedro Town Mayor



Gualberto 'Wally' Nuñez

My name is Wally Nuñez, Mayor of San Pedro Town, and I extend the most heartfelt welcome to the beautiful island of Ambergris Caye.

We are pleased to be part of your Belize adventure. Join us in discovering our special connection with this island we call Our Home. Amazing experiences await as you explore our world-renowned attractions and build lifelong connections with our residents.

Our young and vibrant team is working hard daily, making incredible progress with the island's infrastructure. We are inaugurating new and bold landmarks and launching innovative community-development projects. Our accomplishments have earned the trust of our residents and visitors, which inspire and propel our pursuit.

We invite you to explore our reefs, roam the landscape, and enjoy our unique island traditions. Every experience you enjoy is directly linked to our island's growth and sustainable development. Our thriving tourism sector enables us to keep working for a better San Pedro and unifying our island home. We are grateful to have you become part of our story.

Our San Pedro Town Council keeps working to safeguard our island's prosperity. We are creating lasting opportunities for the younger generation, and we count with the support of our residents. We thank you for the opportunity to be part of your visitor experience and wish you the most memorable and exceptional visit.

About the Front Page:

Daddy and baby share a special moment with a river otter at the Belize Zoo. Photo courtesy of Celso Poot, Director, The Belize Zoo & Tropical Education Center



For detailed stories and many more beautiful images, visit www.mybeautifulbelize.com
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The Belize Zoo at 40! A Reflection on Four Decades of Wildlife Conservation

Sharon Matola founded the Belize Zoo (TBZ) after caring for a handful of wild animals that had been part of a natural history documentary. In 1983, when the filming finished, she was left with these animals and decided to start a zoo. Over the next four decades, Sharon and her team transformed the backyard zoo into a world-renowned wildlife education center where visitors connect with Belize's unique natural heritage: the animals.

Some have captured the hearts and minds of multiple generations of visitors. April, the tapir, the zoo's first and most famous animal ambassador, touched lives for 30 years through her annual birthday celebrations. She paved the way for future ambassadors, including Junior Buddy the jaguar, Panama, the harpy eagle, Rose the crocodile, and Neo, the river otter.

In keeping with its origins, all the animals at The Belize Zoo are rescued, confiscated from the illegal wildlife trade by law enforcement, transferred from other rehab facilities, or born there. Habitats are designed to reflect the animal's natural settings and provide an immersive educational experience for thousands of Belizeans and international visitors annually.

Students from all over Belize have enjoyed field trips to the zoo. For many, it is their first positive encounter with the fascinating wildlife of their country. The Education Department provides fun, hands-on activities for students while they learn about the animals. The zoo has delivered a range of engaging programs over the years, such as science fairs, animal birthday parties, and open days.

In seeking new ways to allow visitors to appreciate the natural world, the Tropical Education Center (TEC) was established in 1991 as an extension of the Belize Zoo. It accommodates a dining hall, library, lecture hall, and nature trails. The TEC provided some of the first naturalist training sessions for tour guides and professional seminars for primary school teachers. For over 25 years, it has hosted hundreds of Belizean teens in the longest-running conservation summer camp.

Continued on Page 4



Article Submitted by: Jamal Andrewin-Bohn
Conservation Program Manager, The Belize
Zoo & Tropical Education Center
Photos: TBZTEC



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The Belize Zoo at 40 Continued from Page 3



**The Belize Zoo and Tropical Education Center is a non-profit organization that cares for more than 160 animals representing 43 native species and employs over 40 Belizeans. Visit us at www.belizezoo.org to learn more.*

For schools unable to visit the zoo, outreach educational programs provided a solution in the early days, and the programs remain a pillar of TBZTEC's education strategy, concentrating on current environmental issues or a species-focused approach to help reduce human-wildlife conflict.

As Belize's oldest wildlife rehabilitation facility, TBZTEC has provided veterinary care for a diversity of wildlife and supported the reintroduction of species such as harpy eagles, jaguars, jabiru storks, howler monkeys, silky anteaters, barn owls, and Morelet's crocodiles.

Part of TBZTEC's mission is to protect Belize's wildlife and their habitats. In recent years, TBZTEC has focused on strengthening landscape

conservation work in the Maya Forest Corridor. This last connection between Belize's most significant forest blocks allows the free movement of wildlife, reducing human-wildlife conflict.

The future of the Belize Zoo and Tropical Education Center lies in building bridges to connect people and wildlife in the hope that nature's biodiversity and wild places are protected for generations to come.

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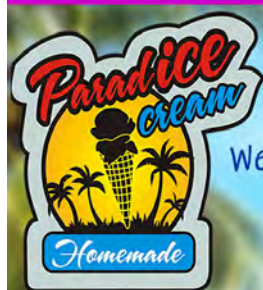
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Vacation like a local;
travel Belize during the "slow" season



Like many other vacation destinations, Belize has a "high" traveling season and what is considered a "slow" travel season. Typically, November through June are the most popular times to vacation in Belize; however, visiting during the off-season can also offer many benefits. July to October is the Jewel's summertime; for some, this is the perfect time to see many of our tropical destinations.

During these months, you can enjoy fewer crowds, lower prices, and more availability regarding tours and accommodations.

One of the biggest perks of vacationing in Belize at this time is saving money! Fewer people are traveling, and therefore more opportunities for you to save on vacation expenses. Flights have reduced fares, and many resorts and hotels offer discounts on accommodation packages. You're also likely to get a better deal on tours and activities.

Belize has grown in popularity, with our annual number of visitors continuously increasing. Peak tourism season can mean full resort occupancy and long reservation lines at popular restaurants. The off-season assures smaller crowds. While this sometimes translates to fewer attractions/restaurants that are open, it also means fewer tourists and groups. Travel in the slow season means a more laid-back vacation ambiance.

While Belize offers picturesque landscapes all year round, something about our summer months makes the country even more beautiful. Summertime means longer days, brighter nights, and blooming flora, offering an excellent opportunity for unique photos filled with vibrant colors.

Another perk of traveling during the slow season is that you are more likely to enjoy Belize's local lifestyle and culture. Summer is when the Belizeans have time to play, and if you are a traveler that wants to engage with the locals, you'll find everyone more relaxed and ready for a good time. There are also plenty of regional activities and events during these times, like concerts, traditional festivals, and celebrations. During the slow season, you can vacation like a local!

Like many tropical destinations, traveling during summer is hurricane season from June 1st to November 30th, and visitors should consider weather forecasts. Always have an emergency plan when vacationing and be mindful of the weather alerts issued. Fortunately, there is plenty of warning when inclement weather is approaching, allowing ample time to prepare or depart the country.

While we happily welcome visitors to Belize year-round, traveling here during the slow months means a lot to the industry when tourism businesses struggle. It's a win-win for all; the tourist enjoys lower rates and helps alleviate the seasonal imbalance. So, pack your bags and prepare yourself for an UnBelizeable vacation!



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Aces Wildlife Rescue - where wild creatures in need get a second chance

Submitted by Chris Summers
 Founder and Director of Operations
 Aces Wildlife Rescue
 Photos: ACES



Aces Wildlife Rescue is a 24/7 emergency wildlife response team, rehabilitation facility, and sanctuary nestled in the heart of Ambergris Caye. Originally centered on crocodile conservation, the organization has undergone a remarkable transformation to meet the growing demand for general wildlife assistance on the island. By expanding their skills, knowledge base, and qualifications, they have committed themselves to serving their community and the various wildlife species of the Cayes.

Before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, ACES noticed a



surge in calls related to distressed wildlife of different species. These creatures arrived at their doorstep in deplorable conditions - dehydrated and malnourished. In the past, the organization could only offer a safe and quiet haven for these animals until they could be transported to suitable facilities on the mainland. Unfortunately, the journey often exacerbated their already deteriorating health, leading to the demise of many creatures. Determined to improve the situation, the team resolved to raise their standards of care, especially for species unfamiliar to them, ensuring a better chance of recovery and successful release into the wild.

To achieve this goal, they embarked on immersive training both domestically and internationally. Christina, Aces' lead wildlife rehabber, visited numerous facilities to study their standards and protocols. She collaborated with experienced rehabbers, consulted wildlife veterinarians, and pursued courses in wildlife stabilization, fluid therapy, and rehabilitation through the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council. This effort enabled them to understand the unique needs of temporarily captive wildlife, facilitating recovery and allowing them to foster natural behaviors essential for survival in their natural habitats.

Remarkably, Aces now boasts ten rehabilitative enclosures designed to cater to a diverse range of species. Over time, they have cared for warblers, pelicans, boa constrictors, iguanas, toucans, parrots, and turtles, among others. These enclosures have become vital sanctuaries where injured or orphaned wildlife can heal and regain their strength.

Deeply rooted in their community, Aces is immensely grateful to all those who have contributed to their transformation into a multi-species wildlife rescue organization. With continuous growth and improvement, their unwavering commitment to providing the highest standard of care for all animals under their care remains steadfast. Every creature that finds its way to Aces is granted a second chance at life in the wild, thanks to the compassionate individuals who form an integral part of the community and who promptly report animals in distress.

If you ever come across a wild animal in need of assistance, whether it is injured, hurt, or orphaned, please reach out to Aces Wildlife Rescue at +501-623-7920 or info@AcesBelize.org. You can also schedule a private visit by using the same contact information.

For further details about their work or to contribute to their cause, visit AcesWildlifeRescue.org.

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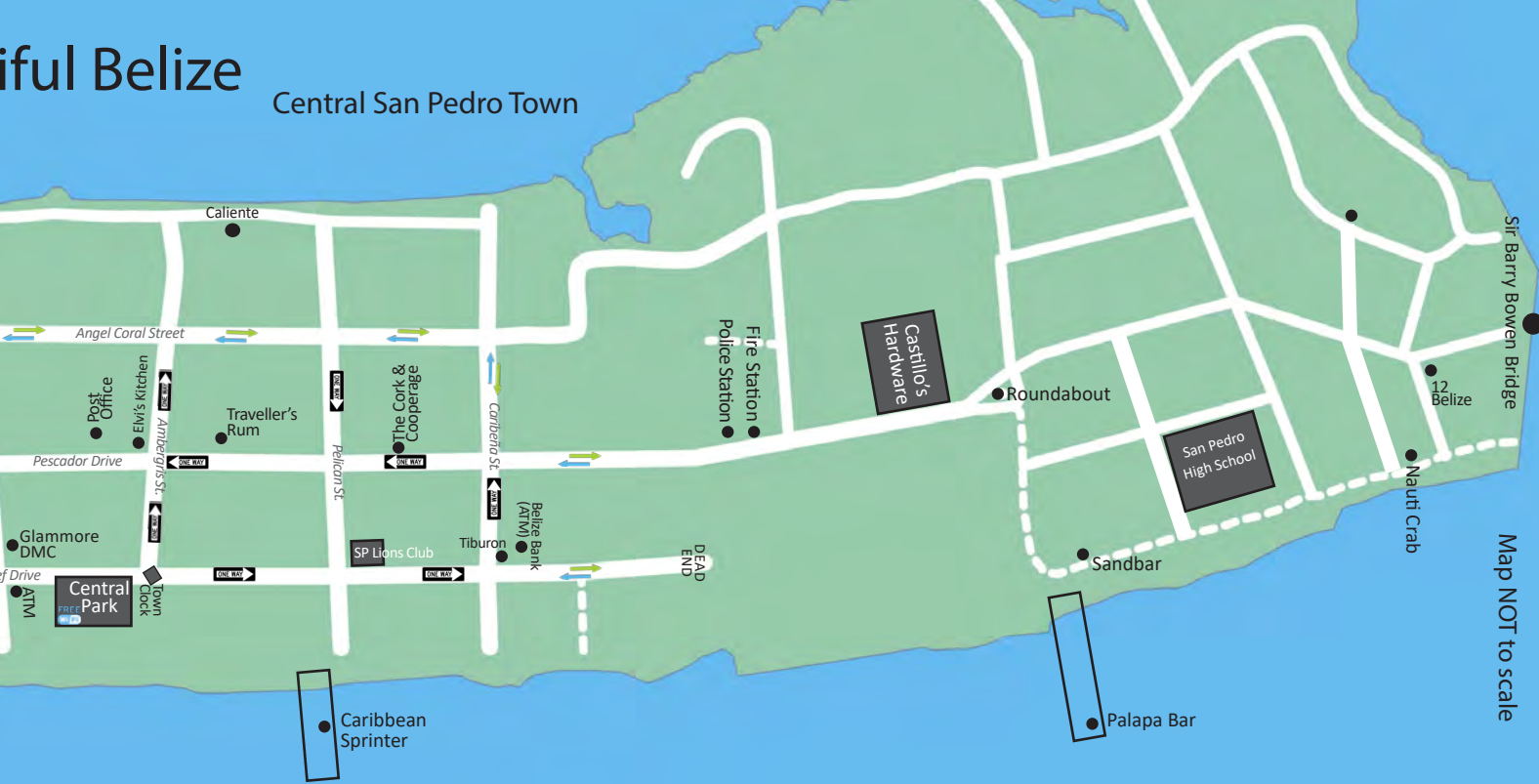
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SP BTIA Tourism Information Center – Hosted by

the Belize Tourism Industry Association San Pedro Chapter, providing information on all things tourism on Ambergris Caye and beyond. On Almond Street, next to the Artisan Market.



Open Monday – Saturday, 9am-5pm. Call/WhatsApp 673-2842 or e-mail: spbtatic@gmail.com



South Ambergris Caye



The Factory Sweets LTD - The Factory Sweets serves ice cream, sweet treats, and a variety of casual eats. Great for families. Open Tuesday through Sunday, 11am - 9pm; TEL: 501-614-8068



Hidden Treasure – Tucked away on a back street in the Escalante residential neighborhood south of San Pedro Town, discover fine dining in a rustic yet elegant and romantic setting. Specializing in Latin American and Caribbean Cuisine. Opening Wednesday through Monday from 5pm – 9pm; TEL: 501-226-4111



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Important Information

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.

ACES Wildlife Rescue: Don't take matters into your own hands. Call 623-7920 for wildlife conflicts and rescue.

Al-Anon Meetings: Wednesdays, 5:30PM, SP Catholic Church Hall islabonitaalanon@yahoo.com

Ambergris Caye Masonic Lodge: ambergriscayemasoniclodge@gmail.com 672-2265

Belize Hotel Association: 223-0669, bha@btl.net

Belize Tourism Board: 227-2419

Belize Tourism Industry Association (BTIA): 227-5717

Dr. Otto Rodriguez San Pedro Poly-Clinic II: 226-2536

Emergency Veterinarian care: 610-3647

Hope Haven: 226-2333

Island Emergency Services: Certified medical emergency service. Call 615-2998

Narcotics Anonymous: By request at 623-0316.

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

Rotary Club of Ambergris Caye: Join Rotary at our weekly meetings Wednesdays at 11:45am at Sea Salt Restaurant/Alaia Resort. Find us on Facebook!

RRR Response: Emergency response team Call 627-1117

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

San Pedro Police Department: 206-2022

San Pedro Tourist Guide Association: 226-2391

SP Post Office: 206-2260.

SP Town Library: 206-2028

The benefits of having a local Real Estate Agent

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If you want to buy or sell a home or property, you've probably heard from people that "having the right agent by your side can make or break your home buying or selling experience." And we must agree!

When considering real estate in Belize, working with someone who knows the local area and market will ensure a stress-free experience. Your agent is your expert guide, who will invest their time to ensure you have a smooth journey throughout the buying or selling process.

There are plenty of reputable local agents on Ambergris Caye, one being Richie Tzib. Richie was born and raised in San Pedro Town and has seen the island's development first-hand. With his real-life experience, he helps those who want to make the right move in investing, "With a drive to serve and please my clients, I work to make your dream a reality." A real estate agent with RE/MAX Real Estate Group, Richie has been offering his services for many working under the guidance of industry professional Jason Turley. Richie can provide insight into living on this beautiful island as a local.



Apart from the immense knowledge of the area local agents offer, Richie also brings other benefits. Real estate agents like Richie have surrounded themselves with a circle of regional industry experts who can help you beyond just buying and selling property. He will get the job done, from recommendations on contractors to assistance dealing with government agencies and even just answering questions regarding daily life on Ambergris Caye!

When your realtor lives in the community where he works, it's easier for him to assist you with viewings. He also has access to more exclusive listings and can get you viewings before they hit the market. Richie is usually the first to know about a property before it hits the market. You will also feel more at ease if you are selling your home or property but don't live on the island, as your local realtor will take care of everything needed to get you the best deal. Richie has worked in the industry and can secure the best value for all parties.

In the complex Real Estate Industry, agents are valuable guides, so be sure to find the right one that fits your needs. Contact Richie via phone at +501-629-3049, by emailing richie.tzib@remax.net, or by visiting www.richieofbelize.com

August - October | 2023

A vibrant advertisement for Palapa Bar & Grill. At the top, the text 'Visit the world famous' is written in a white, cursive font. Below it is a large, stylized thatched roof of a palapa, flanked by two green palm trees. The word 'PALAPA' is written in large, bold, orange letters with a white outline, and 'BAR & GRILL' is in a smaller, white font inside a blue banner. Below this, the text 'Live Music Nightly' is written in a large, blue, cursive font. There are four small images arranged in a 2x2 grid. The top-left image shows people floating in tubes in the water, with the text 'Float In The Tubes' in yellow. The top-right image shows people on a wooden sun deck, with the text 'Enjoy Our Sun Deck' in yellow. The bottom-left image shows a burger and fries, with the text 'Great Food & Drinks' in yellow. The bottom-right image shows several baseball caps with the Palapa logo, with the text 'Visit Our Gift Shop' in yellow. Below the grid, the text 'Located IN TOWN at the beginning of Boca Del Rio Beachfront' is written in a blue, cursive font. Below that, the text 'For Menu, Music schedule and more, visit us online: Palapabarandgrill.com' is written in a blue, cursive font. At the bottom, there are social media icons for Facebook, Instagram, and a pair of flip-flops. The Facebook icon is a blue 'f' inside a white circle, and the Instagram icon is a camera icon inside a white circle. The text 'www.facebook.com/Palapabarbelize' is written in red below the Facebook icon, and '@Palapabarbelize' is written in red below the Instagram icon.



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Down to the most minute details, we will manage and maintain your private property to the highest standards, giving you peace of mind, knowing your investment is consistently being cared for by a responsible and reliable locally owned company.

We understand that each homeowner has different goals and requirements, so we work with you to customize a specific property management plan to fit your precise needs. For many of our clients, this means assisting with guest inquiries and bookings, handling check-ins and check-outs, recommending and booking adventure tours and experiences, local activities, and even in-home massage and chef services.

We hand-select our contractors and service providers and completely oversee the on-site maintenance of your home rental, including all housekeeping, pool, landscaping, and home repair services. So, whether you're showing up for a vacation with the family or have renters scheduled to arrive in town, you can rest easy knowing your property will be ready, spotless, and inviting upon arrival.





Property Management Services – Quick Summary

- Regular property inspections in the home and on the grounds
- Consistent communication with property owners regarding repairs
- Marketing and booking vacation rentals, both short-term and long-term
- Utility, property tax, and home insurance payments
- House cleaning, gardening, and pool cleaning arranged and supervised
- Supervision of all outside work for landscaping, repairs, and maintenance
- Emergency inspection in case of extreme weather events
- Decorating and remodeling services
- Obtaining various price quotes for work at the property
- Installation of local telephone and internet services
- Photography and video marketing for property promotion
- For a more extensive list of our services, please visit our website at <https://azulmanagement.co/>

Each of the vacation villas we manage also comes with a personalized guest book featuring a ton of local travel information, from restaurant, beach, and tour guides to regional maps, emergency contact info, and transportation options. Your guests receive top-notch concierge services before and throughout their stay.

Azul Management features a diverse staff of local and abroad employees. Our various team members can communicate with clients in English and Spanish, making for seamless conversations and simple property-related transactions.

If you're a vacation rental owner in Belize and looking for a trustworthy company to oversee your tropical investment — and make you some good money in the process — consider Azul Management, Belize's top property management team.

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Join the celebration: Belize @ 42!

"Hope Ignited, Hands United, Vision Renews: Belize@42!" Our theme for this year's long-awaited September Celebration! If you have visited Belize during September, you probably know the festive and lively celebrations held throughout the month honoring our country's independence. If there is one thing I can confidently say is that Belize proudly and patriotically celebrates its sovereignty. From concerts to parades and all manners of festivals, we don our colors of red, white, and blue to the tunes of drums, local cuisine, and plenty of revelry.

What are we celebrating?

Belizeans honor two important dates in September, The Battle of Saint George's Caye and Independence Day. Both these celebrations are of monumental importance as they paved the way to the Belize we are today. This year, on September 10th, we are celebrating the 225th anniversary of the significant victory by the Baymen over the Spanish in 1798. This national holiday is vital to our history, as it was a key factor for Belize being the only country in Central America with its national language being English. Eleven days after, we celebrate our Independence Day. We gained independence from Britain on September 21st, 1981, our biggest celebration ever since.



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What to expect?

Every Belizean (at home or abroad) feels extra patriotic in September, and we show it with our grand event lineup. The entire month is packed with fun activities across the country, but a few are the highlights of the September Celebration. The Carnival Road March, to be held on September 9th, brings color and energetic vibes to the streets of Belize City. Revellers, young and old, sport elaborate costumes bringing life to the streets with dance and music. Another fan favorite is the Pan Yaad Steal Ban Concert, a night filled with steel pan melodies by talented Belizeans (concert date and location yet to be announced; visit for updates <https://mybeautifulbelize.com/events/>). A uniform parade is held in all major municipalities the night before The Battle of Saint George's Caye Day, with a concert by local talent held on the actual day. The celebration kicks up on Independence Day Eve with a grand celebration on September 21st. In San Pedro, the festival will be held at the Honorable Louis Sylvester Sporting Complex with live music, dance performances, an inspection of the guard, a 21-gun salute, and a midnight flag raising. On Independence Day, grand parades are held across the country, including San Pedro Town.

A full schedule of all events will be released as we near September, so be on the lookout. All are welcome to participate in Belize's festive celebrations, so don't hesitate to join the fun.



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As avid divers and travelers, we hope you enjoy your stay and while you're here, try a taste of the spirit of Belize.



The Tasting Room

Come visit us at San Pedro for an exclusive rum tasting with our friendly and knowledgeable staff. We're located on Barrier Reef Drive next the Belize Bank

Open everyday from 10am – 7pm

If you can't visit us in San Pedro, stop by our Placencia Village location.



Rooted in Culture: the tradition of honoring the dearly departed



Halloween; a holiday that marks the day before the Western Christian feast of All Saints, or All Hallows, and initiates the season of Allhallowtide. While it may be celebrated worldwide on October 31st, with many people dressing in spooky costumes and giving out candy, it also holds significant traditions in many local cultures. October 31st is part of the traditional el Día de los Muertos or Los Finados. Prominently celebrated in Mexico, the Maya or Mestizo of Belize also celebrate this date as the day to celebrate the cycle of life and death. On this day, families observing this tradition set up altars to honor their ancestors, both those remembered and those long forgotten. Many believe the tradition dates to the ancient Maya, who believed there is life after death. Altars are lit up with candles,

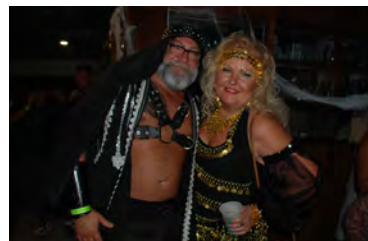
decorated with flowers, and offerings foods and drinks.

The tradition also extends to November 1st and 2nd, with a celebration rooted in Catholic beliefs. Those of the Catholic Faith honor 1st November as All Saints Day to commemorate infants and young children that have passed away. November 2nd is Día de los Muertos and honors adults who have died. Local Catholic churches host a special Mass and processions to the cemetery. Families visit the graves of their loved ones to say prayers and place flowers, wreaths, food, and drinks. Many families also take the time to prepare special local dishes once favored by their departed loved ones. Celebrating death is an integral part of the Belizean culture, rooted in tradition and love for family.

The lighter side of October 31: Let's talk Halloween fun!

Halloween is also a time for light-hearted fun with trick-or-treating and plenty of themed parties. One of our favorite events is Saga's Halloween Spooktacular. A fundraising event for San Pedro's local Humane Society, the Halloween Pet Costume contest and party is fun for the whole family. It was a festival of ghosts, monsters, and adorable pups; you will surely have a good time, all while supporting the island's most vulnerable population. Saga's Halloween Spooktacular Party is held on the last Sunday of October. Look out for details at: www.facebook.com/SagaHumaneSociety/

Island bars also hold Halloween parties where people scare up great fun wearing elaborate costumes and partying far into the night.





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