

# Contents

## INTRODUCTION

■ History . . . . .	2
■ Government . . . . .	3
■ Economy . . . . .	4
US Dollar & the IMF . . . . .	5
New Promise . . . . .	5
■ People & Culture . . . . .	5
Cultural Groups . . . . .	6
■ Geography . . . . .	9
How the Land was Formed . . . . .	9
Environments . . . . .	9
Offshore . . . . .	10
Parks . . . . .	12
■ Climate . . . . .	14
Forces of Nature . . . . .	14
■ Plant Life . . . . .	15
The Rainforest . . . . .	15
Mangroves . . . . .	16
Heliconias . . . . .	17
Trees . . . . .	17
■ Animal Life . . . . .	20
Rodents . . . . .	20
Amphibians . . . . .	20
Reptiles . . . . .	20
Cats . . . . .	22
Other Mammals . . . . .	23
Monkeys . . . . .	24
Spiders & More . . . . .	24
Birds . . . . .	25
■ Underwater Life . . . . .	26
■ National Emblems . . . . .	27

## TRAVEL INFORMATION

■ Facts at Your Fingertips . . . . .	29
■ When to Go . . . . .	30
Seasonal Considerations . . . . .	30
National Holidays . . . . .	30
■ What to Take . . . . .	31
Required Documents . . . . .	31
Packing List . . . . .	32
■ Health Concerns . . . . .	33
Common Ailments . . . . .	33
Treatment Options . . . . .	35
Water . . . . .	36
■ Money Matters . . . . .	36

Price Scales . . . . .	37
Banking/Exchange . . . . .	37
Taxes & Tipping . . . . .	38
Planning your Expenses . . . . .	38
■ Measurements . . . . .	39
■ Dangers & Annoyances . . . . .	39
Common-Sense Precautions . . . . .	40
In the City . . . . .	40
Emergency Assistance . . . . .	40
■ Communications . . . . .	40
Telephone . . . . .	40
Internet . . . . .	41
Postal Service . . . . .	41
■ Culture Shock . . . . .	41
Public Affection . . . . .	41
Gay & Lesbian Travel . . . . .	41
Human Rights . . . . .	41
■ Food . . . . .	42
Traditional Dishes . . . . .	42
■ Booking a Room . . . . .	42
■ Getting Here . . . . .	43
Outfitters Who Do All the Work . . . . .	43
Arriving by Air . . . . .	44
Overland . . . . .	45
Arriving by Sea . . . . .	45
■ Getting Around . . . . .	45
Air Travel . . . . .	45
By Bus . . . . .	46
Car Rentals . . . . .	46
Hitchhiking . . . . .	47
■ Directory . . . . .	48

## **BELIZE CITY**

■ Introduction . . . . .	51
City Life . . . . .	51
Orientation . . . . .	52
■ History . . . . .	53
■ Getting Around . . . . .	54
■ Adventures & Sightseeing . . . . .	54
Adventures on Foot . . . . .	54
Walking Tour ~ Day 1 . . . . .	54
Walking Tour ~ Day 2 . . . . .	58
Adventures on Wheels . . . . .	59
Cycling . . . . .	59
■ Shopping . . . . .	60
■ Places to Stay & Eat . . . . .	60
Accommodations . . . . .	60
Restaurants . . . . .	66
■ Nightlife . . . . .	68

Performing Arts .....	68
Lady Luck .....	68
Flicks .....	68
Sports .....	68
Music, Bars & Clubs .....	68
■ Day Trips .....	69
Tour Operators .....	69
■ Directory .....	72

## THE NORTH

■ Along the Highway .....	73
■ Leaving Belize City .....	75
■ Belize City to Bermudian Landing .....	75
Attractions .....	75
Places to Stay .....	75
■ Bermudian Landing Area .....	76
Getting Here .....	76
Introduction .....	76
History .....	77
Things to Do .....	77
Community Baboon Sanctuary .....	77
Adventures .....	78
Places to Stay .....	79
Places to Eat .....	79
■ Old Northern Highway .....	80
Altun Ha .....	80
Belize Jungle Gardens & Aquarium .....	82
Places to Stay & Eat .....	83
■ Crooked Tree Village & Sanctuary .....	84
Introduction .....	84
History .....	84
Getting Here .....	85
Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary .....	85
Adventures .....	86
Places to Stay .....	88
Places to Eat .....	89
■ Crooked Tree Village to Orange Walk .....	89
■ Orange Walk Town .....	90
Getting Here .....	90
Introduction .....	91
History .....	91
Things to Do .....	92
Cuello Ruins .....	93
Nohmul Ruins .....	93
Places to Stay .....	94
Places to Eat .....	94
Nightlife .....	95
Services .....	95
■ Orange Walk to Indian Church .....	95

Getting Here . . . . .	95
Indian Church . . . . .	95
Lamanai Ruins . . . . .	96
Places to Stay & Eat . . . . .	98
Rio Bravo Management Area . . . . .	98
■ San Filipe to Blue Creek . . . . .	99
Blue Creek . . . . .	99
Places to Stay & Eat . . . . .	99
■ Blue Creek to Gallon Jug . . . . .	99
La Milpa Research Station & Ruins . . . . .	99
■ Gallon Jug/Chan Chich . . . . .	100
■ Sarteneja . . . . .	101
Getting Here . . . . .	101
Introduction . . . . .	102
History . . . . .	102
Things to Do . . . . .	102
Shipstern Nature Reserve . . . . .	103
Tour Operator . . . . .	104
Places to Stay . . . . .	104
Places to Eat . . . . .	104
Nightlife . . . . .	105
■ Progreso & Copper Bank . . . . .	105
Getting Here . . . . .	105
History . . . . .	105
Adventures . . . . .	106
Places to Stay & Eat . . . . .	106
■ Corozal . . . . .	107
Getting Here . . . . .	107
Introduction . . . . .	107
History . . . . .	107
Things to Do . . . . .	108
Santa Rita Ruins . . . . .	108
Cerros Ruins . . . . .	109
Corozal Town . . . . .	110
Four Mile Lagoon . . . . .	111
Places to Stay . . . . .	111
Places to Eat . . . . .	113
■ Corozal to Santa Elena & the Mexican Border . . . . .	113
■ Directories . . . . .	114
General Directory . . . . .	114
Accommodations Directory . . . . .	115
Restaurant Directory . . . . .	116

## THE WEST

■ Along the Highway . . . . .	117
■ Leaving Belize City . . . . .	118
As You Leave Town . . . . .	119
■ Belize City to the Zoo . . . . .	119
Hattieville . . . . .	119

Belize Zoo & Tropical Education Center . . . . .	120
Places to Stay & Eat . . . . .	121
■ La Democracia to Guanacaste National Park . . . . .	121
Places to Stay & Eat . . . . .	121
Guanacaste National Park . . . . .	123
■ Belmopan . . . . .	124
Things to Do . . . . .	125
Places to Stay . . . . .	125
Places to Eat . . . . .	125
Other Services . . . . .	126
■ Belmopan to Georgeville . . . . .	126
Caves at Roaring Creek, Xibalba . . . . .	128
Actun Tunichil Muknal . . . . .	128
Actun Nak Beh . . . . .	129
Actun Uayazba Kab . . . . .	129
Pook's Hill . . . . .	130
Pook's Hill Archeological Site . . . . .	130
Spanish Lookout Village . . . . .	131
■ The Chiquibul Road . . . . .	132
Barton Creek Cave . . . . .	132
Mountain Equestrian Trails . . . . .	133
■ The Cristo Rey Road . . . . .	134
Cahal Pech Ruins . . . . .	134
Places to Stay . . . . .	135
Shopping . . . . .	136
■ San Antonio . . . . .	136
History . . . . .	137
Things to Do . . . . .	137
Pacbitun Ruins . . . . .	137
Places to Stay . . . . .	138
Places to Eat . . . . .	139
■ The Chiquibul/Cristo Rey Road . . . . .	139
Mountain Pine Ridge Reserve . . . . .	139
Lodging, Waterfalls Included . . . . .	140
Rio Frio Cave . . . . .	142
Caracol . . . . .	143
Chiquibul Caves . . . . .	146
■ Santa Elena . . . . .	147
Places to Stay . . . . .	147
■ San Ignacio . . . . .	148
Introduction . . . . .	148
History . . . . .	149
Getting Here & Getting Around . . . . .	149
Sights . . . . .	150
Adventures . . . . .	150
Birding . . . . .	150
Canoeing . . . . .	151
Caving . . . . .	152

Swimming . . . . .	153
Tour Companies . . . . .	153
Equipment Rentals . . . . .	154
Nightlife . . . . .	154
Shopping . . . . .	155
Places to Stay . . . . .	155
Places to Eat . . . . .	156
■ San Ignacio to Bullet Tree Falls. . . . .	157
Things to Do . . . . .	158
Places to Stay . . . . .	159
■ San Ignacio to San Jose Succootz . . . . .	159
Places to Stay . . . . .	159
Things to Do . . . . .	164
Chechem Hah Cave . . . . .	164
Vaca Falls . . . . .	164
■ San Jose Succotz . . . . .	165
Xunantunich Ruins. . . . .	165
Place to Stay . . . . .	167
■ Benque Viejo del Carmen . . . . .	167
History . . . . .	167
Things to Do . . . . .	168
Shopping . . . . .	168
Places to Stay . . . . .	168
Places to Eat . . . . .	169
■ Directories . . . . .	169
General Directory. . . . .	169
Accommodations Directory . . . . .	170
Restaurant Directory . . . . .	172

## **GUATEMALA**

■ Getting Here . . . . .	173
By Air . . . . .	173
Organized Tours . . . . .	173
By Car . . . . .	173
By Bicycle . . . . .	174
■ Money . . . . .	174
■ Customs & Visas . . . . .	174
■ In Guatemala . . . . .	175
Over the Border . . . . .	175
Destinations . . . . .	175
■ Tikal National Park. . . . .	175
Exploring the Park . . . . .	177
The Ancient City of Tikal . . . . .	178
Places to Stay . . . . .	181
Places to Eat . . . . .	182
■ Directory . . . . .	182

## **THE SOUTH**

■ Along the Highways. . . . .	184
-------------------------------	-----

Coastal (Manatee) Highway . . . . .	184
Hummingbird Highway . . . . .	184
Southern Highway . . . . .	185
■ The Coastal Highway . . . . .	185
Gales Point . . . . .	185
History . . . . .	186
Getting Here . . . . .	186
Things to Do . . . . .	186
Places to Stay . . . . .	188
Place to Eat . . . . .	188
■ The Hummingbird Highway . . . . .	188
Armenia & Vicinity . . . . .	189
Things to Do . . . . .	189
St. Herman's Cave . . . . .	189
Hiking Trails . . . . .	190
The Blue Hole . . . . .	190
Places to Stay . . . . .	191
Five Blue Lakes National Park . . . . .	191
Things to Do . . . . .	192
Where to Stay & Eat . . . . .	192
Dangriga . . . . .	193
History . . . . .	193
Getting Here . . . . .	194
Things to Do . . . . .	194
Shopping . . . . .	197
Places to Stay . . . . .	197
Places to Eat . . . . .	198
Other Services . . . . .	198
■ The Southern Highway . . . . .	198
Mayflower Ruins . . . . .	198
A Place to Stay . . . . .	199
Hopkins . . . . .	200
History . . . . .	200
Getting Here . . . . .	200
Things to Do . . . . .	201
Equipment Rentals . . . . .	201
Nightlife . . . . .	201
Places to Stay . . . . .	202
Places to Eat . . . . .	204
Sittie River . . . . .	205
Getting Here . . . . .	205
Things to Do . . . . .	205
Places to Stay . . . . .	206
Places to Eat . . . . .	207
Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary & Jaguar Reserve . . . . .	207
History . . . . .	208
Terrain . . . . .	208

Hiking . . . . .	208
Places to Stay . . . . .	210
Placencia Peninsula . . . . .	211
Getting Here & Getting Away . . . . .	212
Things to Do . . . . .	212
Tour Guides/Companies . . . . .	214
Places to Stay . . . . .	215
Places to Eat . . . . .	221
Nightlife . . . . .	221
Leaving the Peninsula . . . . .	222
Monkey River Town . . . . .	223
Getting Here . . . . .	224
Things to Do . . . . .	224
Tour Guides . . . . .	225
Places to Stay . . . . .	225
Places to Eat . . . . .	225
Nim Li Punit Ruins . . . . .	227
Exploring the Ruins . . . . .	227
Place to Stay . . . . .	227
San Pedro Columbia, Lubaantum & San Miguel . . . . .	228
Things to Do . . . . .	228
Place to Stay . . . . .	230
Blue Creek Village & Blue Creek Cave . . . . .	230
Getting Here . . . . .	230
Things to Do . . . . .	230
Place to Stay . . . . .	231
San Antonio . . . . .	231
Getting Here . . . . .	231
Things to Do . . . . .	231
Places to Stay . . . . .	231
Santa Cruz . . . . .	232
Santa Elena & Rio Blanco National Park . . . . .	232
Laguna Village . . . . .	233
Things to Do . . . . .	233
Places to Stay . . . . .	234
Punta Gorda . . . . .	234
History . . . . .	234
Getting Here . . . . .	235
Things to Do . . . . .	237
Tours/Equipment Rentals . . . . .	237
Places to Stay . . . . .	237
Places to Eat . . . . .	239
Nightlife . . . . .	239
Barranco . . . . .	239
Getting Here . . . . .	240
Things to Do . . . . .	240
■ Directories . . . . .	241

General Directory . . . . .	241
Accommodations Directory . . . . .	242
Restaurant Directory . . . . .	244

## THE CAYES

■ The Cayes in a Nutshell . . . . .	246
Natural History . . . . .	246
Diving & Snorkeling . . . . .	248
■ Getting Here . . . . .	249
■ Northern Cayes . . . . .	250
Ambergris Caye . . . . .	250
History . . . . .	251
Getting Here & Getting Around . . . . .	251
Sightseeing . . . . .	252
Things to Do . . . . .	252
Natural Attractions . . . . .	253
Maya Ruins . . . . .	254
Adventures on Water . . . . .	254
Dive & Snorkeling Sites . . . . .	254
Parasailing . . . . .	257
Fishing . . . . .	257
Windsurfing . . . . .	258
Sailing . . . . .	258
Adventures on Land . . . . .	258
Cycling . . . . .	258
Birding . . . . .	259
Butterfly Migrations . . . . .	259
Equipment Rentals & Tour Agencies . . . . .	260
Services . . . . .	261
Shopping . . . . .	262
Nightlife . . . . .	263
Places to Stay . . . . .	264
Places to Eat . . . . .	268
Caye Caulker . . . . .	270
History . . . . .	271
Getting Here . . . . .	271
Adventures on Water . . . . .	272
Windsurfing . . . . .	272
Safety for Windsurfers . . . . .	272
Diving & Snorkeling . . . . .	272
Canoeing . . . . .	273
Adventures on Foot . . . . .	273
Hiking . . . . .	273
Equipment Rental & Tour Guides . . . . .	273
Services . . . . .	274
Shopping . . . . .	275
Nightlife . . . . .	276

Places to Stay . . . . .	276
Places to Eat . . . . .	278
■ Cayes near Belize City . . . . .	280
Chapel Caye . . . . .	280
Sergeant's Caye & Goff's Caye . . . . .	281
Rendezvous & Paunch Cayes . . . . .	281
St. George's Caye . . . . .	281
Swallow Caye . . . . .	282
Spanish Lookout . . . . .	283
Turneffe Islands Atoll . . . . .	283
Lighthouse Reef Atoll . . . . .	286
■ Cayes near Dangriga . . . . .	290
Tobacco Caye . . . . .	290
Cockney Island . . . . .	291
South Water Caye . . . . .	292
Glover's Reef Atoll . . . . .	293
■ Cayes near Placencia . . . . .	297
Laughing Bird Caye . . . . .	297
Lime Caye . . . . .	298
Hunting Caye . . . . .	298
■ Directories . . . . .	299
General Directory . . . . .	299
Accommodations Directory . . . . .	301
Restaurant Directory . . . . .	303
<b>APPENDIX</b>	
■ Emergency Contacts . . . . .	305
Embassies . . . . .	305
Consulates . . . . .	305
<b>INDEX</b> . . . . .	307

## ◆ Maps

Central America . . . . .	8
Major Archeological Sites, Reserves, . . . . .	13
National Parks & Natural Wonders	
Belize . . . . .	50
Belize City . . . . .	56-57
Belize City Accommodations & Restaurants . . . . .	62-63
Vicinity of Belize City . . . . .	70
Northern Highway . . . . .	74
Community Baboon Sanctuary . . . . .	77
Altun Ha Ruins . . . . .	81
Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary . . . . .	86
Crooked Tree Village . . . . .	88
Orange Walk . . . . .	92
Corozal Town . . . . .	110
Vicinity of Belmopan . . . . .	127
Cahal Pech Ruins . . . . .	134
Caracol Ruins . . . . .	145
San Ignacio . . . . .	151
Xunantunich Ruins . . . . .	166
Tikal Ruins . . . . .	176
Dangriga . . . . .	195
Vicinity of Dangriga . . . . .	199
Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary . . . . .	209
Placencia . . . . .	216
Placencia & Vicinity . . . . .	222
Toledo District . . . . .	226
Punta Gorda . . . . .	236
Ambergris Caye . . . . .	255
Downtown San Pedro . . . . .	262
Caye Caulker . . . . .	275
Turneffe Islands Atoll . . . . .	284
Lighthouse Reef Atoll . . . . .	287
Glover's Reef . . . . .	294