

Deep Blue Adventures

HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR TRAVEL TO BELIZE

BANKS:

Banking hours are shorter in Belize, typically only until 1 or 2 p.m. most days, and in other cases banks close for lunch. Many bank offices have modern conveniences such as ATM machines, but they may be out of order as often as they are working, and nearly all (Barclays/First Caribbean is the current exception) accept only ATM cards issued in Belize. At present, some expats living in Northern Belize cross over into Mexico where they can use their American-issued ATM cards, though they get funds in pesos. This situation with ATMs may be changing soon – look for ATM machines in tourist areas that accept foreign ATM cards.

CURRENCY:

The Belize Dollar (BZ\$) has a fixed rate of exchange of BZ \$2 to US \$1. Most hotels, resorts, restaurants, and tour operators will accept U.S. currency, traveler's checks, or credit cards. When using your credit cards in Belize, most establishments will add a 5% service charge to your bill. Always make sure that you understand which dollar rate is being quoted. Is it Belize Dollars or U.S. Dollars?

CLIMATE:

Belize weather is characterized by two seasons: a rainy and a dry season. Belize annual rainfall: most of the year's rainfall occurs during the period June to November, that is, the rainy season. It is noted that the transition from dry to the rainy is very sharp. Belize annual rainfall ranges from 60 inches (1524mm) in the north to 160 inches (4064mm) in the south. Except for the southern regions, the rainfall is variable from year to year. The mean temperature varies from 81°F/ 27°C along the coast to 69°F/21°C in the hills. The coldest month is January while the highest temperatures are experienced during the month of May.

DEPARTURE TAX:

Departure tax ranges from \$20 to \$55 U.S. Dollars depending on where you're departing from and is payable when you check in for your return flight home. The only acceptable forms of payment are cash (Dollars U.S. or Belize) or Travelers Cheques.

DRINKING WATER:

Potable water is available in most areas of Belize, but it is advisable to ask, and if in doubt, drink boiled or bottled water.

DRIVING LICENSE:

Valid U.S. driver's licenses and international driving permits are accepted in Belize for a period of three months after entry. Driving is on the right-hand side of the road.

ELECTRICITY:

Although Diesel/Generator Sets provide most of the electricity, the power is stable at 110 Volts A.C., which is the same voltage as in the United States. It is best to bring an adaptor as not all accommodations have compatible outlets.

EMERGENCY SERVICES: Dial 911

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS:

All visitors to Belize must present a valid passport before entering the country. Passports must be valid for at least 6 months from date of return. In cases where a visitor remains in the country for over 30 days, an extension of entry must be requested.

MARINE PARKS FEES:

The Blue Hole has a \$40 U.S. fee per diver. Other parks such as Hol Chan and Half Moon Caye charge between \$5 - \$10 U.S. per site.

TOURISM SEASONS:

The busier time of the year for travelers to Belize is November to May, which is the winter month of the Northern Hemisphere. Still, many visitors prefer the more quiet days of the summer months from June to October for their vacation in Belize. Both times of the year have their own unique attractions and the choice of when to visit is totally up to you, your budget and the adventure you crave.

VACCINATIONS:

There are no serious epidemic diseases in Belize. No inoculations are required for entry, but anti-malaria tablets are recommended for extended stays in the jungle. We always suggest you speak to your family physician for a personal recommendation.

WATER TEMPERATURES AND WETSUITS:

Water temperatures generally range between 78 – 80°F. Most people find wearing a 1mm – 3mm wetsuit keeps them comfortable.

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