

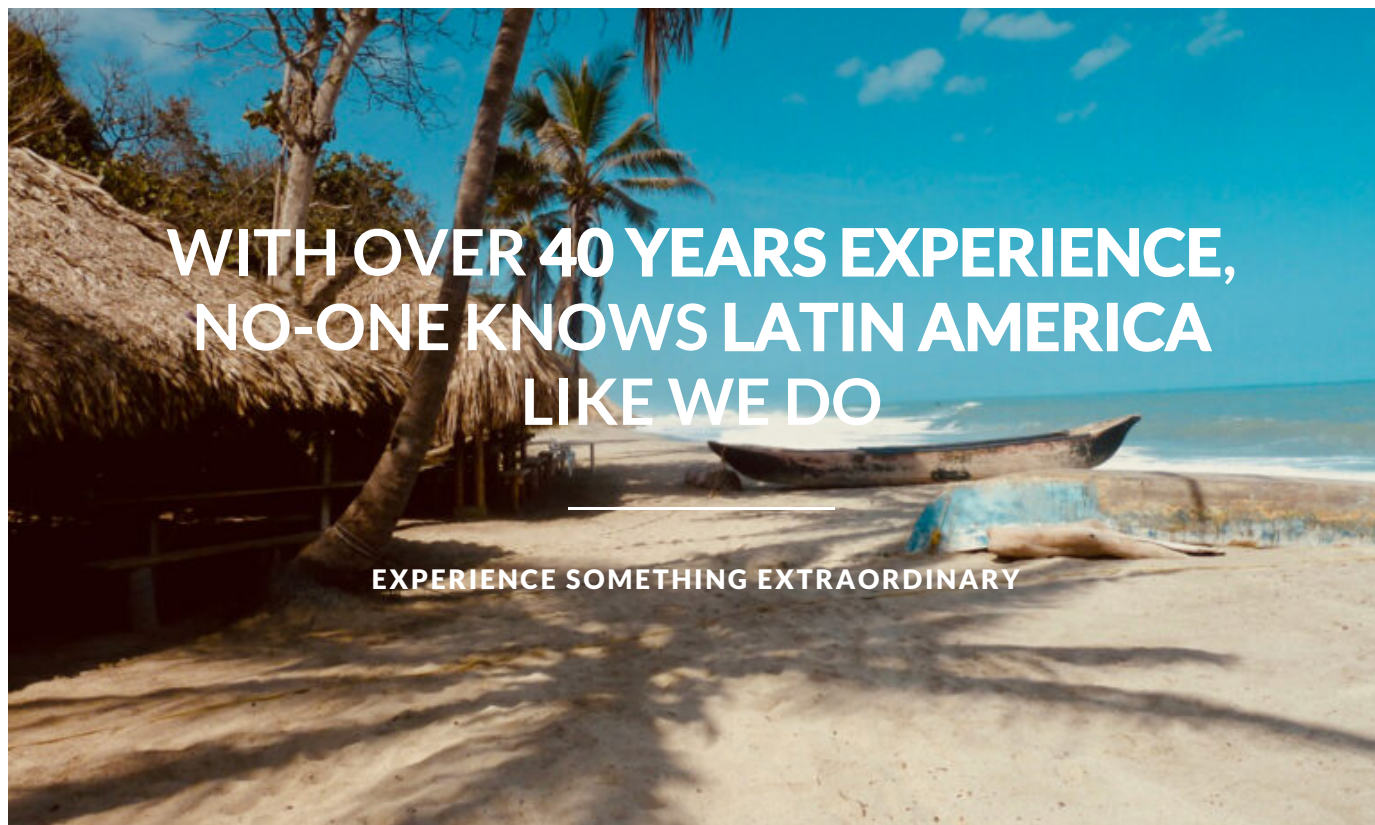


PRIVATE JOURNEYS WITH JOURNEY LATIN

SIGNATURE BELIZE: RAINFOREST, REEF AND RUINS

12 days from **£3,860pp**

**BELIZE / MAYA MOUNTAINS AND JUNGLE / TOLEDO AND THE SOUTH / CARIBBEAN
CAYES AND COAST**



WHY US

We are the UK's No.1 specialist in travel to Latin America and have been creating award-winning holidays to every corner of the region for over four decades; we pride ourselves on being the most knowledgeable people there are when it comes to travel to Central and South America and passionate about it too.

OUR JOURNEY

As our name suggests, we are single-minded about Latin America. This is what sets us apart from other travel companies – and what allows us to offer you not just a holiday but the opportunity to experience something extraordinary on inspiring journeys throughout Mexico, Central and South America.

WE LOVE LATIN AMERICA

A passion for the region runs through all we do

All our Consultants have lived or travelled extensively in Latin America

Up-to-the-minute knowledge underpinned by 40 years' experience

TRAVEL WITH CONFIDENCE

Fully bonded and licensed

ATOL-protected

On your side when it matters

Book with confidence, knowing every penny is secure

THE REAL LATIN AMERICA

Our insider knowledge helps you go beyond the guidebooks

We hand-pick hotels with character and the most rewarding excursions

Let us show you the Latin America we know and love



OVERVIEW & OUTLINE ITINERARY

A comprehensive highlights holiday in one of the world's best eco-destinations. Includes the less visited south, embracing jungle wildlife, active adventures, Mayan ruins and a vibrant Caribbean culture.

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| DAY 1 | Arrive Belize City, transfer to mountain lodge. |
| DAY 2 | Excursion to the Actun Tunichil Muknal caves. |
| DAY 3 | Optional excursion to Tikal or Caracol Mayan ruins. |
| DAY 4 | Transfer to lagoon-side, multi-activity lodge at Lamanai. |
| DAY 5 | Visit to Lamanai Mayan ruins. |
| DAY 6 | Transfer to eco-resort in the southern district Toledo. |
| DAY 7 | Optional active and cultural adventures. |
| DAY 8 | Excursion to Hokeb Ha cave and Ixcacao cocoa plantation. |
| DAY 9 | Transfer to Caribbean beach resort at Placencia. |
| DAY 10 | Optional water sports and wildlife spotting. |
| DAY 11 | Further beach time and sea-sport opportunities. |
| DAY 12 | Transfer to Belize City airport for international flight. |

ITINERARY

On this good-value holiday packed with adventures, you can enjoy many cultural and wildlife-focused experiences. Visit communities of the Mayan and Garifuna peoples, and find out how they live in harmony with nature and the modern world. You even get to visit an artisan chocolate factory.

English-speaking Belize is rapidly becoming one of the world's premier eco-adventure destinations, with a bunch of excellent, high quality lodges scattered through the undisturbed Mayan Mountains and along the coral-fringed Caribbean coast.

The small-scale, eco-friendly accommodation we have chosen is appropriate for lovers of sporting activities too: go caving, hiking, tubing down fast-flowing rivers, kayaking and snorkelling. Experienced guides will be with you all the way.

DAY 1

Arrive Belize City, transfer to mountain lodge.

Arrive in Belize City and transfer by road to your remote forest eco-resort, Pook's Hill Lodge, on the edge of Tapir Mountain Nature Reserve; a journey inland of about 90mins. The thatched property is surrounded by flourishing tropical foliage and rugged hills populated by a multitude of birds and mammals.

DAY 2

Excursion to the Actun Tunichil Muknal caves.

Today you have a day trip to the Actun Tunichil Muknal caves (often referred to as ATM caves though you can't withdraw any cash there!). Here you hike into the caves, cross over underground rivers and enter a giant chamber which was long ago the setting for Mayan religious ceremonies and is stuffed with relics including ceramics and, rather gruesomely, skeletons.

DAY 3

Optional excursion to Tikal or Caracol Mayan ruins.

The Mayan peoples have had a presence in Mexico and Central America since well before the birth of Christ. Their civilisation, which was at its height in the 1st-9th centuries AD has left a legacy of remarkable buildings, sculptures and artefacts featuring their hieroglyphics and reflecting their artistic creativity and knowledge of astronomy and mathematics.

Tikal and Caracol, shrouded by extensive rainforest, are two of the most impressive, long-abandoned Mayan sites, now reclaimed for visitors with their pyramids, sculpted temples, broad plazas and ball-parks. You can choose to visit either on your free day at leisure.

DAY 4

Transfer to lagoon-side, multi-activity lodge at Lamanai.

Transfer back to Belize City and continue by road and river to Lamanai on the woodland-fringed banks of New River Lagoon.

DAY 5

Visit to Lamanai Mayan ruins.

Don't miss the opportunity on one of your days here to discover the nearby Lamanai Maya ruins. In the company of an expert guide, you'll explore the mysterious abandoned jungle-cloaked temples. The ruins encompass over 700 structures, a visitor's centre and museum.

DAY 6

Transfer to eco-resort in the southern district Toledo.

Transfer by water and road back to Belize City airport and take an exhilarating light-aircraft flight to the little port of Punta Gorda on Belize's less-visited southern coast. It's just a short drive on to another adventure-filled, family-friendly property, the Lodge at Big Falls.

The lodge is crammed between the Mayan mountains and the Rio Grande, on a meander of the river with over a kilometre of river frontage.

It's great accommodation for families, with each hardwood or thatched cottages having its own bathroom and three their own kitchenettes.

DAY 7

Optional active and cultural adventures.

Again, there are loads of activities on offer which will suit all sorts of interests and enthusiasms. Try kayaking, snorkelling, caving, and hiking. Cultural activities include a visit to a Mayan or Garifuna indigenous community, to learn about how their long-standing settlements have maintained their traditions and customs.

DAY 8

Excursion to Hokeb Ha cave and Ixcacao cocoa plantation.

You'll follow the path to Blue Creek running along the base of steepening limestone cliffs to arrive at a waterfall and the entrance to the Hokeb Ha Cave. The creek runs out the entrance of the cave, cascading over limestone boulders in the shadow of the surrounding rainforest.

Archaeologists have found many Mayan ceramics and an altar inside the cave, so it was probably a place where religious ceremonies took place. Strong swimmers can travel upstream to the point where the river cascades into a deep pool from a higher cavern, enjoying the limestone formations along the way.

Afterwards, visit Ixcacao, a small-scale, family-run chocolate manufacturer in San Felipe. Ixcacao is the only Mayan chocolate-maker in Belize and supplies the famous company Green & Blacks with organic chocolate. Tour the cocoa grove and have a demonstration on chocolate production with a meal that includes *mole* sauce – scrummy.

DAY 9

Transfer to Caribbean beach resort at Placencia.

Transfer to Placencia, a friendly and low-key beach resort which sits on the tip of a long peninsula in the south of the country. The village is typified by its ramshackle and colourful wooden houses built on stilts, linked by paths weaving under swaying palms rooted in powder-white sands.

Nearby Monkey River and Placencia Lagoon provide good opportunities for spotting wildlife including the rare and comical manatee.

DAY 10

Optional water sports and wildlife spotting.

At leisure in Placencia: explore the village, relax on the beach or by the pools or take out a kayak or paddle board.

Several optional activities can be done in the local area, such as snorkelling trips off idyllic atolls on the barrier reef at Silks Cayes and Laughing Bird Caye. You may see a multitude of technicoloured tropical fish and pristine corals, as well as barracuda, rays and even nurse sharks.

DAY 11

Further beach time and sea-sport opportunities.

At leisure – or perhaps sign up locally for trips in search of the West Indian manatee, a huge, aquatic mammal whose closest relative is the elephant. They have extraordinary, prehistoric looks, at the same time rather sweet and cuddly, with bodies that taper to a flat, paddle-shaped tail, flippers, and heads and faces wrinkled with whiskers on the snout. On your boat trip gliding through lush mangroves in their feeding grounds in Placencia lagoon, you have a good chance of getting up close to these amazing creatures.

DAY 12

Transfer to Belize City airport for international flight.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Services of our team of experts in our London office

Services of Journey Latin America local representatives and guides

All land and air transport within Latin America

Accommodation as specified

Meals as specified

Excursions as specified, including entrance fees

INCLUDED EXCURSIONS

Actun Tunichil Muknal (ATM) Cave

Choice of daily excursions at Lamanai Outpost Lodge

Blue Creek Cave and Ixcacao chocolate maker

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE

Tips and gratuities

Meals other than specified

International flights to Latin America

Airport taxes, when not included in the ticket

Optional excursions

ESSENTIALS

SUMMARY OF NIGHTS

12 days, 11 nights: Mountain Pine Ridge 3; Lamanai 2; Punta Gorda 3; Placencia 3

ACCOMMODATION

This trip uses independent mid-range accommodation that we think is great value, comfortable, well-located and which showcases a touch of local character. Properties vary in heritage from colonial style to remote jungle lodges, but will all be well-equipped with rooms that have private bathrooms. All accommodation is flexible and can be tailored to meet your specific preferences and requirements.

TRANSPORT

2 domestic flights, 4 road journeys

MEALS

Breakfast daily, full board on days 4 and 5

GUIDES

Our local, trusted and carefully selected partners understand the expectations of our customers very well, and their staff and guides are consistently singled out for praise by clients on their return. On this holiday, you will be joined by different guides for each activity and or region, ensuring you benefit from specialised expertise and knowledge, often from someone local to the area.

OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS

As well as any included activities, this Private Journey includes some free time for optional excursions. As optional excursions are often subject to availability, we recommend you discuss and arrange them with your Travel Expert as early as possible before you depart.

A selection of these include:

- Tikal or Caracol Mayan ruins
- Punta Gorda community visit
- Manatee or Whale Shark watching
- Monkey River tour

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GET IN TOUCH WITH US...

Our friendly, knowledgeable team of travel experts are always happy to chat about holiday ideas and share helpful advice. Give us a call today and begin planning your perfect trip to Latin America.

GIVE US A CALL

We'd love to chat

0208 747 8315

OPENING HOURS

Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

SEND US AN EMAIL

tours@journeylatinamerica.com