
GEEO ITINERARY

X – BELIZE and TIKAL – Winter

Day 1: Belize City Arrive at any time.

Arrive in Belize City at any time. Check into our hotel and enjoy the city. The day is free to spend at your leisure exploring this coastal town until our welcome meeting this evening. Check the notice boards or ask at reception for the exact time and location of the group meeting, typically 6:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. After the meeting, you might want to head out for a meal in a nearby local restaurant to further get to know your tour leader and travel companions. Please make every effort to arrive on time for this welcome meeting. If you are delayed and will arrive late, please inform us. Your tour leader will then leave you a message at the front desk informing you of where and when to meet up.

Day 2: Belize City/Flores Cross the border into Guatemala and continue on to Flores.

Enter Guatemala at the northeast jungle Petén region. The descendants of the Maya of Chichén Itzá migrated to the Petén area several centuries after the collapse of the great Mayan cities in the Yucatán. Notice the difference in culture from Belize, with Guatemala's heavy Mayan influence and Spanish language. Approximate travel time: 5-8 hrs via local bus and private vehicle

- 3-4 hrs by local bus (Belize City – Benque Viejo del Carmen)
- 30 min-1.5 hrs (border crossing)
- 1.5-2.5 hrs by private vehicle (Melchor de Mencos – Flores)

Day 3: Flores Enjoy a guided tour of the Tikal archaeological site. Return to Flores and opt to relax and go for a swim in Lake Petén Itzá.

Put on your walking shoes and prepare for a tiring but memorable day walking through history at the impressive site of Tikal. The Mayan site is set in the heart of the jungle in Tikal National Park, now a UNESCO World Heritage site. Along with our bilingual guide, see some of the temples, plazas, carved stone monuments and public squares, more than 3,000 buildings in all, dating from as far back as 600 BC. Climb to the top of Temple IV, catch your breath, take photos, and then sit and contemplate the magnificence of the site and the tropical rainforest beyond. Look for monkeys, anteaters, armadillos, and deer, as well as macaws and eagles, snakes, and spiders. Later, spend the afternoon relaxing, exploring on your own, or going for a swim in Lake Petén Itzá.

Day 4: Flores/San Ignacio Cross back into Belize and the town of San Ignacio, and opt to visit the Mayan ruins of Xunantunich.

Make your way back to Belize this morning by private vehicle. Spend the afternoon touring the Xunantunich Mayan ruins, horseback riding, or relaxing. Hike to the top of Xunantunich, an impressive 9th-century Maya center set high on a natural limestone ridge, and admire the view of the Mopan River, Cayo District, and neighboring Guatemalan countryside. The tallest temple, El Castillo, is partially excavated and explored and there's a unique stucco frieze on the east side of the structure. Discover why Xunantunich is Belize's most visited site with intricately carved stelae, 25 temples, and well-preserved palaces. Another option for the afternoon is to go horseback riding for an extra cost (\$40-65 per person). Choose from one of the 45 horses at our partner's stables and ride over farm trails and forested paths, all the way along the river to the Mayan site of Xunantunich. Enjoy a short guided tour of the site before taking a different trail back to the stables. Watch for native birds, including toucans and parrots, listen for howler monkeys, admire orchids and fruit trees, and breathe in the fresh air of the Belize countryside. Approximate travel time: 3-4 hrs via private vehicle (includes 30-90 min for border crossing)

Day 5: San Ignacio Enjoy a free day to visit the sacred Mayan caves of Actun Tunichil Muknal, or opt to check out Barton Creek Cave, Mountain Pine Ridge, and Caracol.

There's plenty to see and do in San Ignacio, and we want to make sure that you have time to take it all in. Feel free to relax or try optional activities like cave exploring, visiting Mayan ruins, and horseback riding. Your tour leader has more ideas if you need them. Just ask!

Day 6: San Ignacio/Caye Caulker Travel by bus and boat to beautiful Caye Caulker, where "go slow" is the island's motto. Later, explore the island on the G Adventures-supported Bike with Purpose tour.

Travel from San Ignacio to Caye Caulker via local bus and water taxi, then spend the rest of the day exploring Caye Caulker. There are plenty of optional activities that will keep you busy here for days! This afternoon, take a leisurely bike tour around Caye Caulker with a guide from the Bike with Purpose project. See the island through the eyes of a local on this two-hour tour, and live the island's motto of 'Go Slow.' Feel the island breeze in your hair while knowing you're supporting a program that helps youth from Caye Caulker build skills for tourism jobs upon graduation from high school. Approximate travel time: 4-5 hrs via local bus (3-4 hrs) and water taxi (1 hr)

Day 7: Caye Caulker With free time, opt to snorkel in the Hol Chan Marine Reserve, or just chill out, Belizean style.

Free day in Caye Caulker. Feel free to relax or try optional activities like snorkeling, sea kayaking, and sailing. Your tour leader has more ideas if you need them.

Day 8: Caye Caulker Continue to explore Caye Caulker and its water or land-based activities during free time.

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Day 9: Caye Caulker Depart at any time.

Our program ends in Caye Caulker, which is located 1 hr by water taxi from Belize City (an additional 30 min by taxi to the airport). There are frequent ferry departures between 7:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. If flying out of Belize City today, please ensure to book your departure flight after 11:30 a.m. to allow for enough time to reach the airport. Want more adventure? Book two or more GEEO trips in the same year and receive a discount! GEEO will give you 10% off of the lesser value program(s) (up to 3 programs). If you don't see a program that interests you that pairs with this trip, but still would like to extend your time abroad, let us know. We will work with you to find a non-teacher trip from our tour operator's much larger catalog. Even better, if you are an educator, we can still offer you a discounted price on the trip you choose!