

## **The Best of Belize**

### ***Rainforests, Ruins and Wild Life Wonders***

March 2 – 8, 2014

With Gayle Lawrence Journeys of Discovery and Intuitive Master Joanie Ford

Tour Cost: \$1,625.00

All trip participants will receive a “free copy” of Kathryn Harwig’s latest book:

***“Become a Psychic Wanderer – Expand Your Mind and Soul Through Travel”***

Get your life back into balance, experience exquisite natural beauty and discover wild life wonders on the ultimate nature lover’s trip to what may arguably be the world’s most diverse nature travel destination, Belize! It’s hard to comprehend the wealth of wonders tucked inside this tiny country on the edge of the Yucatán Peninsula. You’ll find endless emerald-green rivers, home to an astounding number of bird and wildlife species. Primates forage amongst mountains wrapped in colossal trees and forests. The screech of parrots and howler monkeys rings out through the rainforest, where other exotic creatures travel through a tangle of bromeliads and orchids. The jungle then reveals magnificent ruins of an ancient Mayan civilization, as well as a friendly melting-pot of cultural richness that combines frontier-town thrill with modern environmental consciousness. Travelers will find a magical land that still belongs to the rainforest and the sea...not to man; an untamed land that will touch you with awe and leave you gasping in wonder. And when we tire of exploring—as if we could—the comfort and pleasures of our lovely jungle eco-lodge beckon us to return to rest and reflect on this magical adventure.

**The Maya believed that everything has a Soul...stones, stars, trees and even the journey...  
Come explore the Rainforests, Ruins and Reefs of their ancient world.....**



**Day 1:** Arrive at Belize International airport where a guide will be waiting to transfer you to duPlooy’s Jungle Lodge. If time permits make a stop to visit the Community Baboon Sanctuary. Take a guided nature walk in the forest to learn about the traditional medicinal uses of rainforest plants and to observe Black Howler monkeys in their natural habitat. The Black Howler monkey and the spider monkey are 2 species found in Belize. The most remarkable trait of the howler monkey is its loud, rasping howl, which can be heard roaring across the forest for well over a mile. You will certainly hear this howl as you enter the sanctuary. Upon arrival at duPlooy’s Jungle Lodge relax and enjoy a welcome drink before dinner. **Dinner included**

**Day 2:** No alarm clock is necessary for you’ll probably wake up to the early morning chortle (ruckus) of Chachalacas (aka: bush chickens) just outside your window. After a hearty breakfast we’ll depart for the Mayan site of Cahal Pech which is located on a hill overlooking the town of San Ignacio and sits within a serene jungle-type environment. The area is home to many colorful birds and exotic plants, which also makes it a good place for Birders to visit. The on-site museum is informative and contains a display of artifacts recovered by archeologists. The site consists of 34 structures located around 7 courtyards and the tallest temple stands 77 feet high.

After spending some time at Cahal Pech we'll visit The Iguana Conservation Project where we will have the opportunity to have an up close encounter with the iguanas who are descendants of dinosaurs. We'll learn about how vital they are to the ecological balance of the Macal River eco-system. This hands-on tour is both fun and educational with the iguana's. Enjoy lunch in a local restaurant and then take some time to explore San Ignacio town before heading back to the lodge for a delicious dinner. **B-L-D included**



**Day 3:** Breakfast. Early morning birding walk with a local guide and then a guided tour of the Belize Botanic Gardens with an emphasis on the medicinal plants used by the Maya. Afterwards try your hand at tortilla or tamale making on a Mayan wood fired "fogon" and then enjoy eating what you have prepared as part of a typical Mayan lunch. Afternoon is free to enjoy activities at the lodge, swimming, canoeing, tubing, hike or take a nature walk. Before dinner we'll enjoy a talk about the local archaeology.

Sunset marks the changing of worlds and the jungle really comes alive at night. This evening we'll have a guided night walk and listen to a symphony of night sounds. We're sure to see some fascinating nocturnal animal life that our guide will point out. From the top of the Lookout Tower you have an unobstructed view of the night sky, and are sure to be awed by the clarity and sheer number of stars and constellations you can see. **B-L-D included**



**Day 4. :** Full Day tour. It's worth getting up early to join duPlooy's bird guide on the deck as you can see many exotic species while drinking your morning coffee or tea before breakfast. Our day's adventure will begin at the Rio Frio Cave located in the Mountain Pine Ridge area. If you are a little claustrophobic, this is the perfect cave for you as everything is BIG in this cave!

The two 65-foot arched entry ways leave you in awe. Huge stalactites hang from the massive cathedral-like vault, which is part of a cave system the Maya used to bury their dead. Room size boulders are strewn throughout the cave and a stream flows through, forming pools with cascading falls. Huge openings at both ends make flashlights unnecessary for viewing the cave's formations during daylight hours. There is a beach area with a foot bridge for crossing the stream and getting to the other side. It is a quarter mile through where you exit through another equally impressive cave opening.



After our cave adventure we'll relax with a picnic lunch at Rio On Pools which are a continuous series of pools formed by large granite boulders many of which are connected by small cascading waterfalls. The smooth surface of the boulders make natural water slides and are a great place for a refreshing swim or a hike.



After our picnic at the pools, we'll visit the Green Hills Butterfly Ranch nestled between lime stone hills covered with lush vegetation. Here we will have a tour and delight in a flock of butterflies with colors from brilliant blue to gorgeous orange, dazzling yellow to intriguing gray, all flying freely in a beautifully landscaped flight area.

The butterflies flit amongst tropical plants in a sunken garden with a lovely goldfish pond. This butterfly farm boasts the biggest live butterfly collection in all of Belize. Along with the butterflies they have a botanical collection which includes passionflowers, cycads, heliconia and other plants that feed the butterflies. Green Hills is also renowned for its diversity of birds and over the past decade 230 bird species have been recorded on their 100 acres of land! **B-L-D included**

**Day 5:** Today is a free day to do as you please and choose your own optional local excursions (additional cost – see list). Each activity requires at least 4 guest's and you can choose either 2 half day activities, 1 full day activity, or just 1 half day activity and take the rest of the day to just relax or have a massage or facial. There are plenty of hiking trails to explore on your own, you can relax on the beach and swim, canoe, tube on the river or take a bicycle ride. These lodge activities and equipment are available and included in your trip cost. [Activities at duPlooy's](#) **click here: B-L-D included**

**Day 6:** Half Day tour: Mayan site of Xunantunich (shoo-nahn-too-nitch)

Located close to San Ignacio town and sitting atop a limestone ridge across from the green crystalline waters of the Mopan River and within sight of the Guatemala border, lies the largest Mayan ceremonial center in the Belize River Valley, Xunantunich. A hand-cranked, mechanical ferry is used to carry visitors across the Mopan River, which is located about a mile from the site.



Its name means “Stone Woman” in the Maya language and, like many names given to Maya archaeological sites, this is a modern name taken from local legend. It refers to the ghost of a woman claimed by many local people to inhabit the site.

At 127 feet, the pyramid known as **El Castillo** is the second tallest structure in Belize. It's a steep climb but the view from the top is worth it. At one time its frieze, a banded stucco decoration, extended around the entire pyramid. Today only a small part of the frieze remains which displays masks of the sun god flanked by signs of the moon, Venus and different days. We'll enjoy lunch at a local restaurant before returning to the lodge to enjoy the afternoon.



If you want more adventure today, you have the option to ride horses to visit Xunantunich. Saddle up and depart the lodge at 8 am for a 2 hour ride. Enjoy the beauty of the country side as you ride to the Mayan village of Succotz; Cross the Mopan River on a hand-cranked ferry, yep you ride the horses right onto the ferry and then ride onward and upward the last mile



to the site. Let the horses have a rest as you have a guided tour of these beautiful ruins. If you are feeling a little “saddle sore” after lunch, your guide can arrange a taxi for you back to the lodge. **B-L-D included**

**Day 7:** After breakfast we must say goodbye to our jungle lodge home and return to Belize City for our flights home. We leave the jungle with our mind, body and spirit refreshed by the energy of nature, our Soul nourished by the natural beauty surrounding us and with a deeper appreciation for the magic of all life. We leave with a deeper connection to our inner self and the simple truths that Mother Nature teaches.

#### **duPlooy's Jungle Lodge Accommodations:**

**Belize River House - Macal and Mopan Suites:** Our small, private group will have our own personal house, in a quiet, serene area on the lodge property to enjoy together. The River House is divided into 2 suites with a total of 7 bedrooms (2 beds in each room), 4 large lovely bathrooms and 2 open area living rooms and 2 outdoor covered porches to sit and enjoy the beauty of the surrounding landscape and jungle.

As this is an Eco-Lodge, there is no AC. Normally this is not a problem because the overhead jungle canopy and cooling tropical rains keep rooms quite comfortable most of the year with just an overhead ceiling fan. Would you want to miss out on the pleasure of falling asleep, lulled by the sounds of the nightly chorus of jungle background sounds? Or waking up to the calls and songs of tropical birds that are all a part of an authentic jungle lodge experience? Single Rooms: are available in the Jungle Lodge at a slightly higher cost. See trip details below.

### **BELIZE Jungle Lodge, Rainforests, Ruins and Wildlife** Personally escorted by Gayle Lawrence - Journeys of Discovery

**TOUR COST:** \$1,625.00 per person  
only 14 spaces available at this price in River House on a first come first serve basis  
Price is based on a minimum of 14 guests in shared room River House  
No single room option in River House

Shared rooms are available in the jungle lodge with private bath: \$1,750.00  
single room supplement in Jungle Lodge: \$360.00

#### **What is Included:**

Transfers to and from Belize City, Belize International Airport  
Optional stop at the Belize Zoo or Howler Monkey sanctuary (if time allows...depending on arrival or departure times)  
6 nights' accommodations in duPlooy's Jungle Lodge  
All meals with dinner on arrival day, through breakfast on departure day  
Private group tours as listed in the trip itinerary

Choice of Activities & Tours on the free day  
Includes ALL Taxes & Service Charges

**What is Not Included;**

International airfare to Belize  
Alcoholic beverages, beer, wine  
Personal expenses, phone calls, laundry, room service etc.  
Anything not specifically noted in the tour itinerary  
border crossing fees  
Tips to drivers and private guides

**For reservations and information please contact**

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