

Belize

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Northern cays** The second-biggest reef in the world has plenty of places to strap on your flippers (p230)
- **Lamanai** Spot crocs, birds and turtles on the boat ride to impressive Maya ruins (p238)
- **Hopkins** It may be a one-street beach town with very little to do, but that's why we love it (p252)
- **Best journey** Fishing, snorkeling and camping your way south on an island-hopping sailing tour from Caye Caulker to Placencia (p232)
- **Off the beaten track** The Barton Creek Outpost is a little slice of Eden that won't stay undiscovered for too long (p248)

FAST FACTS

- **Area** 22,966 sq km (slightly larger than Wales or the US state of Massachusetts)
- **ATMs** Foreign cards accepted at Belize Bank ATMs in major towns and cities
- **Budget** US\$40-60 per day
- **Capital** Belmopan
- **Costs** Budget hotel in Belize City US\$20, bottle of beer US\$2, 3hr bus ride US\$5, set lunch US\$5
- **Country Code** ☎ 501
- **Electricity** 110V AC, 60 Hz (same as the USA)
- **Famous for** Reef diving, that Madonna song (*La Isla Bonita*)
- **Head of State** Prime Minister Said Wilbert Musa
- **Languages** English, Spanish, Creole, Garífuna
- **Money** US\$1 = BZ\$2 (Belize dollars); US dollars accepted everywhere
- **Phrases** *Arright?* (an all-purpose hello/how's it going type greeting), *ackin' up* (misbehaving), *fer real* (seriously)
- **Population** 312,200
- **Time** GMT minus 6 hours
- **Traveler's Checks** Cashed at major banks, some restaurants and hotels, and some exchange houses
- **Visas** Not required for citizens of North America, Australia, New Zealand and most EU countries

TRAVEL HINTS

Keep a Belizean dollar in a separate pocket – somebody might ask you for it. And stop walking so fast.

OVERLAND ROUTES

The Mexican border town of Chetumal has good connections into Belize. The other popular entry point is Benque Viejo del Carmen on the Guatemalan border on the road from Tikal.



