

Northern Cayes



Sunset at San Pedro

AMBERGRIS CAYE

The laid-back island atmosphere divers crave when coming to the Caribbean or Central America really comes to the fore when you arrive in San Pedro on Ambergris Caye. Sandy streets, colorful signs and homes, and friendly people are what divers come to the western Caribbean for – and here they get it. The tiny airstrip sits right near the beach and many hotels are within walking distance of the runway. You can get off the plane and just stroll across the tarmac into the hotels such as the Sunbreeze Hotel. You put your stuff in your room and just keep walking through the courtyard to the beach, where you find restaurants, bars and, most importantly, the sea.

San Pedro is a small place with three main sandy streets lined with shops, cafes, delis, local stores and internet outlets. Many residents get around on electric golf carts or bikes, so its pretty quiet and pollution free at the height of a hot, sunny day. The beach scene is a mellow affair with weekend live bands churning out '70s rock and reggae as people sip Beliken beer and watch the light fade into night.

Dive operators depart mostly from docks on the east side of the island. Among the farther sites, there are almost daily trips to places like the famous **Blue Hole** at the northern atoll of Lighthouse Reef (an extremely popular but rather longish trip). Those craving a shorter boat ride can experience the nearby barrier reef dives that are, for the most part, just five to 15 minutes from the dock. The barrier reef is quite close to the Ambergris Caye and diving is quick and easy, though visibility isn't always prime and it can be somewhat surgy, so some divers will put up with the long boat ride to get better visibility and drop-off clarity. Others prefer to make more dives close by, (most shops run up to four a day plus a night dive), or just be back from diving quickly to enjoy the beach and island scene.

The southern end of the barrier reef here has the Hol Chan Marine Reserve, which was established more than two decades ago, and the profusion of marine life is a testament to its success. A lot of the reserve is shallow and in many

<i>Ambergris Caye</i>		GOOD SNORKELING	NOVICE	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
1	MEXICO ROCKS	•	•		
2	BOCA DEL RIO - STATUE			•	
3	TRES COCOS			•	
4	TACKLE BOX CANYONS	•		•	
5	MERMAID'S LAIR			•	
6	ESMERALDA	•	•		
7	TUFFY CANYONS	•	•		
8	THE BORDAH (BORDER)			•	
9	CYPRESS GARDEN			•	
10	PILLAR CORAL		•		
11	EAGLE RAY ALLEY			•	
12	HOL CHAN CUT	•	•		
13	SHARK RAY ALLEY	•	•		

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