



Northern Cayes

Includes ➔

Ambergris Caye	81
Caye Caulker	104
Other Northern Cayes	119
Cayo Espanto	119
Turneffe Atoll	119
Lighthouse Reef	121
Long Caye	122

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Sandro, Caye Caulker (p117)
- ➔ Lazy Croc BBQ, Ambergris Caye (p99)
- ➔ Hidden Treasure, San Pedro (p99)
- ➔ Habaneros, Caye Caulker (p117)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Caribbean Villas Hotel & Bird Sanctuary, San Pedro (p93)
- ➔ Ak'bol Yoga Retreat, Ambergris Caye (p95)
- ➔ Barefoot Beach Belize, Caye Caulker (p114)
- ➔ Sea Dreams Hotel, Caye Caulker (p112)

Why Go?

Daydream a little. Conjure up your ultimate tropical island fantasy. With over 100 enticing isles and two amazing atolls, chances are that one of the northern cayes can make this dream a reality.

If you imagined stringing up a hammock on a deserted beach, there is an outer atoll with your name on it. Pining to be pampered? You can choose from an ever-growing glut of ritzy resorts on Ambergris Caye. San Pedro is prime for dancing the night away to a reggae beat, while Caye Caulker moves at a slower pace.

But the islands are only the beginning: the Northern Cayes' richest resource lies below the surface of the sea. Only a few miles offshore, the barrier reef runs for 80 miles, offering unparalleled opportunities to explore canyons and coral, to face off with nurse sharks and stingrays, and to swim with schools of fish painted every color of the palette.

When to Go

During the peak tourist season – from December to April – prices for accommodations are significantly higher – sometimes by as much as 50%. The trade-off is that the weather is predictably warm and wonderful. If you happen to find yourself on the cayes during the hot summer months you can enjoy the opening of lobster season, which is celebrated with much fanfare on Ambergris and Caye Caulker. In August San Pedro is the site of Belize's biggest street festival, the International Costa Maya Festival.

Northern Cayes Highlights

1 Availing yourself of the amazing array of aquatic activities – from kitesurfing and paddle-boarding to snorkeling and diving – in laid-back **Caye Caulker** (p104)

2 Being surrounded by nurse sharks and stingrays at **Shark Ray Alley** (see boxed text, p90)

3 Watching the sun set and feeding the tarpons at San Pedro's **Sunset Restaurant** (p98)

4 Kayaking to investigate the birdlife at the **Caye Caulker Forest Reserve** (p105)

5 Catching sight of a West Indian manatee frolicking in the shallow waters off **Swallow Caye Wildlife Sanctuary** (p108)

6 Cruising out to Lighthouse Reef to descend into the darkness of the **Blue Hole Natural Monument** (p120) and spying on the rare red-footed booby at **Half Moon Caye** (p121)

