

Belize District

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Celebrity Restaurant (p62)
- ➔ The Ice Cream Shoppe (p62)
- ➔ Nerie's II Restaurant (p62)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Crooked Tree Lodge (p72)
- ➔ Maruba Resort Jungle Spa (p75)
- ➔ Black Orchid Resort (p69)
- ➔ Tropical Education Center (p78)

Why Go?

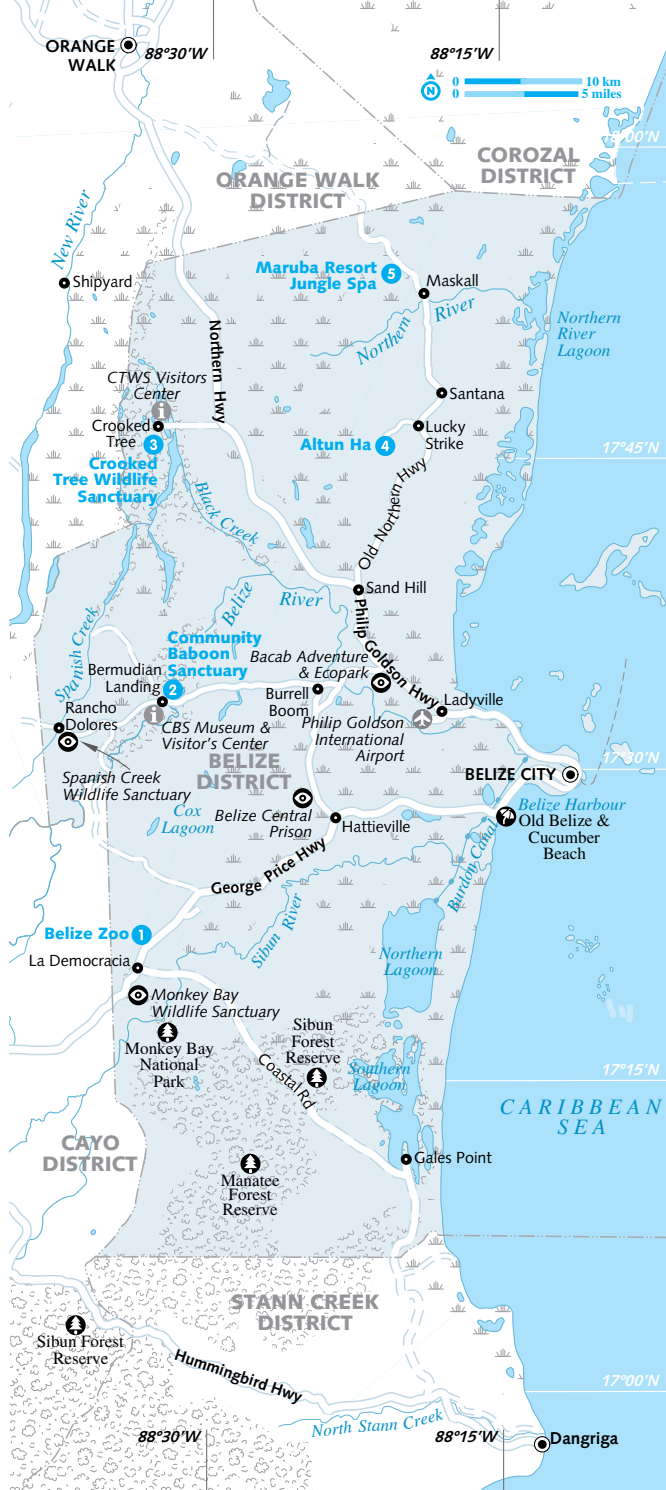
What a contrast is the district that shares its country's name! Belize District comprises 1600 sq miles at the heart of the country, and includes its largest population center and some of its most pristine tropical bush.

Belize City gets a bad rap for its impoverished areas, some of which are plagued by crime and violence. But the seaside city also embodies the country's amazing cultural diversity, its neighborhoods packed with people, restaurants and shops that represent every ethnicity.

A few miles out of the city center, the gritty Caribbean urbanism crumbles, revealing a landscape of vast savannah that stretches to the north, dense tropical forest to the west, and lush marshland to the south. There is plenty to see and do in Belize District – so much that a weeklong visitor could spend their entire vacation here, sampling the country's Maya heritage, Creole culture and luxuriant wildlife, all within an hour's drive of the city.

When to Go

- ➔ **Mar** Baron Bliss Day and Ruta Maya canoe race are both accompanied by colorful parties.
- ➔ **May** Crooked Tree goes nuts for a weekend during the Cashew Festival.
- ➔ **Sep** Belize City engages in two weeks of festivities from National Day (September 10).



Belize District Highlights

- 1 Belize Zoo (p77)**
Getting a firsthand introduction to all of the zoo's native species.
- 2 Community Baboon Sanctuary (p70)**
Spending a night surrounded by the roar of howler monkeys.
- 3 Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary (p71)**
Cruising the lagoon and marveling at the birdlife.
- 4 Altun Ha (p74)**
Admiring the view from atop the Temple of the Masonry Altars.
- 5 Maruba Resort Jungle Spa (p75)**
Indulging in an afternoon of luxurious pampering in the jungle.