

# Public Health Outreach and Research in Belize



# Belize - Public Health Outreach and Research

## Overview

### Includes;

- Accommodation at volunteer house
- 3 Meals a day
- English-speaking, on-site Kaya group leader
- All transfers from airport and to excursions
- Guided visit to Cahal Pech
- Guided tour of Xunantunich
- Tour of Maya Mountains including 1000 foot falls, Rio Frio caves and Rio Hondo pools
- Mayan culture day with Women's Cooperative
- US \$3Million liability insurance to protect your University and your participants

### Does not include:

- International flights
- Medical Insurance
- Visas, (if required)
- Tips and Gratuities
- Personal expenses and baggage fees

## The Project

We will be working with our project partners in the San Ignacio area, who work with local farming communities in San Ignacio and surrounding villages. Many people lack public health education as it relates to the use of pesticide and herbicide and the effect on Human health. There will be the opportunity to visit projects and understand the local challenges and support our project partners in delivering help and support through workshops and outreach programs.



## Community Discussions:

Students will also be working with the local communities to discuss issues where cultural barriers and taboos prevent openness and acceptance amongst the community. The students will help facilitate discussion and information provision in a non-judgmental and safe environment. Topics could include areas such as sexual activity, HIV/AIDS, pregnancy, types of abuse and drug use. These discussion groups could be with all aspects of the community, from primary school children, to youth and adults.

## Research

There is also the opportunity for students to conduct research into a particular topic, to help identify particular needs in the local community (for example, the use of harmful chemicals in farming and the lifespan of such ) The results of the research can be

disseminated to relevant local partners and agencies, and plans developed for actions that can be taken to address the issues identified.

## Itinerary

### Day 1: Mon Arrive in Belize city (D)

The group will fly into Belize City (Philip Goldson International Airport) . At the airport upon arrival you will be welcomed by your Kaya group leader who will escort you for the duration of your trip. From here we will drive around 2.5h to the Cayo District and the town of San Ignacio, which will be our home for the next 2 weeks.

Tonight we will settle into our accommodation, enjoy our first Belizean dinner and relax after our long journey.



### Day 2:- Tue - Orientation (B,L,D)

We will start our day off with an orientation to the program. Once we are settled and know a bit more about whats happening we will take some tours of the placement sites that we will be working in.

In our orientation we will learn more about the people of Belize and as we learn more about the ancient Mayan culture, we will take our first trip to visit Cahal Pech

Cahal Pech was a palatial hilltop home for an elite Maya family, with evidence of habitation as early as 1200BC - making this the oldest recognizably Mayan site in Western Belize.

After an action-packed first day, we will have a relaxing evening with dinner at the volunteer house.

### Day 3-5: Wed-Fri The working week (B,L,D)

We will spend our weekdays working in the three areas described in the project section. Daily activities will depend on the needs of our partners at the time but will focus on supporting community initiatives, group discussions and participant research in communities.

### Day 6: Sat - Mountain Pine Ridge (B,L,D)

We will spend today on a tour of the Maya Mountains, in The Mountain Pine Ridge area; where we will visit the thousand feet falls, rio frio caves and rio hondo pools.

### Day 7: Sun - Mayan Culture (B,L,D)

We will spend the day experiencing the Culture and life of the Maya people. We will learn to make corn tortillas by hand as well as clay pots. Our teachers will be the a local women's cooperative that teaches people about Mayan culture to support themselves.

### Day 8-11: Mon-Thu - The working week (B,L,D)

Our weekday sessions will continue with us supporting the research, education and health initiatives.

### Day 12: Fri - Volunteer Day (B,L,D)

Today we will get our hands dirty helping to construct a sustainable home for children who outgrow the orphanage system in Belize. We will help to construct houses made from earthbags that are made from local materials. This will be a great way for us to spend a day working as a team and making a tangible impact to the community in Belize

**Day 13: Sat - Market and Xunantunich (B,L,D)**

We will spend the morning visiting the market in San Ignacio, where we can buy some souvenirs and try some fresh fruits.

In the afternoon we will visit Xunantunich, a famous Mayan temple. For a really exciting change we can do this visit on horseback!

**Day 14: Sun - Departure (B)**

All good things must come to an end and today we head back to the airport for our flight home

**Accommodation**

For the duration of this program, the group will be staying together at the volunteer guest house, known as Nefrey's Retreat

A short walk from the main street in San Ignacio, Nefrey's offers us comfortable and spacious twin and three-person rooms with en-suite facilities and air conditioning - which is very welcome in the summer months.

The en-suite bathrooms have hot and cold showers and each room also has a supply of purified water and a cooler.

The group will eat together with other visiting volunteers each day in the dining room for breakfast and dinner and be provided pack lunches each day to take out to our place of work.

During our stay we will also host an 'international foods' evening, where participants will be invited to take over the kitchen to cook and share their national dishes in a cultural culinary exchange.

There is free Wi-Fi at the house and a spacious outdoor seating area where students can catch up on their journals, or relax in a hammock.

