

Soggy Paws Belize Inland Trip Notes Late June 2007

Books and Reference Material			
Central America on a Shoestring	Another good pub from Lonely Planet.		
Buses			
Local Bus	\$3.50 US to go from Belize City to San Ignacio one way (pay the driver's assistant when asked). Buses leave approx every half hour. If at Cucumber Beach Marina, can flag it down as it goes by. Stops in Belmopan for ~15 minutes for snacks and bathroom. Ends in the square at San Ignacio. Approx 2 hour trip.		
San Ignacio – Hotels			
<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Description</u>
Venus Hotel	In Lonely Planet		After looking at a couple of rooms, and trudging around in the heat, we ended up back at the Venus hotel, in their nice room with private bath, king size bed, and A/C, for about \$37/nite US. There are much cheaper alternatives if you forgo the A/C. We might have stayed somewhere else if they'd had rooms with A/C available. All the budget rooms were booked.
San Ignacio – Eating			
Evas	Across the street from Venus and down a few doors		Reasonable food. Internet café. Water bottle refills, some flies.
Serendib	Right next door to Venus		Sri Lankan cuisine.
Erva's	A block or 2 from the main part of town		On a quiet street, good clean food and reasonable prices.
San Ignacio – To Do			
Xunantunich Ruins	We did this one on our own. We took a local bus out to the ruins area. We got off the bus at the free car ferry, and paid a local taxi \$2.50 US to go across on the ferry with us and take us up to the entry point of the site (you CAN walk it, but it's hot and uphill). We paid about \$5 pp to get in (but received no pamphlet or anything, just a wave up the hill to the information building). There was a nice information center with pictures, maps, and explanations, and a set of bathrooms, but no concessions, vendors, glitzy tourist crap, or crowds of people. It was a nice quiet site. We were limited on time but you can see the whole thing in about 1-2 hours.		
Cave's Branch Tubing (aka Jaguar Paw)	We booked this Tour thru Eva's for \$65 pp US, which included round trip shuttle bus with driver, guide, entry to 'park', inner tube, and bag lunch (sandwich). Our guide was Joanne August (a freelance). An hour drive, a 30 minute hike through the forest carrying an inner tube, and then a nice 3 hour easy float down through the caves. There was only one other group of 4 within sight. But Joanne says that on Cruise Ship days (Thursdays) they take groups of 45 people down through the caves! Joanne was very good and the tour was good. The driver did not speak any English. We didn't realize that this is the cave tubing place that is not far from Belize City. Might be cheaper to book as a tour from Belize City. Would be hard to get to on your own because a long road off the main bus route.		
Actun Tunichil Muknal	We booked this one through Mayawalk Tours for \$80 US pp. This is a 'strenuous' hike through a huge series of caves, with a number of Mayan artifacts (pottery and human remains) plainly visible. This included transportation (~2hr van ride), entry to the park, lunch, and a guide for the day.		
Belize Zoo	The Belize Zoo is actually not far outside of Belize City (about half hour by bus from Cucumber Beach). We did this on our own, on the way back from San Igancio. We just had the bus driver stop at the zoo. And later caught another bus heading on. Entry was \$10 US pp. Small zoo but clean and well kept. Fairly good 1-sheet guide to the animals (all local Belizean species).		

San Ignacio Area Tour Companies

Mayawalk	Across from Eva's in Central San Ignacio http://mayawalk.com/		We used both of these companies for different trips.
Eva's	Across from Mayawalk (in LP) http://www.evasonline.com/		They are comparable and charge about the same for the same tour.
August Family	Family of private tour guides	804-2582 Or 623-8989	We met daughter Joanne August, who was our English-speaking tour guide for the Cave's Branch tour. She and her family are all certified Belizean tour guides. They freelance for the tour companies and the cruise ships. They could put together private tours at maybe cheaper rates than the tour companies (especially off season). Each family member specializes in a different Belizean site and cover everything from jungle hikes to tubing in caves to ruins jennisaugust@yahoo.com