

Latin America Program: Summer 2018 Itinerary

Please note that the Itinerary listed below is tentative and subject to change without notice.

Programme for Belize Rainforest (6 nights)

Visit the Maya site of La Milpa

La Milpa is the 3rd Largest Maya site in the country of Belize. Students will visit on-going excavations, participate in the investigation, and see the oldest elite residential structure at La Milpa (nearly 2,000 years old).

Visit the Maya site of Lamanai via jungle river

Journey to Lamanai ("Submerged Crocodile) via a speed boat and experience Belize's second largest Maya site. You will be able to climb the High Temple (103' feet tall) and experience the greatest view at La Milpa.

Tour rainforest trails with lessons on local flora and fauna

You will experience 3 short hikes throughout the Programme lands and be introduced to the amazing diversity of jungle life (trees, plants, and animals).

Visit traditional Maya shaman and dancers

Visit one of the few remaining Maya shamans trained in the indigenous field of medicinal healing. You will learn how the Maya used native plants to address illnesses ranging from headache to infertility. In addition, you will see a traditional dance performance conducted by young Maya women at the community of Augustin Pine Ridge.

Service learning: volunteering for a Maya community

Students will visit a local Maya school

Maya Center (2 nights)

Visit the Maya village of Maya Center

Maya Center is a present-day Maya village in southern Belize. Students will visit a cacao plantation, participate in the volunteer at the plantation, meet a well-known Maya shaman, learn how to make chocolate and learn about the history of Maya Center from a village elder.

Visit the premier botanic garden in Belize, Du Plooy's

Du Plooy's is a large garden, whose main work is encouraging sustainable agriculture, maintaining conservation collections and engaging in conservation education.

Belize River Valley (7 nights)

Tour San Ignacio Market

The market is the heartbeat of both ancient and modern Latin America. Visit the local market and observe how goods are bartered and exchanged.

Visit Maya site of Xunantunich

A short ferry ride gets you to the site of Xunantunich and the spectacular “El Castillo” structure. Climbing El Castillo will give you one of the most beautiful views in the country.

Visit Maya site of Cahal Pech

This well-known Maya site is almost entirely reconstructed and is only a 5-minute walk from our hotel. You will see excellent examples of stone-cut residential and temple architecture.

Actun Tunichil Mucnal Cave (ATM Cave)

Visit the most amazing Maya cave site in the country of Belize. In fact, this tour has been voted “The Most Outstanding Cultural Destination in Central America” for the past three years. You will navigate the tight confines of the cave for three hours and come face-to-face with sacred offerings and sacrificial victims.

Volunteering at Octavia Waight Elderly Clinic

Santa Monica College has been assisting at this elderly care facility for nearly a decade. You will have the privilege of meeting these wonderful individuals, sharing stories, playing bingo, and assisting in dinner.

Dinner in traditional Maya community

The group will visit the Maya community of San Antonio and be served a traditional Maya dinner.

Visit Maya site of Xunantunich

A short ferry ride gets you to the site of Xunantunich and the spectacular “El Castillo” structure. Climbing El Castillo will give you one of the most beautiful views in the country.

Flores, Guatemala (4 nights)

Visit Maya site of Tikal

Locked in the jungles of the Peten is the largest and most famous Maya site of all. You will spend an entire day exploring Tikal’s massive ruins and visiting the local museum. The day culminates with the climbing of the tallest standing Pre-columbian structure in the Americas: The great temple of the “Warrior King.”

Attend a catholic mass

Visit the local marketplace

The market is the heartbeat of both ancient and modern Latin America. Visit the local market and observe how goods are bartered and exchanged. Compare this experience with what was observed in San Ignacio.

Sunset lake tour

Ambergris Caye/San Pedro Island (2 nights)

Snorkel the Great Barrier Reef of Belize

This amazing all-day adventure takes you, via a Catamaran sailboat, to the second largest barrier reef in the world. You will spend an entire day exploring and snorkeling at the reef. You will then sail to the neighboring island of Caye Caulker for lunch.

Volunteering at local school

You will visit the local middle school on the island and provide tutoring assistance to the children.