

The Blue Lagoon

Adventure Zones Next Door

These eco-playgrounds may feel far away, but you'll be there in five hours or less

BELIZE

Why we love it

It's amorous and adventurous. Nestled between Mexico and Guatemala, Belize is ideal for high-octane honeymooners. Make the most of its mix of reef and rainforest by heading inland to Mayan sites, then east to one of dozens of *cayes* (pronounced "keys") and dive spots. At night, cuddle up in a hammock for two and relive the day's top adrenaline rush.

How to enjoy it

Major in Mayan. Home to impressive Mayan ruins, Belize teems with treasures from this advanced ancient civilization. Must-see sites are the magnificent structures and mystifying hieroglyphics at Caracol and Xunantunich. Climb to the top of Xunantunich's "El Castillo" for panoramic views.

Go remote. Intrepid twosomes should visit Actun Tunichil Muknal in the Cayo District. Only select guides are licensed to lead expeditions into this remote cave used centuries ago by Mayan rulers for human sacrifice. You'll have to plunge into icy rivers and navigate rocky precipices—but the Indiana Jones-like thrills make every precarious step worth it.

Swim with sharks. And stingrays, octopi and grouper at Shark Ray Alley, a sandbar on the tip of Ambergris Caye. All you need to explore this underwater world is a snorkel, fins and a good guide—ask for one of the Bradley brothers.

Where to unwind

Blancaneaux Lodge Francis Ford Coppola's sanctuary serves



El Castillo at Xunantunich

up rustic luxury, delectable pizza and Coppola wines in the middle of a gorgeous pine forest. (Doubles from \$250; 800/746-3743 or blancaneauxlodge.com)

Victoria House The new sea-view Infinity suites at this inn on Ambergris Caye are light and inviting. Savor sevice and snapper sandwiches at Palmilla Restaurant. (Doubles from \$175; 800/247-5159 or victoria-house.com)

The Lodge at Chaa Creek This well-appointed lodge has gorgeous grounds, suites with sweeping decks and one of the top spas in Belize—don't miss a massage. (Doubles from \$300; 877/709-8708 or chaacreek.com) —Blane Bachelor
(For more info, 800/624-0686 or travelbelize.org)