

## Packing for Belize

### General Guidelines

- Luggage: 1 checked bag, 1 carry-on bag, and 1 small personal item as carry-on. Pack your carry-on bag so that you can survive for a couple of days if your checked luggage does not arrive the same time that you do (clothes, toiletries, etc.). Be smart – think light. Remember you *must* be able to carry all your own baggage at once. Check out a travel light web site like <https://www.onebag.com/> for strategies on packing efficiently.
- American Airlines regulations (subject to change):
  - Carry-on bag: max: 40 lbs., 45 linear inches (L + W + H)
  - Checked bag: max: 50 lbs., 62 linear inches (L + W + H) REMEMBER the weight limit when you purchase souvenirs!
  - Examples of 1 small personal item allowed as carry-on: camera, small briefcase, small backpack, purse
- Transport Security Administration rules limit the amount of liquids you may bring in a carry-on. You may bring *one quart-sized bag* of liquids, aerosols, gels, creams and pastes in your carry-on bag and through the checkpoint. No one item in the bag may exceed 3.4 ounces (100 milliliters). Most travel-sized items meet these restrictions. These restrictions do not apply to your checked luggage. Check the TSA web site for other restricted items. <https://www.tsa.gov/travel/travel-tips/travel-checklist>.
- Be prepared to remove your shoes, belt and jacket at security, and to remove a laptop, if you have one. You will also have to remove your bag of liquids.
- Lithium-ion batteries (cell phones, portable speakers, etc.) may only be carried in your carry-on. They may not be packed in checked luggage.
- Do not wear expensive jewelry or carry other expensive items in an obvious way that would draw attention to yourself. Secure your money, passport, credit cards, etc. in a place that would be hard to access (e.g. not inside the back flap of a day pack or in the back pocket of your jeans).
- Be sure to pack any essential medications (or anything else you cannot live without) in your carry-on. While your checked luggage usually does arrive with you, you don't want to net your life on it.

### Vaccinations

The CDC recommends, in addition to all routine vaccinations that you should have anyway, that travelers to Belize be current on Hepatitis A and Typhoid. Malaria is the other question that often comes up. According to the CDC, the risk of malaria is low in Belize, and most people just exercise a good bite-avoidance strategy (i.e. being proactive about applying repellent), but you should discuss with your own doctor whether to take a course of anti-malarial prophylactics. Please review the information on the CDC web site and make decisions that seem reasonable to you and your doctor.

[https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/belize?s\\_cid=ncezid-dgmq-travel-single-001](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/belize?s_cid=ncezid-dgmq-travel-single-001)

I offer the following additional comments. A single dose of the Hepatitis A vaccine protects you for a year. If you get a second shot six months after the first, your protection is extended to 20-years. If you plan on more extensive travel overseas in the next year or so, and your doctor recommends a Hepatitis B vaccine, there is a combined Hep A/B vaccine that covers both. The CDC site has more information on why someone might want the Hep B vaccine.

## Packing List

### Documents

- Passport
- Credit card / ATM card
- Cash
- Copy of itinerary
- Emergency contact / medical information printed out

### Clothes

Light clothing: Cotton is light and breathes, but stays wet from rain or sweat. Shiny technical fabrics wick moisture away from your skin and dry quickly, but can be warmer than cotton on a hot day. Newer cotton-feel technical fabrics combine moisture wicking qualities with good breathability, keep you cool and dry quickly. It's all tradeoffs... any of these will work fine. Technical fabrics are easy to wash in a sink and dry quickly. Cotton often takes much longer to dry in the Belize climate.

Nothing real fancy or dress up. Long pants or skirts are best for casual wear. Shorts are okay for tourist sites, but not too short. *Think modest*, as Belizeans dress conservatively by American standards.

- Shirts: T-shirts (5-8 if cotton, 4-6 if technical) and perhaps a few short-sleeved shirts/blouses.
- Light, breathable long-sleeved shirt to protect yourself from the sun. It will mostly be warm, but it can drop to the upper 60's in the evenings, so bring something lightweight and long-sleeved in case of a cool evening or a cool breeze on a boat ride. Whatever you bring to survive the trip to the airport in early March in Ohio should be sufficient.
- At least one set of "grubby" or "work" type clothes including shoes for muddy conditions. Normally we wear long pants when working. Remember you may be climbing up and down ladders, kneeling on roofs or in the dirt. You will want to protect your legs and knees.
- Pants / Skirts (2-4 pair, at least one lightweight). Jeans are fine, but can be hot on the island. Don't limit yourself only to jeans.
- Shorts (2-3 pair, depending on how likely you are to wear shorts vs long pants. Nothing too short.)
- Swim suit
- Athletic clothing (may have opportunity for volleyball or basketball)

- ❑ Head covering (hats, bandanas, etc.) during prolonged periods in the sunshine. This is not optional; you need to protect yourself from the sun!
- ❑ Shoes (something for working, but also lighter, cooler options like sneakers, Keens, etc.)
- ❑ Belt
- ❑ Umbrella and/or rain poncho/jacket. Think light, packable and breathable where possible.
- ❑ Bring a towel. Microfiber travel towels are inexpensive, absorb lots of water per square meter and dry quickly.
- ❑ Other items, like socks and undergarments, as needed. Bring enough to be clean, but it's reasonable to plan to wash some things in the sink along the way.

## Electronics

- ❑ Most cell phones work in Belize. Using your U.S. plan in Belize can be very expensive on regular International roaming (see next bullet for options), but prices with the local phone companies are very reasonable. You can buy a Belize SIM card for US\$5.50, and then buy voice minutes and/or data. Voice (Belize-to-Belize) costs US\$0.25/min. Data is US\$5 for 1GB, US\$15 for 2.4GB, US\$20 for 5GB. Reception may be “spotty” in the Toledo District (south). You can recharge your Belize SIM around the country at convenience stores, groceries and gas stations. The most cost-effective way to call home is to buy data, then use something like Skype or FaceTime.
- ❑ Verizon and AT&T both have a plan that allows you to roam in Belize for \$10/day, using your regular allotment of voice, texts and data. You keep your regular SIM and phone number and you receive the same calls you would here. Calling home is not long distance, but calling a number in Belize is an international call. You only pay for days that you actually use data (includes background data use, so watch your settings), and you must set up these plans before you go.
- ❑ Phone charger. Belize uses the same outlets and power that we do so no adapters are needed. Bring any chargers and cables you might need for your electronics. We will bring a battery pack that you can use to charge via USB while away from power. Though it is not large enough for everyone to charge at once, it will charge 8 phones before it needs recharging. You may want to bring a small one of your own to hold you over while away from electricity during the day.
- ❑ Camera. We recommend small cameras that are easy to pocket. Smart phone cameras are very good these days, and it makes one less thing to carry.
- ❑ Portable speaker. As a group, you may want to check amongst yourselves and see if any of you have a portable speaker you would like to bring (UE Boom, etc.). These can be nice on the busses and in the hotels, but one or two is probably sufficient.

## Gear

- ❑ Day pack for carrying to job sites and when we visit tourist places.
- ❑ Water bottle (and perhaps a belt holder if you like to carry it that way)

- Sunglasses
- Flashlight. Small is fine; anything that makes a bit of light to navigate by. You may use your smartphone for this, but we find a separate flashlight to be useful.
- Work gloves (optional). If you have a pair, you might find them useful. We will have some as well.

## Toiletries

Walmart and similar stores have a travel size section in the pharmacy. A mirror or two can be shared by the group

- Mosquito repellent (with DEET), "anti-itch", mosquito netting is optional
- Sunscreen (30 SPF or higher)
- Travel sized soap and shampoo. Most of our hotels will provide that, but not all in Belize do. Be prepared for either case.
- Travel-sized Kleenex
- Possibly a roll of TP. Small travel rolls are available online.
- Powdered detergent? (may share)
- Your regular toiletries... toothbrush, toothpaste, etc. Don't forget any special needs, like contact lens cleaner, etc.
- Any necessary medications (with prescription bottles). Prescription medications must be in original containers because of customs. Anti-diarrheal / upset stomach meds (recommended).

## Other Items

- Any snacks you want to share and remind you of the U.S. Sometimes we may be irregular in eating times, so it can be useful to carry a few trail mix bars, candy bars, or whatever would hold you over until we eat.
- Spending money for souvenirs and any extras you want. Students generally bring \$100 - \$300 range. Credit cards will work, but may include a percentage charge for international use as determined by your own bank. Getting money from an ATM will cost a fee from a debit card. It is much more expensive to get money from an ATM with a credit card.
- A small game (for evenings or airports, etc.) and perhaps a couple of paperback books to share with the group.
- Any items you may wish to leave/donate in Belize (clothing, etc.)
- Plastic bag(s) to place dirty laundry/muddy boots in while in your luggage/suitcase. We suggest two kitchen garbage bags, one gallon-sized ziplock, and two quart-sized ziplocks. They take almost no space and weigh next to nothing.

## ALSO....

- ❑ No “dating” Belizeans. Many Belizeans view romance as a ticket to the U.S.
- ❑ Be cautious about giving out your home phone numbers – unless you want some collect calls unexpectedly.
- ❑ Do not invite strangers to our rooms.
- ❑ When going out, travel in small groups of 4 or 5 (with at least 1 male, if possible). Approval to leave the location MUST be received from your professor(s) before leaving the place where we are staying.
- ❑ Do not attempt to bring any fruit or vegetables back to the U.S.
- ❑ Do not take anything from the reef.
- ❑ BE SENSITIVE TO THE FEELINGS OF OTHERS– not just in our group but especially to our Belizean hosts. THINK before you make a comment, that could offend a Belizean.
- ❑ Also be sensitive what you post on the web (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc). Consider that Belizeans may see your posts.
- ❑ You may be asked to be Facebook, etc., friends. This is okay, if you want this.
- ❑ Remember that you are representing Kenyon, the USA and yourself while in Belize – be a good representative.