BELIZE

BLUE HOLE · MAYA · RAINFOREST

16–30 DECEMBER 2027 | 15 DAYS · 14 NIGHTS



A RETURN TO LEGENDARY PLACES

Join Frank Wirth on a very personal journey back to Belize: the country where he filmed for German television at the Belize Zoo in 2002/03 and where he completed more than 300 dives at the Great Blue Hole in 1990/91.









Nonstop from Frankfurt with Discover Airlines · Special Belize Zoo photographic visit · 7 nights at Lighthouse Reef · 6 diving days · Maya temples and underground rivers

AN EXPEDITION WITH A PERSONAL STORY

An extraordinary combination of world-class diving, ancient Maya civilisation, tropical rainforest and native wildlife, carefully designed for a small group of around 12–14 participants.

Frank Wirth returns to the Belize Zoo

In 2002 and 2003, Frank spent several weeks filming at the Belize Zoo for German television, particularly with Ellen, the black jaguar. He knew the zoo's pioneering founder Sharon Matola personally. We plan a private, photography-focused visit to revisit this remarkable conservation institution, photograph Belize's native animals and celebrate Sharon's legacy.

Frank Wirth returns to the Great Blue Hole

During 1990 and 1991, Frank logged more than 300 dives at the world-famous Great Blue Hole. Returning decades later is a central personal highlight of this journey. Offshore at Lighthouse Reef, our group will explore coral walls, reef formations and the spectacular marine environment of Half Moon Caye.

At a glance

- Proposed nonstop flights: Frankfurt – Belize City with Discover Airlines
- A private photo-oriented visit to the Belize Zoo (subject to confirmation)
- Ancient Maya sites: Xunantunich and Cahal Pech
- Guided cave tubing / cave floating through a remarkable underground landscape
- Four nights at Ian Anderson's Caves Branch Jungle Lodge
- Seven nights on Long Caye at Itza Resort, Lighthouse Reef
- Six diving days with 12 planned dives plus one additional night dive
- Great Blue Hole, Half Moon Caye Wall and other outstanding atoll reefs
- Final-day choice of Lamanai by riverboat or birdwatching at Crooked Tree

Route: 1 night Belize City → 4 nights Caves Branch → 7 nights Itza Resort → 2 nights Belize City.

YOUR JOURNEY · DAY BY DAY

Day 01 · Thu 16 Dec | Arrival in Belize City

We plan to arrive on Discover Airlines' new nonstop service from Frankfurt. After a warm welcome at Belize City International Airport, a private transfer takes us to our hotel, planned as the Ramada by Wyndham Princess or an equivalent property. The first mainland night is deliberate: it provides flexibility while the final flight schedule remains unpublished. Time to settle in and enjoy an informal group welcome.

Day 02 · Fri 17 Dec | Belize Zoo: a very personal homecoming

Our first major highlight is a specially arranged photography-focused visit to the Belize Zoo. Frank spent weeks filming here for German television in 2002/03, particularly with Ellen, the black jaguar, and personally knew founder Sharon Matola. We hope to photograph jaguars, Baird's tapirs, birds of prey and other native species under the guidance of the zoo team. Afterwards we continue inland to Ian Anderson's Caves Branch Jungle Lodge.

Day 03 · Sat 18 Dec | Maya civilisation: Xunantunich and Cahal Pech

Step back into the remarkable world of the ancient Maya. We visit the impressive temples and ceremonial areas of Xunantunich near the Guatemalan border and Cahal Pech near San Ignacio. Expert local guidance brings their history, architecture, beliefs and astronomy to life. Monumental stone buildings and the surrounding tropical scenery make this a superb day for travel photography.

Day 04 · Sun 19 Dec | Cave floating: into the Maya underworld

Equipped with helmets, lights and floating tubes, we explore Belize's extraordinary underground river and limestone cave landscapes. We drift through spectacular chambers, past rock formations, and discover why caves held deep spiritual significance for the ancient Maya. The exact excursion will depend on river levels, tour operating conditions and participants' physical abilities.

YOUR JOURNEY · DAY BY DAY

Day 05 · Mon 20 Dec | Rainforest discovery and photography

A relaxed but rewarding extra day in the green surroundings of Caves Branch. Depending on the group's interests, we can arrange a guided nature walk, bird and wildlife photography, a further cave experience or simply enjoy the lodge's tropical setting. This flexible day gives our land-based adventure space to breathe before we head out to the reef.

Day 06 · Tue 21 Dec | From the rainforest to Lighthouse Reef

After breakfast we travel back to Belize City and embark on the roughly two-hour boat journey to Long Caye, Lighthouse Reef Atoll. Our home for the next seven nights is Itza Resort, ideally situated close to iconic dive sites. We settle into island life, receive the diving briefing and enjoy our first Caribbean sunset. A private Tuesday boat transfer must be arranged for our group.

Day 07 · Wed 22 Dec | First dives at Lighthouse Reef

Our first diving day features two guided dives at selected reefs around the atoll. Colorful coral communities, large sponges, reef fish and clear Caribbean water provide a wonderful introduction to the local underwater environment. Between dives we return to the leisurely rhythm of Long Caye and prepare our photography equipment for the coming days.

Day 08 · Thu 23 Dec | Half Moon Caye Wall

We aim to visit the legendary Half Moon Caye Wall, where the reef plunges into the blue. Gorgonians, sponges, fascinating reef formations and possible encounters with turtles, rays and sharks make this one of Belize's most celebrated dive sites. Two dives are planned, subject to conditions and local scheduling.

YOUR JOURNEY · DAY BY DAY

Day 09 · Fri 24 Dec | The Great Blue Hole: Frank’s return

One of the defining moments of our expedition. The Great Blue Hole is a remarkable circular marine sinkhole renowned around the world. Frank returns to the place where he completed more than 300 dives in 1990/91. The deep Blue Hole dive is only suitable for appropriately experienced and qualified divers; alternative dive arrangements may be needed. The exact itinerary remains weather dependent.

Day 10 · Sat 25 Dec | Christmas beneath the Caribbean sea

Celebrate Christmas at Lighthouse Reef with two planned reef dives among beautiful corals, fish and dramatic reef edges. During our island stay we also intend to organize one additional night dive, offering an extraordinary glimpse into the nocturnal life of the reef. Timing of the night dive will be chosen locally according to safety and weather.

Day 11 · Sun 26 Dec | Reef walls, marine life and photography

Another full diving day takes us to a selection of sites chosen for the best conditions. We seek out coral gardens and steep drop-offs with time to appreciate small reef creatures as well as larger passing animals. Two guided dives are planned, with opportunities for underwater photography and a relaxed surface interval.

Day 12 · Mon 27 Dec | Final diving day at the atoll

Our final two dives complete six days and twelve planned regular dives, in addition to the scheduled night dive. We spend our last evening on Long Caye exchanging stories, reviewing photographs and enjoying the island’s quiet atmosphere. With our international flight due on 30 December, there is ample planned time between diving and flying.

YOUR JOURNEY · DAY BY DAY

Day 13 · Tue 28 Dec | Return to Belize City

We leave Long Caye and take the boat back to mainland Belize. The usual resort return transfer departs around 8 am and arrives around 10 am; private arrangements for our Tuesday return must be confirmed. After checking in to our Belize City hotel, the afternoon is free. These two final mainland nights provide useful flexibility should sea conditions affect boat schedules.

Day 14 · Wed 29 Dec | Lamanai or Crooked Tree: the final adventure

Our final full day offers a choice of two distinctive adventures. Option A: a New River boat safari to Lamanai, a magnificent ancient Maya centre in the rainforest. Option B: an excursion into Crooked Tree Wildlife Sanctuary, a rewarding wetland habitat for birdwatching and photography. We will select the preferred option with the group and local partners.

Day 15 · Thu 30 Dec | Departure from Belize

After breakfast, depending on the confirmed flight time, private transfer to Belize City International Airport for the planned Discover Airlines return flight to Frankfurt. Thursday is among the announced operating days; specific departure time, flight number and arrival date in Europe remain to be confirmed.

ACCOMMODATION & PRACTICAL DETAILS

Proposed overnight stays

• 16–17 December: 1 night in Belize City – Ramada by Wyndham Princess or similar, subject to confirmation

• 17–21 December: 4 nights at Ian Anderson’s Caves Branch Jungle Lodge

• 21–28 December: 7 nights at Itza Resort, Long Caye, Lighthouse Reef Atoll

• 28–30 December: 2 nights in Belize City – proposed Ramada or similar

Planned programme inclusions (subject to final quotation)

• International Discover Airlines flights Frankfurt–Belize City–Frankfurt as the preferred option

• Local ground transfers and return boat transfers between Belize City and Itza Resort

• Six diving days with twelve guided dives and one additional night dive

• Two Maya archaeological site visits, cave tubing, and a rainforest activity day

• Private photography-oriented Belize Zoo programme and a final excursion to Lamanai or Crooked Tree

Important booking and logistics notes

Discover Airlines announced nonstop flights between Frankfurt and Belize City from 16 December 2027, on Thursdays and Sundays through mid-April 2028. Exact flight schedules, seat availability and fares are not yet confirmed. Itza Resort normally offers scheduled boat transfers on Wednesdays and Saturdays, departing Belize City around 2 pm and returning from Long Caye around 8 am. Our proposed Tuesday transfers on 21 and 28 December require written confirmation and may involve additional cost. Holiday availability at the Belize Zoo, archaeological sites, Caves Branch and dive operations also needs confirmation. Diving depends on weather, sea conditions, experience and health requirements. No animal sightings are guaranteed. Final prices, meal plans, equipment rentals, marine park fees and optional activities will be confirmed in the final offer.

Illustration note: visual excerpts on the cover come from concept artwork, not verified original photographs of the properties or wildlife individuals. Contact the organizer for programme details and availability.

References: Discover Airlines newsroom announcement, 20 October 2026; Itza Resort official transfer schedule and planning information. Prepared October 2026.