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Understanding Belize: A Historical Guide



Synopsis

Tiny, island-dotted Belize, perched on the Caribbean, south of Mexico and east of Guatemala, is a fascinating blend of Creole, Mestizo, Maya, Garifuna, English, East Indian, Mennonite, Lebanese and Chinese cultures. With its colonial background (English remains the official language) and a history of fending off its Latin neighbours, Belize has emerged as a relatively stable democracy that is as much Caribbean as it is Central American. In *Understanding Belize*, Alan Twigg tells the story of the country, from its bizarre early days as a haven for pirates, through its colonial period as British Honduras, to its new status as an ecotourism mecca and a hotspot for Mayan archaeology. This lively history includes original photos, a comprehensive timeline and a feature on nation founder George Price, the longest serving democratically elected leader in history. *Understanding Belize* is an eye-opening alternative to the glossy tourist brochures. Lobster-and-orchid-rich Belize looks great from a hammock on Ambergris Caye, the place that inspired Madonna's song "La Isla Bonita," but don't go buying that seaside lot until you learn more about this beautiful--but problematic--paradise from the author of *Cuba: A Concise History for Travellers*.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I purchased this book for my brother before his recent trip to Belize. When I received it I glanced at it to make sure that it would be useful to him. I actually found myself becoming interested in Belize from the small portions I read and I've been meaning to borrow it back from him. But anyways, my brother started the book before he left and he finished it on the plane to Belize. He found the book fascinating and said that it really enhanced his trip because he had so much more background on

the country and culture. From what we'd seen online, the internet is filled with pieces of Belize culture and history, but this seems to be the best at bringing it all together. I'd definitely recommend it if you're going to be visiting Belize and want to improve your experience.

Plenty of travel guides cover Belize; but much fewer narrow the focus to its history and culture. UNDERSTANDING BELIZE tells the story of the country, from its early days as a haven for pirates through its current attraction as an ecotourism focal point. Black and white photos and a timeline accompany a rare survey of the nation that will appeal not just to travelers, but to any interested in the individual histories and evolution of the South American countries. Diane C. Donovan
California Bookwatch

It is hard to find solid information about Belize, and this book has pulled together a wealth of resources. Well researched and seemingly unbiased. Enjoyed the balance of focus on the various elements of Belize -- Mayan, Colonial, Spanish, Creole, etc. I'd give it a 5th star but there are times when the writing can be abrupt and perhaps a bit choppy. Still, if you want a book about Belize, this is the best I've found.

I am writing a novel that will end in Belize. I found Mr. Twigg's historical review of Belize to be informative and very helpful. When writing about a location, knowing the history is imperative. Millie West, author

A good broad explanation of Belize and the path it took to independence. The writer is sometimes disjointed in the way the book is laid out. As an expat I found that the opinions on the politics are just opinions. While the service of George Price was invaluable to Independence, the author spends most of his writing focusing on the old and more liberal PUP party and doesn't give enough information on the UDP and new VIP parties. Overall, if you are looking for information about the early days of Belize and the conflict with Guatemala and the domination by Great Britain then this book is for you.

My husband and I own property in Belize and spend 6-8 months a year there. It is interesting and beneficial to know more about the history and cultural beginnings of this beautiful little Caribbean country. This book covers history back hundreds of years! It may be more than I wanted to know but educational just the same.

Fabulously written in witty, easy-to-understand language. A fun yet highly informational read. I might have majored in history had he written the text!

This is a very nice book on the history of Belize. My whole family went on a trip to Belize and this little book kept "walking away". Everyone enjoyed the easy to ready history.

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