

10-DAY PROGRAM



## GLA GROUP TRAVEL SAMPLE ITINERARY

*EXAMPLE ITINERARY ONLY: DURATION, DATES, COMMUNITY SERVICE HOURS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES ARE CUSTOMIZABLE*



### BELIZE: Animal & Wildlife Conservation

Engage in conservation and community development work to protect the manatees and sea life that make Belize unique.

#### OVERVIEW

On this program, you will take in the wonders of Corozal Bay, home to Belize's largest population of Antillean manatees! You will work alongside rangers, scientists, and fishermen to protect this natural habitat and its surroundings through species monitoring, mangrove restoration, beach clean-ups, and conservation initiatives with local children. Learn how waterways can be protected and conserved through governmental, organizational, and community action. Revel in the natural beauty of Belize as you explore a pristine island and snorkel in turquoise waters. Get your adrenaline pumping with high-adventure activities like ziplining and cave tubing. Belize will feel like a home away from home in a short time!

#### THIS ITINERARY INCLUDES:

- **10 days / 9 nights of accommodation**
- 12 community service hours
- 1 free chaperone per 10 students
- 2 expert GLA staff members
- Medical & evacuation insurance
- 12-24 students (price is per student)

#### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

- ★ Restore mangroves, track native species, and educate local students as part of your conservation-focused service work.
- ★ Snorkel in turquoise Caribbean waters.
- ★ Get your hands dirty as you shadow local fishermen to harvest from traditional fishing traps and filet your own fish
- ★ River tube and zipline through Belize's lush rainforest
- ★ Get up close interactions with rescued manatees

## SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITY SERVICE

Work alongside the **Sarteneja Alliance for Conservation and Development** (SACD), an organization committed to protecting the Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary through marine research, surveillance, conservation education and community development initiatives. Accompany rangers as they monitor the 178 thousand-acre Corozal Bay by boat and track marine life in the wild. Learn how to identify migratory and native species and contribute to long-term conservation research. Get your hands dirty as you transplant mangrove seeds and restore forests essential to the coast's protection and biodiversity. Connect with locals through beach and trail clean-ups and facilitate conservation-based activities for primary school students.

## SAMPLE ITINERARY: DAILY BREAKDOWN



### DAY 1: WELCOME TO BELIZE!

Touch down near Belize City, where GLA staff will greet you upon arrival. We'll drive in vans roughly three hours north to our Home Base, located in the fishing village of Sarteneja. Our Home Base is at the Sarteneja Inn, a family-run hotel close to the ocean. After settling in, tour our host community and pay a special visit to the local businesses and art galleries that line Sarteneja's main street. We'll eat a hearty meal tonight and rest early after a long day of travel.

### DAY 2: ORIENTATION, MAYAN TEMPLE & RIVER TOUR

To kick off our first full day together in Belize, our group will board boats to visit a nearby coastal SACD campsite called Warrie Bight, known for its white sand and clear waters. There, staff will lead a program orientation where we'll cover the expectations of GLA and our hosts, go over ground rules, and have a cultural crash course. Cool off in the ocean while conducting a swim test to understand each student's comfort and experience in the water.

After, we'll head to the coastal Cerros archaeological site, once home to Mayan farmers, fishermen and traders. Explore the complex and learn about the Mayan civilization that previously occupied parts of present-day Central America.

From Cerros, we'll go to the heart of Corozal Bay where the river meets the ocean. If conditions are right, we'll make our way up the New River through brackish water and mangrove forests to spot migratory birds and crocodiles! Here, we'll learn about the identification and counting methods rangers use to track local and migratory species.

We'll return to Sarteneja before nightfall, and after dinner we'll break out into smaller Mentor groups to reflect on the day and the program ahead.

### DAY 3: MANGROVE SEED PREPARATION & PLANTING

Mangroves play a major role in the coastal ecosystem: they prevent coastline erosion, provide storm surge protection, contribute to water quality, and serve as a shallow breeding ground for sea life. Today, we'll be working to







restore a mangrove forest near Sarteneja village.

In the morning, we'll receive a presentation from an SACD leader and mangrove enthusiast about the importance of these trees and get a hands-on tutorial on how to prepare seedlings.

After lunch, prepare to get your hands dirty as you ready the mangrove seedlings and later transport them to a nearby coastal area – back again to Warrie Bight – for planting alongside trained professionals. Once done, we'll play a game of volleyball before returning to Home Base for a leadership activity.

#### DAY 4: FISHERMEN TOUR & COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP



Today, we'll receive an insider's view of Sarteneja's fishing industry. Wake up early and head to the main pier to meet several local fishermen. Together, we'll load onto private boats and jet down the coastline to visit several heart-shaped fishing traps used for generations. Listen to the fishermen's stories and try to harvest a fishing trap before heading back to land. (8:00am-9:30 am)

With fresh fish in hand, we'll visit the fishermen's homes to prepare and share a seafood lunch. You'll learn how to filet your own fish as you work alongside the fisherman's family to prepare a delicious meal. This is an excellent opportunity to learn more about daily life in Belize, so come with questions!

In the afternoon, we'll give back to the Sarteneja village through a community-wide clean-up (1-2 hours). Break into smaller groups and head to the main public areas to pick up trash and debris.



In the evening, we'll begin planning for the kid's conservation camp the following day.

#### DAY 5: CONSERVATION CAMP



Embark on an adventure as we transform a regular day at a primary school into a captivating Conservation Day Camp for grade school children! Our highlight is a vibrant reforestation project, where we bring native different trees and share intriguing insights about various species with the students. The magic unfolds as students actively participate in planting these trees on and around the school grounds.

Returning to the Home Base, prepare for a conservation-focused debate with your program mates.

#### DAY 6: COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP & MANATEE RESCUE CENTER



Today, we'll start our day with a community clean-up, removing debris from common spaces and beautifying meeting spots near the town center of Sarteneja.

In the afternoon, we'll visit the Wildtracks manatee rescue center, where you'll see manatees up close and learn about the many stages of their rehabilitation. Meet scientists and volunteers working around the clock to prepare the manatees to return to the wild.

In the evening, meet a group of inspiring women entrepreneurs using invasive lionfish fins to make beautiful jewelry and souvenirs. Learn about the



collective efforts to rid the Caribbean Sea of invasive Lionfish and craft a unique souvenir to take home.

## DAY 7: BARRIER ISLAND EXPEDITION, SNORKELING, & ARTISAN COOPERATIVE

It's time for an adventure! Head to the Sarteneja pier, where our boats await us. Buckle up because it will be a bumpy ride, but we promise it'll be worth it! Today, we're going to the Bacalar Chico Marine Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage site and barrier island known for its unusually high biodiversity.



Upon arriving, we'll meet friendly park rangers who will give us a tour of the small on-site museum. Climb the nearby observation tower to get a birds-eye view of the beautiful island. After, we'll boat through a man-made Mayan canal to reach the Bacalar Chico reef. Snorkel over beautiful coral and admire the variety of colorful fish and sealife that call this reef home.

Once done, we'll jump back on our boats and return to our Home Base to celebrate our time in Sarteneja and pack up our bags.

## DAY 8: MAYAN RUINS



We'll depart early from Sarteneja Village, heading south towards Central Belize. We'll stop at one of Belize's most famous ruins, Altun Ha, a key Mayan city in the Belize District region. Walk through the archeological complex and visit Altun Ha's impressive temples. Admire the treasured artifacts that have been recovered, including a giant carved jade head of the Mayan sun god! After our tour, we'll continue on our journey to the small town of La Democracia, where we'll stay for the next two nights. We'll settle into our cabins at the Tropical Education Center, located on a lush wildlife reserve and then have dinner. Cool off in the pool and enjoy the new scenery!



## DAY 9: CANOPY ZIPLINING & CAVE TUBING

Get your adrenaline pumping on a high-adventure zipline tour through the canopy of the Belizean rainforest! Learn about the local flora and fauna as you zip from one tree to the next. After, cool down on a tubing trip that will take you through impressive caves. Chill out and float with friends while learning about the cave formations that make Central Belize (Cave Branch) unique! In the afternoon, we'll gather for a final leadership activity to reflect on our time in Belize and the lessons we're bringing home. Take some time to pack your bags before our final dinner, where we'll celebrate the memories and friendships we've made in Belize!

## DAY 10: DEPARTURE DAY

And just like that, our group's adventure draws to a close. Staff will bring the group to the airport (BZE) and bid you all farewell as you ruminate on the memories that will last a lifetime. Safe Travels!

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## TRAVEL TO BELIZE

**GLA Home Base** | Home Base is a locally-run hotel located on the Northern coast of Belize. Students will dorm with one other roommate in comfortable, gender-segregated rooms equipped with AC and en-suite bathrooms. Cool down after a hard day's work in the ocean, just a few blocks away from Home Base!

**Food** | Belizean cuisine has traditional dishes from each ethnic group and region. The GLA cooks at Home Base will provide many options for you to sample! Belizean staples include rice, beans, chicken, seafood, and fresh fruits and vegetables. This location can accommodate a wide variety of food allergies & dietary restrictions.

**Climate** | The Northern coast of Belize, where the Home Base is located, has a tropical climate with moderate to hot temperatures. A constant sea breeze keeps the heat and most mosquitoes at bay.

**Flights** | Most group travel clients opt to travel together on the same flight, whether that be a group booking or individually-purchased tickets. GLA's partner travel agency, StudentUniverse, can be a helpful resource in finding and booking flights that meet the groups' budget and logistical requirements.

## LEADERSHIP

Global Leadership Adventures started as an educational institute, so we continue to think and act like educators—not tour operators—as we deliver life-changing programs. We intentionally weave a leadership curriculum into the group's daily experience to the desired degree. Through group discussion, meaningful service, workshops, speakers, and excursions, staff guide students to reflect on program events through the lens of leadership, and celebrate outstanding examples of leaders they encounter in the local community. Lending this context to the experience creates opportunities for students to dig deep into their vision, purpose and knowledge of themselves and the world.

## ABOUT GLOBAL LEADERSHIP ADVENTURES

GLA was founded in 2003 by Fred Swaniker, a native of Ghana, TED Fellow, and educational entrepreneur whose work has been praised by Barack Obama. Born as a global extension of the revolutionary African Leadership Academy, Global Leadership Adventures now operates programs centered around leadership, sustainable community service projects, and meaningful travel across Africa, Asia, Europe or the Americas. Through life-changing adventures, we strive to inspire the next generation to realize their potential to transform the world and their role in it.

## OUR EXPECTATIONS

### **Be present**

Our mission at GLA is “to inspire the next generation to realize their potential to transform the world and their unique role in it.” To that end, we expect GLA students to maintain high standards of personal behavior and to be open-minded. The culture may be different, sometimes shockingly so. GLA will challenge students as they are expected to work hard and be present physically and mentally for all activities. Students may get hot, dirt, and bug-bitten along the way, but their contribution can be transformative to both the community and themselves. The goal is for each student to return home having had a life-changing experience.

### **No tolerance**

GLA has a no-tolerance policy towards drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and disruptive behavior. Those who violate or are suspected of violating this policy will be immediately dismissed from the program at the sole discretion of staff.

## **Flexibility & Program Changes**

GLA makes every effort to offer thoughtfully crafted programs for teens and young adults. Detailed planning and exhaustive communications with partners are indispensable parts of our program development process. However, occasionally service and activities are adjusted from session to session, due to weather, changing needs of our local community partners or various cultural celebrations and holidays. We expect participants to be open-minded and flexible, and willing to embrace the experience when plans change. GLA will communicate adjustments to group leaders with advance notice whenever possible and work together with custom group leaders to reschedule or replace activities if needed.

## **Mentorship & Health**

GLA is not a therapy program. Our staff are highly skilled, professional, caring, and fun, but they are not licensed therapists. GLA programs can be physically and emotionally demanding, and all participants should be physically and mentally healthy. Each student and staff member will undergo a self-reported medical screening process that includes a physician sign-off to ensure that our program can safely accommodate everyone's physical and mental health needs.