



Tourism

A Top Export Prospect for Belize

September 2014

Overview

- The Belize Tourism Board is the statutory body responsible for management and oversight of the tourism industry. They regulate, administer, and monitor the issuance of licenses for hotels, accommodations, tour guides, and tour operators. Visit <http://www.belizetourism.org> for more information.
- The tourism sector continues to rank among Belize’s top foreign exchange and revenue earners. The table below provides an overview of total revenues earned by the tourism sector, also called tourism expenditures, between the period 2008 to 2013. For more information, see Central Bank of Belize Annual Report 2013 at www.centralbank.org.bz.

Year	Tourism Expenditures (USD \$ Millions)	Overnight Tourist Arrivals	Cruise Ship Arrivals	Total Tourist Arrivals	Avg. Expenditure per Tourist
2007	285.6	241,575	560,478	802,053	356.09
2008	272.5	234,706	537,632	772,338	352.82
2009	250.9	221,654	634,697	856,351	292.99
2010	259.2	226,632	688,165	914,797	283.34
2011	248.5	233,258	654,790	888,048	292.72
2012	299.0	257,292	576,661	833,953	358.53
2013	351.0	272,255	609,612	881,867	398.02

- Belize, as a country, does not yet feature a five-star luxury franchise hotel.
- Although some resorts have invested substantially most luxury hotels, and most tourism in general, in Belize offer a “boutique-style” experience, often focusing on adventure and recreational activities.

Sub-Sector Best Prospects

- There are still many tourism subsectors in Belize that have yet to be explored, including niche services and destinations. For example, the hotel and accommodation

industry in Belize has adopted green technology in a haphazard manner, though Belize is seen as an eco/adventure destination.

- Belize has been increasingly recognized for its second-home buyers market, along with other countries in Central America including Panama and Costa Rica. Much like its competitors, Belize offers a retirement incentive. The fact that Belize is English speaking is a big enticement for many U.S. citizens.
- As of early 2014, there are two major investments in the early stages focused on increasing cruise tourism.

Opportunities

- Tourism is a very important industry for Belize, since the performance of numerous other economic subsectors depend on this industry to support their businesses and livelihoods. For example, the auto rental and (water) taxis sectors rely on tourists and, the farmers and fishermen depend on local restaurants where tourists consume fresh produce.
- The hotel, resort, and accommodation industry functions as a platform for the development of many other tourism sub-sector businesses. The establishment of strong sub-sector businesses is important for the tourism industry to continue to remain competitive within Central America and the Caribbean. These areas include: cruise tendering services; auto rental services; restaurants; gift-shops; adventure destinations and parks; entertainment; land, air, and sea transportation services; and the agro-production and fisheries sectors.
- Applicants for investment incentives in this industry usually qualify under the Fiscal Incentives Program, offered through the Belize Trade and Investment Development Service (BELTRAIDE). Visit <http://www.belizeinvest.org.bz> for more information.

Web Resources

- Belize Tourism Board (BTB)
<http://www.belize tourism.org/>
<http://www.travelbelize.org/>
- Belize Tourism Industry Association
<http://www.btia.org/>
- BTB Retirement Incentives
<http://www.belizeretirement.org/>
- Belize Hotel Association
<http://www.belizehotels.org/>
- BELTRAIDE
<http://www.belizeinvest.org.bz>

For More Information

Mr. Nathan Bland
Economic Section Chief
Embassy of the United States of America
4 Floral Park Road, Belmopan, Cayo District
Belize, Central America
+501-822-4011
belmopancommercialinquiries@state.gov

The U.S. Commercial Service – Your Global Business Partner

With its network of offices across the United States and in more than 70 countries, the U.S. Commercial Service of the U.S. Department of Commerce utilizes its global presence and international marketing expertise to help U.S. companies sell their products and services worldwide. Locate the U.S. Commercial Service trade specialist in the U.S. nearest you by visiting <http://www.export.gov/eac>.

Disclaimer: The information provided in this report is intended to be of assistance to U.S. exporters. While we make every effort to ensure its accuracy, neither the United States government nor any of its employees make any representation as to the accuracy or completeness of information in this or any other United States government document. Readers are advised to independently verify any information prior to reliance thereon. The information provided in this report does not constitute legal advice. The Commercial Service reference to or inclusion of material by a non-U.S. Government entity in this document is for informational purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement by the Commercial Service of the entity, its materials, or its products or services

International copyright, U.S. Department of Commerce, 2012. All rights reserved outside of the United States.