



Coppola Resorts Presents... Blancaneaux



Hiking

Experience the natural beauty surrounding Blancaneaux Lodge with a variety of different hikes.

FULL DAY JUNGLE HIKE

With an expert guide, follow fresh jaguar tracks through the jungle-clad hills of the Elijio Panti National Park, marvel at delicate orchids and observe charismatic bird species such as the keel-billed toucan. Discover medicinal plants used by the ancient Maya thousands of years ago and learn their secrets. After lunch beside a cooling waterfall, conclude the day by meandering along old logging trails in the tropical pine forest while the sun begins its descent.

HIKE TO HOWLER HILL

Walk beside fresh Jaguar tracks and explore the abundant biodiversity of the Neotropics. After a short drive on horse and buggy from the lodge, stroll along the edge of the Mountain Pine Ridge before entering the lush rainforest of the 13,000-acre Noj Kaax Meen Elijio Panti National Park. Learn about Belize's Jaguar Research Project, a hands-on experience allowing you to actually help your guide in gathering project data as part of the research team, observe exotic birds and enjoy the wonder of the dozens of stunning orchids that make this hike a botanist's dream.

HIKE TO BIG ROCK FALLS

Begin your adventure crossing the wooden bridge over Privassion Creek, and then follow a trail that overlooks the creek and waterfalls. Keep a slow pace and admire the abundant brightly colored orchids that adorn the granite rock outcroppings and that thrive in the thin soils of the savannah meadows. Relax at one of the many streams crisscrossing the trail, lie in the shade of an ancient granite outcropping and enjoy the spectacular scenery. Dip into the creek to be energized by the cool mountain water and receive an invigorating massage provided by the massive waterfall.

ORCHID HEAVEN TREK

Blancaneaux Lodge is located in Gallery Forest at the intersection of the Mountain Pine Ridge and the broadleaf forests of the Elijo Panti National Park. This unique region provides world-class orchid hunting opportunities with approximately 150 orchid species found in a 10-mile radius of Blancaneaux Lodge.

Follow orchid trails close to the lodge in the Mountain Pine Ridge and along a landscape of tumbling waterfalls and granite outcroppings where trees often have five or six different orchid species and are complemented by a wide array of ground orchids. Heading to the west, spectacular viewpoints are accompanied by trees literally stacked with orchids.



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Horseback Riding

We invite you to explore the surrounding area on horseback. Our horseback riding tours are ideal for all riders, regardless of skill level.

SUNRISE HORSEBACK RIDING

Enjoy the beginning of a new day in a truly natural setting. Ride about 30 minutes into the rainforest where first light offers a kaleidoscope of colorful birds to observe, all under a canopy of vines, palms and exotic bromeliads. You may also catch sight of a whitetail deer, grey fox, and many types of butterflies.

HORSEBACK TO BIG ROCK FALLS

A gentle ride through the forest takes you to hidden falls. Take a break from the saddle and swim under a cascading waterfall. Recommended for beginners or those who just want a short time in the saddle.

HORSEBACK RIDING - FULL DAY EXPERIENCE

Following local trails, the terrain transforms from pine to rainforest. Ride through a semi-tropical rainforest and explore a hidden cave once used by ancient Maya. Swim under a crystal waterfall and enjoy a picnic lunch on the banks of the river.

Moonlight Jaguar Quest

As darkness covers the rainforest, the predators start to roam their kingdom in search of prey. As most of Belize's large mammals are nocturnal, this is your best chance to actually see them in their natural habitat. After a short drive from the lodge our guided walk begins along the edge of the pine forest and into the jungle. At a slow and quiet pace, we search the forest for gibnuts, armadillos, peccaries and other wildlife, including the elusive jaguar.

Guided Mountain Biking

There's no better way to explore the diverse eco-systems of the Mountain Pine Ridge Reserve than a bike tour. Guided bike trips will take you on scenic routes and trails around the Reserve. Check with the Concierge to discuss departures times, difficulty or terrain, and desired length of trip.

Swimming

Over a thousand streams begin their journey in the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve while smooth granite boulders, sandy beaches and waterfalls of Privassion Creek provide some of the reserve's best natural swimming holes. You can swim in the deep, cool pools close to the lodge or explore the hidden rock pools leading to the stunning Big Rock Falls, a must see for the adventurous.

On the resort, our fresh water infinity pool is set between the main lodge and the Guatemaltequa Restaurant and is decorated by brightly colored ceramic tiles. Handmade mahogany sun loungers surround the edge of the pool while our 'Captains' are on-hand to provide towels and take drinks orders from the bar.

Mountain Pine Ridge Reserve

Blancaneaux Lodge is situated in the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve, the oldest of Belize's national parks. Take in the most scenic sites nearby the Lodge, as well as some of the least visited, in this unique and eye-opening tour.

Our first stop is the viewpoint to Hidden Valley Falls (or 1000 foot Falls), which thunder over a granite ledge into the mists below.

Traveling higher and deeper into the reserve we travel to Baldy Beacon – one of the highest accessible areas in Belize for a panoramic view of the reserve. We then visit the Rio Frio Cave, an ancient Maya burial site with an enormous arched entranceway. The Rio Frio (Cold River) flows in one end of this cave and out the other, helping to create smooth limestone walls and sharp stalactites. Also included in the full day tour is a stop at the Rio On Pools and Falls – a beautiful picnic spot and perfect for a cool dip in the natural pools

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Caracol

Situated high on the Vaca Plateau deep in the Chiquibul Forest Reserve, Caracol is the most extensive Mayan site in Belize and was only re-discovered in 1936. The site of Caracol covers over 80 square miles with 30,000 structures, and at its peak supported a population of more than 150,000 people. Situated 1600 feet above sea level with no natural body of water nearby, it remains a mystery how such a huge population was able to survive there. At the heart of the site lies the massive pyramid of Caana (Sky Palace), which is now almost fully restored and reaches over 135 feet high. From the top you can enjoy breathtaking panoramic views over the forest-clad mountains.

Caracol, Rio Frio Cave and Rio On Pools

This tour is an ideal combination of the Mountain Pine Ridge Reserve tour and the tour of Caracol. After picnic lunch at Caracol, we drive back towards the Lodge, stopping at the Rio Frio Cave, and finishing our tour at the Rio On Pools, leaving time for a refreshing swim.



Xunantunich

Xunantunich flourished during the Classic Period (250-900 A.D.) and is believed to have survived the Maya collapse to remain an important population center until the 11th Century. Our tour begins with a drive down the mountain and through the town of San Ignacio, where we head to the village of San Jose Succotz to take a hand-cranked ferry over the Mopan River to the site of Xunantunich (Maiden of the Rock). The site has five main plazas, although only three plazas are evident to visitors today. Dominating the site is El Castillo, rising to over 120 feet. A steep but short climb to the top is highly recommended because of the panoramic views of the surrounding Mopan and Belize River valleys, as well as Guatemala to the west. In addition, the visitor's center and museum are excellent resources for further information.

Xunantunich, Cahal Pech & Green Hills Butterfly Farm

Located on a hill overlooking San Ignacio, Cahal Pech is a small but major Mayan center. Situated on top of an acropolis on the Macal River, the center of Cahal Pech consists of 34 structures in only two square acres. A Visitor's Center contains artifacts and a reconstructed model of the site. The Green Hills Butterfly Farm features dozens of different species of Belizean butterflies. There are many small restaurants in the area serving excellent local food, or you may choose to bring along a picnic lunch.

Tikal, Guatemala

Take a full day tour to perhaps the most visually stunning of all the Maya sites. Tikal's five monolithic temples pierce the jungle canopy (Temple IV reaches a height of almost 230 feet) and ancient plazas, steles and ball courts tell of a rich and powerful history when Tikal's population reached almost 100,000. Today the site is recognized as one of the archeological wonders of the Americas. Its unspoiled jungle setting within the Tikal National Park makes it a paradise for birders, nature lovers and amateur archaeologists as well.

Barton Creek Cave

Explore a remote cave once used by the ancient Mayans as a burial site on this exciting canoe trip. Adorned with amazing stalactites and stalagmites, the guides tell stories of civilizations past as they use spotlights to point out Mayan pottery shards and remains in the depths below.

Sunrise Bird Watching

As the sun rises at Blancaneaux, the forest is alive with the sound of exotic birdlife. Take a short walk around the property's gardens and trails, and let your guide point out the well-camouflaged birds hiding in the nearby forest. Learn about our migrant species and the many secrets of our feathered friends. With almost 600 species documented in Belize, this walk is an excellent introduction to the birds of the region.

In the Land of the Jaguar

Learn about Dr. Marcella Kelly's groundbreaking jaguar research in the Mountain Pine Ridge and Chiquibul National Park. Dr. Kelly uses remote infrared, motion sensitive cameras to record data on the elusive jaguar. Her work has revealed that the forests surrounding Blancaneaux Lodge host some of the highest densities of jaguars and other cat species in the western hemisphere. We'll introduce Dr. Kelly's research through a short classroom seminar and then trek into the Noj Kaax Meen Elijio Panti National Park to visit our own remote and spectacular camera locations.