

10 Reasons Why You Should Start Planning Your Belize Vacation Today

Are you in need of a getaway, but don't know where to go? Do you crave the feeling of the sand between your toes and the view of the sun setting over the ocean?

Sounds like you need to consider planning a Belize vacation!

Belize is one of the Caribbean's most beautiful hidden gems. It's not as crowded with tourists as other tropical destinations, but it's just as – if not more – worthwhile to visit.

Here are 10 reasons why you should put a trip to Belize at the top of your travel bucket list.

1. To Soak in the Beauty of Belize Beaches

If all you do in Belize is sit on the beach and soak your worries away, you won't regret it. The beaches here are absolutely beautiful. They make you want to slow things down, kick back, and relax.

This goes for the bigger, more popular beaches and the smaller, off-the-beaten-path ones alike. Whichever shore you end up on, you're in the right place.

2. To Visit the Cayes

For those who want something other than the traditional beach day, plan a visit to one of Belize's Cayes. These are small, practically untouched beaches just off the coast. Some areas

of the Cayes can be rented out for private use, but for the most part, there's a very intimate feel to these beaches.

3. To Go on Incredible Underwater Adventures

As great as all the beaches in Belize are, there's more to see than what meets the eye! Once you get out into the water, you'll find plenty of gorgeous reefs and marine life.

Belize is home to huge coral reefs, sea turtles, and all kinds of tropical fish. You may also see a few stingrays or sharks while out and about.

4. To Dive in the Blue Hole

There are plenty of places in Belize to go snorkeling, diving, or enjoy some other water sport. But, the best dive spot of all is arguably the Blue Hole.

This is a world-famous destination in Belize that's over 400 feet deep. It is incredibly preserved and a true marvel to take in – from both above and below the water's surface.

5. To Explore Lush Landscapes

In addition to all the adventure of the water, Belize is also home to a lush rainforest. The rainforest is full of gorgeous dense vegetation, many diverse plant and animal species, and breathtaking caves.

There are many hiking tours available for visitors to explore scenery unlike any other. You can even go zip lining through the forest or do an advanced hike if you feel comfortable with the challenge!

6. To Chase Waterfalls

If you do decide to check out what the rainforest has to offer, make sure you ask your tour guide about the waterfalls. This is a must-do in Belize. There's nothing like standing at the foot of a waterfall and taking in its beauty.

But, the best part is going for a swim in this refreshing water! After some time spent hiking, swimming under a waterfall is equally as rewarding as it is mind-blowing.

7. To See All Kinds of Unique Animals

Whether you're on the beach or in the forest in Belize, you have to keep your eyes peeled. This helps you spot all the unique animals sharing the beaches and forests with you!

Between toucans, spider and howler monkeys, you'll never get bored of looking for new animal species. They're not exactly what you find in your backyard, after all!

8. To Learn About Mayan History

This is one of the most unique reasons on this list to go to Belize: it is home to incredibly well-preserved, beautiful Mayan ruins. This is a little-known fact to most travelers, which means you're in for a real treat if you decide to go!

There's rarely ever a crowd at the Mayan ruins in Belize. You can easily arrive there at any time of day without having to deal with large crowds or rushed guides. Rather, you'd get to take in all you want about the ruins in a setting that is peaceful, quiet, and very unique.

9. To Eat Delicious Food

Good food is an absolute must on any vacation – and in Belize, you can trust you won't go hungry. It's easy to find mouthwatering food and to try a lot of different plates, too.

You can find everything from Caribbean lobster to fryjack and refried beans – and many of the country's popular dishes are a representation of the diverse culture. Belize cuisine truly reflects the melting pot of Mestizo, Maya, and Creole cultures that co-exist here.

10. To Relax and Get Away

Still need more convincing? Close your eyes and picture yourself sitting on a beautiful beach with crystal clear water. Imagine the sound of the waves crashing on the shore, and the refreshing feeling of waking up to the cool ocean air and the sounds of nature waking up with you.

These are simple pleasures that are hard to enjoy in the hustle and bustle of everyday life. But in Belize, you can't ignore them! You're consumed by a sense of total relaxation – a worry-free, easy-going state of mind.

How to Plan the Ultimate Belize Vacation

It's one thing to realize you need to go to Belize, and another to plan the perfect Belize vacation. Luckily, you've come to the right place to get started!

The first step in planning your vacation is to research everything there is to do and prioritize which activities you'd like to do the most. Then, book these activities so that you can be sure you enjoy them!

[Click here to let the adventure begin.](#)

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On the map: Muscat International Airport crowned best in region

Muscat: Muscat International Airport has made the country proud once again by winning the title of Middle East's Leading Airport 2019 at the World Travel Awards.

Oman Airports took to their official Twitter account to make the announcement, congratulating the Sultanate for this great achievement. "We are proud to announce Muscat International Airport as the Middle East's Leading Airport in 2019.

"Congratulations to our beloved country for this honourable achievement, which came due to the efforts of the whole airport family," the officials said.

Opened on March 20, 2018, Muscat International Airport is built over a floor area of approximately 580,000sqm and has the capacity to serve 20 million passengers per year, with an expansion potential of up to four times that number.

The Muscat airport has won several awards since its operations began, including the prestigious 'World's Leading New Airport' prize at the World Travel Awards 2018. It saw an increase in the passenger traffic by 5.7 per cent to 16.1 million.

According to the report by Oman Aviation Group for 2018, the new Muscat International Airport is operating at a lower cost

than expected despite its size being six times that of the old terminal.

Oman Airports, represented by Saud Nasser Al Hubeishi, Senior Vice President, accepted this prestigious award at the award ceremony, which was attended by a wide spectrum of professionals in the aviation, airports and travel industry across the world with a network of senior representatives of more than 200 companies from all sectors of the airports, aviation, travel, tourism and hotel industries.

Oman Air

Meanwhile, Oman Air has been crowned the Middle East's best airline in both business and economy class.

Additionally the national carrier was also awarded best in-flight magazine. The awards were given at the World Travel Awards 2019.

In a statement, Oman Air said: "An unprecedented achievement for Oman Air, winning three prestigious awards in one night: Middle East's best airline in both Business and Economy Class, and best in-flight magazine at the World Travel Awards 2019. We thank you for your incredible endorsement and support."

Commenting on the award, Chief Executive Officer of Oman Airports, Sheikh Ayman bin Ahmed Al Hosani, said: "On behalf of the Executive Management of Oman Airports, I would like to congratulate all the employees of Muscat International Airport and all the official and commercial companies and airlines operating at the airport as well as all our strategic partners who contributed directly to this achievement. This award recognises the exceptional efforts and services by all our staff and partners who demonstrate outstanding dedication to the betterment of Muscat International Airport as well as all the other airports of Oman.

He added, "We are proud of this new achievement, which

represents a valuable addition to our national success stories and which is the result of our endeavour, at Oman Airports, to continuously expand our global presence as a primary way to help the various actors operating at our airports achieve their strategies through state-of-the-art infrastructure and facilities and record level of services to all our customers. He concluded: "May God bestow success on us and guide us along the path of achievements and expansion at international level. Congratulations to all of us."

On his part, Saud Al-Hubeishi, Senior Vice President at Muscat International Airport said: The exceptional efforts exerted by the airport family have set us on the road of achieving an exceptional travel experience for the airports users. Muscat airport redefines the passenger experience through its state-of-the-art infrastructure and facilities housed within its exceptional terminal characterised by its modern architectural design, along with the efforts of many colleagues who worked hard to secure the mobilization of the best trademarks and partners to deliver greater and better results through our airports, which have certainly led to an ideal experience for airport users, and reinforced our dedication to raising our aspirations, ambitions and expectations to attain to the very highest echelons of services and achievements. We are committed to sparing no effort to consolidate all aspects of partnership with all the parties working at the airport and to bring together our efforts as one family towards attaining the best in delivering impressive services to all travelers through our airport."

"It is our aim to expand our global presence and to increase the international visibility of Muscat International Airport, the Jewel of Oman airports, and position it as a leading player in the innovation and uniqueness scene.

The report also highlighted that Oman Airports has reached a 95 per cent Omanisation rate and hired 115 nationals in 2018.

Additionally, 364 locals were hired at Oman Air, including 234 fresh graduates and 48 pilots which means a total of 2,683 Omani employees, with an Omanisation rate of 75.9 per cent (excluding female cabin crew). However, the female workforce ratio makes up 35.1 per cent of staff at Oman Air. Passengers travelling through Muscat International Airport rose by 8.7 per cent in March 2019 to 4 million, compared to the same time period last year, according to the National Centre for Statistics and Information (NCSI).

The monthly statistical report by NCSI also revealed that the total number of flights at Muscat International Airport rose 1.5 per cent to 28,775 flights in March 2019, compared to 28,346 flights for the same period in 2018.

The number of international flights at the Muscat International Airport increased by 2.1 per cent to 26,334 flights during the three-month period of 2019, up from 25,789 flights for the same period of the previous year.

The total number of international passengers at airport rose by 9.4% at the end of March 2019, reaching 3.72 million passengers. This included 1.86 million passenger arrivals, 1.85 million passenger departures, and 9,969 passenger transits.

Meanwhile, domestic flights at the airport fell by 4.5 per cent to 2,441 flights at the end of March 2019, against 2,557 flights during the same time in 2018. The arrival and departure of domestic flights also dropped by 4.4 per cent and 4.7 per cent respectively. However, the total number of domestic passengers at the airport rose by 0.1 per cent to 278,052 passengers in March 2019, against 277,799 passengers for the same period of the previous year. This included 137,362 passenger arrivals and 140,690 passenger departures, the NCSI report highlighted.

According to the report, the total number of passengers at

Salalah International Airport increased by 2.7 per cent to 339,706 passengers at the end of March 2019 compared to 330,725 passengers for the same period of 2018. The total number of flights at Salalah International Airport rose by 5.6 per cent to 2,794 flights in March 2019 compared to 2,647 flights in March 2018.

The total number of international flights at Salalah International Airport surged by 21.9 per cent to 1,217 flights till the end of March 2019 while the number of domestic flights fell by 4.4 per cent to 1,577 flights in March 2019. The total number of international passengers recorded a rise of 11.2 per cent to reach 135,773 passengers while the number of domestic passengers fell by 2.2 per cent to 203,933 passengers.

However, there was a drop in the total number of passengers at Sohar International Airport by 42.5 per cent to 48,716 passengers at the end of March 2019 compared to 84,717 passengers for the same period of 2018. The total number of flights at Sohar International Airport also fell by 26.4 per cent to 524 flights in March 2019 compared to 712 flights in March 2018.

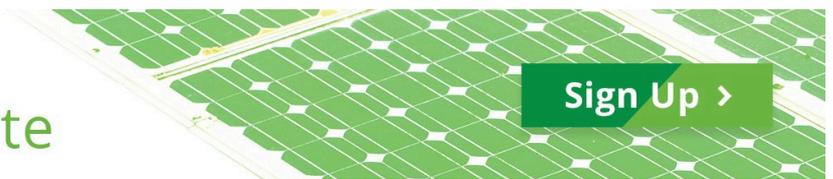
Duqm Airport saw a rise in the total number of passengers by 26.8 per cent to 14,075 passengers at the end of March 2019 compared to 11,103 passengers for the same period of 2018. The total number of flights at Duqm Airport till the end of March 2019 reached 148, which is a drop by 3.9 per cent compared to 154 flights in March 2018, the report showed.

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Renewable Energy Advocates Learn To Not Say “Climate Change” In Texas

Published on April 14th, 2019 | by Steve Hanley

Never miss
a **CleanTech** update



Renewable energy, particularly wind power, has been hugely successful in Texas, thanks in large measure to a combination of federal, state, and local incentives that began more than two decades ago. Those incentives included both wind turbines and grid interconnection links, so the electricity generated by the winds in rural areas can power homes and businesses in cities like Dallas.

“Texas was really a world leader in figuring out how to solve the chicken-and-the-egg problem,” Dan Cohan, a professor of civil and environmental engineering at Rice University tells *KUT News*. “No one wanted to build wind farms when there weren’t enough transmission lines to carry power to the cities, and no one wanted to build transmission lines where there weren’t any wind farms.”

Is There A Pattern Here?

In case you missed it, subsidies for solar, wind, and electric cars are under attack by shills for the fossil fuel companies. Shills like Bill Peacock, who bills himself as vice president of research for the Texas Public Policy Foundation. That’s one of those so-called think tanks that cranks out reams and reams

of fake “research” bought and paid for by their financial supporters.

Here’s how it works. A benefactor says “I will pay you X amount of money if you will produce a report that says Y.” If the report supports that result, the group gets more funding. If not, funding is cut off and the benefactor goes in search of other people who will shut up and do what they are told. And who is propping up TPPF? According to a report published in the *Texas Observer*, a good chunk of its funding comes from Koch Industries and ExxonMobil. Surprise, surprise.

The TPPF is bombarding the Texas legislature with misinformation designed to show that subsidies for renewable energy are bad for the state. “Wind is bringing prices down, but not in a good way,” Peacock says. What he means is that there is so much of it that prices for renewable energy are tumbling. That in turn discourages utility companies from building new conventional power plants.

We have heard echoes of that refrain in recent remarks by the alleged president, who likes to tell his adoring fans, “Let’s put up some windmills. When the wind doesn’t blow, just turn off the television darling, please. There’s no wind, please turn off the television quickly.” The source of both is the same – disinformation put out by the fossil fuel industry and their paid toadies.

“You can make anything not look great without context,” Joshua Rhodes, a research fellow at the Energy Institute at UT Austin tells *KUT News*. It’s simplistic and misleading to advocate for a reduction in renewable energy incentives without making the same argument about fossil fuel incentives. But hypocrisy is the stock in trade for organizations like TPPF. Why Texas legislators don’t laugh in the face of such buffoons is a great mystery. Could they share the same source of funding? Hmmmm...

Rhodes adds that low-cost renewable energy has been good for Texas consumers. “The cheaper energy is, the more growth we can have in the economy. So just because a new technology is pushing an old technology out [doesn’t make it] a market failure; it’s just the market working.”

Don’t Say Climate Change In Texas

Rhodes points out that renewable energy advocates in Texas have learned to avoid the words climate change. “There are certain aspects of the country that aren’t ready to talk about it yet. The idea is that if you can win your arguments based on price and efficiency, for some people, that’s just going to be better received than talking about climate change.”

Asked about that dreaded subject, Bill Peacock paused and then said, “I’m concerned about the damage renewable energy subsidies are doing to the marketplace.” In other words, he is scared to death to say anything that might lessen the flow of petrodollars into the coffers of TPPF, money that will be used to pay his salary. There is a word for someone who sells himself for money. Can you think what it is?

Unprecedented

“What we’re seeing is somewhat unprecedented,” says Jeffrey Clark, director of the Advanced Power Alliance, a renewable energy advocacy group. “It is a very organized, very well-funded effort to slander renewable energy in Texas. We have seen a lot of money come into the state hidden by organizations that use their nonprofit, their charitable status, to lobby against renewable energy.”

Oddly enough, the Advanced Power Alliance also represents natural gas companies. So what fossil fuels is TPPF shilling for? A possible answer may be found by researching some of the organization’s more recent activities, including one called Life:Powered. According to *DeSmog*, it is run by Bernard

McNamee, who formerly worked as deputy general counsel for energy policy under Secretary Rick Perry at the Department of Energy. TPPF's 2017 annual report says Life:Powered was originally the "Fueling Freedom" project, which launched in 2015 "to combat the Obama-era Clean Power Plan."

Clean power plan? Didn't that have something to do with...hold on, it's right on the tip of my tongue. Oh, yeah. CCP is for you and me and that rhymes with C and that stands for Coal. It's all becoming clear to me now.



Tags: Bill Peacock, Energy Institute University of Texas, ExxonMobil, koch brothers, Renewable Energy, Texas Public Policy Foundation, wind power in Texas

About the Author

Steve Hanley Steve writes about the interface between technology and sustainability from his home in Rhode Island and anywhere else the Singularity may lead him. His motto is, "Life is not measured by how many breaths we take but by the number of moments that take our breath away!" You can follow him on Google + and on Twitter.

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Agreement between India-Denmark on renewable energy approved by Cabinet

The Union Cabinet Monday gave ex post facto approval to an agreement signed between India and Denmark for cooperation in the field of renewable energy with focus on offshore wind energy

The agreement was signed in March 2019 in New Delhi, an official statement said.

“The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has given its approval for a cooperation agreement between Ministry of New and Renewable Energy of India and Ministry for Energy, Utilities and Climate of the Kingdom of Denmark on strategic sector cooperation in the field of renewable energy with a focus on offshore wind energy and a letter of intent to establish an Indo-Danish Centre of Excellence for renewable energy in India,” the statement said.

The areas of cooperation would include technical capacity building for management of offshore wind projects, measures to develop and sustain a highly efficient wind industry – onshore as well as offshore, measures to ensure high quality of wind turbines, components and certification requirements, forecasting and scheduling of offshore wind, it said.

The Indo-Danish Centre of Excellence in Integrated Renewable Power would work on renewable energy resource assessments with focus on onshore and offshore wind, hybridisation of wind, solar, hydro and storage technologies, testing and R&D, and

skill development/capacity building.

The signing of the pact will help in strengthening bilateral cooperation between the two countries, the statement added.

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Jet Airways cancels flights on international routes

Jet airways has proactively cancelled all west bound long haul flights from India from tonight until tomorrow morning

- Jet Airways fights for survival
- Jet is saddled with more than \$1.2 billion of bank debt,
- It owes money to lessors, suppliers, staff and oil companies.

Mumbai: The crisis deepened at Jet Airways on Thursday even as the bid process to get new owners for the debt-ridden airline elicited good response from investors.

In a regulatory filing, Jet Airways said 10 more of its aircraft have been grounded over non-payment of lease rentals, taking the total number of grounded planes to 79.

Also Read: Jet Airways pushed further to the brink of collapse

The airline has cancelled all international flights for

Thursday amid reports that the government is likely to review Jet Airways' eligibility to continue its international operations. The Civil Aviation Ministry is awaiting a report from the regulator DGCA on the issue.

Jet Air has also grounded its services to and from the East and Northeast regions.

The airline has reduced its fleet to just 14 planes as of Thursday noon, way down from 123 planes in operations at the peak.

Sources said private equity firms TPG Capital and Indigo Partners, National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Ltd (NIIF) and Abu Dhabi-based Etihad Airways are among the four firms that have submitted their expressions of interest (EoIs) for picking a stake in Jet Airways.

Former Jet Airways chairman Naresh Goyal is also expected to submit initial bids for a stake in the airline, sources said.

SBI Caps, which invited Expression of Interest (EoI) for stake sale in Jet Airways on April 8, has already extended the date for submission of bids to April 12 from April 10.

Sources said lenders are expecting EoIs from international airlines like Air Canada and Delta Airlines.

SBI Caps has the mandate for Jet Airways' sale on behalf of the SBI-led consortium of domestic lenders to the private carrier.

It has put between 31 per cent and up to 75 per cent in the airline for investors.

An agency report quoting a source said, "Jet Airways flights to London, Amsterdam and Paris from Mumbai, New Delhi and Bengaluru scheduled for April 12 are cancelled for operational reasons."

The airline will not operate on the Bengaluru- Amsterdam-Bengaluru route on April 13 as well, the report said.

“All Jet operations to and from the Eastern and Northeastern regions are suspended. Following this, there are no Jet flights to and from Kolkata, Patna, Guwahati and other airports in the region,” said a travel industry source.

Jet Airways said its Mumbai-Kolkata, Kolkata-Guwahati and Dehradun-Guwahati via Kolkata stand cancelled for Friday due to “operational reasons.”

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Jet Airways pushed further to the brink of collapse

India's beleaguered Jet Airways said on Thursday 10 more of its planes had been grounded over unpaid dues to leasing companies, pushing it further to the brink of collapse and jeopardising hopes of a new investor rescuing the carrier.

Jet had already been forced by lessors to ground more than 80 percent of its fleet. It said it had cancelled all west-bound overseas long-haul flights until tomorrow morning.

With the fresh groundings on Thursday observers peg the size of Jet's operational fleet at about 12 planes or so. At one time, Jet used to have 120 airplanes at its disposal. That is history now.

Also Read: Jet Airways cancels flights on international routes

If the size of its operational fleet drops below the 20 mark, Jet may be forced to halt all international operations, as Indian regulations demand that any domestic carrier has to have at least 20 operational aircraft in order to fly overseas.

Jet's lenders are still trying to seek expressions of interest in the debt-laden carrier from potential investors interested in rescuing the 25-year old airline.

The lenders have so far not put in their own money. Even they doubt the feasibility of such act. Lenders, led by State Bank of India (SBI), want a new investor to acquire a stake of up to 75 percent in the airline. Initial bids were to be submitted by the end of Wednesday, but SBI extended the deadline on Wednesday to Friday. The lenders seem to have received four expressions of interest in the airline. It is not clear though, whether any of these will translate into bids and whether an investor will be identified in time to who could turn around the carrier.

Jet did not get a loan of about \$217 million from its lenders as part of a rescue deal agreed in late March. Many of the lessors first repossessed the planes. Eventually, they have begun to de-register these planes, further eroding value in the airline. All through this processes, the lenders remained mute spectators. They could have prevented it.

Once a plane is de-registered, the lessor can take it out of the country and lease it to other airlines.

Some fuel suppliers have also begun to tighten their fuel supply terms to the embattled carrier, piling additional pressure on Jet.

The airline, once India's leading private carrier, has been forced in recent months to cancel hundreds of flights to

dozens of destinations both in India and overseas, leading to a customer backlash and a steady slide in its market share.

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