

There are over ten diverse cultures present in Belize, many of which still place great importance on traditional activities and practices that span generations. These traditions are often rooted in practicality and provide great benefits to those that keep them going.

In southern Belize, two of the most prominent cultural groups are the Garifuna and the Maya. These groups still continue with many daily practices started by their ancestors.

### Garifuna

- Schedule a "Garifuna cultural experience", on a cassava baking day near a small farm. Learn how to grate the manioc root, strain, sieve, and bake on an open hearth. Then enjoy the finished cassava biscuit with Serre la Sus - fresh fish sauteed in coconut milk with mashed plantains.
- Pass by a neighborhood wake, "9 night" or "Dugu" and share in the honoring of Garifuna ancestor spirits via drumming and song. A "9 night" is similar to a wake and is held as a memorial usually 9 nights after someone has been buried.
- Garifuna songs and dances are vehicles for teaching newer generations about their history. These dances are filled with meaning, and an evening of entertainment can be arranged with a local dance group.

### Maya

Visit the village of Maya Center at the entrance to the Cockscomb Basin Wildlife Sanctuary and:

- Shop at the Women's Craft Cooperative, where Mayan women sell souvenirs crafted from materials found in the nearby tropical forest
- Visit the Maya Museum and learn more about the rich history of the Maya in Belize
- Walk the medicinal trails inside the sanctuary itself, and learn the myriad uses for some of the herbs and plants that grow within the Cockscomb Basin.