

The Toledo Howler

Newspaper of the Toledo Chapter of the Belize Tourism Industry Association

MAY 2011

YEAR 4, ISSUE 4

FREE

Cacao Fest 2011

Full Schedule of Events inside

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We Love Chocolate!



It's that chocolaty time of year again. Yes the Toledo Cacao Fest is fast approaching. The dates for this year's event are the 20th-22nd May and the festival celebrates its fifth year

The full schedule of events appears in the centre of this issue. Make sure you have your copy so you know what's going on and where.

In honor of this year's festival, The Toledo Howler has some special chocolaty articles in this issue.

Our 'Wat's Cooking' section on Page 3 has a recipe for Chocolate Sticky Goopy Bars. This is for the real chocoholics out there who may need to get their fix before the festival starts.

You will also find an article on Making Chocolate in Toledo, Page 11, which focuses on the Cotton Tree Chocolate Factory in PG. They will be open over the festival weekend, offering demonstrations and chocolate goodies. The factory is open the rest of the year too so don't worry if you miss a visit this time.

There are some changes to festival venues this year so be sure to refer to the schedule inside for information. The festival always launches with the Wine & Chocolate Evening on Friday. This year the event will be held at Coral House Inn at the south end of Front St. near the hospital. Another special event will be the Cacao Fest dinners being offered at The Lodge at Big Falls on Saturday & Sunday evenings. See ad on Page 11. Space is limited so call in advance for reserva-



Don't miss the fireworks on Friday night at the Wine & Chocolate Evening at Coral House Inn.

tions. With mouth watering food, live music, sea and jungle tours, art & archaeology exhibits and more, the Cacao Fest is not to be missed.

See you there!

Cotton Tree Chocolate



#2 Front Street, Punta Gorda
Complimentary tours and tasting. Discover the chocolate making process! Unique chocolate gifts, including cocoa bean jewelry and chocolate soap. 621-8776



BTIA's distinctive octagonal Information Center on Front street in Punta Gorda. All you need to know about Toledo is inside

Join BTIA and display your promotional materials in the information center.

Join BTIA and make a difference.

Contact Toledo BTIA at the Tourism Information Center, Front St., Punta Gorda Tel. 722-2531
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Lee Jones: Birding Adventure on the Rio Grande

Nothing illustrates my passion for birding more than the following.

9:00 a.m. Thursday, 24th February, 2011. Dreamlight Computer Center. I am absorbed in an article on the nascent Libyan uprising when I get a text from Wilfred Mutrie: "Mystery bird at Machaca Hill. Need your help. Come up this afternoon."

I called Wilfred. He wouldn't give me any details, just "Be here at three." Why wait until three, I thought? Why not now? What if the bird flies away? I puzzled over this most of the day but dutifully waited until three before arriving at the lodge. The receptionist informed me that Wilfred was down at the dock waiting for me. Half way down the 340 steps to the dock I was met by a gentleman sporting white hair and a robust white mustache. I had seen that mustache before. But where?

"It's a pleasure to meet you," the gentleman said as we greeted each other. "I'm John Fitzpatrick."

Then I remembered. Dr. Fitzpatrick was director of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and one of the world's preeminent ornithologists. I subscribed to the Lab's biannual publication *The Living Bird*, and his mug was right there, every issue, on the editor's page. John and his wife Molly were staying at Machaca Hill while exploring the possibility of including southern Belize in one of the Lab's tour packages.

"Come on," Wilfred hollered from the dock. "We have to leave."

At the dock, Wilfred told me that they had seen a bird that morning a short ways up the river that they believed was a Great Potoo. Potoos are a group of birds that look like a cross between a pauraque (locally known as Hoo-You) and an owl. They fly about at night catching insects on the wing, and spend the daylight hours perched motionless on the end of a nearly vertical broken-off branch relying on their cryptic coloration to blend in, looking every bit like an extension of the branch. The expected species in Belize is the Northern Potoo, small cousin of the Great Potoo. If Wilfred and his guests that

morning had really seen a Great Potoo, it would be a new bird for me and only the third for the country. Now I understood why Wilfred had been in no hurry to show me the mystery bird—it was not going anywhere before sundown.



About a mile up the river we drifted to a halt. "Over there," Wilfred said, pointing to a distant tree. After about five minutes of Wilfred explaining to us where the bird was, John and I finally made out a distant bump on the end of a short branch that looked more or less like a bird. Only a speck to the unaided eye, through a telescope we could make out a few of its features: owl-like aspect, gray plumage mottled with black streaks and blotches, perfect camouflage for the limb it was perched on.

While scanning the trees with binoculars that morning, one of the guests at the lodge had found the bird, an incredible feat considering that it was several hundred meters away and blended in perfectly with the branches of the tree. After many minutes staring through Wilfred's scope, they had determined that it was a potoo, but it looked too large to be a Northern. That's when Wilfred had decided to text

me.

After studying the distant bird for a few minutes through the scope, I was still not convinced. Why not a Northern Potoo? John Fitzpatrick also studied the bird, carefully weighing each feature. He had just come from Pico Bonita Lodge in Honduras where he had seen several Great Potoos. "I don't know. It kind of looks like a Great to me." We compared the pictures of the two potoos in my book *Birds of Belize*. "The picture in your book sucks," he said, only half in jest. We looked at the lump on the branch some more. After about a half hour, I said, "I have to agree with you. It may be a Great Potoo after all." To my surprise John countered, "I don't know. The pattern in the wings doesn't look right. It could be a Northern."

We left the bird eager to learn more. That night, John googled "Great Potoo" and found several dozen photos posted on the internet. I pored through my reference library at home. I compared illustrations and photographs from other sources with the one in my book. Indeed, the picture in my book did suck! My only excuse: I had never seen the bird before, so how was I to know what it looked like?

The next morning John and I compared notes. Both of us had concluded that it was probably a Great, but neither of us was willing to *declare* it a Great. "Someone needs to go there before dawn and listen for it to call," John said. He was right. While the two species look very similar, their calls are quite different. I looked at John. John looked at me. We both looked at Wilfred. "Tomorrow morning, 4 a.m.," Wilfred said. John and I both grimaced. Looks like the "someone" John had referred to was going to be the three of us.

4:50 a.m., Saturday, 26th February. Somewhere on the Rio Grande. John, Wilfred, yours truly, and three cold cups of joe were parked at the spot where we had seen the bird two afternoons before. Silence. Long, insufferable silence. Nothing. Nada. Zip.

Continued on page 11

Coral House Inn

BED, BREAKFAST AND BICYCLES

Step off of Main Street in Punta Gorda and experience the intimate atmosphere of the Coral House Inn, with spacious verandas overlooking the Caribbean Sea.

Amenities include – Swimming pool, continental breakfast, wireless internet, poolside bar and use of bicycles.

www.coralhouseinn.net 722-2878



Restaurant Guide				
Name	Address	Cuisine	Phone	Opening Hours
Coleman's Cafe	Big Falls Village, near the rice mill	Belizean	720-2017	Daily: 11:30- 4pm & 6- 9pm [Res-ervations Preferred]
Fajina Firehearth Food	Front St, PG	Local Mayan Food	666-6144	Mon—Sat: 7am—7:30pm. Closed on Sundays
Gomier's Restaurant and Soy Centre	Alejandro Vernon St, near PG welcome sign	Local & international vegetarian / Seafood	722-2929	Mon-Sat: 8am-2pm & 6-9pm. Closed Sundays
Grace's Restaurant	Main St. PG	Belizean/ Interna-tional	702-2414	Daily: 6am-10pm, including holidays
The Lodge at Big Falls	Big Falls Village, near the rice mill	International/ Beliz-ean/ Middle Eastern	671-7172	Daily: 11:30am – 2pm & 6:30 – 9pm [Reservations Required]
Machaca Hill Lodge	Wilson's Road	Pan Central Ameri-can and International	722-0050	Lunch: noon-2:30pm. Dinner: 7:30-10pm. [Reservations preferred]
Marian's Bay View Restau-rant	Front St, south of the mar-ket by the sea	East Indian/ Belizean	722-0129	Mon-Sat: 11am – 2pm & 6 – 10pm Sun & Hols: noon – 2pm & 7 - 9pm
Martina's Kitchen	BTL parking lot, PG	Belizean	623-3330	Mon-Sat: 7am-3pm. Closed on Sun-days
Rainbow Cafe	Queen St, PG, by the park	Belizean	631-2309	Mon—Sat: 7am—2pm. Closed on Sundays
Rainforest Cafe	Big Falls, just south of the bridge	Belizean	669-0080	Daily: 10am—10pm
The Snack Shack	BTL parking lot, PG	Breakfast & lunch/ Snacks, shakes, juices & pastries	702-0020	Mon-Sat: 7am – 3pm. Closed Sun-days
A listing in the Restaurant Guide costs BZ\$30 for a year (4 issues) or \$10 per issue. Please contact the BTIA Tourism Information Office on 722-2531 for more information and to let us know if any of the details in your listing change.				

Wat's Cookin?

Chocolate Sticky Goopy Bars

Brownie Crust:

- 4 eggs
- 2 cups white sugar
- 1 stick margarine, melted & slightly cooled
- Pinch salt
- 1/2 cup flour
- 3/4 cup cocoa powder

Beat eggs and sugar until smooth and light yellow in color. Stir in melted margarine. Add salt, flour and co-coa and stir until just mixed. Do not over mix or crust will be tough. Bake in a 8'x8' pan at 350 degrees ap-proximately 25 minutes or until inserted toothpick comes out clean.

Sticky Goopy Topping:

- 1.5 sticks margarine
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 can condensed milk
- 2 cups grated fresh coconut
- 1/2 cup walnuts or pecans

Cook first 3 ingredients over medium heat until bub-bling and light amber in color. Remove from heat and add coconut and nuts. For an extra chocolate boost, sprinkle with chocolate chips. Pour mixture over cooled brownie crust and freeze. Cut into squares and wrap in wax paper, then store in freezer. Yummy!

Recipe donated by Juli Puryear of the Cotton Tree Chocolate Factory, PG.

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BTIA TOLEDO MEMBERS 2011

Business Name	Email	Phone	Contact Person
Belize Crafts Ltd, Maya Bags	belizeexecutivedirector@mayabags.org	722-2175	Desiree Arnold
Beya Suites	info@beyasuites.com	722-2188	Lisa Avila
Blue Belize Guest House & Tours	info@bluebelize.com	722-2678	Dan Castellanos & Rachel Graham
Coral House Inn	coralhousebelize@yahoo.com	722-2878	Rick & Darla Mallory
Cotton Tree Lodge	chris@cottontreelodge.com	670-0557	Chris Crowell
Chrisbel Perez	cuxlinha@live.com	630-7673	Chris Perez
Cuxlin Ha Retirement Village	cuxlinha@hotmail.com	614-2518	Dona Lee Scafe
Dem Dats Doin	demdatsdoin@btl.net	722-2470	Yvonne Villoria
Dreamlight Computer Center	dreamlightpg@yahoo.com	702-0113	Timothy Dami
Fajina Craft Center of Belize	fajina.craft.center@gmail.com	666-6141	Candelaria Pop
Garbutt's Marine Investment Co.	garbuttsmarine@yahoo.com	604-3548	Dennis Garbutt
Hickatee Cottages	cottages@hickatee.com	662-4475	Ian & Kate Morton
Las Faldas	dehsino@yahoo.com	674-8368	Andrew Caliz
Lodge at Big Falls	info@thelodgeatbigfalls.com	671-7172 / 614-2888	Marta & Rob Hirons
Machaca Hill Lodge	info@machacahill.com	722-0050	Brian Gardiner
Maya Ant and Bee Group	mayaantandbee@gmail.com	662-1139	Ofelia Cal
Requena's Charter Service	watertaxi@btl.net	722-2070	Julio Requena
Romero's Charter Service	rcharters@btl.net	722-2625/2924	Francis Romero
Scotia Bank	roxanna.aleman@scotiabank.com	722-0098/0099	Roxanna Aleman
The Sea Front Inn	larry@seafrontinn.com	722-2300	Larry & Carol Smith
Sun Creek Lodge	suncreek@hughes.net	604-2124/ 665-6778	Bruno Kuppinger
TIDE Tours	info@tidetours.org	722-2129	Delonie Foreman
Toledo Eco-Tourism Association	teabelize@googlemail.com	702-2119	Vicente Sackul / Reyes Chun
Toledo Tour Guides Association	ttgabze@gmail.com	660-3974	Dennis Garbutt
Tranquility Lodge	info@tranquility-lodge.com	677-9921	Sheila & Rusty Nale
Tumul K'in Center of Learning	tumulkin_tourism@yahoo.com	608-1070	Rosemary Salam



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TOLEDO Cacao-Fest

distinctive chocolate, diverse cultures

It's time to stimulate your senses, and head down to Belize's beautiful deep south for the fifth Toledo Cacao Festival.

Grown by Maya farmers, the Criollo and Trinitario cacao species have, over the years, naturally crossed to produce new varieties. These new strains, along with Toledo's rich soil and the organic farming methods

used by the farmers, have produced a bean with a rich, pungent chocolate flavour which is much sought after by chocolaters.

Packed with activities for the young and old alike, CacaoFest pays tribute to the organic cacao farmers and Belizean chocolatiers, and is a celebration of cacao, culture, and the rich flavours of the Toledo District.



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FRIDAY 20TH MAY - WINE AND CHOCOLATE

Coral House Inn, Front Street, 7pm to 10pm

tickets BZ\$50 in advance, BZ\$60 at the door

Wine & Chocolate has fast become a Festival favourite, with good food, wine, music and, of course, great chocolate made from our distinctive Toledo cacao!

This year's signature opening event will be held in the seafront gardens of the lovely Coral House Inn in Punta Gorda Town, with music from the fabulous Nelita Castillo, and rounded off with a firework display.

Nelita is one of Belize's best-loved singers, having performed from an early age on radio and at live shows, before heading off to study and perform internationally. She'll be singing a range of jazz and Latino favourites.

To complement her smooth sounds, there'll be a range of sweet and



© JC Cuellar Photography - jccuellar.com

savoury finger food, and decadent chocolate treats from Belize's four finest chocolatiers - Kakaw, Goss, Cotton Tree, and Cyrila's Chocolate - along with a selection of Premium Wines, and cacao and fruit liqueurs from Old Master, the Belizean family-owned distillers.

And be sure to visit the SavorBelize booth to learn more about the new "Flavors of Belize" culinary guidebook! They'll be announcing the winner of their chocolate recipe competition at the Taste of Toledo on Saturday!

SATURDAY 21ST MAY - TASTE OF TOLEDO

See inside for our timetable of events and Festival map of PG Town

With chocolate and cacao exhibits, arts and crafts, Cacao for Kids, and bargain-priced tours you'll get a true Taste of Toledo!

Visit our Chocolate Centre on Front Street to meet Belize's four chocolatiers, tour the factory, and view cacao-related products, including jewellery and cacao soap.

TCGA is hosting an open day to explain more about this important Belizean industry, and you'll be able

to sample the traditional Kukul Ukul drink! Discover more about the links between cacao and conservation from Toledo's three major NGOs - Ya'axche, Sustainable Harvest, and TIDE, and take a free trip to the Dolomite plant to learn more about the vital role this mineral plays in cacao farming.

There are fine art and archaeology exhibits from NICH, a range of local arts and crafts, and **Culture in Harmony** live music from morning until the small hours!



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Athletes will love our new Cacao Triathlon, children can enjoy the free Cacao for Kids activities at the PG Library, and the whole family will delight in our Cacao Trail tours and Sea Toledo snorkelling trips.

www.ToledoChocolate.com
tel: 722-2531

FESTIVAL TOURS

PG is Toledo's gateway to lush rainforest and beautiful offshore cays. Sample some of the southern delights with our special Festival tours.

If you've always wanted to make chocolate, then here's your chance... TIDE Tours' **Cacao Trail** visits to Cyrila's cacao farm and chocolate factory in the lovely village of San Felipe, at a bargain price of BZ\$45 pp. Cacao Trail tours leave

from TIDE Tours office on Front Street at 8am and 2pm.

Many Belizean farmers - including our cacao farmers - rely on **Punta Gorda Dolomite** to increase their crop production. Meet at Central Park at 2pm to join Brian Holland and Anne Brorsen for a tour of Belize Mineral's dolomite plant, and learn more about this vital mineral.

Water babies will love our Sea
Toledo snorkelling trips to
Frenchman's Caye in the Port



Honduras Marine Reserve. Run by Garbutt's Marine from their base at Joe Taylor Creek the amazing price of BZ\$45 can't be beaten, so sign up early for your tickets!

TIDE TOURS 722-2129. *Garbutt's Marine* 604-3548

TASTE OF TOLEDO TIMETABLE - Saturday 21st May events in and around PG Town

Chocolate Centre Belize's fabulous chocolaters, chocolate factory tour, cacao soap, jewellery, and more!

Savor Belize Announcement of the winner of the Savor Belize "Best Chocolate Dish in Belize" recipe competition

TCCA production and processing, and learn to make the traditional Kukul drink

Fajina Craft Centre for Maya crafts and tortilla-making lessons

NICH art & archaeology multi-purpose building

Neotropical Afro Beats drumming
Airstrip area

Cacao Armadillos music and BBQ
Rosewood Studio

Roots Rock Reggae Bar at Cattle Landing, for karaoke, billiards, wine, and beer

Triathlon swim 250 metres, cycle 6 miles, and run 2 miles. Texaco dock.

Cacao for Kids! Free story-telling and arts and crafts at PG Library

Dolomite Plant tour with free transport from Central Park

Sea Toledo snorkelling, Garbutt's Marine, BZ\$45pp (call 604-3548)

Sea Toledo snorkelling from Garbutt's Marine, BZ\$45pp (call 604-3548)

Cacao Trail tours
TIDE Tours, BZ\$45 pp call 722-2129

Cacao Trail
TIDE Tours, BZ\$45 pp call 722-2129

Olympic Bar DJ Fresh and special dinner menu

Ocean View BBQ and live music from the Culture Boyz

Reef Bar for Garifuna drumming

Waluco's dance and launch of Joe Villafranco's reggae/R&B album

Earth Runnin's dinner and reggae
special dinner menu from 5pm, reggae show from 8.30pm

Chocolate dinner
Lodge at Big Falls, call 671-7172

Extra daytime activities

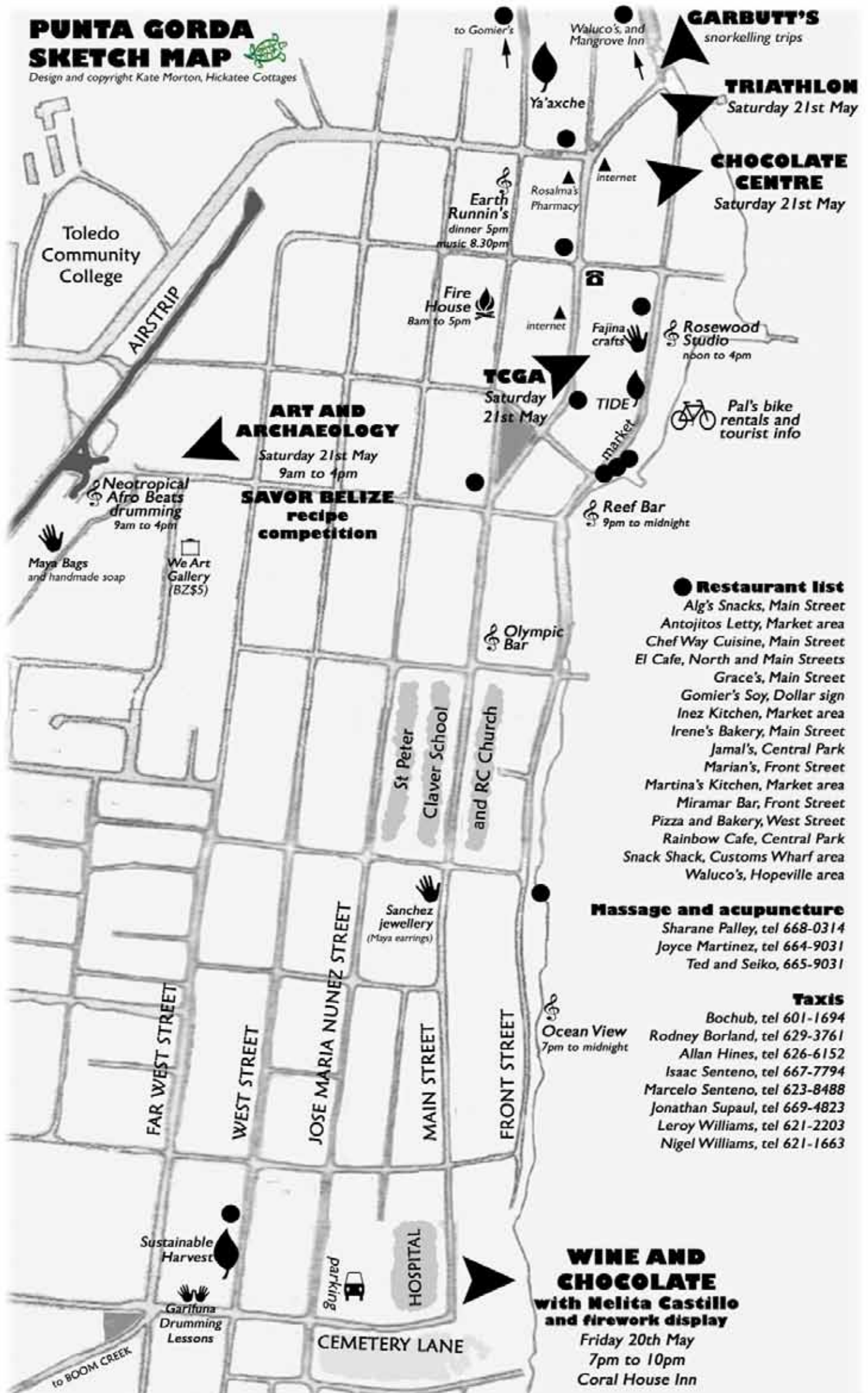
- **Cacao and Conservation** (9am until noon) visit TIDE, Ya'axche, and Sustainable Harvest International to learn more about their work in the District
- **PG Fire House** tour (8am to 5pm)
- **Maya Bags** near the airstrip (9am to 4pm)
- **We Art Gallery** on Far West Street (9am to noon, 4pm to 8pm, admission BZ\$5)
- **Garifuna Drumming Lessons** by Roy McDonald (632-7701)

TASTE OF TOLEDO TIMETABLE - Saturday 21st May events in and around PG Town

Toledo CacaoFest is held in association with:

PUNTA GORDA SKETCH MAP

Design and copyright Kate Morton, Hickatee Cottages



Restaurant list

Alg's Snacks, Main Street
Antojitos Letty, Market area
Chef Way Cuisine, Main Street
El Cafe, North and Main Streets
Grace's, Main Street
Gomier's Soy, Dollar sign
Inez Kitchen, Market area
Irene's Bakery, Main Street
Jamal's, Central Park
Marian's, Front Street
Martina's Kitchen, Market area
Miramar Bar, Front Street
Pizza and Bakery, West Street
Rainbow Cafe, Central Park
Snack Shack, Customs Wharf area
Waluco's, Hopeville area

Massage and acupuncture

Sharane Palley, tel 668-0314
Joyce Martinez, tel 664-9031
Ted and Seiko, 665-9031

Taxis

Bochub, tel 601-1694
Rodney Borland, tel 629-3761
Allan Hines, tel 626-6152
Isaac Senteno, tel 667-7794
Marcelo Senteno, tel 623-8488
Jonathan Supaul, tel 669-4823
Leroy Williams, tel 621-2203
Nigel Williams, tel 621-1663



SUNDAY 22ND MAY - LUBAANTUN, SAN PEDRO COLUMBIA

with steel pan concert, and Folkloric Ballet of Quintana Roo, BZ\$10 pp

Pedestrian access. Parking and shuttle bus available at the entrance road to Lubaantun

With its beautiful location at the foothills of the Maya Mountains and bordered by streams, the ancient Maya site of Lubaantun provides a mystical setting for Sunday's Grand Finale.

CacaoFest brings you a day of history and culture, fabulous steel pan music and Maya dance, along with great local arts, crafts and food for sale.

Lubaantun is a Late Classic Maya site, distinctive for its architectural style and 'rounded corners', the many clay figures found at the site, and the mythical 'Crystal Skull'.

Join Dr John Morris, Research Director at the Institute of



Archaeology to learn more about ancient Maya history, and for your guided tour of Lubaantun.

Visiting from Chetumal, the Folkloric Ballet of Quintana Roo continues the CacaoFest tradition of featuring Maya dances, with their interpretation of the Maya legend of the creation of

Man and Woman. Don't miss their performance at 3.30pm!

Lubaantun event is sponsored by Institute of Archaeology, Institute of Creative Arts, Toledo Cacao Growers Association, and San Pedro Columbia Village Council

LUBAANTUN TIMETABLE - Sunday 22nd May

9am	10am	11am	1pm	2pm	3pm	4pm
	Opening ceremony	Cultural music <i>Florencia Mes</i>	Guided Tour <i>Santiago Coc</i>	Cultural music and dance	Archaeology Tour <i>by Dr John Morris</i>	Steel Pan
						Folkloric Ballet of Quintana Roo
	Bus from PG Central Park		Bus from PG Central Park			FINALE CONCERT <i>by the Pantempters and the Panerrixf</i>

MUSIC 'PAN THE PYRAMIDS - finale concert

In 1992 a lecturer at University College Belize formed a steel band, made up of college students and faculty staff. That lecturer was Dr Colville Young, now Sir Colville Young, Governor General of Belize.

The UCB Steel band quickly made a name for itself in the entertainment world, but as the student pannists graduated they were no longer eligible for membership, and so formed the Pantempters Steel Orchestra, led by Lynn Young.

CacaoFest is delighted that the Pantempters will be performing at Lubaantun, not only entertaining the audience, but equally importantly inspiring future young musicians.



One such example is the **Panerrixf Steel Band** from *Our Lady of Guadalupe School* in Belmopan.

Formed in 2005 under the direction of Julietta Burrowes-Lewis, the Band has performed at several events, including Carnival and Independence Day celebration parades.

As well as producing a great sound, the Band has experienced first-hand the positive influence of music on their lives, with several members excelling academically, and becoming role models for their friends. With international performances in Denver, Colorado, already under their belt the Panerrixf are set to go from strength to strength!

This programme is produced with the kind assistance of the Belize Ag Report
www.BelizeAgReport.com



Toledo Cacao Festival, Front Street, Punta Gorda
www.ToledoChocolate.com
email: info@ToledoChocolate.com tel: 722-2531

Mark your calendar for CacaoFest 2012!
Commonwealth Day Holiday Weekend - 25th, 26th, 27th May 2012

TRANSPORT SCHEDULES

Schedule of Flights from Punta Gorda To Belize City and from Belize City To Punta Gorda							
Flights stop at Placencia & Dangriga							
Depart Punta Gorda	Arrive In Belize City	Service Provider	Depart Belize City	Arrive In Punta Gorda	Service Provider		
6:45am	7:45am	Maya Island Air	8:00am	9:00am	Maya Island Air		
7:00am	8:10am	Tropic Air	8:30am	9:30am	Tropic Air		
9:30am	10:30am	Maya Island Air	10:00am	11:00am	Maya Island Air		
9:40am	10:50am	Tropic Air	10:30am	11:30am	Tropic Air		
11:30am	12:30pm	Maya Island Air	12:30pm	1:30pm	Tropic Air		
11:35am	12:40pm	Tropic Air	2:30pm	3:30pm	Tropic Air		
1:35pm	2:45pm	Tropic Air	2:30pm	3:50pm	Maya Island Air		
4:00pm	5:00pm	Maya Island Air	4:30pm	5:30pm	Maya Island Air		
4:00pm	5:00pm	Tropic Air	4:50am	6:00pm	Tropic Air		
Schedule of Buses leaving Punta Gorda							
Departs from Punta Gorda		Arrives in Belize City		Service Provider		Type of Service	
3:50am		10:30am		James Bus Line		Regular	
4:50am		11:30am		James Bus Line		Regular	
5:50am		12:30pm		James Bus Line		Regular	
6:00am		10:45am		James Bus Line		Express	
7:50am		2:30pm		James Bus Line		Regular	
9:50am		4:30pm		James Bus Line		Regular	
11:50am		6:30pm		James Bus line		Regular	
1:50pm		8:30pm		James Bus Line		Regular	
2:50pm		9:30pm		James Bus Line		Regular	
3:50pm		9:15pm		James Bus Line		Regular	
Boats To & From Puerto Barrios , Guatemala							
Service Provider		Dep. Punta Gorda	Arrive in Puerto Barrios		Dep. Puerto Barrios		Arrive in Punta Gorda
Requena's Charter Service		9:30am	10:30am		2:00pm		3:00pm
Pichilingo		2:00pm	3:00pm		10:00am		11:00am
Marisol		4:00pm	5:00pm		1:00pm		3:00pm
Memo's		1:00pm	2:00pm		3:15pm		4:15pm
Boats to Livingston depart on Tuesdays and Fridays at 10 a.m.							

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Arzu on Medicinal Plants: Herbs for Menopause

Menopause is technically the last menstrual flow of a woman’s life. Some women stop menstruating at about 51.3 years of age, however, menopause can begin any time around the mid to late thirties. It is a time of coming into wisdom, power, and knowledge for a woman. Thousands of women will reach menopause this year and no one is exempt. This metamorphic event awaits every woman, and can be slightly different for each one. Your cultural background, your diet, your lifestyle, your genetics, and your knowledge of the menopausal process play a key role in how you will experience giving birth to your true Self.

Knowing the symptoms of the menopausal process is the first defense against a negative menopausal experience. Symptoms of menopause include: insomnia, palpitations, hot flashes or night sweats associated with headaches, itchy skin, dizziness, weakness, numbness in arms or hands, low libido; vaginal changes of dryness, itchiness, infections or painful sex, urinary infections or incontinence; irregular bleeding, depression, anxiety, irritability, weeping, mood swings, verbal and episodic forgetfulness, acne, hair loss, facial hair, and weight gain. Menopausal remedies in indigenous cultures rely exclusively on symptoms to determine which plant medicine to use. Three of the master plants used in the Caribbean are Wild Yam, Neem, and Horsetail.

Traditional herbalists believe God designated Wild Yam as the herb to alleviate any ailment that affects women because they are women. They use Wild Yam infusions to treat imbalances of the uterus, ovaries, fallopian tubes, and of the entire female reproductive system. Wild Yam tincture serves as a hormone balancer to address psychological symptoms like depression, anxiety, irritability, weeping, mood swings, and low libido. A weak Wild Yam tea

taken daily has proven helpful in verbal and episodic forgetfulness, if you can remember to take it.



Neem is good as a dietary supplement for strengthening the immune system, cleaning the blood, and removing toxins from the liver. One capsule or cup of Neem tea taken before bedtime will alleviate menopausal symptoms like insomnia, palpitations, hot flashes, or night sweats associated with headaches, itchy skin, dizziness and weakness, and numbness in arms or hands. As an antibiotic, Neem treats vaginal itchiness, urinary infections, and incontinence.

There is no herb better than Horsetail for growing hair where it is supposed to grow, and for discouraging the growth of facial hair in women. Horsetail is used in herbal remedies for growing hair in proper places (not the face), to strengthen bone, and clear skin conditions like acne. It is the only herbal source of sulfur; a mineral that helps skin and hair stay healthy. Horsetail also promotes the body’s absorption of calcium, speeds the healing of surface injuries, and eliminates excess oil from skin and hair. One cup of horsetail tea taken three times daily for seven consecutive days will suffice. Traditionally, Horsetail is not taken for more than seven days in a row. The body must rest/process for three weeks before taking again.

Phytoestrogens are also found in food. An estrogen found in brown rice, date palms and licorice are identical to the ones produced by your own body. Included in this class of plant estrogens are isoflavones, two of which are flaxseed (Linaza), and soy (tofu). Soy contains phytoestrogens that mimic the effects of human estrogen. This makes them useful in treating symptoms of menopause as well as protecting against osteoporosis. Other sources of these plant based estrogen mimickers include beans, lentils, and black-eyed peas.

Other things you can do to deal with menopausal symptoms include maintaining a positive attitude. We are what we think and a positive attitude helps the physical body to heal. Think Sexy: sexual activity provides physical benefits for menopause. It is good exercise and helps hormonal levels, vaginal muscle tone, and lubrication. Get rid of vaginal dryness once and for all!

Diet is one of the most important keys in transforming menopause into a pleasant experience. Research found that women who eat a mostly vegetarian high fiber, low fat diet, experience fewer menopause symptoms. Their diets include leafy green vegetables and fatty acids, such as flaxseed. They also avoid, eliminate, or reduce caffeine, refined sugar, refined flour and grains, salt, alcohol, nicotine, dairy products, spicy foods, artificial colorings, canned foods, flavorings and preservatives.

Since everyone’s body is different, not one method will work for everyone but following the herbal and dietary suggestions will certainly render some relief. Menopause is not a disease or a reason to run to the hospital. Menopause is a sacred transition into womanhood, where women of wisdom, power, and knowledge begin.

Where to get your copy of The Toledo Howler

- ◆ BTIA Tourist Information Center, Front St in Punta Gorda
- ◆ Tropic Air and Maya Island Air terminals throughout Belize
- ◆ Business premises of BTIA members in Toledo (see list page 4).
- ◆ Tropic Air office in Puerto Barrios, Guatemala.
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Making Chocolate in Toledo

Who doesn't like chocolate? Well, yes, there are a few people who do not like it and others, poor souls, who are allergic to it. However during this season of celebrating cacao in all its forms, we will be speaking for those of us who think life would be a little less interesting without chocolate.

The Howler team recently visited the Cotton Tree Chocolate Factory in Punta Gorda Town to find out more about this wonderful food. The Cotton Tree Chocolate Factory has been operating for 3 years in a small seaside building on Front St in PG, formally occupied by a bakery. There are several other chocolate makers in Belize, all using our local organic beans, but Cotton Tree is the only chocolate factory based here in Toledo.

The factory is run by Juli Puryear, a native of California who settled in PG six years ago. Juli works with 3 other staff to produce a variety of bars and decorative chocolates each week.

So how do they do it? The raw cocoa beans are first roasted for 30 minutes and then ground down in a special machine to make 'nibs'. These small cocoa kernels are then put into another machine which separates the natural starch from the liqueur — a key ingredient in chocolate.



Conch machine: velvety smooth and rich but still not finished

The liqueur is then combined with co-



Juli Puryear shows off the chocolate factory's gift shop goodies

coa butter (extracted through another labor intensive process), milk powder, sugar and vanilla bean in what is called a conch machine. Other flavorings are also added at this point. It is then churned for 3 days.

After this comes the tempering machine, which both mixes and heats the chocolate to stop the ingredients separating at a later stage. Finally the mixture is poured into molds which vibrate to settle the contents properly. Refrigeration and packaging are the final steps.

It is certainly a complicated and labor intensive process and requires a substantial investment in machinery but the final product makes it all worthwhile! We must thank the ancient Maya for introducing cacao beans to the world but we must also thank Europeans (Swiss, Dutch or English depending on who you ask) for taking it further and inventing the solid treat we know and love as chocolate.

Free tours of Cotton Tree Chocolate Factory are available on Monday-Friday and Saturday mornings. Phone: 621-8776 for more information.

Birding Adventure

continued from Page 2

Why had we been foolish enough to think that the bird would have hung around for two days *and* had the disposition to call? We had been there nearly a half hour with, at best, maybe a half dozen pauraques to our credit. But no potoo.

"Over there!" John whispered. "Did you hear that?" Wilfred and I both nodded. "That sounded just like the birds I heard in Honduras last week. Great

Potoo!" he declared. It did sound like the recording I had heard over and over on xeno-canto, the website dedicated to audiotracks of bird sounds from all over the world. But it was way off in the distance and barely audible. We heard a second bird on the opposite side of the river, but it was even farther away. Each bird had called only once.

After several more minutes of silence, we went farther up the river. This time we hit the jackpot. Almost immediately a bird called from a nearby tree. Then a second bird. "Grrraaawwww" they said to each other in a language that could

only be appreciated by a Great Potoo—and three exuberant birders!

Footnote: After several more trips up the river in the following week, Wilfred and his assistant found several more Great Potoos, including two at a potential nest site in a hollowed out branch not far from where we had first seen the bird.

H. Lee Jones is based in Punta Gorda and is the author of the very popular 'Birds of Belize' .

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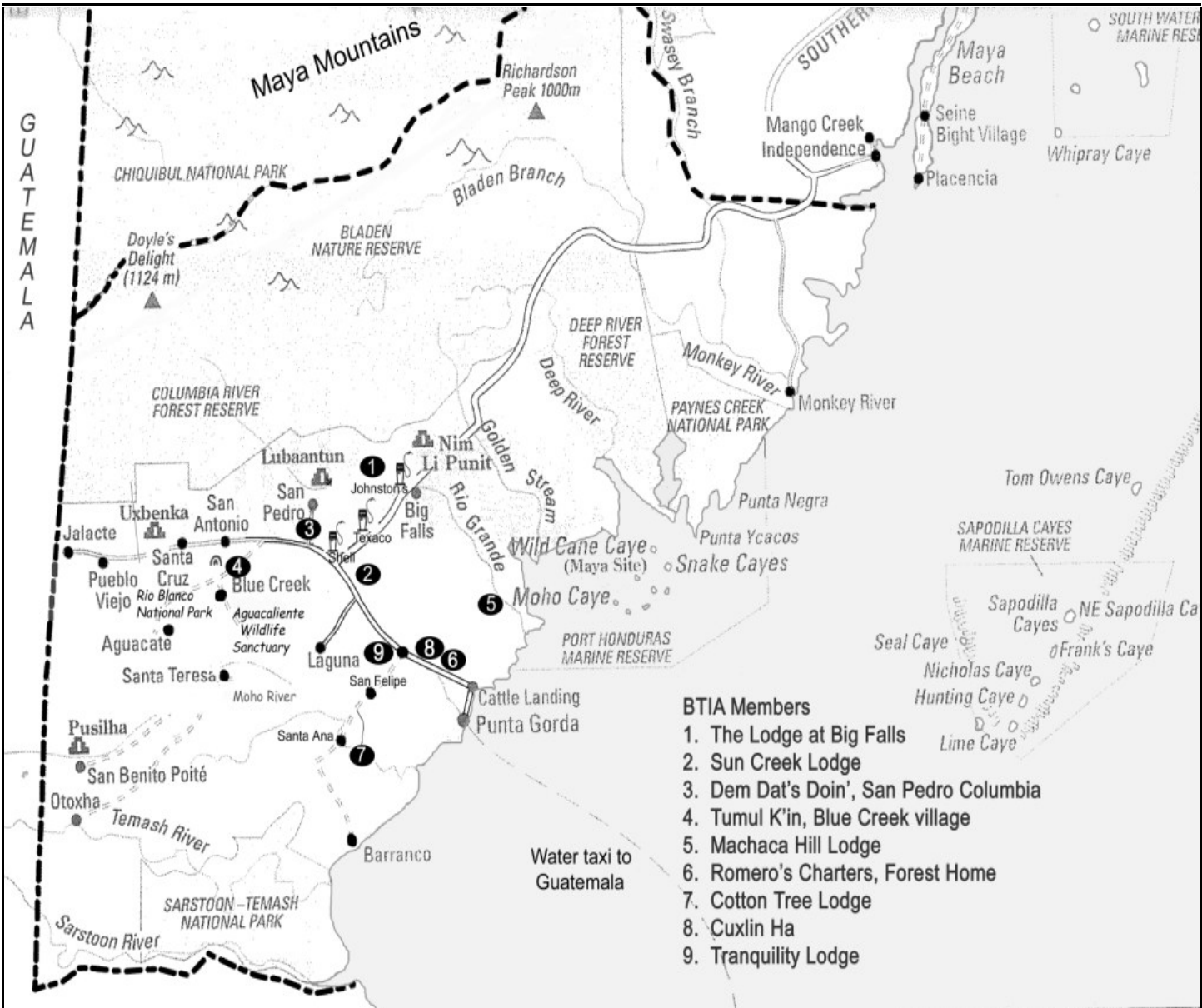
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