

# WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE ~~EXPECTING~~ EXPATING

BELIZE EDITION

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# What/Who is an Expat?

“Expat” = Expatriate

❓ Latin root = “expatriatus”

*ex* = “out of”

*patria* = “native country,  
fatherland”

*Definition* = “A person who lives outside their  
native country”      -*Oxford Dictionary*

# Motivations for an Expat Life



vs.



- Social Concerns
- Economic Struggles
- Political Differences
- Climate

- Work Opportunities
- Quality of Life
- Family/Friends/Love
- Preferable Climate



# It's OK to Be Confused

"I am the wisest man alive, for I know one thing...  
and that is that I know nothing."

*-Socrates*

- You won't know everything
- Embrace the change and unknown
- Keep an open mind
- Ask for help when you need it
- Leave your "comfort zone"

# Continuously Be Learning

- Take up new activities/skills
- Engage in locally-based, “social bonding” activities
  - Go to local restaurants, vendors, meat shops, etc.
  - Attend local events
  - Volunteer
  - Share meals with your neighbors
- Talk to people, ask questions, LISTEN
- Be mindful of social etiquette and cultural traditions
- Use resources (with a grain of salt): Social Media, Internet Search





# Engage with Other Expats

*"Be wary of the company you keep for they are a reflection of who you are, or who you want to be."*

- Kenneth G. Ortiz

- Find your "tribe"
- Learn from their experiences  
(and mistakes)
- Grow together



# EXPECTATIONS

vs.

# REALITY



# Expectations vs. Reality

- US/Canada/Europe vs. Belize
- *Simpler* Life vs. *Easy* Life
- Sub-tropical climate
  - Dry Season (mid-Nov. – May), Wet/“Green” Season (June – Nov.)
  - Hurricanes/Flooding | NO active volcanoes
  - Forest-Fire risk and agricultural burning (April-May)
  - Bugs and critters



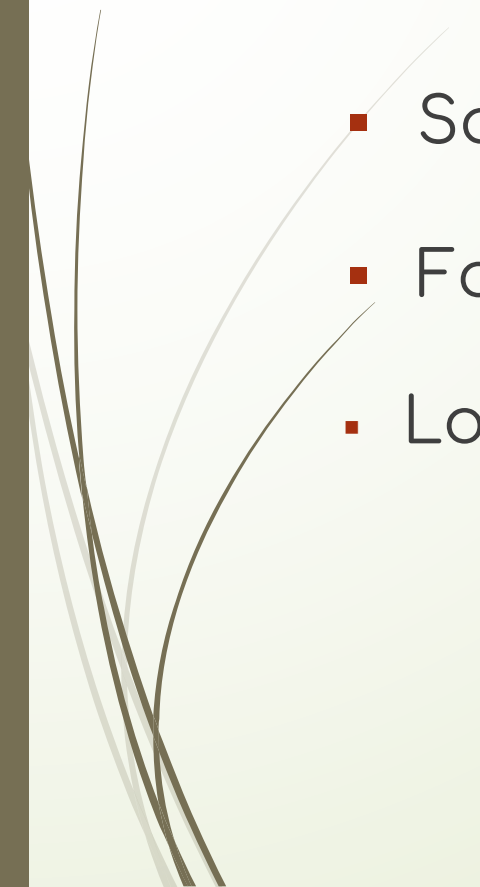


# Expectations vs. Reality

- Practicality
  - Cars
  - High-end appliances
- Shopping, Sourcing Goods, Importing
  - Most products have a 12.5% General Sales Tax [GST]
  - Import duties vary *broadly*
  - Shop from multiple sources



# Expectations vs. Reality

- Safety
  - Food Quality, Accessibility, and Diversity
  - Logistics (ie visa renewal, car registration)
- 



# PRIMARY TAKEAWAYS

- Get clear on your motivation for expatriating
- Expectations  $\neq$  Reality
- Attitude / Mindset is everything!