

What is the difference between the International Airport and the Municipal Airport in Belize City?

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One of my longtime readers Jenny and her family always fly Municipal to save a few dollars. This time she and her husband Brad were coming down for a solo trip and out of habit she got me to book them through Belize Municipal Airport then she wrote me back and said she realized that since there were only two of them she wanted to make it easy fly to San Pedro from Belize International Airport instead.

Since this is a topic that often comes up on trip advisor in the Belize Forums I asked Jenny to do a comparison between the two airports. This will help you decide which option is best for you. Personally after a long day of travel I like to hop on a Tropic flight and get home to Ambergris Caye as soon as I can.

Flying to San Pedro: Airport – Municipal or BZE

When flying to San Pedro, two options exist: flying directly from BZE to San Pedro or taking a taxi to municipal and flying to San Pedro from there. Both have advantages and disadvantages, and some people have a definite preference. We, on the other hand, have done both and decide on each trip which way is the best option to use that time.

The main advantage of flying directly from BZE is time. Once you exit immigration, pick up your luggage and get through customs, you go directly to the departure area and fly straight over to San Pedro. Depending on your arrival time and the length of the line ahead of you, you could be in San Pedro within 45 minutes. There is a cost for this convenience, as the price to fly from BZE is \$125 USD plus fees per person, adult and child.

The main advantage of flying from municipal is cost savings. At \$72 USD plus fees for an adult and \$50.50 plus fees for a child, there can be a definite savings over flying from BZE, especially if you have

kids who qualify for the child rate (I think it is up to age 12 or 13). Even when you consider the \$20 USD taxi ride each way, the savings for a family of 5 can exceed \$335 USD.

There are other reasons to choose one way over the other, though. Now that duty-free shopping is available for departures to San Pedro, some folks like to stock up on wine or liquor before leaving for San Pedro. Others actually like the taxi ride to municipal, since a talkative driver can make the 20 minute ride feel like a tour of the city. Sometimes, a good driver can even make you forget about the lack of air conditioning with stories about local events, politics, fishing, and the history of the city! One reason we like to fly out of municipal is our ritual of checking in and then heading straight to the little waterside café to drink our first Fantas and eat our first plates of rice and beans! It is also fun to see the look on people's faces when the plane from municipal, on occasion, stops at BZE to pick up the same people who were on your arrival flight. When they get on the plane and see that you are already settled in, they can get thoroughly confused!

Either way you decide to fly to San Pedro, you can cut your wait by packing light enough for carry-on luggage only. That way, you do not have to wait around for the luggage to be unloaded and claimed and can go directly to the customs line. If you stay in a condo, you likely have a washer and dryer, so you can wash clothes as needed throughout your stay. And, be sure to contact [TacoGirl](#) for a discount for Tropic Air flights!

While on the topic of flying and pricing I decided to add some information about flight fees and have included a picture of the airport departure tax sign.

Local Security Fee Adult/Child \$0.75

Belize Airports Authority Rider Fee Adult/Child \$2.50

Fuel Surcharge Adult/Child \$3.10

(As of 4/2017 the few rate is \$56us a person)

The rider fee is only charged once for a round trip but the fuel surcharge is charge both ways.

Security fee is only charge out of BZE. If passengers only do a one way from SPR to BZE they do not pay the security fee



Waiting area at Belize International Airport



Alternate waiting area Jet's Bar – he is a character worth visiting



Admirals Club & Grill – waterside cafe



Tropic Air in San Pedro

Fees Payable Upon Departure

Int'l PAX <u>Belizean</u>	Bze \$ 35.00
Int'l PAX <u>Non-Belizean</u>	USD \$ 39.25
Domestic Pax	Bze \$ 1.50

Belize Departure tax

SOURCE

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