

How To Ride A Taxi In Belize

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Confession: When I first came to Belize, I could not figure out why cars kept honking at me. Did I just drop something? Was I accidentally walking in their way? Or was it just harass the gringo time? When I finally asked a Belizean friend, she got a good laugh, because all those cars were simply taxis letting me know they had free space for a passenger.

Riding a taxi is one of the best ways to get around in Belize, and also a great way to get a bit more authentic in your travels because it's how many locals travel. Belize taxis are ordinary cars; usually the only thing that indicates it is a taxi is the green license plate. Taxis are shared, so don't be surprised if the driver pulls over during your trip and accepts a few more passengers. The fare is usually set, and you pay for yourself. For example, to ride from San Ignacio to the Guatemala border is about \$10.00 BZ per person, whether there is one person riding or five. You hail a taxi by standing on the side of the road for the direction you want to travel – a taxi with a free space will indicate with honking or flashing lights. Give them a wave and they will stop for you.

Some Belize taxi advice

1. Taxi courtesy: When you get into a taxi, greet everyone with a Good Morning or Buenos Dias. You might be a bit scrunched—3 adults to a back seat is fare game—so try and stay in the boundaries of your own seat.
2. First come first served... usually. Give yourself a bit of extra time to get where you are going in case a fellow passenger requires a bit of a detour for their destination. Usually the driver will go in order of who gets in first, but if a later passenger's destination is before yours, the driver will probably take them first.
3. Taxis on the Cayes (Caye Caulker and Ambergris Caye) are golf carts! The ride can be a bit bumpy, so be prepared.
4. Taxis are really hard to catch after dark, in many areas drivers stop running around 6pm. Plan ahead for this if you will need a taxi after dark. Many hotels will arrange a taxi for you, or you can get the cell number of a driver and call when you need to be picked up.
5. Small bills! Taxi drivers rarely can change anything larger then \$20.00 BZ, and exact fare is best. In fact, it is best to...
6. Know the fare. Ask a local what the fare is for your trip, or ask the taxi driver before you get it. Have that exact amount ready to hand to the driver at the end of the trip if possible. Otherwise

you might pay a bit of “tourist tax” :>

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