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# Robb Report

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## See to Belize

GERMÁN ALAMILLA, dive master and fishing guide at **Cayo Espanto**, recommends that you pack a pair of optically correct, polarized sunglasses for your trip to the island. The curved-lens shades provide the proper light balance for spotting the schools of bonefish that lurk in the shallows below your villa's private dock. Catching one of the fish also requires the right tackle, an accurate cast, and a convincing retrieve that mimics the action of a shrimp crawling through the current. But if all the elements are in place, the bonefish's resuscitation on your hook—and the brilliant battle that will ensue—will create a rare and welcome connection on this sandy speck in the Caribbean.

Such an expenditure of energy may seem a violation of principle on **Cayo Espanto**, a four-acre, four-villa island a few miles from San Pedro in northeastern Belize. The privacy and seclusion of the resort's villas, and the lack of interaction among guests, make the island the exclusive lair of couples and families, many of whom

want nothing more than to relax. Still, should a yearning for adventure arise, Cayo is one of the better-situated resorts for fulfilling the desire.

The Belize Barrier Reef, second in size only to Australia's Great Barrier Reef, is a 15-minute boat ride from the island. Five square miles of the coral ecosystem are protected as the Hol Chan marine reserve, where divers and snorkelers can swim with groupers, barracudas, nurse sharks, and many reb. Sections of the reef outside of the reserve are rife with tarpon and other game fish, and the Belizean mainland abounds with wildlife in its jungle rivers and rain forest nature preserves.

Regardless of the day's activities, most afternoons on Cayo end with your personal butler serving drinks and dinner on your dock. The butler will see to every additional detail of your stay, but should you forget to pack the proper sunglasses, ask instead for dive master Alamilla. He will gladly hop over to San Pedro to pick up a pair for you. —**ANDREW WELLEN**



## River Royalty

RETURNING FROM A DAY AT **Waterford Castle's** golf club—the only 18-hole, championship-caliber course at a private island resort—the golfer who runs aloof of the hilly parkland terrain and subtly connoisseur greens notices not the brightly colored pennants atop the castle's battlements, but the rooftop gargoyles and their mocking grin. Such a greeting, however, belies the castle's many charms, which enable its guests to shrug off even the most dispiriting rounds.

Set on a 210-acre island in the Suir River, a five-minute ferry ride from **Waterford, Ireland**, the resort consists of the golf course and the castle, the latter of which was built in the 15th century for the Fitzgerald family, whose lords were, at the time, Ireland's royalty in all but name. In the castle's grand entrance, which now serves as a hotel lobby, a 28-foot



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• Location •

Three miles off the northeastern tip of Ambergris Caye in northeastern Belize.

• Accommodations •

The resort's 2,000-square-foot Cayo Espino is the most spacious of the resort's four villas, each of which includes a deck and small pool. Also available is a one-bedroom bungalow with a deck and jacuzzi.

• Recreation •

Swimming off your private deck, snorkeling at Shark-Fin Alley and other spots in the 10th Class marine reserve, getting on Cayo Chapel, and visiting to the Maya ruins of L'Anast on the mainland.

• Dining •

Much more than just seafood, but the seafood is superb. Eat it on your veranda, in the villa, on the beach, or at the end of your private dock.

• Diverly Diversions •

Specialize for snappers and groupers with dive master Manilla, who will prepare your catch for you on a private beach on Ambergris Caye.

• Rates •

From \$1,099 per couple, per night, most of the estate (that begins at \$1,000 per night).

812.434.4332, [www.oprivateisland.com](http://www.oprivateisland.com)

