



### **What is Reef Conservation International?**

Feel the thrill of swimming with a whale shark, the excitement of spearing the invasive lionfish, and the satisfaction in helping protect coral reefs. Reef Conservation International (ReefCI) trips are a unique opportunity to protect the reef ecosystem by directly participating in our ongoing marine conservation projects! We are located on a small, private, picture-perfect Caribbean island on the Belize Barrier Reef. The diving is incredible and the conservation work we do is meaningful!

### **What Is Included?**

- 5 days/4 nights on private island in the Caribbean off the coast of Belize
- 3 meals daily during dive week
- 12-13 dives per week
- At least one night dive a week
- Training for conservation work and participation in our conservation projects
- Island boat transfers to and from island
- All diving equipment (excluding wetsuit, fins and booties, dive mask)
- Accommodations while on the island

### **What is Not Included?**

- Flights to Placencia, Belize
- Wetsuit, fins, booties, dive mask
- Optional PADI certification courses you would like to take while on the island
- Sapodilla Caye Marine Park Fees: 25 USD per week
- Alcohol and soda/pop while on the island (2-5 USD per drink)

### **What will I be doing?**

Reef Conservation International empowers you to take an active role in directly protecting and conserving our oceans that we love via our marine conservation projects and environmental education and awareness program. You will learn about the invasive lionfish species that is destroying our native coral reefs and participate in our dives to spearfish and remove this incredibly destructive species. You will also learn all about coral reefs, tropical fish, sharks, manatees, dolphins and many other species from tiny invertebrates to the largest fish in the ocean, the whale shark. You will participate in our marine conservation identification dives to discover the wonders of the marine world. We also cover many more topics from ocean acidification, climate change, to global warming and you will discover things you can do to combat these issues. Join us and make a difference!

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Each week/day will differ but you will be helping and participating in the following areas:

- **Invasive Lionfish:** Spearfish to remove this destructive invasive species that is destroying native coral reef ecosystems. Watch this short YouTube video to experience [Lionfish Spearing with ReefCI](#).
- **Marine Conservation Education:** Learn about coral reefs and marine animals and discover how we can protect our oceans and reefs.
- **Whale Shark Monitoring** (if spotted): Watch this short YouTube video, [Whale Sharking with ReefCI](#) to see it in action!
- **Biodiversity Identification Dives:** ID dives (fish, sea turtles, sharks, invertebrates, coral) to increase one's knowledge and understanding of reef ecosystems.
- **Beach Clean-ups:** Weekly beach and island trash/plastic removal on islands of the Belize Barrier Reef.

Depending on the season and length of stay you might not take part in all of these activities above but it is a good bet that you will experience most of them. Check out this short video, [Volunteering with ReefCI](#), to get an overall feel for what you will experience.

#### **Marine Conservation Education Program Schedule and Weekly Itinerary**

All new arrivals to the island will complete week 1 schedule while on the island. Those who are with us as rollovers (volunteers with us multiple weeks in a row) will be on our cycle two, three, and four schedules. Please click on the links below to see each detailed weekly schedule that includes dives, conservation presentation topics, and meals.

- [Marine Conservation Education Program](#)
- [Week 1 Schedule/Itinerary](#)
- [Cycle 2 Schedule/Itinerary](#)
- [Cycle 3 Schedule/Itinerary](#)
- [Cycle 4 Schedule/Itinerary](#)

#### **Is this trip for me?**

We attract a vast cross section of demographics from diverse ages, backgrounds, and nationalities. We have singles, students, working professionals, families, couples, and retirees that come to our island! People coming on this type of volunteer experience all have a shared passion for diving and ocean conservation, which makes for great group dynamics. We give the general diver a unique opportunity to learn about and help conserve the marine environment while having a fun volunteer experience. Our trips are for both experienced and non-experienced divers and those wishing to become certified divers. Everyone contributes regardless of their background or experience. The research methodologies we teach are very simple and you will learn all you need to know in our

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training sessions prior to each dive. You will be spearing the invasive lionfish and participating in our other conservation dives and making a difference!

### **How much will I be volunteering?**

Our volunteers can choose how much they wish to get involved. Some people want to do as much conservation diving and learning as possible, while others wish to combine the conservation dives with a bit of relaxation and island time. All dives are voluntary so you can choose to relax in our hammocks with a good book, fish from the island, or do a bit of sea kayaking/stand up paddle boarding or immerse yourself in conservation volunteering. The choice is yours! Please visit ReefCI on [Tripadvisor](#) for past volunteer reviews.

### **We have lots to offer on the island when not diving!**

- Stand Up Paddle Boarding
- Kayaking
- Snorkeling
- Fishing from the island
- Conservation help (dissections, data collection)
- Volleyball and badminton
- Great food and lots of hammock time!
- Further your dive course training with us with optional PADI courses

### **PADI Dive Courses Offered on the Island**

We have many dive courses available to help you develop your scuba and marine conservation skills while on the island volunteering with us. Below is the price our program charges for each PADI certification course and how long it will take you to complete the certification course on the island. Please note the Open, Advanced, Rescue, and Dive Master certifications require the PADI e-Learning prior to arrival.

- PADI Open Water Certification – \$150 USD (3 days)
- PADI Advanced Open Water Certification – \$200 USD (1 week)
- PADI Rescue Diver Certification – \$250 USD (1 week)
- PADI Dive Master Certification – \$400 USD (4 week minimum stay)
- PADI Specialty Course: Invasive Lionfish – \$100 USD (2 days)
- PADI Specialty Course: Coral Reef Conservation – \$100 USD (2 days)
- PADI Specialty Course: Fish Identification – \$100 USD (2 days)
- PADI Specialty Course: Deep Diver – \$100 USD (3 days)
- PADI Specialty Course: Emergency First Response – \$100 USD (2 days)
- PADI Specialty Course: Underwater Photographer – \$175 USD (2 days)

Click [here](#) to learn more about taking a dive certification course with ReefCI and find the answers to our frequently asked diving questions.

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### **What Dive Equipment Do I Need?**

**You must bring your own dive mask, booties, fins, and wetsuit. It is very important that you bring these items or you will not be able to dive!** There are no reliable places in Placencia, Belize to buy or rent these items; therefore, it's important you have them prior to your trip departure. We do not provide dive computers since almost all of our volunteering dives and conservation efforts are at depths less than 18m/60ft. However, a dive computer is mandatory for any diver that wants to dive deeper than 18m/60ft or for those taking the PADI Advanced Open Water certification course with us.

We provide the rest of your dive gear – BCD's, tanks, regulators, and weights for a \$25 USD per week dive gear rental fee. You are welcome to bring your own dive gear if you prefer. Anyone wishing to participate in our optional night dives **MUST** bring their own dive light/torch. Please note that in order to participate in night dives one must be a certified Advanced Open Water diver.

### **Travel Details and Schedule**

Our conservation dive trips are Monday thru Friday – we depart for our island at 9:30am on Monday from Placencia, Belize and return to the mainland (Placencia) on Friday anywhere from 11am-1pm. You will need to schedule your arrival and departure in and out of Placencia, Belize either on a Saturday or Sunday. Please see the [Getting Here](#) document which provides the best travel options to Placencia, Belize.

### **Weekend Accommodations**

All volunteers will need to book somewhere to stay in Placencia, Belize upon arrival and departure on the weekends. Those staying multiple weeks will need weekend accommodations on the mainland Friday night thru Sunday night in between their weeks with us on the island. So, with ReefCI you get the best of both worlds. Monday thru Friday on a private Caribbean island partaking in diving and marine conservation with ReefCI and your weekends on the mainland exploring all Belize has to offer. Click [here](#) for weekend accommodations – there are recommendations for all budget levels. Weekend accommodations are not included in the price of your trip. Cost ranges anywhere from 15 USD to 150 USD a night depending on your hotel preferences.

### **Weekend Activities and Tours**

Besides the incredible diving and conservation experience with ReefCI, Belize has so much to explore on the weekends! From ancient ruins, jungles and nature expeditions, spelunking, repelling, ziplining, cave and river tubing, to cultural tours; there is something for everyone. You are guaranteed a trip of a lifetime in Belize! Please click [here](#) to see what

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Belize has to offer on the weekends.

**Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean!**

ReefCI is a registered NGO in Belize and a registered non-profit in the USA. Our work is funded through environmentally minded eco-volunteers, like yourself, who come to our unique island in Belize to assist in our marine conservation projects and protect the underwater world we love. Without your help and funding, ReefCI would not be possible. Our volunteers truly are the change they wish to see in the world. Join us and make a difference!

**How do I reserve my spot?**

We are open year-round and on all holidays except for the month of September. The typical stay with us is anywhere from 1 week to 8 weeks. Our island is a small picture-perfect Caribbean gem and our maximum number of volunteers our island can hold per week is only 18. Our groups are always small, friendly, and of like-minded people who love the ocean and conservation, which makes for great group dynamics. But space is limited and we often reach capacity, especially during our busy season of March – August, so don't wait too long to reserve your spot.

You can reserve your place via our quick and easy online booking system at our [homepage](#) as well as see our real-time availability calendar.