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### Proem

I delight in pushing the boundaries of my capabilities. In Belize, floating in a tube through caves and snorkeling stretched me. How can tubing stretch anything? It's passive floating. The event included a mile-long walk to the cave entrance – relatively flat with some steps and wading across the river, a mere six-inches deep. No electric wheelchair, just my forearm crutches. Our guide and my compatriots shared in the decision-making and assisted me. This video episode was taken with a GoPro camera hanging around my neck. Watch the video. Reading will not give you the flavor.

I delight in pushing the boundaries of my capabilities. In Belize, floating in a tube through caves and snorkeling stretched me.

How can tubing stretch anything? It's passive floating. The event included a half mile long walk to the cave entrance, relatively flat with some steps and wading across the river, a mere six inches deep, no electric wheelchair, just my forearm crutches. Our guide and my compatriots shared in the decision making and assisted me. This video episode was taken with a GoPro camera hanging around my neck.

Let me tell you a little bit about where we are what you'll see. Excuse me, as I will be certainly butchering some of the names of stuff. So where we are is Nohoch Che'en Caves, Branch Archeological Reserve, also called the Caves Branch River. It's in the Cayo District, and districts are like provinces or states. It's by far the most famous cave tubing destination in Belize and one of the most unique in the world. So this was sacred to the ancient Maya. They were considered portal to Xibalba, the Maya underworld. This wasn't just mythology. The Maya actively used these caves for religious rituals and ceremonies, particularly during times of drought when they needed to communicate with the rain God, chaac. I don't know. Archeologists have found ceramic offerings, jade artifacts and human remains inside; evidence of sacrificial rights dating back over 2000 years. The caves were largely forgotten after the Maya civilization declined and weren't widely known to the outside world until the 1980s and nineties when the Belizean guides and explorers began documenting them and it became a active tourist destination in the early two thousands. So the Caves Branch River flows through a network of limestone caves carved out over millions of years. The system I floated on. Is part of a much larger Karst landscape riddled with interconnected caves. Some of them still unexplored. Pretty amazing, huh?

### Reflection

OK. That was it. Fifteen minutes of about an hour total time and 30 minutes of recording. I hope it gives you a flavor of what we did. It was awesome. I will be producing a couple more videos from Belize over the next few months. The next video will be of the Mayan ruins, then making tortillas and tamales, and then, we'll see.



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