Altun Ha, the archaeological site closest to Belize City, was a major ceremonial center and the discovery site of Belize's famous Jade Head.

Altun Ha functioned as a central trading link between the Caribbean coast and Maya centers in the interior during the Maya Classic Period. Two main plazas with some thirteen temples and residential structures have been excavated here.

A unique feature of this site is the absence of carved stelae, while its most notable artifact is a large jade carving of the Maya sun god "Kinich Ahau." Weighing almost ten pounds, this six-inch carving is the largest carved jade object to be found in any Maya community in the region. A national treasure, a replica of the "Jade Head" is on display at the Museum of Belize and its likeness watermarked on all Belizean currency.

Visitor Experience

Altun Ha is located near Rockstone Pond Village in the Belize District. Although there is no public transportation to the site, this is a popular day tour with hotels and tour operators in the area as well as with the cruise lines at port in Belize City.