

## CARICOM passport comes with new security features

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But if you're heading east, the new CARICOM passports have just been released and should make traveling hassle free in the Caribbean region. As we've reported, they come with a new look and have a number of built in features that made the document stand out. The passport, which is now forty-eight pages thick and valid for ten years, will allow Belizeans an automatic six month stay in any member state of CARICOM. And according to Director of Immigration, Gareth Murrillo, who appeared on our Open Your Eyes breakfast show this morning, the new design is also packed with security features.

**Gareth Murrillo, Director of Immigration**

*"Now all of this particular text and the national symbols on the inside of the front cover, they're done with a security ink called intaglio ink. It's raised. You can rub your finger over it and it does have a feel; it does have a texture. It's not a very cheap process."*

**Marleni Cuellar**

*"But this is a security feature of the passport."*

**Gareth Murillo**

*"Yes, this is a security feature, yes. The thing with intaglio ink and how you know it is quality intaglio is it never dries. We also have on the pages, particularly on the inside of this front cover; this design would be referred to as a guilloché. It's just a French word; all it is is a pattern of wavy lines. If it were to be magnified under a microscope that is the depth of it, you would see that this is just a pattern of wavy lines on the underneath."*

**Marleni Cuellar**

*"And on the pages itself?"*

**Gareth Murillo**

*"On the pages itself, you will note we have the mahogany tree, which is on every page."*

**William Neal**

*"First they're doing the bio-data page and again, you have the dual image."*

**Gareth Murillo**

*"Yes, the smaller image is referred to in security terms as a ghost image. What we have done on that bio-data page is over that ghost image we have on the laminate itself, which is the plastic that covers that particular page, we have a color shifting image of our statement 'Sub Umbra Floreo'. Just beneath the laminate on the page, beneath where the two lines of code goes which make the passport machine readable, in this pink and blue just below it spells out the word Belize."*

**Murrillo says some of the other security features of the passport require forensic equipment to test for validity.**

The Immigration Department is also planning to issue a card that will allow Belizeans to travel to Chetumal without a passport. The card will be implemented so that passport holders will not have to use their passports for travel just across the border.