



Oh, the Places You Can Go!



After decades of traveling and leading trips worldwide, it is truly heartbreaking to witness how tourism is damaging some of the planet's most extraordinary places. Statistics show that iconic destinations like Amsterdam, Athens, Dubrovnik, Barcelona, the Great Wall of China, and even Mt. Everest are feeling the negative effects of overtourism. In response, some locals are pushing back, and the tourism industry is beginning to react. For example, cruise ships are reducing their visits to popular spots such as Venice, Bar Harbor, and even Antarctica to protect these fragile environments.

Two years ago, I experienced firsthand the commercialization of Grand Cayman, a place I once knew as a quiet refuge. When disembarking a cruise ship for the day, I was shocked by the crowds and commercialization—a far cry from the island I had spent weeks at a time exploring in the past. In contrast, discovering Dominica, a lush and beautiful island in the Caribbean and St. George's Caye in Belize, has been a joy. Our trips to destinations like rural Portugal and Tuscany, as opposed to major European cities, are quite popular with our travelers right now.

One thing I've learned with Christine Klotz, our Director of International Adventures, is that even at popular tourist destinations, the crowds thin out once you venture off the beaten path. Christine believes "the quickest way to lose throngs of tourists is to put in a little effort and gain some elevation on a trail." For example, this past summer, we had a wonderful trip to Banff and Lake Louise. Taking a gondola ride to trails up into the mountains and hiking four miles offered moments of pure bliss and tranquility. We saw very few people in our own little world.

Looking forward, we will continue to introduce exciting but lesser-known destinations! At the same time, we will also prioritize our yoga retreats to serene, non-touristy locations where the focus is on unwinding and disconnecting from the demands of everyday life. Our new Costa Rica destination at the Bodhi Tree Yoga Retreat will be a signature trip for years to come, and we're excited to offer a similar all-inclusive experience near Puerto Vallarta, accessible only by boat, in 2026.

Check-out the results at the bottom of our "Where in the World?" survey as there is still time to add your travel wishes as we plan for the future!

Happy Travels! Sally Bassett



INNER HEALING WITH MARIAH – Yoga and Its Impact on Mental Health

The physical benefits of yoga are well-known: improving flexibility, increasing mobility, and building strength. It's also a common experience that after a yoga session, you leave feeling relaxed—some might even fall asleep during Savasana. For some, yoga is simply a form of exercise or a way to unwind. For others, it's an opportunity for self-reflection. Whatever yoga means to you, research shows that it has significant impacts not only on physical health but on mental well-being as well. Whether you have experienced trauma, high stress, or the everyday challenges of life, your body has likely gone through the fight, flight, and/or freeze response. The brain constantly sends signals to the body in an effort to protect you. The challenge today is that while we may not face life-or-death situations—like encountering a bear in the wild—we do face modern stressors, such as deadlines that could jeopardize our job. Yet, our bodies respond to these perceived threats in the same way, releasing adrenaline and spiking cortisol levels. Living in this heightened state without relief can lead to chronic stress, which negatively affects the body in various ways (chronic pain, migraines, illnesses, anxiety, depression, etc.).



Coming to the mat gives you an opportunity to tell your body, "You are safe." Safe to be vulnerable, safe to release the tension in your muscles and ligaments, and safe to breathe deeply. Research shows that brain activity decreases during yoga practice. Yoga and mindfulness send signals to the brain's alert center, indicating that protection is no longer needed, reducing stress levels in the body and creating space for joy.



2025 INTERNATIONAL RETREAT SCHEDULE...so far!

- **DOMINICA:** January 18-25, 2025 (sold-out)
- **INDIA –** INTERNATIONAL YOGA FESTIVAL: March 4-16, 2025
- **COSTA RICA** "BLUE ZONE": March 29-April 5, 2025 (sold-out)
- **PORTUGAL:** April 4-11 and April 12-19, 2025
- **PERU –** Machu Picchu and the Sacred Valley: April 27-May 4, 2025
- **TUSCANY, ITALY:** May 2-11, and May 16-25, 2025
- **BANFF/LAKE LOUISE:** August 2-6 (sold-out) and August 6-10, 2025
- **COSTA RICA** "BLUE ZONE": November 1-8, 2025
- **DOMINICA:** February 14-21, 2026 (Valentine's Day and President's Day...just sayin')



Ashram Retreat with Peace through Yoga Group, France, September 15, 2024

Why Stay at an Ashram? by Karla Becker

I just returned from a retreat at an ashram in France, in which I lived simply with little communication from the outside world, and I'd like to encourage you to do the same! An ashram is a spiritual environment away from the noise and disturbances of daily life. Unlike a regular vacation that offers only a temporary escape, an ashram retreat offers a transformative, life-enhancing experience that continues to benefit you long after you return home. Please join us at our next Ashram Retreat...in INDIA!

India - March 4-16, 2025

Join us for a yoga retreat at an ashram in Rishikesh, India, just down the street from where the Beatles stayed in 1968! The Parmarth Ashram is a sanctuary on the holy Ganges River, where you can relax, refresh, and renew yourself while experiencing the International Yoga Festival. Whether you are new to yoga or a seasoned yogi, you will be transformed should you choose to say "YES!"



If you are interested in joining us in India, we invite you to consider looking into it sooner rather than later, as the retreat is filling up! [Click here for information.](#)

Buy a Book (or Two!) for NEW LIBRARIES in Costa Rica

We are thrilled to announce that we have received a grant to fund a library in our new school, built just a year ago in Hone Creek, Costa Rica. The funding will cover books, bookcases, and sustainable furniture that the girls can enjoy for years to come.





We LOVE books and are passionate about supporting children with a lifelong love of reading. Check-out our Karma Yoga Projects, where we have established and support four libraries in Costa Rica and Dominica.

Muchas Gracias!

In Nosara, Costa Rica we will also be starting a library in a very needy local school that has 72 students and only two teachers. Please consider purchasing Spanish books for pre-school to sixth grade and mail your check with your donation request to:

Peace through Yoga Foundation 5723 Lower Garden Way Zionsville, IN 46077 OR go to Peace through Yoga and click "Donate" at the top right corner. 100% of all donations always goes directly to the cause.



WHERE IN THE WORLD SURVEY?

You voted and we tallied the responses. Thank you to those who participated in the "Where in the World Survey" last month. We will be working on itineraries to some of the top destinations. Voting will remain open through October 10, so please provide your input, if you haven't yet. [Click here to take the survey!](#)

