

THE HEALING TOUCH

A GUIDE TO WELLNESS IN INDIA



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“You have to grow from the inside out.
None can teach you,
none can make you spiritual.
There is no other teacher but your own soul.”

– **Swami Vivekananda**



India is a vast country with its history dating back to a time when gods, goddesses, demi-gods and demons roamed her lands freely. Our ancient history, riddled with folklore, is testimony to the many sciences and traditions that continue to be an intrinsic and ever-evolving part of our daily lives. Once known to be the land of snake charmers and mystics, India has now earned global fame as the preserver of age-old practices that allow one to connect with their inner self on a physical and spiritual plain. The end path to the achievement of such a state is facilitated manifold by the serene landscapes that nature has bestowed upon India.

These ancient traditions and sciences referred to earlier are none other than Ayurveda and yoga – both of which offer a holistic approach to attain physical and spiritual wellbeing.



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SO, WHAT IS AYURVEDA AND YOGA?

Ayurveda - the traditional Hindu system of medicine (incorporated in Atharva Veda, the last of the four Vedas), which is based on the idea of balance in bodily systems and uses diet, herbal treatment, and yogic breathing.

- **Yoga** - a Hindu spiritual and ascetic discipline, a part of which, including breath control, simple meditation, and the adoption of specific bodily postures, is widely practiced for health and relaxation.

While Ayurveda has been around for 3000 years, Yoga is a far older practice with its origins being traced back to 5000 years of Indian civilization. This literally makes India the pulse point of authentic yogic and Ayurvedic practices. While Yoga and Ayurveda are the collective sciences or practices, each of the two have various sub practices and treatments respectively to suit each and every individual.

WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF AYURVEDA TREATMENTS?

Pizhichil: As a part of this procedure, warm oil is poured from a special kind of vessel, known as Kindi, which is placed some inches above the body. While the oil soothes your nerves, a masseuse massages to treat the Vata Dosha. People who suffer from stiffness in the body, fractures, paralysis, paraplegia, monoplegia and hemiplegia can benefit from this massage.

- **Njavarkijhi:** This massage is customised to boost the perspiration process in the body. Mostly performed in parts of Kerala, application of medicated oil followed by pressurized massage forms a part of Njavarkijhi. The massage is done with help of small cotton blouses that are filled with special type of cooked rice called Njavara. These blouses are dipped in cow's milk and herbal paste is applied to boost the production of sweat. This massage is beneficial for the skin and it helps the senses to revitalize.





Shirodhara: In this head massage, stimulation of the nerves is the motive. A continuously flowing stream or 'dhara' of medicated or herbal oil is poured on the scalp, which treats mental fatigue, increases focus and clarity and relieves headache.

- **Ubtaan and elakijhi:** In these massages, various herbal or animal centric products are used to treat and rejuvenate the skin. This massage technique improves skin's quality and nourishes the body.
- **Abhyangam:** A full body massage is given in this procedure along with medicated hot oil chosen according to the medical condition of the patient. Proper attention is paid to the temperature of the oil to ensure comfort of the patient. Pressure is applied on certain points, which stimulates various energies and aids release of toxins from the body.
- **Udvartana:** This massage is generally used to enhance blood circulation and release of toxins from the body. People with high cholesterol levels, obesity and Kapha dosha can benefit from this massage. A herbal paste or dried herbal powders are applied opposite to the growth of hair, which treats the Kapha and breaks down adipose tissues in the body.
- **Garshana:** No oil or herbal powder is used in this form of massage. In this procedure, the body is stimulated using raw silk gloves without application of any lubricant. Light movements in this massage release toxins from the body by stimulating the lymphatic system.

PREPARING FOR AYURVEDA

- **Honesty is key:** Be prepared to answer a series of personal questions about your physical and emotional state. Be honest and make sure that you keep no secrets from your doctor or therapist.
- **Complete abstinence:** This is advised during the treatments. Keep that in mind if you're planning a trip with your partner. Also be prepared to give up tea, coffee, alcohol, cigarettes and, in most cases, meat during the course of your treatment.
- **Don't be shy:** You'll need to learn to let go of your inhibitions, as some of the massages involve nudity.
- **Get your checklist:** All treatment programs require pre and post-treatment care. Ask your doctor how best to go about it when you return to your daily grind.
- **It's more than a massage:** Don't be surprised if you're not offered a massage on your first day. That's only one of the many parts of any treatment.
- **It's no Michelin-starred meal:** Food is an integral part of Ayurveda and most centres will personalize your meals based on the diagnosis. Meal portions will be small and take some getting used to. Do not panic if you get headaches or if you're dizzy during the initial days of the treatment.
- **Don't be stingy:** Therapists don't expect to be tipped after every treatment, but do leave some cash at the end of your visit. This amount gets divided among the support staff.
- **Follow the house rules:** At some of the stricter centres, you'll need permission from the chief physician if you want to step out of the campus.





THE BEST TIME FOR AN AYURVEDIC TREATMENT

According to Ayurveda, the human body is the most fragile during monsoons and so it is considered to be an ideal time to engage in Ayurvedic treatments for healing or to rejuvenate the body. During this period, the atmosphere remains dust-free and cool. The humidity in the air helps open up the pores allowing medicated and herbal oils to seep in and restore the body's health and vitality. Also, the monsoon's moistness help soften the skin allowing Ayurveda to remove excess energies and toxins from the body and mind.

WHAT ARE THE VARIOUS FORMS OF YOGA?

Here we'll look closely at the six most widely practiced ancient branches or paths of yoga. More than just different styles of physical yoga, these 'branches' have different histories, philosophies and intentions when compared with each other - although it is possible to practice more than one style.

Dualism and non-dualism is a recurring theme in all yoga practices and thus it is important to understand what each of them mean.

Dualism refers to a belief system that separates nature (known as Prakriti) and consciousness. You could also think of this as separating us and everything around us and God.

Non-dualism is, of course, the opposite. It denotes that everything is One; that nature, consciousness, the divine and ourselves are all made up of the same thing and that there is no separation between anything or anyone.





- **Raja Yoga:** Royal', 'Chief' or 'King', alluding to being the 'best' or 'highest' form of yoga; Raja yoga is also known as 'Classical Yoga'. This path is precise and contemplative. It aims to 'control' the intellect and thoughts through meditation. A connection with 'God' or 'consciousness' is worked towards by un-identifying with the ego-based self and identifying with the universal true Self. As a primarily interior practice with little outward spiritual expression, it is thought that Raja yoga requires much self-discipline.
 - ✧ Primary practices: Meditation, Svadhyaya (self-inquiry and study of texts) and Tapas (self-discipline), Brahmacharya (purity)
 - ✧ Dual or Non-Dual belief: Dual

➤ **Jnana Yoga:** Wisdom or knowledge. This is the yoga of 'knowing', of realizing the truth of oneself. First mentioned around 400BC, this is thought of as one of the most direct paths to insight and illumination, but also as one of the most difficult. Priests and scholars are most likely to be considered Jnana yogis through their practice of constant inquiry. Study of philosophical and yogic texts, along with discrimination and inquiry are the ways these practitioners understand the depths of the body, mind and spirit.

✧ Primary practices: Meditation and Svadhyaya

✧ Dual or Non-Dual belief: Either, dependent upon the practitioner's perception and perspective. Jnana Yogis are often relatively 'open minded' and inquisitive about life and the process of yoga.





Tantra Yoga: The root word of Tantra is 'Tan' meaning 'to expand' or 'to weave'. It explores all aspects, sensations and energies that weave through the body and mind and actually began as a religion around 500BC. For over 1000 years it was the primary belief system of India in its less extreme forms and is the first time the physicality of the human body started to become important within a yogic context. Before this, much of a yoga practice was based upon worship, visualisation and meditation. Many people confuse Tantric yoga with 'spiritualised sex' - however, this isn't the case. Whilst Tantra yoga includes many rituals, the ritualistic act of fornication is only reserved for a very rare ceremony for certain people. The fact that this branch of yoga permits mindful, purposeful and meaningful sex as opposed to no sex at all is probably why it has come to be known in such a way. Much of Tantra is kept in obscurity, with the practices and rituals passed along secretly through oral tradition from guru to shishya ('student' or 'disciple').

- ✧ Primary practices: Mantra, Yantra, Kriya, Pranayama, Asana, Meditation, Visualization
- ✧ Dual or Non-Dual belief: Non-Dual. Tantra is essentially the original form of non-dualism, and 'one-ness' is very much a part of this branch of yoga. A large part of Tantra is focused upon the more subtle elements of the body, mind and life. Chakras, nadis, yantras, kundalini, and invocation of deities are a large part of Tantric yoga practices. The emphasis on 'expansion' can be expressed by the practitioners of Tantra experiencing life's fullness, expanding the mind beyond ordinary limitations.

Hatha Yoga: 'The Yoga of Force'. Many teachers equate Ha to mean 'Sun' and Tha to mean moon, and reason that the physical yoga practice is intended to 'balance' the Sun and Moon energies within us. Whilst the physical yoga practice is intended to bring about a state of equilibrium within the human organism, the real meaning and essence of Hatha yoga is to change the physical body and mind by way of experimentation, movement and physical 'force'. Hatha yoga is anything that uses the physical body. It is what you are most likely to practice in class in some form, whether it's called Hatha yoga, Vinyasa yoga, Power yoga or any of the other many styles of physical yoga. First mentioned and practiced around 1100AD, it is the most 'modern' branch of yoga. When it comes to Hatha yoga, liberation is attained through cultivating a Yoga-Deha – otherwise known as a 'Yogic Body' (probably a little different to what we might consider a 'yoga body' to look like nowadays!) – which is immune to disease and free from limitations that ordinarily bind human beings.

- ✧ Primary Practices: Asana, Pranayama, Mudra, Meditation, Purification rituals, Bandha, Mantra, Kriya (anything related to the physical body).
- ✧ Dual or Non-Dual belief: Non-Dual





Bhakti Yoga: Devotion. First mentioned in The Bhagavad Gita around 300BC, the word Bhakti comes from the root word 'Bhaj', of which the essence is 'to share'. This form of yoga is based upon the heart, love and devotion towards a chosen deity (Ishta Devata). Much like Karma yoga, dedicating all actions towards a deity or 'God' is an intrinsic part of Bhakti yoga. Much like other branches of yoga, Bhakti yoga has limbs (anga) for each practitioner to adhere to and take part in.

- ✧ Primary Practices: Mantra, devotional rituals, meditation upon a chosen deity
- ✧ Dual or Non-Dual belief: Dual

Karma Yoga: The Yoga of Action, also contemporarily known as the 'Religion of Love'. The word 'Karma' in this context is derived from the root verb 'Kri' meaning 'to do'. First mentioned around 300BC, this form of yoga is the main focus of the Bhagavad Gita. Karma yoga is based upon selfless service and acting without expectation of benefitting. It occupies a large part of Indian thought and through this practice, union with 'the divine' is achieved through making any action an offering to God. Karma yoga suggests that we relinquish attachment to the consequences of our actions and instead focus on the moment in action. Awareness of each thought, word and deed and mindfulness are an important part of Karma yoga, which allows the practitioner to truly experience that moment-in-action. Through the practice of Karma yoga, yogis work and act to benefit the people and the world around them in order to contribute towards facilitating a unified and 'enlightened' world.

- ✧ Primary Practices: Mindfulness, selfless service, ahimsa (non-violence)
- ✧ Dual or Non-Dual belief: Dependent upon the practitioner's perspective





PREPARING FOR YOGA

Come well-hydrated and avoid caffeinated products (including green and black teas) a few hours prior to a class. Caffeine dehydrates the body and can increase heart-rate.

- Eating snacks or meals before a class depends on each student. Some prefer to have an empty stomach, while others may want a snack prior to class. Avoid heavy or greasy meals.
- Bring a yoga mat and a large bottle of water. You may want to bring a towel to dry off with after class.
- Wear clothing that is comfortable to move, stretch and sweat in. Materials that breathe and wick away moisture are most suitable.
- Shoes and socks are not worn in class.
- Respect the other students and teacher in the class by being on time, this applies even for private yoga sessions.

TOP YOGA AND AY





URVEDA RETREATS







Mysore Mandala, Mysore, Karnataka

Established in 2001, Mysore Mandala Yoga Shala is a Yoga and Cultural Centre located in a Century Old Heritage House in Mysore. Following the traditional path laid out by Yogacharyas Krishnamachar and Pattabhi Jois of Mysore, their focal points are Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga, Hatha Yoga, Ayurveda Treatment, Ayurveda Massage, music and Indian Classical Dance and Arts. Apart from hosting Yoga workshops very often they offer a teacher's training course lasting a little less than a month. Although they do not have accommodation on the premises at present, once you register with them for a course, they will help you find the right place.

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <https://ashtanga.org/home>





Art of Living Ashram, Bangalore, Karnataka

This ashram in Bangalore is dedicated to the spiritual sojourn to match the requirement of each individual. Their 4 programs which range between 3 days to 10 days with focus on the nuances of meditation and self-reflection through various sciences of Yoga. This is a perfect place to begin your journey in immersing yourself in the spiritual realm.

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <https://www.artofliving.org/in-en>





International Center For Yoga Education And Research, Puducherry

Located in the global village of Auroville in the French town of Puducherry, this is an institute for those longing to ingrain the roots of Yoga in their system. A rigorous course of hatha, Karma or Mantra Yoga where only 10 students are accepted each year to follow the ancient Gurukul system (where the student lives in the home of the Guru) to understand, live and breathe Yoga. A rigorous schedule is followed in this ashram for a course of 6 months which starts in October and ends in March. One can also enroll in an advanced teacher training program for an additional 6 months.

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <http://www.icyer.com/>





Sri Ramana Maharishi Ashram, Thiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu

A place of utmost tranquility which is a retreat to reflect on yourself and answer the question of “Who am I?”. This Ashram located 160 kms from Chennai is an Ashram dedicated to Maharishi Ramana who believed in the spiritual power of the Arunachala hill which represents and transmits knowledge of the transcendent Self. The beauty of the ashram is that one can be part of the activities at the ashram or not, they can find their nook and concentrate on finding inner peace. There is a daily reading of the Sage’s teachings which can surely help in leading you in the right direction. While this is not a proper Yoga institute, you get to focus on meditation which is an intrinsic part of Yoga.

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <https://www.sriramanamaharshi.org/>





Isha Yoga Centre, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

Isha Yoga Centre is a non-profit organization that is run entirely by over million volunteers in their centers worldwide. It is considered to be one of the best yoga retreats in India located at the foothills of Velliangiri Mountains in Tamil Nadu. Focusing mainly on Gnana, Karma, Kriya and Bhakti Yoga the main focus at Isha is to restore the global community concept. A non-religious centre for Yoga in India, Isha Yoga distills powerful, ancient yogic methods for a modern person, creating peak physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing.

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <https://isha.sadhguru.org/in/en>





Sivananda Yoga Vedanta Dhanwatari Ashram, Trivandrum, Kerala

Founded in 1957 by Swami Vishnudevananda, named in honour of his guru H. H. Sri Swami Sivananda Saraswati Maharaj, this is a non-profit organization that propagates the authentic teachings of Yoga and Vedanta. The ashram is set in the verdant surroundings of the Neyyar dam and forests just outside Kerala's capital city, Trivandrum. The ashram follows the Yoga of Synthesis taught by Swami Sivananda which is a sum of - 'Serve, Love, Give, Purify, Meditate, Realize'. Many of the teachers here dedicate their lives to the study and practice of yoga, living within the Organization as swamis.

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <http://sivananda.org.in/neyyardam/>





Bihar School Of Yoga, Munger, Bihar

At the sprawling Bihar School, yoga is a lifestyle not a practice, and karma yoga is given precedence over asana. So alongside classes expect hours of seva (service) – including gardening, kitchen work and toilet cleaning – supplemented by cold showers and a simple diet. It may sound daunting, but comfort's loss is authenticity's gain, and former students attest to the life-altering qualities a stint in this ashram can give. Days begin at 4am, and end with twilight satsangs (discourses) or kirtans (mantra chanting) before lights out at 8pm. Many yoga styles are taught, including Hatha, Raja (mental discipline), Kriya (breathing, chanting and ritual gesture) and yoga therapy, as well as Yoga Nidra, a deep meditative technique lulling the mind into a state neither awake nor asleep, developed by the ashram's founder Swami Satyananda Saraswati. Source: The Guardian

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <http://www.biharyoga.net/home/>





Phool Chatti, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand

Set on the banks of the Holy Ganges River and just 5 kms upstream from the famous Lakshman Jhula, Phool Chatti Ashram is away from the chaos of the town life. This ashram has been welcoming spiritual wanderers for over a 100 years and is an abode for those wanting to be part of courses they offer or to practice on their own in the tranquil spots the ashram has. Ancient Hindu traditions join with modern comfort and cleanliness at Phool Chatti Ashram. The seven-day yoga course includes meditation, mantra chanting, neti-pot cleansing (a nasal cleaning technique), pranayama, asana practice, prayer, kirtans and plenty of discussion around yoga philosophy.

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <https://www.phoolchattiyoga.com/>





Ramamani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute, Pune, Maharashtra

A practice that took birth from the ancient science of Yoga, Iyengar Yoga is followed by many across the globe. This institute set up in 1975 by Yogacharya BKS Iyengar, is focused on providing tools and props to perform asanas (anatomically correct postures) that stresses on the eight limbs of Yoga. It teaches students to adapt and modify their exercise routine depending. To be part of the training programs here there is a pre-requisite to have practice this form of yoga for a certain number of years.

Accommodation: No

Website: <http://bksiyengar.com/default.asp>





Omkarandana Patanjala Yoga Kendra, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand

Established in the year 1993 by the banks of the Holy Ganges River, this Yoga Kendra follows the Iyengar method of Yoga and is an offshoot of the Iyengar's institute in Pune. This Yoga Kendra is firmly based in the ancient Indian tradition of Yoga as defined in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. Usha Devi, the resident Yoga instructor and a student of BKS Iyengar "Guruji", austerey portrays teachings which are straight from the source without any dilution. This Yoga Kendra offers only daily drop-in classes (for beginners and intermediate) for which no early registration is required, and a nine-day intensive course for which three years regular practice in Iyengar yoga is a prerequisite.

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <https://www.iyengaryoga.in/>





Ashtanga Yoga Research Institute, Mysore, Karnataka

Founded by the renowned yoga master K Pattabi Jois, a contemporary of B.K.S. Iyengar, Ashtanga Yoga Research Institute is the a premiere yoga institute in Mysore. This institute in Mysore is much sought-after by foreigners serious about yoga. Jois propagated the Ashtanga Vinyasa brand of yoga, which is the fast-paced synchronization of breath with movement, often promoted as a modern-day form of classical Indian yoga. The institute offers Teacher Training courses in Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga and Hatha Yoga among other short-term yoga programs customized to suit the needs of each individual.

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <http://www.ashtangayogamysore.net/>





Kaivalyadhama Ashram, Lonavala, Maharashtra

Established in 1924, Kaivalyadhama Ashram, set in Lonavala – a hill station between Mumbai and Pune, is one of the oldest yoga ashrams in the country. The ashram not only offers a variety of courses in yoga but has been carrying out substantial and innovative studies into almost every aspect of Yoga's practice since its inception. The Ashram also offers week-long packages that include yoga with a focus on either relaxation, naturopathy or Ayurveda. Kaivalyadhama's aim is to bring together traditional Yoga with modern science, as neither is thought to be complete without the other.

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <https://kdham.com/>





Parmarth Niketan, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand

Nestled in the Himalayas on the banks of the Ganges, Parmarth Niketan, is one of the largest ashrams in the town of Rishikesh. From its humble beginnings in the 1940s the ashram has grown over the years and become popular amongst international and domestic yoga enthusiasts. The daily activities at Parmarth Niketan include morning universal prayers, daily yoga and meditation classes, daily satsang and lecture programs, kirtan, the world-renowned Ganga Aarti at sunset as well as Nature Cure and Ayurvedic treatment.

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <https://www.parmarth.org/>





Indimasi Ayurveda & Yoga Village, Trivandrum, Kerala

Indimasi lays out the path to self-discovery through the practice of Kundalini yoga under the mentorship of Yogi Shivan. The village is established on the principle of leading a life of sharing and caring in co-existence with Mother nature. The healthcare regime at Indimasi integrates body, mind and spirit through Ayurveda (yoga & Ayurveda) and Kundalini Yoga. The lush green, nine-acre campus has a treatment facility, residential villas and amenities such as a swimming pool, outdoor theatre, meditation room, organic restaurant and research facilities for Kalarippayattu, Ayurveda, Yoga and traditional temple arts.

Accommodation: Yes

Website: <http://indimasi.com/>





Purple Valley Yoga Retreat, Assagao, Goa

Situated in the vibrant environs of Goa, Purple valley at Assagaon is a yogi's delight. The retreat offers you the opportunity to take the Goa vibes and train with renowned Yoga teachers. A typical day in purple valley involves a self-practice session followed by special classes in the afternoon that includes philosophy, yogic living, kirtans and pranayama. Ayurveda treatments are also on offer for a rounded wellness experience. The retreat is spread over two Portuguese-style houses and landscaped gardens with a tropical forest feel. This is the place to go if you are a modern yogi and crave the worldly comforts while indulging in the beneficial practices of yoga.

Accommodation : Yes

Website : <http://www.yogagoa.com/>

****Bookings have to be made in person for the courses at most of these ashrams.**



Ayurveda Retreats



Arya Vaidya Sala, Kottakkal, Kerala

A 117 old charitable institution, Arya Vaidya Sala, is one of the leading centers in the country for Ayurvedic treatments. They specialize in all the different types of Ayurvedic treatments to deal with a variety of ailments. Their Ayurvedic products are made in-house and a lot of their time is also invested in research ultimately leading to publications helpful to promote this ancient science in all authenticity. Replete with a hospital and a research lab, this busy center takes clients by appointments only.

No. of rooms: 204





Kalari Kovilakam, Palakkad, Kerala

Set within the palace grounds of the Vengunad kingdom this Ayurveda hospital has the comforts of a luxury resort. The main focus here is to treat ailments through a rigid combination of authentic Ayurveda, Sattvic diet and yoga. No smoking, drinking or non-vegetarian diet is allowed or available. Once admitted, the patient cannot leave the premises until after discharge. The ayurveda treatment rooms can cater to 10 people simultaneously. The minimum stay is for 14 days and children below 15 years are not permitted.

No. of suites: 18





Kalari Rasayana, Kollam, Kerala

On the same lines of Kalari Kovilakom, this wellness center spread over an area of 8 acres, is another Ayurveda retreat which strictly adheres to the ancient practices to heal the body. The well-appointed suites and the Ayurveda hospital spell luxury and the verdant surroundings create a soothing environment to detox. There are 11 treatment rooms in the single clinic on the premises. The minimum stay is for 14 days and children below 15 years are not permitted.

No. of suites: 22





The Nattika Beach Ayurveda Resort, Thrissur, Kerala

Located by the Nattika beach at Thrissur, this 16 acre wellness resort is set in lush coconut trees and expansive lawns. The entire resort is designed on the Kerala architecture and offers calm and serene ambience which is combined with impeccable services. They have 16 treatment rooms, two steam bath chambers and four consulting rooms. The Ayurveda treatments are combined with Yoga and meditation sessions to provide a holistic wellness package. Children below the age of 12 are not allowed on the premises.

No. of villas: 52





Soukya International Holistic Health Centre, Bangalore, Karnataka

Soukya Holistic health centre is the first of its kind in the world where different systems of medicines (Ayurveda, Homeopathy, Allopathy, Naturopathy, Siddha, Unani, etc.) and more than 30 therapies from Acupressure to Zero Balancing are practiced under one roof. Covering 30 acres of well-maintained green land, they focus on the well-being of the mind body and soul through various wellness treatments which are most effective when clubbed with Yoga. Their treatments combine modern medical advancements, ancient medical techniques and complementary therapies used worldwide. Minimum age of check-in is 18 years.

No. of rooms: 25 (suites, deluxe and super deluxe rooms)





Prakriti Shakti, Panchalimedu, Kerala (Naturopathy)

Prakriti Shakti is situated on the pristine hills of Panchalimedu in Kerala dedicated to treatments that are drugless and non-invasive and adhere to the strict tenets of the old school of Naturopathy. With a well-equipped team, they follow the path of healing through nature to rejuvenate the mind, body and spirit. While the focus is in finding the root cause of symptom, the bigger task is to ensure preventive care. The minimum stay is for 7 days and is open to patients above 14 years of age only.

No. of cottages: 19





Somatheeram Ayurvedic Beach Village, Kottukal, Kerala

Located on the Chowara beach near the famous Kovalam beach, Somatheeram is a retreat spread across 15 acres of greenery. This was India's first Ayurveda hospital created to resemble a resort. Expert Ayurvedic physicians chalk out exclusive rejuvenation therapies for each individual after thoroughly examining each of the guests at the resort. They have 30 treatment rooms on the premises. They also have a separate Yoga retreat for Yoga enthusiasts.

No. of rooms: 79





Bethsaida Hermitage, Trivandrum, Kerala

Nestled between lush gardens and a private beach, Bethsaida hermitage is a haven for those looking to explore Kerala and rejuvenate all their senses. Each of the rooms and the huts offer a view of the sea and are lined by palm trees. They offer both full Healing Treatment program as well as single treatments depending on your needs. With 2 swimming pools, shop, theater, spa, gym there is enough to keep you busy between treatments. The high point of the hermitage is the private beach and the 2 ocean view restaurants.

No. of rooms: 90





SwaSwara, Gokarna, Karnataka

A short walk from the famed beaches of Gokarna, Swaswara is an all-inclusive retreat which helps you on your quest to find yourself. Set in acres of tranquil coconut groves and paddy fields, the retreat's daily programs include various yoga and meditation sessions. The property has a total of 10 treatment rooms, a meditation hut by the cliff, a separate yoga room and an art and pottery studio. The minimum stay is for 5 nights for guests above 15 years of age.

No. of villas: 24





Devaaya - The Ayurveda And Nature Cure Centre, Goa

Accessible only by a ferry, Devaaya sits on the banks of the Mandovi River away from the frenzy that Goa is associated with. The heritage of Goa is visible in the Goan style of architecture - the colorful facades and tall arches. The living spaces are cozy and reminiscent of the Portuguese era which is cozy yet minimalist. The retreat brings under one roof Ayurveda, Naturopathy and Yoga to create the perfect balance your body needs and the perfect peace your mind wants.

No. of rooms: 60





Nikki's Nest, Trivandrum, Kerala

With 17 treatment rooms, a wholesome Ayurveda kitchen and energizing Yoga, Nikki's Nest has been dedicated towards creating Ayurveda wellness experiences and holidays since 1996. Their extensive list of treatment packages along with the daily yoga sessions is a perfect retreat to revitalize the senses. They manufacture their own ayurveda oils and treatment powders at their plantation under the vigilant supervision of the Ayurveda doctors. Nikki's Nest additionally has a restaurant serving seafood, a sea facing yoga floor, spacious sun deck by the swimming pool and a compact library to keep you occupied. You will have to check-in for a minimum of 7 days here.

No. of rooms: 47





Dr. Franklins Panchkarma Institute & Research Centre, Kovalam, Kerala

This Ayurveda institute was started in 1980 by Dr. Franklin who comes from a family of Ayurveda doctors for panning generations for 400 years. With more than a decade in service it has earned the name of being one of the best Centres offering Authentic Ayurveda treatments in Kerala. They have a total of 27 treatment rooms which focus on a variety of Ayurvedic treatment which needs one to check-in for a minimum of 7 days. Daily classes are conducted for yoga and meditation sessions. They have an inviting pool and a gymnasium to engage you in the free time amidst sessions.

No. of rooms: 67



Wellness Retreats



Harivihar Heritage Homestead, Kozhikode, Kerala

A combination of carefully restored royal heritage residence and the goodness of Ayurveda, Harivihar is a home away from home. Built in 1850 and restored from its dilapidated state in 2001, this charming homestay has been recognized as one of the best Ayurvedic retreats in Kerala. With just 2 Ayurveda treatment rooms where provide packages for rejuvenation and curative treatments. The accompanying yoga sessions led by a teacher with 30 years of experience adds to the complete care package. Furthermore, they take pride in promoting the traditional art forms that are slowly vanishing. This makes Harivihar a culturally and spiritually enhancing experience.

No. of rooms: 5

Pricing: \$\$\$





Sukhayus Wellness Ayurveda Retreat, Fort Kochi, Kerala

Sukhayus wellness Ayurveda Resort located in the heart of Fort Kochi is a great option for those looking to stay in the heart of Fort Kochi and enjoy an authentic Ayurvedic experience. Each room is different in terms of décor and is designed elegantly. Each of the bathrooms has a bathtub that overlooks the landscaped gardens. Being a wellness and Ayurveda center, Sukhayus offers a range of Ayurvedic treatments. Apart from Ayurveda they also offer naturopathy, Acupuncture and Physiotherapy treatments. One can also take up Yoga and meditation courses when here. The wellness center also has an inviting pool to relax in.

No. of rooms: 18 (2 Suites)

Pricing: \$\$\$





The Oceano Resort, Varkala, Kerala

Oceano resort overlooks the pretty Varkala beach and fits the needs and requirements of all travelers. Away from the bustle of the crowded beach front dotting the town of Varkala, Oceano Resort offers a peaceful environment to enjoy the views of the Arabian Sea. This resort also offers a number of healing packages overseen by experienced Ayurveda doctors. All the rooms in the well-manicured garden of the resort are in different styles and vary in sizes to meet the varying comfort needs of guests. It is important to know that they do not have air conditioners in any of the rooms only high speed fans.

No. of rooms: 27

Pricing: \$\$\$





Krishnatheeram Ayur Holy Beach Resort, Varkala, Kerala

Perched on a cliff in the town of Varkala, Krishnatheeram offers a welcoming ambiance to revitalize the senses. The resort is spread over an acre sprinkled with palm trees offering calming views of the Arabian Sea. The surrounding provides a perfect retreat to indulge in Ayurvedic therapies and yoga sessions. The Chakra Ayurvedic centre follows the holistic healing therapies of Ayurveda. The centre also specializes in curative, rejuvenating and restorative massages which can be couples with Yoga sessions. It is only here in Varkala that one will find an infinity sea view pool.

No. of cottages: 13

Pricing: \$\$\$





The Travancore Heritage, Kovalam, Kerala

The Travancore Heritage resort is spread over an area of 15 acres of lush green coconut garden and landscaped gardens. Standing on a high cliff in a panoramic hinterland, the resort is designed to showcase the traditional side of Kerala which reflects in its architecture. Ayurveda being an internal part of the culture, is the focus at this resort which boasts of 40 treatment rooms. They have a separate restaurant to cater for people under treatment at the Ayurvedic centre. There are 2 other restaurants on the premises one facing the pool and one on the beachfront.

No. of rooms: 90

Pricing: \$\$\$





Ayurveda Village, Poovar, Kerala

Ayurveda Village is the exclusive Ayurvedic treatment and rejuvenation centre at Poovar Island resort. Set by the serene backwaters and accessible only by a ferry the resort makes for a perfect getaway. The intimate settings of the resort have been thoughtfully designed to create the perfect ambiance to make the most of the ancient tradition of Ayurveda. They also have a herbarium which houses the herbs used in creating Ayurvedic remedies. You can choose between land and floating cottages which are swish and replete with luxurious modern amenities. The pool with its sunken bar is the place to chill on the resort.

No. of Cottages: 78

Pricing: \$\$\$





Isola Di Cocco, Trivandrum, Kerala

Aptly named as the 'island of coconuts' this resort rests under the vast canopy of swaying palm trees. This 30 acre resort offers an array of cozily furnished heritage homesteads and spacious suite rooms. A traditional Ayurvedic health centre offers a full range of restorative and therapeutic Yoga and Ayurveda treatments and massages, to help relax, heal, and invigorate your mind and body. While the natural surroundings will have you mesmerized, the pool side restaurant, specialty sea food restaurant and the pool that looks onto the river and the Sea beyond make this an ideal option for a leisurely holiday.

No. of rooms: 67

Pricing: \$\$\$





Anahata Retreat, Goa

On a quiet and secluded part of Ashvem beach, nestled amidst coconut palm trees and lush plantations, lies Anahata Retreat. The eco-retreat with its beach front cottages is a great place to indulge in the spectacular sunsets, great food and a healthy lifestyle. The resort offers yoga sessions at the yoga shala overlooking the sea every day. They also have on premises the Xinalani spa offering western and traditional treatments. While here you could choose to take long walks on the beach or enjoy a cooking class with the chef. Overall, this is a barefoot luxury resort. If you are used to 5-star resorts this may not be for you.

No. of cottages: 16

Pricing: \$\$\$





Shreyas Yoga Retreat, Bangalore, Karnataka

Located on the outskirts of Bangalore, Shreyas is a boutique resort and a luxury ashram. The retreat is dedicated to promoting the authentic spiritual tradition of Yoga along with Ayurveda and wellness treatments to rejuvenate the mind and body. The retreat has 13 treatment rooms and is spread over an area of 25 acres. The tranquil surroundings coupled with the ever smiling staff create a serene environment to bounce back from the mundane routine. They also organize a cooking session focused on healthy lifestyle where the ingredients are sourced from within the property.

No. of cottages: 12

Pricing: \$\$\$\$





Neeleshwar Hermitage, Neeleswaram, Kerala

Away from the bustle of South Kerala, Neeleshwar Hermitage located by the Arabian sea in North Kerala is far removed from the touristy paths. A luxurious resort and rejuvenation centre that has well spread out cottages and 5 spacious spa rooms for a variety of Ayurvedic treatments, they promote and believe in offering a path to balanced lifestyle. They have a few well planned wellness retreat programs to choose from aimed at complete relaxation and harmonious wellbeing. A huge infinity pool and a deliciously varied cuisine add to the overall wellness holiday experience.

No. of cottages: 18

Pricing: \$\$\$\$





The Raviz Resort and Spa Kadavu, Kozhikode, Kerala

Nestled on the banks of the Chaliyar River, this resort of 9 acres sits amidst the backwaters and coconut plantations of Kerala. An oasis for the weary traveler with that entire one could ask for in a trendy resort, wellness is an additional and integral part of their offerings. While they specialize in Marma Therapy which helps achieve the desired result in a dramatically quick way, the wellness centre with 4 Ayurveda treatment rooms and 2 western treatment rooms also offers traditional Ayurvedic treatments and yoga sessions to revitalize and revive yourself. They also have a fitness centre, lounge in the sauna and a well-stocked library to keep you occupied.

No. of rooms: 74

Pricing: \$\$\$\$





Carnoustie Ayurveda & Wellness Resort, Mararikulam, Kerala

An eco-friendly resort with tranquil settings close to the scenic Marari Beach, Carnoustie Ayurveda & Wellness Resort is a place to unwind and get away from the chaos of life. The villas are a super blend of traditional architecture and luxurious living where most have a private pool. The traditional spa here offers a variety of ayurveda treatments, beauty treatments as well as Naturopathy in their 3 treatment rooms. The resort also hosts early-morning yoga sessions every day to help enhance the effects of the treatments. This resort is a perfect Launchpad to explore the serene backwaters of Alleppey in their two bedroom Houseboat and the fishing village of Mararikulam.

No. of Villas: 40

Pricing: \$\$\$\$





Punnamada Lake Resort, Alleppey, Kerala

Set amidst the tranquil settings of palm fringed backwaters of Alleppey, Punnamada Resort is a perfect place to reconnect with oneself in utmost luxury and comfort. The resort reflects the aura of Kerala in all its glory infused with a range of modern facilities. The restful environment of the resort amplifies the effects of the various wellness programs one enrolls for. They have 4 ayurveda treatment rooms on the premises and the separate yoga retreat. Their exclusive yoga retreat is a highlight at the resort and has the best yoga teachers and exercises to help you take part in some self-care yoga.

No. of Villas: 35

Pricing: \$\$\$\$





Atmantan Wellness Resort, Pune, Maharashtra

The Atmantan Wellness Spa sits on a hill overlooking the picturesque Mulshi Lake spells luxury from the word get go. With integrated and customized wellness programs the resort strives to encourage a holistic amalgamation of the atma (soul), mana (mind) and tann (body). Spread across a lush green area of 42 acres in the valley coupled with minimalistic architecture, there is plenty of space to unwind and reconnect with oneself. The therapies offered here vary from Ayurveda to Oriental accupressure to Hamam. Combine all of that with nutritious food and Yoga sessions to complete the detoxification process.

No. of rooms: 106

Pricing: \$\$\$\$\$





Niraamaya Retreats Surya Samudra, Trivandrum, Kerala

A Relais and Chateaux property, Niraamaya Surya Samudra is perched on a dramatic cliff-edge flanked by secluded beaches celebrates its natural surroundings. The resort is dotted with traditional Kerala style cottages under the shade of palm trees. The Spa with 8 rooms focuses on Ayurveda treatments along with various other therapeutic traditions like authentic Thai & Western relaxation techniques and traditional Asian therapies like reflexology. At the resort you are encouraged to indulge in long walks on the secluded beaches or take a dip in the rock-cut infinity pool. It is here that you can experience the best of wellness and culture in luxury.

No. of cottages: 31

Pricing: \$\$\$\$\$





Ananda in the Himalayas, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand

Located on a 100 acre Maharaja's Palace Estate, Ananda is surrounded by graceful Sal forests and overlooks the spiritual town of Rishikesh and the Ganges river valley. It is here where you can find your spiritual path and combine it with the age old science of Ayurveda to heal your body, mind and soul. Though commercial and unlike ashrams, this retreat is perfect for those who would like to combine luxury with the long lasting effects of Yoga and Ayurveda. The 24 room spa and treatment centre at Ananda in the Himalayas has a temperature controlled outdoor pool and gym.

No. of rooms:

Pricing: \$\$\$\$\$





Vana, Dehradun, Uttarakhand

A luxurious ashram surrounded by the enchanting Sal forest is a world of divinity in itself. Everything here has been chosen for a purpose, is coherent with nature and evokes wellbeing. The retreat brings together Ayurveda, Sowa Rigpa, Yoga, Natural therapies, Spa, fitness and Tibetan healing all under one roof. With 55 private wellness treatment rooms spread across the retreat, 2 temperature controlled pools, a Watsu pool and a separate yoga Shala the healing process here aims at holistic growth of the mind, body and soul. Bathed in elegance with muted colors Vana is a refuge for all beings to pave a path of self-transformation.

No. of rooms: 82 (16 suites)

Pricing: \$\$\$\$\$



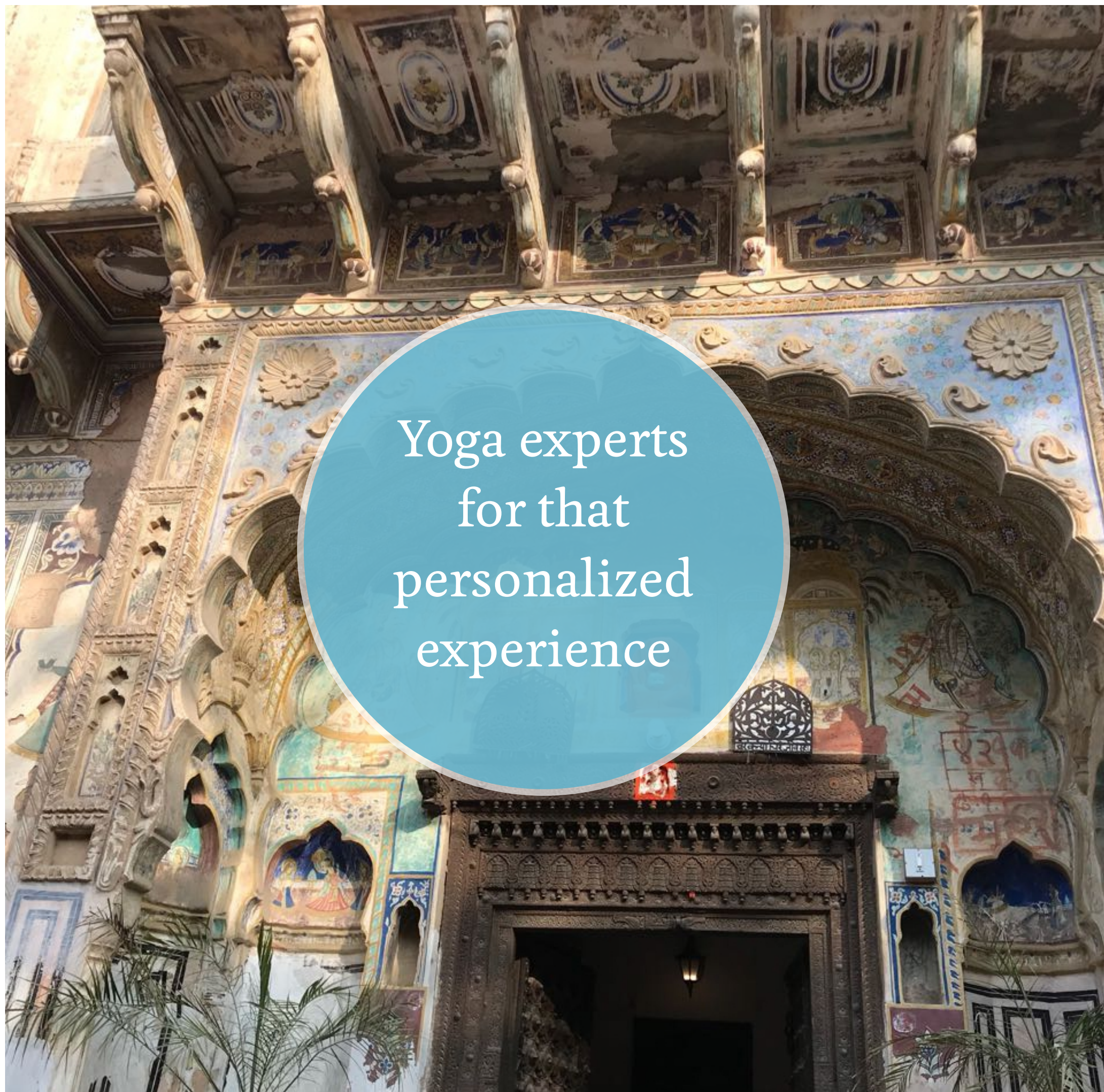


Niraamaya Retreat Backwaters And Beyond, Kumarakom, Kerala

Niraamaya Retreats Backwaters & Beyond is the latest waterfront resorts on the tranquil Vembanad Lake. The uber luxurious resort is set amidst 8 acres of beautifully landscaped tropical gardens. Here meandering pathways and tasteful living spaces are in complete harmony with nature amidst breezy coconut palms and tropical foliage. Privacy, relaxation, and rejuvenation are a prime focus at this retreat that features a world-class wellness spa rooted in Kerala's ancient wellness practices, large outdoor swimming pool, and two gourmet restaurants offering regional and global cuisine.

No. of villas: 27

Pricing: \$\$\$\$\$



Yoga experts
for that
personalized
experience



Dr. Shruti Nada Poddar, Rambagh, Rajasthan

Founder of the Shruti foundation and currently chairperson of PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Rajasthan State, Shruti is a globally recognized Nada Yoga Teacher, a Vibrational Healer and Musician, a Heritage Conservationist as well as a poet. Mentor, educationist and entrepreneur, she is the pioneer of the Nada Vibronics (a Nada Yogic Wellness Ecosystem based Indic Vibrational Yogic Sciences). Shruti is widely known for resurrecting the Indian healing Sciences of Nada Yoga (indigenous sound and vibrational technologies). She teaches and cures people worldwide with the power of Nada Yoga and other Indic systems of medicine (ISM or Ayush). She also conducts courses, retreats and workshop on wellness, cultural wisdom, leadership, integral education, life sciences, self-management and development of consciousness.

Shruti has created a space to deep dive into her passion at the beautiful Vedaaranya Haveli in Rambagh, a concept homestay and one-of-its-kind in the entire Shekhawati region of Rajasthan. The 6 charming rooms elegantly decorated with warm colours and local furniture are on the first floor. Here you can experience, among others, sound healing and yoga courses conducted by Shruti herself.





Enteyoga With Seethu, Udaipur, Rajasthan

Seethu belongs to the revered yoga lineage of Shri T. Krishnamacharya - arguably the most influential Yoga guru of the 20th century - and was initiated into it by its most prominent direct disciples Shri Srivatsa Ramaswami. A certified yoga guide, her personal yoga practice of 20 years and a deep belief in the system has inspired Seethu to undertake the path of a Yoga Guide. Seethu's approach is encapsulated in the phrase EnteYoga. Translated in Malayalam, Seethu's mother tongue from Kerala, EnteYoga means My Yoga. Her sessions represent her pursuit to help fellow practitioners find "their own yoga". You can spend your time in secret alcoves of Udaipur discovering your yoga with Seethu's help.

Anchored in the Vinyasa Krama Yoga methodology and its core of "art of intelligent sequencing", Seethu constructs and offers diverse Yoga experiences woven in the local milieu of Udaipur. Broadly categorized, she offers three experiences to her participants:

Curated Yoga products - individuals and exclusive boutique (small) groups

Regular sunrise and sunset sessions - fixed groups sessions

Curated Yoga workshops - larger groups



Sources

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“When the truth is known ignorance cannot be,
when the mind is pure there is no disease,
when the breath is mastered
there is no death, therefore, surrender to Yoga.”

– T Krishnamacharya



A person in a white long-sleeved shirt and pants is performing a yoga pose, likely Bhujangasana (Upward Dog), on an orange mat. They are in a room with a large window or balcony railing overlooking a body of water and palm trees. The room has a decorative ceiling with a fan and a mural of people in yoga poses. A semi-transparent purple box with the text "Thank You" is overlaid on the image.

Thank You