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Wednesday, May 17, 2006

NAMASTE

What a pleasure it is to be starting the second year in operation!! I am so thrilled that so many students who started last year are still regular happy smiling faces at Bikram Yoga Hampden. Jen and I are often discussing the impressive changes our students are making.

As we head into the *beautiful long summers* that we are lucky to have in Baltimore you will notice your postures and your classes change.

The humidity will provide you with **deeper flexibility** and you may sense your body change more rapidly, it can also be more tiring. This eventually creates a *higher endurance* for later when it dries out or cools down (think Olympic athletes training at a higher elevation)-- **DO NOT DESPAIR! Every class that feels hard brings a class that feels manageable.** Every posture that feels like you will never make it through gets you closer to being able to hold the pose with poise. **Remember: just being here** and trying your hardest for today you already get an A+.

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30-Day Challenge

So many of you have made this *formidable commitment* and I am

**Featured Destination:
NEVIS!**

As promised I am finally delivering the itinerary and cost of this **wonderful** Yoga retreat. I am sure you have seen from the posters that we have **three dates** lined up and will do all three trips with a minimum of 6 people per trip. We will need to consolidate the trips to fulfill that quota and have a maximum setting at 22 people.

I don't need to remind you how much I love this yoga practice and enjoy teaching it here in Baltimore every day. However for those of you new to Bikram Yoga Hampden I must express that this island in the **British West Indies** and this guest house in particular is my *favorite* place in the world. So I share with you a long-hatched plan to combine my favorite worlds all into one wonderful adventure, and I hope you will consider joining me.

proud of each and everyone one of you. The posture clinic (see Amy Callies getting pulled apart by Jen and me!) was a great way to kick off the 30 day challenge. We will be doing another one in the fall for those of you who couldn't make it. Many of you are seasoned practitioners solidifying your relationship to your practice and re-establishing time in your day for your practice. Those of you at the start of your journey will be seeing the daily changes that are a **great reward** to this early commitment.

Our very own **Vera Brown** has contributed some of her thoughts thru this committed practice and I know you will all find the same inspiration and recognition I did in her eloquence:

"After completing my **15th** and **16th** class today, I have never been more exhausted than I am right now. *And what a wonderful thing!* I love getting to discover and use muscles in my body I didn't know were there. I love feeling so much of my body - I was sleepy and tight this morning, but so excited to come to class this evening, all warmed up. And after my second class just felt so deliciously wrung out and exhausted. **This, for me, is what the yoga challenge is all about.** In the beginning, deciding to show up every day and do the best I can. In the midst of it, enjoying each feeling and each moment in my body, knowing that even if I'm really tired that I earned it.

For someone who's probably put in more time on the mat in the past two weeks than the past year, well ... doing the yoga challenge is really exciting (*super exciting* for me, and also cool to think that if I can do it, even when I eat cookies and soda for lunch - so unwisely - between classes, you can too)!

French poet Paul Eluard once said,

'There is another world, but it is in this one.'

If he had been a yogi, he would have said "*there is another pose, but it is in this one.*" Today I saw the floor in the first backbending pose, after half-moon. And someday I might reach the top of my head to my toes, in the forward stretching that follows. **But that future pose is in the work I'm doing now**, and though I've been a sporadic (at best) pursuer of fitness, I'm learning that with **consistent effort** - which is actually fun!- and time, that other pose and other world will come."

Inspirational Essay, by a 16 year-old Bikram student

Encourage your friends and loved ones to come try a class with you. Below is an inspiring essay from a 16 year old nephew of one of our students. He is a student at Bikram Yoga, Albuquerque and is an inspiration to us all.

"The Gift"

by Robin Osofsky

Day One

Afternoon arrival at Nevis Island. We'll settle into our cottages amid the quaint stone terraces at The Hermitage, and enjoy cocktails and a welcome dinner prepared by the skilled chefs at this exceptional island restaurant. You'll have the evening free to get to know your fellow Adventurers!

Day Two

Wake up your body and mind with our early morning yoga class from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. Class locations will vary: beach, verandah, poolside, etc. We'll enjoy a Hermitage specialty, the Full Planters Breakfast (think fresh fruit, home-made yogurt, omelets, breakfast breads, and more), then take a three-hour hike through Nevis's legendary rain forest. Gourmet lunch is at a lovely sugar plantation in the hills. Spend the afternoon as you like, but be sure to rejoin your fellow yoga devotees for class at 5:30 p.m. Cocktails and dinner will be at The Hermitage.

Day Three

We'll start the day with yoga, wind down with breakfast on the verandah, then gear up for off-road mountain biking. After exploring remote ruins, villages and vistas not accessible by car, we'll be ready for a relaxing lunch at a beachside restaurant. Enjoy free time until yoga class at 5:30 p.m., then dine on native cuisine at one of our favorite local beach bars.

Day Four

After our usual early morning yoga class and breakfast, prepare to relax for the remainder of the day as we embark on a leisurely cultural tour of some of the island's historic villages, estates and plantations. An afternoon cocktail cruise to a bay off St. Kitts includes snorkeling and

Anything a fifty-four year-old woman could do, I could do, **especially if that woman was my mom**, no sweat. There I was, in the 105-degree room standing on a yoga mat anticipating an hour and a half of *easy relaxing stretching*. I was surrounded by middle-aged women in lycra. The instructor, a muscular, tattooed man with a shaved head and an eight-pack set of abs welcomed me as the new student in his Bikram's Yoga class. He also wore lycra.

The class started with a breathing exercise that was *slow* and *monotonous*. Halfway through the second set of the breathing exercises my skin felt damp and sticky. Beads of sweat appeared as my confidence started to waver. The poses were back to back with no time in between; this class was far from relaxing. **"Go back, way back, more back, lean back, fall back"**. This phrase was said during the back bend. I was filled with frustration and pain. Muscles that I didn't know I had began to hurt. I didn't want to go "more back"; as my body went back sweat began to drip, or rather pour from me. I was losing a lot of water. **"And change"**, those two words alone **filled my body with relief** because they signaled the end of a pose. "Bend forward, keep your legs straight and touch your head to the floor." There was no way my head was going to touch the floor. I looked over and saw these middle-aged women do this pose with ease. I felt discouraged and faint; I was dehydrated.

Why didn't I listen to my fifty-four-year-old mom? Why didn't I drink a lot of water the night before and get a lot of sleep? ***It's natural to resist any advice*** a parent gives, but my parent had experience. I mean she was fifty-four-years-old, which is a lot of time to learn. After a few more poses my vision blurred and knew I needed to escape the heat. I left the room *ashamed* and almost had to throw up. Ten minutes later I returned to the class, humbled. I focused on slowing down my breathing and got through the last thirty minutes; however, I had to sit down a few times.

That night I drank three or four liters of water and retired early. Refreshed, I woke up and went back to yoga class the next day with **humility** and **determination**. I looked up to these women. I finished the entire class with no breaks and was a little closer to being able to touch my head to the ground. I have been continuing yoga for several weeks now and love it. **I've learned to focus with 100% intensity on one pose.** This experience has taught me to be opened minded to new things, and **discard my expectations**. I'll never forget this gift my mother showed me and always hold with me its lessons.

Schedule Change and Addition

May 29th is Memorial Day.

Due to this holiday, there will **ONLY** be a **9am class**. The 5pm and 7pm classes are **CANCELLED**.

~So practice yoga early, and enjoy the weather outside!~

sailing. There's no afternoon yoga class today – but we'll gather for another great dinner from our chefs at The Hermitage.

Day Five

Here's your opportunity to create the perfect "Day on Nevis" for yourself! We begin with yoga and breakfast, then we'll help you schedule whatever activity piques your interest: a windsurfing or sailing lesson, a visit to Nevis's renowned Botanical Gardens, a massage, a trip into town. After unwinding at our afternoon yoga class at 5:30, we'll dine at The Hermitage.

Day Six

Ready to saddle up? After yoga and breakfast, we'll horseback ride through unspoiled, remote country that affords beautiful vistas of Nevis and beyond. We'll have a gourmet lunch at a plantation inn, then enjoy some unscheduled time until our 5:00 p.m. yoga class. Dinner will be at a top Nevis eatery known for its fresh fish, salads and native dishes.

Day Seven

Your last full day in paradise begins with a final yoga class and the usual Full Planters Breakfast, followed by a few hours of relaxation. You might need the downtime . . . because we're capping off the week with a three-hour trek up spectacular Nevis Peak! We'll bypass afternoon yoga to pack for home, leaving the evening free for our farewell Grand Finale dinner.

Day Eight

We bid our fellow Adventurers good-bye as we depart for home...with a suitcase full of great memories!

To learn more about the

Hermitage [click here](#)

Guided Meditation at Lunch

Please join Brianna for a midday practice dedicated to relaxation and renewal.

Beginners are encouraged to attend.

No change of clothes necessary.

Wednesdays, 12:15 - 12:45 p.m.

\$10 drop-in

NO experience required.

Karma Classes

Some of you may have a hard time fitting in all your good intentions in your busy schedule. Well, to make it a little easier for you here at Bikram Yoga Hampden we will be starting up our **Karma Classes** so you can exercise and *give back* to the community at the same time!

Wednesdays at 7pm we will start a "Karma Class"

This means that each student donates what he or she can afford and **all proceeds go to the local charity of the month**. If you have an existing membership we still ask that you donate something. If you don't have a current membership or are joining us for the first time we ask that you consider a \$5 donation minimum.

Below are listed some of the charities we are lining up and **any further suggestions are encouraged!**

- Baltimore City Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention
- Baltimore Medical Systems
- Caroline Street Clinic for the Uninsured
- Healthy Start, Baltimore City
- East Baltimore Medical Center
- Julie Community Center
- Health Education Resources Organization (HERO)
- ALS Clinic, Outpatient Center at JHU
- House of Ruth of Maryland, Inc.
- Baltimore County Health Dept., Hannah More

hermitage, [click here](#).

Cost:

Price, per person: \$2485 - \$2,975, depending on type of accommodations desired (twin beds, king beds, single or double occupancy, etc.)

While most of activities are included in the overall trip fee, please note that certain items such as free time recreational activities and beverages constitute an additional expense (Please pick up a complete itinerary at the front desk).

For more information, contact Trip Director Gwen Trucco at 847-924-0131 or gwen*at*islandexperiences.net

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