



# In Search of Serenity

You can jump-start—or renew—your practice at one of these 5 retreats **By Christopher Hall**

## 1 FEATHERED PIPE RANCH Montana

**FORMAT:** All-inclusive organized retreats

**COST:** From about \$1,000 for a four-day program

Don't be surprised if you spot deer, a moose or even a bear on the grounds of this woodsy May-to-October compound high in the Rocky Mountains outside Helena. Yoga classes take place in a vintage log hunting lodge that overlooks a broad lawn and a lake where you can swim or paddle a canoe. The food is mostly vegetarian, and accommodations include dorm-style rooms, private cabins, tepees, and yurts tricked out "glamping" (glamorous camping) style. Between classes, you can hike pine-scented trails that lace the sur-

rounding national forest or meditatively walk a living labyrinth of trees. At night, a lakeside fire crackles while Montana's famous Big Sky becomes a dense tapestry of twinkling stars.

## 2 VIA YOGA RETREAT Costa Rica

**FORMAT:** All-inclusive program except for some meals

**COST:** From \$2,495 per person (double occupancy) for seven nights

Water play meets sun salutations at these beginner-to-intermediate yoga gatherings organized by Via Yoga, a tour company, on Costa Rica's central Pacific coast. The venue is Tulemar Villas, a top resort with a palm-fringed beach, a trio of infinity pools, and contemporary lodgings dotting 33 hillside acres of

jungle alive with toucans and scampering monkeys. Yoga classes—on a covered terrace with views of the sea—alternate with meditation sessions, surf or stand-up paddleboard lessons, exploring adjacent Manuel Antonio National Park or simply sunning and swimming.

## 3 KRIPALU CENTER FOR YOGA & HEALTH Massachusetts

**FORMAT:** All-inclusive individual programs and organized retreats

**COST:** From about \$167 per night

A virtual mother ship of holistic health in the United States, this Berkshire Mountains destination offers instruction in not only yoga but also Ayurveda, qigong, personal growth, spiritual practice and more—a total

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ARIANNA HUFFINGTON, FOUNDER OF THE HUFFINGTON POST

of over 700 programs annually. But it's not just size that draws around 40,000 people each year for visits of a couple of days to a few weeks. Pristine, simple white rooms (shared or private) exude a calming Zen vibe. Food—whether turkey shepherd's pie, squash lasagna or haddock—is both wholesome and delicious. And, between yoga classes and perhaps an aromatherapy massage or Reiki session, the 150-acre campus and the forest beyond allow a seasonally changing menu of activities—from snowshoeing in winter to lake swimming in summer to long walks amid spring buds or blazing fall colors.

#### 4 ART OF LIVING RETREAT CENTER

##### North Carolina

**FORMAT:** Individual programs and all-inclusive retreats

**COST:** From \$84 per day for private accommodations/classes extra; from \$350 for a two-night program

The powerful presence of the surrounding Blue Ridge Mountains is keenly felt throughout this 380-acre campus of forest and buildings stretching along a 3,700-foot-high ridge in western North Carolina. A soaring meditation hall—reminiscent of a grand Indian temple—dominates the site, while most of the smaller rooms hosting yoga classes and mind and meditation workshops are oriented toward the rising sun. Lodging is a comfy boutique hotel and simple but serene retreat rooms; the dining hall—offering spectacular views of the mountains—features a vegetarian menu that might include greens from the center's own garden or a warm Tuscan bread salad with sun-dried tomato pesto. At the spa, Ayurvedic options range from multiday detox regimes to facials, massages and warm-oil “bliss therapy” treatments.



Clockwise from top: Guests at the Art of Living Retreat Center; a Kalani bungalow; canoeing at Feathered Pipe Ranch

#### 5 KALANI Hawaii

**FORMAT:** À la carte programs and all-inclusive organized retreats

**COST:** From \$95 per day for accommodations only; from \$810 for a six-day program

The sound of a trumpeting conch shell announces mealtimes on the open-air lanai at this family-friendly, educational retreat center that serves the local community as well as visitors. With trade-wind-cooled cottages, bungalows and rooms spreading across 120 acres of lawn

and rain forest on the Big Island's remote Puna coast, it offers 50 classes each week—a third of them yoga sessions accompanied by the sounds of ocean waves, thanks to the studio's screen walls. Spend the balance of your day in other wellness pursuits such as a lomilomi massage or aqua therapy, or take a class in lei making, hula or ukulele. Farther afield, you can snorkel, see fiery lava flows and visit black-sand beaches or the calderas, lava tubes and other fascinating natural features of Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park. ■

