

YOGA

NATURAL LIVING

THE UK'S *best* yoga retreats
INTERVIEW - LAURA BAUMANN

QI GOING FOR PAIN

YOGA IN ALL THINGS

TAKING KUNDALINI BACK TO *its roots*

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*Britains Best
Yoga
Retreats*



Yoga retreats are a wonderful way to relax and rejuvenate, helping us to reconnect with our inner selves. Nowadays with a plethora of retreats available, it is hard to know where to start when searching for a haven of tranquillity. Emma Sharma provides us with information on some of the best sanctuaries that can be found in the UK, proving there is no need to jet off to faraway places for some peace and solitude, when such serenity and beautiful scenery can be found closer to home.

AdventureYogi in Somerset and Cornwall

AdventureYogi provide a yoga retreat of healthy living combined with extra dimensions of excitement and adventure. They have been running exhilarating yoga retreats in the UK and Europe for over four years, and are experienced in organising bespoke trips to satisfy wanderlust, a thirst for action or simple down time.

Their UK breaks show that being on retreat in England is just as good as going overseas. AdventureYogi have admirable environmental ethics- represented by their policies such as supporting Sustrans, the charity of the national cycle network, and encouraging people to travel overland instead of flying.

Well-Being Yogi weekends are run in Somerset for those who need time away to relax, and SurfYogi weekends take place in Cornwall for the more active yogi who loves the waves.

AdventureYogi work with a great team of experienced yoga teachers, offering two yoga classes per day. The experience will take you on your own personal adventure, whether it is to enhance your yoga practice, aid your activity of choice or calm a busy mind. The vegetarian food to nourish and restore compliments the yoga, and there also some wonderful in-house massage treatments available.

adventureyogi.com

Revitalise

Revitalise organise an annual six night retreat on Holy Isle, just off Arran, Scotland, which combines yoga, meditation and tai chi and is suitable for all levels. The island has a long sacred history with an ancient healing spring, a hermit-cave of a 6th century monk and evidence of a 13th century monastery. The powerful nature of the island has become charged with the energy of spiritual practice which can touch the heart and inspire the mind. Although the journey to the island can be challenging, the unique feeling of peace and solitude makes it well worth the trip. Along with yoga and tai chi, Buddhist meditation practices are also available throughout the day. The next annual retreat runs from September 22nd – 28th.

Revitalise also offer a weekend yoga retreat suitable for beginners and experienced practitioners, in Brazier's Park, Oxfordshire, an actual commune with around fifteen permanent residents. Although the venue is not five-star accommodation, it does have a splendid grandeur, and most of the food is grown organically in the gardens. The next retreat is on August 6th.

re-vitalise.co.uk 08000 191 6356

Yoga Ayurveda Retreats

SOUTH WALES Neals Yard Holidays combine the healing effects of yoga and Ayurveda with year-round retreats at a centre cocooned in nature near some of Britain's best beaches. Set amongst acres of private land and ancient forest in a beautiful part of South Wales, this unique centre is just three hours from London by train. The centre offers twice-daily Kundalini-inspired yoga sessions tailored for the individual, and every student receives personal attention. The personalised Ayurvedic massages use medicinal oils to help eliminate toxins from the body as well as increasing overall energy. Other treatments offered include shirodhara, polarity therapy and craniosacral alignment. The nutritional food includes plenty of seasonal home-grown organic vegetables in the Ayurveda influenced meals, and detox and juice-fasting are also offered on request. In between yoga and treatment sessions, guests can relax in a four-star en-suite guest room, enjoy the sauna and outdoor tub, or go for gentle walks through some beautiful scenery. There are also beautiful beaches nearby for swimming and sacred sites to explore. A retreat by the sea helps you reconnect with your own inner healing force so you leave relaxed and rejuvenated with the skills to maintain a healthy lifestyle. nealsyardholidays.com 0844 888 5050

Dru Yoga Retreats

SNOWDONIA Dru Yoga retreats are nestled in the mountains of Snowdonia, away from the bustle of city life. Whether enjoying a yoga holiday or meditation retreat, this is an idyllic place to relax and be at one with nature, and boasts impressive, panoramic views of the Nant Ffrancon valley. Each room has en-suite facilities, and the lodge offers healthy and delicious vegetarian cuisine to complement their courses. Beside the spacious yoga hall, there is an extensive yoga shop, and the World Peace Flame – a monument water feature where people take time to relax and soak up the sunshine, or alternatively meditate by a mountain stream. Dru offers a number of courses during the year:

Dru Yoga and Wellbeing weekends run from 29-31st October and are the ideal introduction to Dru Yoga, and are a great way to try out Dru Dance, Meditation and Sound at once.

Dru Dance (26-28th November) is a fusion of yoga and dance moves choreographed to music. It is both stress-busting and

energetic while focusing on dynamic, flowing movement to create both strength and suppleness.

For beginners, Dru Yoga and Walking Holidays run in July and September, which combines yoga with walks in Snowdonia and the coastline of Anglesey and afternoon meditation sessions. If you book, then you can bring a friend or partner for free.

If you enjoy yoga and would like your family to share it with you, the Dru Family Holiday runs from 5-8th August, for kids aged 8-13 and their parents. druworldwide.com

Free Spirit Travel

Free Spirit Travel regularly hosts yoga weekends at differing UK venues. Oxon Hoath in Kent, a huge stately home with picturesque grounds is a favourite. Several times a year, Free Spirit hires the whole venue and gives participants the chance to move freely between two different yoga teachers in order to experience alternate teaching styles. Favourite teachers are Liz Lark and Jean Hall whom offer dynamic ashtanga and hatha yoga classes in addition to yin yoga and meditation. These weekends require booking far in advance due to their popularity.

Domus Mariae in Epping, also easily reached from London, is a serene venue with single rooms. Fiona Agombar leads her energising and healing yoga retreats especially aimed at those people that need a nurturing space. These retreats are normally held in the spring, and occasionally in autumn, offering a wonderful opportunity for rest and recharging your energy levels.

In the west, Free Spirit holds spring and autumn weekends at Croydon Hall in Somerset, where a spa and a swimming pool add to the appeal. These retreats are led by Simona Hernandez who teaches anusara inspired flow yoga.

freespirituk.com

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