

Costa Rica Retreat 2013

Trip Information & Cancellation Policy

Welcome to our spectacular yoga retreat, *Journey to the Blue Zone: The Yoga of Awakening*. Our destination is **Blue Spirit**, a world-class yoga retreat center in Nosara, Costa Rica. We have selected this location for its pristine natural landscapes, subtropical climate, turtle-protected beach, excellent food, comfortable and stunning accommodations, healing energy of the land, and Blue Spirit's dedicated staff who contribute to this deeply nurturing setting. Visit the Blue Spirit website at www.bluespiritcostarica.com.

ABOUT COSTA RICA

While it may seem remote, Costa Rica is easily accessible from the United States. Costa Rica has not only become known for its spectacular nature, bio-diversity, and ecological tourism, but also as a country that values many of the ideals embraced by those of us interested in world peace, environmental preservation, quality education, and high standards of health care. Costa Rica is unique in Central America as it has the longest uninterrupted democracy, no standing army for over 50 years, and a 95% literacy rate.

BLUE ZONE®

Blue Spirit is nestled in one of the world's five Blue Zones®; Nosara, on the Nicoya Peninsula. A Blue Zone® is a recognized geographical area where people live the longest and report the highest levels of wellbeing.

ABOUT NOSARA

In the last 10 years Nosara has grown quietly into one of the hippest holistic hot spots on the planet. Nestled along the coast with 3 pristine and stunning beaches - protected as turtle refuges – Playa Guiones, Playa Pelada, and Playa Nosara. This peaceful, vibrant and international community of nature lovers, surfers, yogis, and families truly embraces the Costa Rican 'Pura Vida' lifestyle.

TRAVEL AND FLIGHT INFORMATION

The two international airports in Costa Rica are: Liberia International Airport (LIR) and San Jose International Airport (SJO). It is recommended to fly into Liberia, which has recently expanded to accommodate increased numbers of flights from the U.S.

Blue Spirit takes care of all of the details regarding shuttle transfers between the retreat center and both airports. Your shuttle arrangements can be made very easily online at <http://www.bluespiritcostarica.com/shuttle-reservations>. Shuttle transfers from/to Liberia cost \$55 per person each way. An alternative option is to take a 40-minute short domestic flight between San Jose and the Nosara airport (20 min. from Blue Spirit). If you choose

this option you may need to plan an overnight in San Jose, so be sure to ask for details about flight times.

Steve Bonczyk (Sharon's husband) can help you with flight information. He is a long-term Delta employee and can check flights for you or make suggestions. Steve can be reached at 612-816-7792 or steve.sharon@maccom. He has agreed to keep an eye on flight costs and notify all who are registered for the retreat when prices appear to drop. There is no guarantee that he will identify the best time to buy, but he will use his best judgment.

If you wish to arrive a few days early or stay later, please contact Blue Spirit or let us know so that we can help. Please note that the Blue Spirit shuttle runs only on Saturdays. They can arrange a private shuttle for you on other days for approximately \$140.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & DEPARTURE TAX

- Passport – **If you don't have a passport, arrange to get one soon** as it can take 4-6 weeks. Your travel agent or online flight booking website (perhaps Orbits or Travelocity) will ask for your passport number. The passport must be valid with two blank pages and an expiration date at least six months after the end of the trip (May 9, 2014); make extra copies; (pack separately from originals); give a copy to someone at home.
- You will be required to pay Costa Rica departure tax (currently \$28 U.S.) which can be paid in U.S. dollars, Costa Rican colones, or a VISA credit card (no other credit card is accepted). Expect to pay approximately \$10 extra if using a credit card.
- We recommend that you purchase travel insurance in case you must cancel. However, this is not required. If you have travel insurance, take a copy of the insurance name, phone, and policy number with you to Costa Rica.

MONEY

- The Costa Rican currency is the colón (plural colones, ₡), named after Cristóbal Colón (Christopher Columbus). \$1 U.S. = 499.5 colones. Expect to think in large numbers! Bills come in 500, 1000, 5000 and 10,000 notes, while coins come in denominations of 5, 10, 20, 25, 50 and 100. Note that older coins are larger and silver, while newer ones are smaller and gold-colored.
- It is not necessary to bring a lot of money with you since this is an all-inclusive retreat. See the list below for what is included and not included in the retreat.
- ATMs are readily available in Nosara, a few miles from Blue Spirit, and are easily accessible throughout Costa Rica. We suggest you come with some cash to use in the gift shop, or for other activities if you wish.
- Blue Spirit and most other places in Costa Rica will accept U.S. dollars. Credit cards can also be used. Expect a transaction fee on all credit card purchases.

EXCURSIONS

There is a lot to enjoy when we are not in session. Whether you stay on the premises to lounge in the saltwater infinity pool, read in a hammock, or wander the grounds, there are fabulous activities for guests who would like to venture further.

Blue Spirit offers: Horseback riding on the beach, surfing lessons, surf board rentals, canopy zip line tour, river kayaking, bird-watching tour, waterfall hike, stand up paddle surf, and turtle refuge tour. These excursions are not included in the price of the retreat and can be booked through Blue Spirit during free time.

TIME ZONE & WEATHER

- Costa Rica is in the same time zone as U.S. Central Standard Time (same as Minnesota).
- The weather in the Nosara area is generally mild throughout the year, with average temperatures of 80 degrees during the day and 70 degrees in the evening. The Green Season supplies plenty of rain that supports the lush, tropical surroundings and usually lasts from August to October. In November, light afternoon showers may cool the air. The weather is beautiful!

TRAVEL HEALTH

- No vaccinations are required for entry into Costa Rica although it is a good idea to be up-to-date on vaccines required in the U.S. such as tetanus.
- There is no malaria risk throughout most of Costa Rica including Nosara where Blue Spirit is located.
- In March 2012, Costa Rica passed one of the strictest smoking regulations in the world. Smoking is banned in busses, taxis, trains and their terminals, work places, public buildings, restaurants, bars, casinos, and all enclosed public-access buildings, granting no exceptions (no separate “smoking areas” are permitted). It also bans smoking in outdoor recreational or educational areas such as parks, stadiums and university campuses.

COST

Cost of the retreat is dependent on type of accommodation selected. Refer to Sharon's website at www.5809yoga.com for a list of accommodations and costs.

REGISTRATION and PAYMENT

- If you have not yet reserved a room, contact Sharon at sharon.hillsbonczyk@gmail.com or call 612-709-4089. You can view options for accommodations on Sharon's website at www.5809yoga.com. A \$300 deposit will hold your room.

PLEASE NOTE: The costs listed are for EARLYBIRD SPECIALS prior to July 1. After July 1, add \$150 to the cost.

- To finalize your registration, complete and sign the Registration Form. Mail the Registration Form (with \$300 deposit if not already paid) to:

Sharon Hills-Bonczyk
5809 Emerson Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN, 55419

- Remaining payments are due by the following dates. If special arrangements are needed or you have any questions, contact Sharon Hills-Bonczyk at 612-709-4089.

\$700 due by June 1, 2013.
Remainder due by September 2, 2013

INCLUDED

- Accommodations and three delicious meals per day.
- Beautiful, white sandy beach, tranquil infinity pool, and exceptional weather in November.
- Twice-daily yoga for all levels including gentle, dynamic, beach yoga, meditation-in-motion, yoga dance, yoga therapy, group & partner yoga, restorative, and yoga nidra.
- Morning or afternoon sessions for sacred practice, deeper group connection and communion with nature.
- A different meditation practice each day for both new and experienced meditators.
- Full use of facilities with free time every day to relax in the enchanting grounds or explore Costa Rica as you wish.
- Optional evening programs including Latin Dance Class, Fire Celebration on the beach, and Evening Salon for deeper connections and fun.
- Art supplies and materials.
- Use of yoga props: Mats, blocks, straps, and cushions

NOT INCLUDED

- Round-trip Airfare to Costa Rica
- Shuttle from airport to Blue Spirit (\$55 each way)
- Healing Arts Sessions (many types of body work to choose from)
- Tipping: Tour guides and hotel staff if you wish
- Alcoholic drinks, smoothies, or other snacks purchased at the bar

CANCELLATIONS and REFUNDS

If it becomes necessary for you to cancel, please notify us immediately by cell phone at 612-709-4089 or email at sharon.hillsbonczyk@gmail.com. The following cancellation charges will apply:

Cancellation Date	Non-Refundable Charge Per Person
Before September 1, 2013	\$300 non-refundable deposit
September 2 – October 2, 2013	\$1,220
After October 2, 2013	No Refund

Participant substitutions are possible. Contact Sharon at sharon.hillsbonczyk@gmail.com for details.

In the case of trip cancellation by 5809 YOGA, all payments except airfare and \$300 deposit will be refunded (deposit will be applied to a future trip). For airline cancellation or refund policies, you must contact your airline directly.

Contact Sharon with questions:

Sharon Hills-Bonczyk, 612-709-4089, sharon.hillsbonczyk@gmail.com