

# From *Inner* Discovery to *Outer* Adventure

YOGA RETREATS FOR THE ATLANTAN SOUL

by Diane Eaton

Is your soul yearning for a vacation? Are you looking for some “me” time, some peace and quiet, some time to replenish from the inside out? Or are you feeling a calling to deepen your yoga practice or to rise to new heights of spiritual connection?

If any of these are true for you, you’re not alone.

Atlanta yoga lovers have a plethora of retreat options: near or far, short or long, in small groups or large, intensely focused on spiritual principles or providing time to relax and peel off everything worldly. Each one has its own flavor, focus and set of features. Here’s a sampling of local and regional retreat providers.

## SOUL NOURISH RETREATS

*Self-discovery and self-integration retreats*

[SoulNourishRetreats.com](http://SoulNourishRetreats.com) • 808-755-5221

Self-discovery is the hallmark of the programs that Soul Nourish Retreats has been leading since 2012. The full-time retreat company features weekend retreats in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains every season as well as “soul vacations” in places such as Todos Santos, Mexico; Sicily and Maui, Hawaii. Using yoga, meditation, laughter and the Enneagram of Personality Types as tools, its yoga getaways focus on helping people integrate the spiritual aspects of themselves with their everyday in-the-world self.

“It goes way beyond getting on a mat,” says Shari Fox, co-director of Soul Nourish Retreats. Fox is a senior retreat leader and one of only approximately 250 certified Enneagram teachers in the world.

“In our retreats, we do a lot with group exercise, meditation, ceremony, natural and cultural adventures, psychology and spirituality. We focus on how to integrate the profound states people have on retreat—community, safety, vulnerability—with their real life at home, so it’s not just a vacation or a mountaintop experience that gets left on the mountain. We’ve designed programs to enrich the inner connections for people to take home with them and really transform their lives.”



Shari Fox of Soul Nourish Retreats. (Photo: 2TPHOTO)



Yogis practicing at the Art of Living Retreat Center, Boone, NC. (Photo: Katie Basile)

## THE ART OF LIVING RETREAT CENTER

*Tranquil regeneration*

[ArtofLivingRetreatCenter.org](http://ArtofLivingRetreatCenter.org)  
800-392-6870

Every year, hundreds of Atlantans travel 300 miles or so to the Blue Ridge mountains of western North Carolina to experience the rejuvenating programs of the Art of Living Retreat Center.

“The mountains, the environment and the calm and serene atmosphere just seem to feel like the physical embodiment of a meditative state of mind,” says Andrew Keaseney, the center’s communications manager for more than six years.

The Center offers several retreats for yoga enthusiasts within the broader range of programs for personal growth, detox, spiritual practice, health/nutrition and more. World-renowned and 500-hour registered teachers lead 3-day retreats such as Holistic Yoga Flow, Gentle Yoga, Hot Yoga Women’s Retreat, and a 3-week Sri Sri Yoga Teacher Training course. Their signature program, the Happiness Retreat, combines yoga sessions with the yogic breathing technique, Sudarshan Kriya, to give people tools to be present and to tap into their personal power. Taught worldwide, the Happiness Retreat is offered every week of the year at the Art of Living.

“The programs have touched millions of lives; they’re time tested and they’re a practical entry point to experience the meditation mindset and a state of ease,” Keaseney says.

## ELOHEE YOGA RETREATS

*A space for healing*

[Elohee.org/retreats/yoga](http://Elohee.org/retreats/yoga)

Just one to two hours from Atlanta, in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, sits Elohee, a residential retreat center on 216 acres of undeveloped land. Visitors can spend a week or two in retreat: practicing, learning, healing and growing.

“The land here is healing,” says founder Eve Cook. “It’s too good not to share with other people. Just looking at the mountain trees and the rainbows that show up takes you deeper into connection with yourself.”

The Center, in Sautee Nacoochee, Georgia, is host to a wide variety of programs that nurture personal growth and spiritual development—from yoga and meditation to nature therapy, the expressive arts, movement classes and sound healing. As of this writing, there are 12 yoga retreats scheduled at Elohee before year’s end.

Having survived her own health crisis, Cook wants to make sure that Elohee is accessible to everyone. “It was important for me to find ways to make going on retreats not exclusive to people with money. We are now a 501(c)3 organization and have grants, scholarships and fundraising opportunities in the works.”

## YOGA WITH HEART

*Deeper communion with the Divine*

[ElizabethYatesYoga.com/retreats](http://ElizabethYatesYoga.com/retreats)  
404-210-6800

According to owner Elizabeth Yates, a structural yoga therapist who has been teaching for more than 20 years, what lies at the heart of yoga are the practices that lead to a deeper communion with the Divine.

In Yoga with Heart retreats, Elizabeth combines philosophy, delving into the Yoga Sutras for inspiration and wisdom, with physical practices to lighten the body, breath practices to elevate prana and meditative practices to calm the mind. The blend helps participants move into what she describes as the “divine nature of their own heart.”

Yoga transformed Elizabeth’s life many years ago when she realized the pain in her body was caused by its response to a stressful life. She has earned multiple yoga-teacher certifications, including Yoga for Osteoporosis and Structural Yoga Therapist. She also leads workshops, including her Strong Bones for Graceful Living: Yoga for Osteoporosis.

Upcoming Yoga with Heart retreats include a Day Retreat on January 1, combining teachings of the Enneagram and yoga, and a full weekend retreat in June. Activities for her retreats include hikes, asanas, pranayama, yoga nidra, releasing the spine, vedic fire ceremony and free time.

## PEACHTREE YOGA RETREATS

*Launching the new year in the right direction*

PeachtreeYoga.com • 404-847-9642



One of the vistas at Elohee. (Photo: Elohee Center)

The Atlanta yoga studio Peachtree Yoga helps the city's yoga community start the year off right with its Not-Your-Usual Yoga Retreat, scheduled for December 29 to January 1. Open to singles and couples, this year's alcohol-free event will be held at the Dahlonega Spa Resort, in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Georgia, about an hour's drive from Atlanta.

According to Peachtree staff, the event will include yoga, meditation, rest, campfires, partner yoga, live music, soulful connection and fresh mountain air. Participants will learn an ancient meditation practice to take home, and will receive free, ongoing practice support for three months. The New Year's ceremony around a fire circle will help people release the burdens and issues of the past, and a Higher Self meditation will help guide the way forward.

"Some of the tremendous benefits of our yoga retreats have to do with their being curated yoga getaways where you can immerse yourself deeply in the experience," says Katz. "Getting to spend time with people in community and be with like-minded people who are also interested in expanding their practice is incredibly valuable."

She says that people often make lifelong bonds with other participants or find teachers they want to work with more closely in the future.

Southeast Yoga Retreat's upcoming offering—Open Sea, Open Sky, Open Heart—will venture to a resort that's on its own island in Belize. The week's schedule includes yoga twice a day, group snorkeling and plenty of free time.

The company is planning to expand beyond the Southeast with their first international retreat scheduled for 2019.



(Photo: Yoga by Helen)

## SOUTHEAST YOGA RETREATS

*Creating connections that last*

SEYogaRetreats.com  
ThatchCayeBelize.com/  
Yoga-Retreat-by-Melissa-and-Tra  
877-927-6466

Since 2013, Melissa Katz, E-RYT 500, and Nicole Jurovics have offered yoga retreats in the Southeast with the intention of providing great yoga experiences in some of the area's most beautiful locales. All retreats are led by Southeastern yoga teachers, and recent destinations included Amelia Island, Hilton Head, Jekyll Island, and the mountains of North Carolina and northern Georgia.

## YOGA BY HELEN

*Reconnect with your inner playfulness*

YogaByHelen.com • 404-520-0089

"Yoga should feel good and feel peaceful," says Helen Noviello, a retreat leader and the owner of Yoga By Helen, who has been teaching yoga for more than 30 years. "I believe it should be fun and playful to connect with your body. Of course, it's okay to press a little, but it should feel good. Otherwise, you're leading with your ego instead of your heart. But your heart is where your freedom lies."

The Atlanta resident leads customized and packaged yoga retreats several times a year at the Dahlonega Spa Resort in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Georgia. But Helen's claim to fame is her retreats abroad, which take yoga lovers to the island of Ischia in Italy and aboard the largest sailing vessel in the world, the Royal Clipper, or its brother vessel, the Star Flyer, for an unusual retreat experience.

Enjoyed by yoga practitioners of all skill levels, the retreats are "vacations and adventures rolled into one," says Noviello. "Yoga is special outdoors in nature, where you feel so close to creation and the earth. There's nothing like practicing in beautiful places and getting immersed in different cultures."

# Yoga in Atlanta

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To place an ad in this section, please inquire at ads@naAtlanta.com

## yoga events

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

**Pranakriya Teacher Training: Deepening the Asana Experience** – Sept 14-16. Led by Krissy Dopson, RYT 500, this is a 20-hr course toward YACEUs, or toward Pranakriya School of Yogic Healing Arts' 300-hr Professional Development Certification. \$425. Santosha Studio, 896 Davis Dr, Atlanta. 404-964-4858. atrevelino@gmail.com. Santosha-Studio.com. Santosha.as.me/Training.

### FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12

**Korsi Yoga 200-Hour Teacher Training** – Starts October 12, and then every 3rd weekend, Fri, Sat and Sun. Become certified to teach yoga. \$3,200 full program. 555 S Atlanta St, Roswell. 404-542-7458. Ahoo@KorsiYoga.com. KorsiYoga.com.

### SUNDAY

**Yoga at the Park** – Thru Oct 28. 7-8pm. Hosted by King of Pops and yoga teacher Rachele Knowles. Ascend to the top of the hill at the park to mingle with event attendees around 6:30pm. Then at 7pm, shift your mindset to the yoga practice, because that's when the class begins. Foundation / Old 4th Ward Skatepark, 766 Willoughby Way NE, Atlanta. Facebook.com/events/174338579868194.

### MONDAY

**Hatha Yoga** – 6-8pm. With Raj Mehta. Gentle stretching and health education. Each week Raj presents information about different herbs. Free. Sevananda Community Room, 467 Moreland Ave NE, Atlanta. 404-681-2831. Sevananda.coop.

### WEDNESDAY

**Yogive** – 12-1pm. A practice style yogahour class. 100% of the proceeds from this yogahour group practice go to support Cultivate Union. All levels; suitable for the fit beginner without major injuries. Tough Love Yoga, 1530 Dekalb Ave NE, Ste D, Atlanta. CultivateUnion.co/events.

### SATURDAY

**Sunrise Yoga Meditation** – 7-8am. Simple mantras, gentle asanas, pranayama and guided meditation. Unity North Atlanta, 4255 Sandy Plains Rd, Marietta. 678-819-9100. UnityNorth.org.

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