

Yoga Vacation in Macedonia

September 9-15, 2008

FAQ's (Frequently Asked Questions)

1. Why Yoga in Macedonia?

Macedonia is a small country in South-Eastern Europe (North of Greece) that abounds in natural beauty. It is a Mediterranean climate California-like setting that has yet to be heavily traveled. It offers pristine lakes, ecologically healthy mountains, stunning beaches and sunsets, a diversity of plant & animal life as well as cultural and historical sites dating back for millennia! Perhaps the most compelling quality is the country's policy of peace. Macedonians have never invaded another's land as long as they have been in existence. Macedonians have a reputation for being so friendly, and relaxed!

2. Where Ohrid Lake and what is it like?

Ohrid Lake is located in the South-Western part of Macedonia. The picturesque historical and cultural cities of Ohrid and Struga are located on the Lake. Ohrid and the surrounding area are the cradle of Slavic literacy and the home of the Fortress of Tsar Samuil, as well as numerous monasteries dating back to the age of the Old Church Slavonic Language, the first written Slavic language. Ohrid is also known for hosting international yoga seminars for decades.

3. What style of yoga is offered on this trip? Is it suitable for beginners?

Ema Stefanova and graduates of Ann Arbor Yoga and Meditation as well as Ema's Macedonian long time friends and fellow yoga teachers from the 70's are happy to be able to offer exclusively world renowned therapeutic and spiritual Satyananda style yoga. Some classes will be moderately challenging, while others will be mellower. Modifications will be offered for those wanting more or less physical and meditation challenge. The program is suitable for beginners and those who are more experienced. Registered yoga teachers i.e. RYT's of all paths will earn Continuing Education Credits accredited with the Yoga Alliance, teachers and yoga therapists in training will earn credits toward their certificate.

4. What are the facilitators' credentials?

Ema Stefanova, Yoga Master since 1979, Experienced Yoga Therapist and Registered Yoga School owner, E-RYT500, has been teaching yoga since 1979. She has been chosen to teach yoga personally by Satyananda Paramahansa, the founder of the IYFM (International Yoga Fellowship Movement). She has been personally trained by the guru and senior swamis (yoga masters) in the Satyananda Yoga Lineage. Ema is also the founder of the Macedonian Yoga Federation.

5. How would you describe the accommodations?

The accommodations are simple yet comfortable with single and double beds. They are very clean, and well maintained. We are planning to stay at Hotel Gorica, at Lake Ohrid just outside the city of Ohrid. Depending on when you register, you may get a room with a view of the Lake. Getting to know the friendly staff is a definite bonus to this special place.

6. If I want to stay longer, can that be arranged?

You may arrange additional nights, however booking early is recommended. Please make these arrangements on your own. September is a month when many seminars and symposia take place in Ohrid and still a swimming season most years.

7. Where will our program activities take place?

Programming will take place at the hotel where we will be staying, or in beautiful nature by the lake, walking distance from your room or on day trips (transportation provided).

8. How much free time will I have?

The schedule has been designed with free time built in on a daily basis. Everything on the schedule is optional.

9. What can I do with my free time?

Relax by the lake, read, journal, sleep; enjoy a massage or anything else you desire. Optional excursions will be easy to arrange on your own and, for those who are interested, we may do some together as a

group. To give you an idea of cost, at this time some options are: The Traditional Farmer's Market in Struga (Saturday): approx. \$15/hour, going places on the lake by boat: approx. \$30/person, specially Prepared for Our Group Traditional Lake Ohrid Dinner on the Lake (A boat Excursion): approx. \$100/person). Hiking and Shopping for Ohrid Pearl tours may also be available.

10. How would you describe the food?

Macedonian cuisine menu offers a variety of fresh, delicious choices including salads, soups, sandwiches, pasta, Ohrid trout, eel, etc. Whether you prefer vegetarian, fresh lake fish, meat, or desserts, there are a number of options on the menu. Bottled drinks & alcoholic beverages are at your own expense and discretion. Heavy drinking is not allowed. Breakfasts and dinners are included in the registration price.

11. Can I drink the water in Macedonia?

Tap water in Ohrid and everywhere in Macedonia is safe to drink and there will also be bottled water for purchase.

12. What type of weather should I expect?

The weather in Ohrid in September is very beautiful and pleasant, in the 70ties and 80ties, hotter during the day and cool in the evenings. One shouldn't expect rain (although one can never predict the weather!).

13. Do I require a VISA or passport to enter Macedonia?

For Canadian & US citizens, a passport valid for 6 months beyond your departure date is required. At this time, entry VISA is stamped at the port of entry upon arrival in Macedonia.

14. Are any vaccinations required for travel to Macedonia?

No vaccinations are mandatory at this time. If this is a concern for you, please check with your health care provider.

15. What is the average cost of flights to Macedonia?

Flight cost depends on the carrier, the routing, the number of stopovers and when the flight is booked. If you have some frequent flyer miles that have accumulated, you may consider offsetting part or all of the cost of the journey with your points.

16. What sort of flight arrangements should I make?

Once you have received confirmation by phone or email that there is space open in the retreat, please make your own travel arrangements. There are two international airports in Macedonia, Petrovec Skopje and Ohrid Airport. **Please book your flight to Skopje Airport.** If for any reason you prefer to fly into Ohrid airport, just let us know. Cost for transportation from and back to the airport and any additional nights at hotels before and after the official nights paid in your yoga vacation, will be on you.

Flying into Petrovec, Skopje: Please book a flight arriving no later than the early afternoon on Tuesday, September 9. We will then take cabs 2 1/2 to 3 hours to Ohrid. We will coordinate this transfer for you. Please check with Ema if you're flying from or via Detroit in the U.S. to see if you can book the same flight.

Flying into Ohrid Airport: You will need to arrange your own flights to Ohrid and transportation to our hotel. Please, arrange your flights to arrive into Ohrid by the afternoon of September 9,

Departing flights: Our retreat will finish on the morning of Monday, September 16. Arrange your returning flight from Petrovec Skopje in the afternoon or evening so there is enough time to drive to the airport. If you are leaving from Ohrid Airport, make sure there is enough time to fly from Ohrid to Petrovec, Skopje or your connecting or final destination.

17. Will everyone fly together?

Since there will be departures from various places around the country, and individuals have preferences about the airlines they use, each person will book his or her own flight. If you are traveling on your own and prefer to fly with another retreat participant, it is sometimes possible to connect people with one another so let us know if this is your desire.

18. How do I make contact with home?

Internet access is available (at your own expense) at the hotel and internet cafes in town. There are also pay telephones at the Main Post Office in Ohrid, Telephone connections to Macedonia are predictably good and affordable. Pre-paid calling cards bought in North America do not work in Macedonia.

What is the time difference between home & Macedonia?

The time difference is 6 hours (just as the most of the rest of Europe) from Eastern Standard Time. To check the time difference from your part of the world, check www.timezoneconverter.com Macedonia maybe listed as FYROM (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

19. What type of currency should I bring?

The denar is the local currency, and you can either bring denars, U.S. dollars, as they are easily exchangeable almost everywhere, Euros or any other hard currency for that matter. There is a 2% or higher charge for using traveler's cheques in Macedonia. Transactions with local businesses are best performed in cash. Credit cards are not widely accepted and transactions are subject to fees.

20. How much spending money is required?

If you wish to take optional day trips, buy gifts, have a massage or involve yourself in local activities, these are at your own expense. It is also entirely possible to have a beautiful time without purchasing these extras. Please check with your travel agent if airport departure tax is included in your airfare or not, and how much will you need to pay when you leave Macedonia if so. You will need money for meals that are not included in your package. Gratuities are not included. **We recommend bringing spending money or travelers' cheques with you rather than withdrawing money when you arrive, as the ATM's can be scarce and possibly unreliable.**

21. What should I pack?

Yoga mat and/or blanket, sun block, comfortable lightweight clothing suitable for movement, sunglasses, sunhat, water bottle, flashlight, hand towel, beach towel or sarong, bathing suit, camera, travel-alarm, journal & pen, and comfortable walking shoes/sandals are very important, a sweater or two, long pants as well as an umbrella or raincoat (just in case).

22. What is required to hold my space?

A non-refundable deposit of \$500 is required to reserve your spot. This is to be accompanied by the Retreat Registration form. The balance of the retreat cost is due by June 25, 2008. Please make all checks payable to Ema Stefanova or use any major credit card and PayPal to pay online at www.YogaAndMeditation.com .

With any further questions, do not hesitate to call us at (734)665-7801.

Speak slowly when leaving your name and number. Thank you.