

Rediscover Plant Wisdom while treating yourself to a simple yet exuberant life style



Treat yourself to a relaxing week in gorgeous Tuscany and reconnect with nature, discover the healing world of plants, practice yoga and enjoy a quiet and luxurious life style in a breath taking set up: a former XVII Century Monastery in a private forest with panoramic views to the Mediterranean sea and the ancient Etruscan coast.

This is a retreat about rediscovering plant wisdom; about connecting with nature and being aware of the gifts that are available to us. Marcus will share his esoteric perspective and experience, guiding you through a down to earth, hands on experience. We will combine ancestral knowledge, modern herbalism and new perceptions, to plant a complete understanding of how to work with herbal medicine. You will learn to prepare a wide range of remedies, to grow and wild-harvest your own herbs and to spiritually connect with plants. This is an opportunity to gain essential understanding of Healing and healthy living, while treating yourself to a simple but luxurious life style. With stunning landscapes, ancient architecture, peaceful forests and olive fields you are in nature in a beautiful, haven get-away. We will provide the most delicate hand-picked ingredients to create delicious home cooked meals and of course infamous Italian hospitality.

Intention

Nature feeds us, clothes us and shares everything with us. All we need has always been provided by nature. Over time we have forgotten this basic truth and instead learned to ignore her gifts and 'take what we please'. We ignore the medicines from herbs and trust more in those drugs we can manufacture instead. We don't have the same faith in medicinal plants as we once did not so long ago. This course intends to restore that faith. This is a humble sharing of one man's years of experience condensed into practical guidelines of what can be called Holistic Herbalism. This is herbalism made simple and accessible to everyone without the need of years of study and vast amounts of technical information. Humanity gets lost easily in complicated lifestyles and 'quick fixes'. "I want this course to inspire people not to step back into the past but to jump into a healthier future where we can take more responsibility for our own health and live harmoniously with

nature.”- Marcus.

Yoga and Meditation

In this course we include daily yoga and meditation exercises. Yoga and meditation prepare the body and mind for the day helping promote openness, flexibility and stamina. It is a practice that will clear the mind from unwelcome thoughts and purify the body from unwanted toxins. A daily practice alone will change the way you feel and increase the ever important connection with our bodies. Discover the benefits for yourselves with our yoga program, meditation exercises and medicinal teas.

Some of the topics covered in this course:

- Yoga
- Our Spiritual connection to plants and nature- Conscious meditation exercises to connect to plants individually and to enhance sensitivity and intuition.
- Ayurvedic herbal diagnosis- discovering personal doshas and understanding the tastes of plants and their medicinal properties from an ayurvedic viewpoint.
- Cultivation, propagation and conscious gardening practices- Four main propagation methods, understanding soils, composting, and the elemental effects on plants. esoteric practices that increase plant potency of personal remedies.
- Herbal harvesting, storing and drying- basic understandings of how to collect and keep plant medicine safe for future use.
- Making individual and generic herbal remedies- here we will prepare hands on remedies both for personal use and for generic purposes such as infusions, decoctions, tinctures, infused oils, salves and poultices. This is hands on practical work.
- An introduction to Flower essences and the psychological power of herbs- discovering personal flower essences and how to make a sun infusion.

Practical remedies and Herbal diagnosis

We look to the experts in life to help us with our specific problems, we get mechanics to fix our cars and in a similar way doctors to fix our bodies. We can always benefit from knowledgeable people but it doesn't serve us often to surrender our healing process to another person completely. It is empowering to realize the control we can have over our own health and the simple understandings that can enrich our healing experience and connection to the world around us. Through living in the 'third world' for so long I continually find myself having to 'fix' a variety of problems that I am "technically" not qualified to fix. This has helped me be adventurous and encouraged experimentation in ways I would not have made in the -so called- first world. It has led me to believe that we are all way more 'qualified' than we think we are especially when it comes to our own healing process.

We all learn in slightly different ways but it was only years ago when I began teaching this course that I saw the difference between telling someone what to do and doing it with them. It was only here that I figured out how enriching and important it is for people to make medicines 'from nature to the table'. After years of study on western herbalism and fighting to understand the best herbs for each person I bumped into the science of Ayurveda. Without needing to be an expert, but accompanied with modest self-analysis Ayurveda has become the simplest and best example for me of an holistic diagnosis.

Growing local and Sustainable Healing

In the western world it is now the norm for the supermarket and the health food stores to be filled with products that are imported from all over the world. This is pretty much taken for granted, and we don't often question the ethics of 'out-sourcing' our Sunday lunch. When we understand the

dynamics of how nature works and the esoteric connection we have to our environment, we also see the logic in going as local as possible when buying food and health products.

There is nothing more healing than the food and herbs that grow in your back garden or out of the crack in the pavement in front of your doorstep. This is one of Nature's realities and through recognizing this truth we open ourselves up to a world of abundance, just awaiting our discovery. This recognition not only saves time and money but is key to living sustainably on this planet.

Spiritual Herbalism and Holistic Healing

While there have always been pioneers in the field planting new seeds for our spiritual connection to nature and healing, our general western view of healing is still the practice of 'ridding ourselves of those annoying symptoms'. We try swapping a pharmaceutical pill with an herbal one and think that is all we need to do in order to 'Heal Naturally'. Let us expand our experience of herbal healing with ways we may never have imagined before. Let us introduce flower essences and explore the healing properties that herbs have to our minds and emotions as well as our bodies.

We experience healing more completely not when we find the right medicine but when we are in the right frame of mind. Plants, as well as their physical properties, have more subtle psychological influences which help us change our minds and moods. For this reason their healing is naturally more holistic.

The retreat price includes

- Daily Yoga and Meditation Sessions, that will take place either in the Yoga Shala or in different breath taking outdoor settings
- Daily Herbalism classes –one or two per day-, to take place in a range of settings, ranging from the Villas own Vegetable and Herb garden, to the surrounding forests, Olive Plantation... and in the kitchen!
- Opening and closing rituals, that will include a guided cacao ceremony
- 7 nights accommodation in an ancient monastery originally designed as a health retreat center for the monks in the XVII century
- 3 daily gourmet and fully home made meals, plus two daily snack and tea breaks
- Drinking water, herbal teas, coffee, local wine.
- Welcome package with a course content booklet(and some small Tuscan surprises –we cannot reveal it all!-???)
- All herbs and other materials for making remedies and a Personal Flower essence.

Price: 1600 Euros

SCHEDULE

We have designed this retreat avoiding routines in the name of making it fun, so each day will have its own schedule. Some days will also include free time to explore the surrounding areas or simply enjoy quiet time.

A sampler of one of the days would be

- 7:30 Morning yoga and meditation session
- 8:30 Breakfast
- 9:30 Herbalism Session -with a tea and snack break-
- 13:30 Lunch
- 14:30 Afternoon Herbalism Session –also with a tea and snack break-
- 20:30 Dinner

Sessions will start on arrival day at 2pm, hence leaving time for all participants to arrive, and will finish next Saturday at around noon, again allowing for travel time.

About Marcus Veysey

Marcus has been living and working in a meditation centre in Guatemala for over 20 years. He has been teaching yoga and guided meditation practices and has developed several courses on medicinal plants and holistic healing. His passion has always been to help people wake up to experience themselves and life in a more spiritual sense. He has been teaching about plant medicine for over 12 years and his courses have developed into a refreshingly new and complete introduction to the practical uses of healing plants. He feels that the world is in need of humanity reconnecting with nature and finding once again a balance and harmony that we have lost. "If this course, in a small way, can inspire people to find a more intimate relationship with the herbal kingdom, then my work is complete."

Some Testimonials

"In my job as a cookbook author and restaurateur I give a lot of myself when I work, and it is essential for me to fill up mind and spirit with new inspiration once in a while. I am so happy that I choose to join the Spiritual Herbalism course, it made a lot of the things I already do in my everyday life as a chef seem even more important. The combination of ancient wisdom, common sense and practical tips on how to treat plants (not just how to cook them!), was just perfect for me. Now I can't wait to start my own medicinal garden in Denmark."

- Mette H.

"...inspiring on so many levels." Angel B.

"I feel so blessed and so grateful for taking this course, such a different approach..." Mariana

"It was a really great week learning about getting more in connection with nature and plants... I feel I could spend much more time and learn so much more"- Lucie R.

"It was a deep learning, it changed my energy and point of view of how to perceive the plants and their healing purpose" Anabella M.

"I found Marcus to be a very clear, grounded, and inspiring teacher" Nikoya

Tuscany- Etruscan Coast

Divine Tuscany. Bucolic landscapes, evocative, almost fairy-like, history, art , fantastic food , excellent wines, hills, sea, not just a holiday, but a real travel experience...

CASOLARE ALBERELLI

The Casolare –or Villa- Alberelli was a monastery built in the XVII century by the Grand Duke Leopold of Tuscany to serve as a retreat home where monks could come to regain both physical and spiritual health by getting in touch with its wonderful natural surroundings. The property is truly an enchanted place, nested in the woods of Nibbiaia (Livorno, Tuscany) and suspended between the sea and the sky. Il Casolare sits on top of a hill overlooking the near by Mediterranean Sea, with a view to some of the islands of the Tuscan archipelago; Elba, Capraia and more in the distance Corsica. Its location allows you to enjoy the countryside air as well as the fresh ocean breeze. The grounds of the villa extend over a hill in a beautiful landscape of Mediterranean trees, vegetation and an array of wild animals.

Nearby places

- The sea 5 minutes
- Castiglioncello - 15 minutes
- Livorno - 30 minutes
- Pisa - 30 minutes
- Bolgheri -30 minutes
- Lucca - 40 minutes
- Volterra - 1 h
- Florence - 1h 30 minutes

Accommodation

Il Casolare Alberelli is a stone monastery repurposed into a house and Retreat Center nestled among majestic olive trees, centuries old cypress and a native Mediterranean private woodland.

The building was renovated by the Filucci family, respecting the original construction and maintaining its ancient glamour.

The property covers the whole Alberelli hill –named after the rock used in the construction of the premises- all the way to the stream of Chioma, and is home to a large variety of plants and trees typical of the Mediterranean. All of the surrounding hills have been declared natural protected area. Alberelli is ideal for those who wish to live an experience a complete immersion in the rhythms , flavors and colors of nature.

Highlights

- An 80m2 Yoga shala, with parquet flooring and a lovely view to the Mediterranean sea and to the native Mediterranean forest
- 2 hectares of olive groves with 440 trees
- 36 hectares of Forest groves where scented Mediterranean plants, cypress and mystical oakmoss are only some of the high lights.
- Fields where you can sit and read or enjoy the beautiful scenery.
- Herb and vegetable gardens

Food

Every meal you will enjoy at the retreat will be home cooked with the best hand-picked ingredients by Cristiana, the owner of the Villa herself. She is truly a wise woman in when it comes to both local cooking and traditional herbalism. You will be treated to delicious vegetarian meals by her, whose personal touches and charming presentation marries the outdoor table setting in what resembles a picture postcard of the Tuscan countryside.

You will find the colors and freshness of the seasonal fruits and vegetables (mostly the Casolare's own harvest), the knowledge of the pastors in the justly-renowned cheeses, hand made jams, wood oven bread made with antique grains and a glass of red wine in each meal, produced in the nearby Bolgheri area, worldwide famous for its fine wines.