



## **Practice Yoga ..... in Harmony with Nature by**

*Trudy Scott Prevost*

Practicing yoga can be a life transforming process - practicing yoga in nature deepens the experience physically, mentally and spiritually.

Recent studies are proving the wide range of benefits in practicing yoga and the physical, mental and spiritual benefits of exposure to nature. Practicing yoga immersed in nature allows us to experience a synthesis of the benefits of both!

Dominica is the perfect location for yoga in nature! A small, breathtakingly beautiful island in the West Indies; with cloud wrapped mountains, misty

towering rainforests, rushing clear rivers, natural hot springs, exotic birds of many types, brilliantly coloured tropical flowers; steaming volcanic fumaroles, a remote boiling lake, dramatic waterfalls, miles of hiking trails, the aqua blue greens of the Atlantic Ocean and the sparkling Caribbean Sea all packed within an island you can drive around within a day.

Dominica has an incredibly wide choice of natural environments to explore; I invite you to close your eyes; visit Dominica in your mind's eye and let's practice 'Yoga in Harmony with Nature' together.

By a cascading waterfall - we sit tall in cross legged position or cow pose on a colossal rock with a waterfall cascading down the cliff into a deep pool just in front of us. We lift the top of our head tall - elongating our neck and spine; we relax our shoulders back and down; our eyes gaze at the power of water seeking the quickest route to the sea; the roar of the waterfall dominates all other sound; the solidness of the rock beneath us grounds us; we are breathing deeply of the cool oxygenated misty air – we are practicing yoga in harmony with the waterfall.

On a beautiful Atlantic beach - we move deeply into down dog position with the sands beneath our hands and feet adjusting gently and the waves tickling our heels and toes. We reach our sitting bones to the warmth of the sun; the breezes gently caress our skin; we draw our head and upper body down between our arms so we can see the Atlantic Ocean rolling onto shore between our legs; we are breathing deeply the fresh scents of the seashore – we are practicing yoga in harmony with the ocean.

In the midst of one of the best examples of oceanic rainforest in the Caribbean – we stand with our feet wide apart surrounded by towering trees; allowing the soles of our feet to relax into the earth; we inhale to open our arms; we exhale to forward bend chest leading the way – moving from the hinge of the hips; we breath deeply of the oxygenated air while gazing at the intricate patterns of the forest floor; then we inhale to lift each arm one at a time up towards the sky; gazing at the healing greens of the canopy above; listening to the birds of the forest – we are practicing yoga in harmony with the rainforest.

Where a river meets the sea - we breath deeply of the fresh salty air while balancing in one legged plank pose; pressing all four points of our balance foot into the wet sands; we bring the rest of our body towards parallel to the ground; lengthening from the sole of the foot floating in the air to the crown of the head; we gaze down at a flowing sand mosaic created by two colours of sand twirling with the waters – we are practicing yoga in harmony with the sands.

On a beautiful moon lit night - we lie on our backs in cross legged supine position gazing at thousands of twinkling stars embedded in the blue, black, purple velvety background of the sky; we are bathed in the silvery rays of the moon; we breathe deeply focusing on the rhythmic expansion and contraction of the breath and the healing energy of the breath and the moonlight – we are practicing yoga in harmony with the moon.

*On a massive rock carved by the Caribs long ago - we practice a standing breath flow gazing at the sparkling waters of the Caribbean Sea; utilizing the ocean breath; we inhale both arms high; then exhale to bring the right elbow towards the right knee with the inner right ankle lifting up towards the chin; inhale both arms high and both feet down; exhale left elbow towards left knee; lifting left ankle towards chin to work inner thigh muscles; inhale both arms high and both feet down – we are practicing yoga in harmony with the Caribbean Sea.*

*In the cool morning air with the rays of the rising sun shooting out from behind the mountains in an arc - we guide our bodies through sun salutations on an open air balcony; the heat in our bodies increases in direct relationship to the length of time we practice our breath flow; our heart beats strongly; as the earth awakens - our bodies and minds awaken and prepare to embrace the day – we are practicing yoga in harmony with the sunrise.*

*Gazing at an inspiring sunset filled with reds, yellows, golds, oranges, corals - we build a vigorous dance like flow of movements in vinyasa style; we breathe deeply; inhaling and exhaling in symphony with the movements; as the power of the flow builds with each pose added the intensity of the sunset increases; with soft grass beneath our feet and historical buildings behind us; it is easy to relate to the timelessness of nature as the sun sets once again – we are practicing yoga in harmony with the sunset.*

Gently bring your awareness back to the moment. Open your eyes and take a big wake up like stretch. Thank you for practicing 'Yoga in Dominica .....Yoga in Harmony with Nature'!

Let Dominica be your Green Prescription for Health and Wellness – discover the essence of nature to soothe the soul; practice yoga to awaken the mind, body, breath connection; eat fresh nutritious local foods to fuel the body; breathe deeply of the oxygenated air; immerse yourself in nature and enjoy the health and wellness sites, services and products this Nature Isle has to offer.

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