

A Divine Destination

By Linda Wellbrock



Stefani Pappas in Pigeon Pose in Tulum, Mexico

Tired, burned out? You're not alone. Maybe you considered a vacation, but then decided not to bother, since you come home just as tired as when you left. Instead of crossing vacations off your list, maybe you need to consider planning the kind of vacation that really will leave you feeling relaxed and revitalized. Stefani Pappas, a seasoned yoga instructor, tells us about a hidden treasure in Tulum, Mexico where she organizes full service vacations and acts not only as your personal yoga teacher, but as a local expert who can guide you through the "must-sees" of the Riviera Maya.

A yoga trip to Tulum with Stefani is a perfect getaway for anyone who needs to recharge. Some people come alone, some with friends, some with their significant other. There are semi private groups of 4-6 people and an annual group of around 12. All are welcome, but it is not a trip for children. While previous yoga knowledge is

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welcomed, many people encounter it for the first time in this serene atmosphere, allowing them to reconnect with themselves. Stefani explains, “I want my visitors to bring back a higher sense of self-awareness and love and a renewed sense of adventure in life. I also hope they remember to take time in life to play like a child again and to feel more connected and loving toward themselves. I hope they remember what their vision is for their life and to start making decisions, however risky, to honor their inner truths.”

Terri Metz, a Merck employee, vacationed in Tulum with Stefani, and says, “Cancun is like spring break, Tulum is relaxation at its best. The vacation with Stefani made me shift gears, detach and let go of the stress. There are not a lot of distractions. I was able to totally rejuvenate, go back home and to work, to focus on the here and now and to really enjoy the moment. It was a fulfilling experience.”

The 7 night, 8 day vacation package does not include airfare, but includes accommodations, daily yoga, a massage, and transportation to and from the airport. You can specify to Stefani what type of villa you would like to stay in, ranging from rustic to regular hotel-like standards, and she will arrange your reservations. In addition, you will receive daily yoga classes on the beach or inside, and your choice of either meditation or belly dancing classes; one massage on the beach; a welcome party with a meal and an excursion to the Mayan town center. Stefani also will arrange any additional tours in advance or once you arrive, for example, swimming with the dolphins, ecological tours, pyramid/jungle tours and many other local excursions. There is a great night life that Stefani can direct you to. Restaurants are outside or on the beach, so they are all inviting, but Stefani can recommend some of her favorites. Basically, Stefani is the friend you wish you could visit on every vacation to take care of everything and to show you the best of the best.

Ever since Stefani vacationed in Tulum a few years back, she refers to this Caribbean area of Mexico as “the destination that chose her.” She immediately fell in love with Tulum and instinctively knew that this was a place that she had to share with her future yoga students who needed to get away. Shortly thereafter, Stefani bought property and built a small home called a palappa where she now resides for half of the year (and the other half she lives in New Jersey). She describes Tulum as a tropical yoga oasis with a strong Mayan influence where you can enjoy many miles of the classic deserted Caribbean white powder beaches and crystal clear ocean waters. There are no built-up hotels, just small villas that set a quiet, charming atmosphere that allows visitors to immediately shift gears and relax.

Among many special traits, Tulum boasts a biological reserve park called Si’an Ka’an, a World Heritage Site, with 1.5 million acres of preserved land; some still undiscovered territory. The park is wonderful for ecological tours, snorkeling, hiking, and diving. Si’an Ka’an means “Where the Sky is Born.” Tulum’s Mayan ruins are the most visited archaeological site in the Mexican Caribbean. It is believed that these ruins were at their peak in the years 900 to 1500 a.d.

Stefani touches the lives of others through yoga classes, teacher training programs, massage therapy, alternative therapies, publications and now her creation of the ultimate yoga trip to Tulum. She is a constant inspiration to her students as the teachings help them discover themselves. Stefani advises, “Take more risks for what

you really want in life. Being comfortable does not necessarily equal happiness. Change is usually not so comfortable—it shakes us, and wakes us up. Go for the whole experience in life and open up to more aspects of yourself. Life is a mystery! Don’t expect resolution.”

Stefani recommends that you book your trip in advance. The winter rooms fill up fast in Tulum since there are no big hotels, making it ideal to book before October to assure a spot.

To register or to get more information you can contact Stefani at 908-310-9666 or go to www.devalilayoga.com/mexicotrips.htm The website also links to Stefani’s yoga class schedule in Belle Meade, NJ. linda can be contacted at lwellbrock@gswoman.com

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