

A Recipe for Success – Veg Soul Retreats in Jamaica!!

There is now overwhelming scientific evidence to prove that a diet of raw/live foods is the very best way to maintain optimum health and there is probably no better place to introduce or enhance such a diet than the Caribbean. With its abundant fresh fruits and vegetables vitally charged with sunshine goodness, crisp clean air and pure water the islands are the perfect place to abandon addictions to junk food and start afresh with nature's bounty. Combine this potential with the five-star cuisine of world-renowned live-food master chef Aris La Tham and instantly we have a combination that is ready to inspire the imagination *and* tantalise the taste buds. If we further add to the mixture the wisdom, leadership and expertise of co-organisers Dr Sunyatta Amen (Naturopathic Physician & Sexual Tai Chi Instructor) and Khepere Anu (Yoga & Live Food Lifestyle) along with a healthy serving of other specialities provided by invited guest facilitators we end up with a dish so explosive that one bite may well change your life!

The Veg Soul Retreat is the final result of the combination of these delicious ingredients and one, which satisfies our desire to be full-filled on all levels - physically, mentally and spiritually. The latest retreat October 6th-12th 2004 hosted at The Runaway Bay Heart Hotel in glorious Jamaica was a phenomenal success and joyful experience for those involved. The 6-day adventure offered daily sunrise walks, ocean swims, yoga and Qi Gong followed by a variety of different workshops including 'Sunfire Foods' philosophy and practical demonstrations, Sexual Tai Chi, Belly Dancing, Holistic Massage, Eco-psychology and Herbal Medicine. Rejuvenating activities such as mineral springs baths, clay detox, flower forest explorations, and coconut water fasting were also a part of each action packed day and oh can I mention once again the food...

Even the most longstanding of live-food devotees could not fail to be impressed and inspired by the array of exciting and magical combinations presented daily by Dr La Tham who has a PhD in Food Science and is the founder of Sunfire Foods. For those who had only thought of raw food as a couple of slices of tomato and cucumber on the side of a main course the delectable dishes were completely mind blowing as day after day we were presented with food that made you wonder why you ever spent money on an expensive stove and question why no-one ever told you about this raw food secret before. After feasting on fruit and being seduced by salads the pinnacle of the production has to be Aris's aptly named Paradise pies which are very literally paradise perfected, made palatable and presented on a plate! To savour one of these creations will always be a true treat for the tongue but when eaten underneath a warm Jamaican sunset, a cool breeze on your skin, the gentle sound of the Caribbean night approaching and surrounded by the company of your fellow retreat companions it becomes a sensory heaven that really needs to be experienced to be believed!

Veg Soul is not your usual stoic health retreat where you are put through a gruelling schedule reminiscent of an army boot camp yet neither is it a hedonistic party with non-stop pampering and frivolity. Striking a truly balanced approach the retreat presents you with a daily itinerary filled with exciting options that flow in accordance with the easy going Caribbean way of life. Veg Soul has all the qualities that you would look for in a relaxing vacation such as fresh wholesome meals, fantastic scenery and wonderful location yet more than just sun, sea and sand it is an opportune space for personal development, spiritual growth, and community living advancement. The Veg Soul team have a wonderful wealth of knowledge concerning many aspects of the holistic health lifestyle and also very importantly a great sense of humour and love for imparting this information. Each of the participants also brought their own knowledge and stories to the event creating a valuable diversity for shared learning, upliftment and a whole lot of fun! The vibrant and supportive community atmosphere makes the retreat suitable for families with children, singles, couples and all those in between!

The only downside of the entire Veg Soul affair is that it has to come to an end. Even after addresses were swapped, prayers spoken and hugs exchanged there were still a few tears shed on departing from such a memorable and elevating experience. Thankfully however this is just the beginning and after-care support is available through the website www.vegsoul.com on which you can pose questions to the staff members, find recipes and local class schedules. You can also keep in touch with fellow attendees and share further information through the yahoo group <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/VegSoul/>. And of course there is always next time to look forward to...

There are three Veg Soul Retreats planned for 2005 on the following dates: Feb 16-21, July 13-18 and Nov 9-14. To find out more check the website www.vegsoul.com, email info@vegsoul.com or telephone 1.888.VEG.SOUL. As the retreats continue to evolve and expand you will be missing out if you don't put the dates for VEG Soul 2005 in your diary as a priority straight away, but be warned like any tasty dish you could find yourself craving more and having to come back for second helpings!

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