

ATENAS TODAY



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***ATENAS TODAY** is a free English language newsletter for the residents and potential residents of Atenas, Costa Rica. It contains informative articles and creative compositions submitted by our readers, and is distributed via email approximately once a month to over 350 email addresses. To get on the distribution list or to submit material, please send an email to Fred Macdonald at fredmac222@yahoo.com.*

Compositions from back issues are archived by category on the Atenas Chamber of Tourism and Commerce website, www.atenascatuca.com. Click on the English version and then [Atenas Today](#) on the business page.

Atenas Today Interviews Leah MacLauchlan

Sponsor of Yoga activities for our community

AT: I understand that you are sponsoring a local Yoga retreat in May. What are the details?

Leah: I have engaged a retreat center in Termales Del Bosque for 5 nights beginning on May 25, and arranged for a professional Yoga instructor to come from Canada to lead the sessions.

AT: What is the cost?

Leah: The cost is \$500 per person, including a double occupancy room, all meals, and two Yoga sessions per day.

AT: Where and what is Termales Del Bosque?

Leah: "Termales del bosque" means "hot springs in the woods", and that is a good description of this idealic place. It is located near Ciudad Quesada, about two hours from Atenas.

The hotel has a conference center, a restaurant and a number of rustic, but comfortable cabins. From the hotel you walk about 10 minutes on a path through a primal rain forest to a beautiful, clear stream. The stream is fed by volcanic activity and the water is about the temperature of a hot tub. There are a number of pools lined with smooth rocks where you can relax and enjoy the nature around you.

AT: What else is there to do near the hotel?

Leah: We can go on short hikes and horseback rides. Massages are available. The Yoga sessions will run from 9am to 11am and from 4pm to 6pm, so there will be time to enjoy the surroundings. You can go to the hot pools in the stream at night if you wish.

AT: What if you are not experienced at Yoga?

Leah: No problem. We expect to have people at all levels

AT: How much experience do you have?

Leah: I have been doing Yoga for about five years, and I teach classes informally. I learned from a friend and am not certified as an instructor.

AT: Who is going to be the instructor on this retreat?

Leah: Her name is Patricia Dewar. She has been trained at the Advanced Studies Program in the Yoga Room in Berkeley, California, and she is certified as a teacher in Critical Alignment Yoga Therapy by Gert van Leewan of Amsterdam, and as a Relax and Renew practitioner by Judith Lasater. She is a registered Yoga instructor with the Yoga Alliance.

AT: Does she specialize in a certain type of Yoga?

Leah: Her special interest is in different modalities that view the body as a vehicle of consciousness. This brings an added perspective an enjoyment as the body is moved deeply into the poses. She also has the ability to make the classes fun.

AT: **Is there a way someone could try Yoga to see if they liked it before signing up for a 5 day retreat?**

Leah: Certainly. I and a group of friends practice Yoga every weekday morning at 7:15am on a special outdoor platform that I have at my house in Atenas. Everyone is welcome. Just give me a call.

AT: **What is the big attraction of Yoga?**

Leah: That's quite a question. Many books have been written on that subject. For me it provides a sense of tranquility, while at the same time keeping my body limber and strong. It is hard to describe the pleasure that it gives me.

AT: **Is it also about weight control?**

Leah: Yes, because it builds muscle, which burns calories. It is amazing how fast people see results in how they feel about themselves after starting Yoga.

AT: **What got you started?**

Leah: I had been an avid runner, but I began to have hip problems. My friend introduced me to Yoga, and it has been a big part of my life ever since. Last year I went to a Yoga retreat in New Mexico and loved it. Now I want to share that experience with friends in Costa Rica.

AT: **Where did you live before coming to Costa Rica?**

Leah: Originally I am from Liverpool, England. When I was twenty one I decided to see the world, and I signed up to go to Canada as a nanny.

AT: **Where did you go in Canada?**

Leah: My first assignment was with a family in Nova Scotia. That's where I met my husband, Jim, who was working on the oil rigs. After that we lived in many places in Canada, in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia.

AT: **How did you end up in Costa Rica?**

Leah: We came on vacation in 1991, and like so many people do, we fell in love with this place. On that same trip we put a deposit on a bungalow in Manuel Antonio. Ten years later we moved here completely and built a house in Atenas.

AT: **How can people sign up for your Yoga retreat?**

Leah: They should call me at 446-3150 or 835-9853, or email me at nomosno@racsa.co.cr. I need a non-refundable 50% deposit of \$250. The deadline is May 1.

by Diane Holman

The *jalapa lila* continues to extend itself across the back fence, its purple flowers translucent in the light of the rising sun. An unseen man with a machete cuts brush beneath the coffee plants above my property. A light wind tosses tops of trees and teases with the faintest edge of chill.

This is my home, my paradise. Here on Calle Zacatal, in Barrio San Isidro de Atenas, Alajuela, Costa Rica, in the house of three goddesses, I reign as queen. Hera and Hecate are my consorts, each of us inhabiting the morning in our own ways.

And now the hens leave their roost across the road and pick their way up the hill to feed, seemingly indifferent to the scolding of the rooster who finally follows after them, strutting in full plumage. He is glorious; but it is, after all, the chickens who lay the eggs.

And so to my duties, for though I am queen, I am subject also. I pay homage to the sun-dappled terrain, I greet the new leaves of the *jocote* tree, I listen to the soughing and rustle of banana plants, I notice the flight of a hawk across the sky and the call of birds from tree to tree. I hallow my home as it hallows me. We are treasure on treasure, my home and I