

Waiting to exhale



RESTFUL VACATION At Shreyas

SHREYAS
NELAMANGALA, BANGALORE

USP: Yoga and rejuvenation

It's really the warmth and simplicity of the place and the people at Shreyas that makes for a restful vacation. Instant cleansing and rejuvenating yourself with a routine of yoga, chanting, wholesome food, massages, and the much-required quietude is not easy when you suddenly get off the highway of life.

But Shreyas makes it easy. The moment I step in, I'm asked about allergies, food preferences, medical condition, whether I'd like incense in my room, how familiar I am with yoga, etc. I'm then whisked off to a quiet nook on the 25-acre property where a walled, tent-like cottage with a verandah beckons. The bathroom opens out to a private garden — a delightful little alcove filled with plants and pebbles.

Soak in olive oil, the diffused aroma of scented candles and settle into a comforting Swedish massage. All scrubbed and ready, move on to the personalised yoga class where one discovers to one's chagrin how rigid and unbending one's urban body has become.

The next morning, I'm the early bird at the group yoga class and manage to do the Suryanamaskara taught with much patience, just about three times.

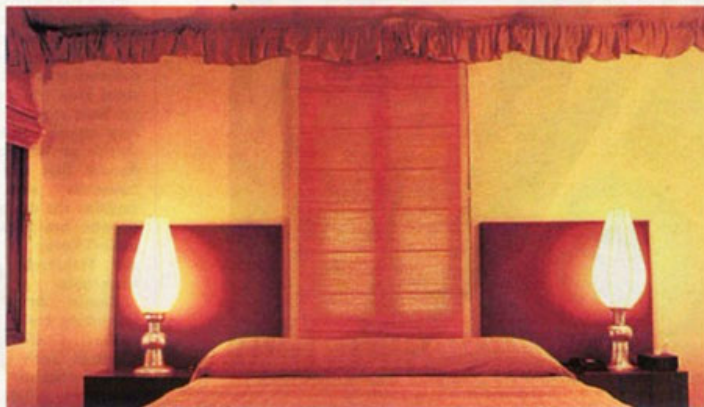
If you thought breathing was an easy, everyday thing, take the Pranayama class — learn how to use something as fundamental as your breath to benefit your body. All the teachers have immense patience and understand if you can't pull off the miracle of a one-leg stance with panache.

Food is a set menu affair, but there are enough choices to keep you full and happy. Most of it is wholegrain; don't miss the crunchy salads, made from fresh vegetables from the in-house organic farm. A stroll through the farm itself is a humbling lesson in where your food comes from. Never has ridge gourd and cucumber kindled so much interest! And you get to eat aromatic fennel (saunf) fresh off the plant!

Besides yoga and organic food, there are enough worldly pastimes — a wonderful collection of books and an enviable collection of movies to watch on the home theatre.

Shreyas's strength lies in the details — if you step into the dining hall or meditation hall, your shoes are turned around and ready for you to wear when you step out. They let you enjoy in solitude the starlit sky at the candle-lit dinner table decorated with huge hibiscus, but make an appearance at the right time to refill your plate. And, leave a little soul-changing story on your cot for you to read before bedtime.

BHUMIKA K.
(The writer was at Shreyas at the invitation of the resort.)



How to get there

Shreyas Retreat is at Santoshima Farm, Gollahalli Gate, Nelamangala.

Things to do

Visit the organic farm.
Indulge in a massage (Balinese, Swedish, Thai or Ayurvedic), sweat out all the fat in the sauna, and pamper yourself with a manicure/pedicure.
Laze around in the outdoor Jacuzzi or pool.
Take group or private yoga classes — they offer Ashtanga and Hatha Yoga.
Walk or jog on the tracks spread across the 25-acre resort.
Take a vegetarian cooking class.
Play cricket — they have nets with a bowling machine.

Tariff

Poolside/Garden cottage Rs. 11,000 (single), Rs. 13,000 double, and Rs. 24,000 for a three-bedroom cottage (excluding taxes, for Indian nationals).

The rate includes a wellness consultation on arrival, all meals, twice-a-day group yoga classes, once-a-day meditation class, and use of all recreational facilities, including the pool and home theatre. For details, look up www.shreyasretreat.com. Call 080-27737102/ 99161-10422 for reservations.