



SHREYAS RETREAT

Books organised around a given theme lead one to question the full meaning and essence of that theme. Almost inevitably, that will change over time depending on changing cultural attitudes, technological innovations and societies' changing expectations – amongst other factors. In this case, the meaning of the word 'Indulgence' has changed very subtly but nonetheless discernibly over the years.

Where, originally (and still today, technically), to indulge means 'allow oneself to take pleasure in'; it now seems that the emphasis has shifted somewhat from a personal agreement to one that puts the responsibility on others' shoulders. The feeling nowadays is almost that one somehow *deserves* to be indulged, that pampering is an expectation that should be placed at the doorstep of others, and that we as individuals either do not have the means to indulge ourselves or are simply too jaded to do so.



At Shreyas Retreat in Bangalore, India, however, balance has been restored. Yes, this is a 5 star relaxation retreat but, noticeably, the focus here is very different. The Shreyas way of thinking is shaped by the primary tenet of so many Indian philosophies: that introspection, self-discovery and unfettered self-determination hold the key to a higher quality of life. It is with that in mind that this luxury retreat operates more like an ashram than a getaway resort. The aim is to offer guests a platform for self-discovery and fulfilment through a holistic approach to balanced living and tranquility.

The idea is put firmly into practice at Shreyas with a routine of daily yoga, meditation sessions, chanting classes, a strict vegetarian and no-alcohol policy and community service. The benefit of this approach is to allow guests true indulgence, in the original sense of the word. The ability to take time away from the stresses of our everyday lives and truly take pleasure is fulfilled in Shreyas' idyllic setting in the midst of 35 acres of stunning greenland.

Every aspect of the resort is dedicated to this purpose:

- Yoga Sessions** - to rejuvenate and cleanse the body.
- Meditation sessions and other yogic practices** - to calm the mind.
- Spa treatments (Ayurvedic and others)** - to rejuvenate the body and remove toxins.
- Nourishing organic vegetarian food** - to detoxify

and heal the body.
An environment and accommodations which allow guests to benefit from the positive energy of nature.
Community service to experience the joy of giving. Discussions on yoga philosophy and scriptures - to stimulate the mind.

Yoga at Shreyas is, as you might expect, about much more than the traditional physical postures. The idea here is to catalyse one's thinking/living philosophy through harmonization with the timeless wisdom enshrined within certain aspects of the Indian philosophical tradition. Apart from the Yogasana classes, guests can participate in sessions on Pranayama (understanding and regulating one's breath), Pratyahara (withdrawal / internalization of sensory inputs), Dhyana (concentration), Dhyana (meditation) practices drawn from the Patanjali Yoga Sutra. Ashtanga and Hatha Yoga are practised at Shreyas, and sessions are customised for guests to suit their level of experience, as well as any physical ailments they may have.

Another elegant twist in the tale of Shreyas Retreat is its corresponding emphasis on providing guests with a totally luxurious setting. For the holistic approach to work, the ashram activities and philosophies for guests are maintained in combination with an utterly relaxing environment. Where a traditional 5 star retreat might offer just the latter, or an ashram would conversely offer just the former, Shreyas insists that the two operating together, in tandem, is what is required for total

indulgence. It is an entrancing proposal: the perfect setting to relax and unwind and the perfect regimen to fully focus on and to take pleasure in what is truly important to you as an individual.

Perhaps the defining policy at Shreyas can be encapsulated in the ancient Sanskrit verse 'Atithi devo bhava', 'the guest is [perceived as] God'. The outstanding level of personal service and the attention to detail for guests during their stay here is just a part of that notion, however. The greater part, one might argue, is the fact that the Shreyas Retreat offers guests the ultimate power to indulge themselves. By providing both the setting for a totally relaxing experience and the tools for their guests to truly understand and appreciate the positive aspects of their lives, Shreyas goes beyond the contemporary reinterpretation of indulgence. By transcending luxury to offer balance, they ensure that an escape to this enchanting environment can be enjoyed by all.

Santoshima Farm, Gollahalli Gate, Nelamangala, Bangalore 562123, India
Telephone: +91 99 16 110422
E-mail: reservations@shreyasretreat.com