

Anam Cara

HEALING RETREATS



AYAHUASCA RETREAT
PREPARATION GUIDE

We are honored you'll be joining us for this beautiful and transformative medicine experience in the incredible Guanacaste Peninsula of Costa Rica!



Each guest will partake in a 30-day preparation program before the retreat. This program is designed to help support you in properly preparing your mind and body to partake in powerful ceremonies with Ayahuasca. In the weeks or months before your retreat begins, it is common that emotional processes, intense dreams, and heightened sensitivities can arise as the medicine brings things to the surface for us to witness and feel.

In the lead-up to the retreat, we will host a series of supportive one-on-one and small group therapeutic sessions, intention-setting workshops, sharing circles, and a nervous-system masterclass to help you expand your resources, attune more deeply with your body, and begin building safety and connection with your facilitators.

The wisdom of Ayahuasca can create profound transformations in our lives however it is not a magic pill or quick-fix. To experience lasting growth and true evolution in relationship to this plant, you will be asked to show up with devotion to the preparations and with presence, reverence, and consistent effort to meet this sacred work. We look forward to diving into this beautiful work with each of you and supporting you at each stage of this journey.

After reading, if you have any questions, please email us at Heal@AnamCaraHealingRetreats.com



TRAVEL

- Our beautiful retreat center is located on the Guanacaste Peninsula in Costa Rica, approximately a 20-minute drive from the well-known Guiones area of Nosara.
- To get to Nosara, international flights go to either Liberia Airport (LIR) or the airport in San Jose (SJO), the country's capital city.
- If you fly to Liberia Airport, you must arrange ground transportation from the airport to Nosara town; it is a 2-3 hour drive (depending on the road conditions which can be a little rough). There are private taxis as well as shared shuttle options you can find online or right in the airport in Liberia. Prices range between \$60 and \$250 USD, depending on the type of service you choose.
- We find traveling to San Jose to be much easier since you fly right into SJO airport and then connect a short domestic flight which brings you right to Nosara. Sansa Airlines is the only airline for domestic flights and you'll have to purchase the flight directly on their website (www.flysansa.com). Their flights do not show up on travel agency websites or Google flights, so book directly on their webpage.
- Please note that to enter Costa Rica, you will need a valid passport that does not expire for at least six months. They will not let you board your flight if your expiration date is within six months.
- All non-resident travelers must possess a return ticket out of Costa Rica in order to enter. Travelers coming from certain countries will also need to possess a Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate to enter Costa Rica (this does not include US travelers) but be sure to check their regulations online.
- Please arrive in Costa Rica 1-2 days before the retreat begins to give yourself at least one day to rest and acclimate before a week of intense medicine work. This is extremely helpful to meet the ceremonies with the energy you'll need.
- Costa Rica is a very safe tourist destination, full of stunning beaches, great surf, wildlife, and great restaurants and hotel options for all budgets.
- You will need to arrive at the retreat venue by taxi in the afternoon on the first day of the retreat. It is a short 20-minute drive to our beautiful retreat venue from the Guiones area of Nosara. Your hotel or Airbnb will be able to assist you with taxi services in Nosara, and it should only cost around \$30 to arrive.



HEALTH

It is important for you to know that when working with Ayahuasca, there are many very dangerous, or possibly even fatal interactions between the medicine and other pharmaceutical medications, health conditions, and psychedelics. **Your safety is our absolute number one priority.** Upon reserving your space, you will fill out a health history and medication form to be reviewed by our medical team to ensure this medicine is a safe fit for you. If you have any questions about a past medication or condition, please reach out to us so we can discuss and get detailed information from you. The more you share with us, the better we can support you and ensure your safety during the retreat.

It is of the **utmost importance** that you share **all** of your past and current medication use, health history, and significant family history with us. We ask you to be as thorough as possible on the form. If you forget any details, you may email them to us afterward.

- Failure to disclose medications or health information can be extremely dangerous and could also disqualify you from being a participant since having trust and transparency with us is imperative to this work. We appreciate your full honesty so we can keep everyone safe and focused on profound healing.
- If you've ever had a heart condition, seizure, major surgery, or any mental health diagnosis (even if you do not agree with the diagnosis), please discuss the situation with us in detail. If for any reason we decide that working with Ayahuasca is not safe for you, we will refund your deposit to you in full (as long as the information was provided to us at the time of registration and not later on).
- All vitamins and supplements (even if naturally derived) should be discontinued for 2 weeks before your retreat to minimize uncomfortable side effects in the ceremony and ensure your connection to the medicine. Taking vitamins or supplements beforehand can lead to increased nausea and physical discomfort. If any of your vitamins serve a significant role in your health, please discuss with us what they are and we can see if it is possible for you to continue them safely up until the retreat time.
- Over-the-counter pain medications, NSAIDS (ibuprofen, Tylenol, Advil), cold and cough medications, OTC sleep aids, and Dramamine, cannot be taken within 2 weeks of the retreat.



SAFETY

- Prescription medications vary greatly but will usually be required to be discontinued between 4-8 weeks before the retreat. We will review your prescriptions and work with you and your medical doctor to ensure collaborative care if you need to wean off or discontinue your medications.
- Use of any marijuana products (including CBD) **must** be stopped for 30 days before the retreat begins. Cannabis use does not mix well with Ayahuasca and can make it very difficult to connect with the medicine or have possible negative side effects for the entire group if brought into the space. We ask all of you to please adhere to this minimum 30-day requirement. If you feel it may be difficult for you or have any resistance to stopping marijuana usage, we are here to fully support you and offer alternatives to sleep or pain aids.
- Recreational drugs and other psychedelics such as mushrooms, MDMA, LSD, or other plant medicines (Bufo, Kambo, DMT,) can be extremely dangerous to mix with Ayahuasca. Please make sure you are completely clean from any drugs or other psychedelics for 30 days before and after the retreat.
- For 30 days before and after your retreat, the Shipibo maestros ask that you do not participate in any other medicine ceremonies or energetic/shamanic journeys. The maestros you'll be working with have developed extreme sensitivity to energetics and to their medicine which allows them to do profound work on us in the ceremonies. We want to honor their devotion and their work by not diluting or mixing this experience with another healer or lineage.
- Alcohol use **must** be stopped for 2 weeks before your retreat. If you have any slip-ups, please simply let us know so we can adjust your dose if necessary.
- We strongly advise against the use of any Botox, filler, or cosmetic injectables for 2 full months before your retreat begins as these can make the blood toxic and difficult for the healers to do their work on you.
- Please let us know on your intake form about any previous experience you've had with psychedelics or other plant medicines so we can best support you.



DIETA

We will all be following a 'dieta', or diet, in alignment with Ayahuasca and the Shipibo healers we will be working with. The dieta is an **incredibly important** part of working with Ayahuasca and can be a powerful learning experience as we begin to cleanse and let go of foods, substances, and behaviors that alter our authentic experience and body's natural rhythm. Working with Ayahuasca is, in many ways, a detox or cleansing of the physical, emotional, and spiritual body, helping us to purge densities, blockages, traumas, fears, toxins, or anything that is creating dissonance in our lives. Through cleansing and letting go, we may reach states of deep alignment and access the creativity, inspiration, focus, safety, clarity, deep love, and authentic expression that naturally resides within each of us.

The Shipibo Maestros we have the honor of working with on your retreat go through many years, or often decades, of rigorous isolation and elimination diets, completely secluded in nature where they withhold from any and all technology, sex, salt, and nearly all foods except rice or plantains, and submerge themselves in nature for weeks to months at a time. This process of rigid elimination and isolation helps them develop incredibly deep levels of sensitivity so they may hear, learn, connect, and gain healing wisdom from the Amazonian healing plants. By developing this sensitive attunement with their own body and with nature, their sacrifice allows for their powerful healing gifts to develop. It is an incredibly difficult process of weakening their physical body in order to strengthen their spirit and acquire profound shamanic healing tools.

It is important that we cleanse ourselves before the retreat in order to experience Ayahuasca but also to avoid bringing energies into the ceremony space that could be harmful to the healers or the rest of the group. Showing up to the dieta with integrity is an energetically important way to show the healers and the spirit of Ayahuasca that you have done your part, are ready to receive deep healing and respect this sacred medicine.

For some, the dieta may be quite easy and for others, it may begin to stir up emotions, sensations, addictions, or parts within us that are greatly challenged by letting go of foods, behaviors, or even relationships that suppress, stimulate, or soothe us. We are here to support you during this shift and will help guide you in using any challenges that arise as useful insights into what is calling for your loving attention. The more we can cleanse ourselves before the retreat begins, the deeper the medicine can work within us and the less physical discomfort we'll experience in the ceremonies.

A month before your retreat begins, we highly recommend shifting to cleaner, healthier whole foods, eliminating processed foods, and being mindful of who and what activities you engage with as your energy will become more sensitive the closer you get to the retreat date.



AVOID FOR 1 MONTH PRIOR

- PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS
- ANY OTHER MEDICINES, PSYCHEDELICS, OR RECREATIONAL DRUGS
- -MARIJUANA OR CBD PRODUCTS

AVOID FOR 2 WEEKS PRIOR

- **ALCOHOL (VERY IMPORTANT!)**
- **PORK (VERY IMPORTANT!)**
- **SEX/SEXUAL ACTIVITY WITH OTHERS OR WITH SELF, INCLUDING MASTURBATION (VERY IMPORTANT!)**
- RED MEAT
- NO PROCESSED FOODS (FROZEN FOODS, PRE-PACKAGED FOODS, FAST FOOD)
- LIMIT FOODS HIGH IN SALT OR WITH PROCESSED SODIUM (SEASONING YOUR FOOD WITH SEA SALT IS OKAY, AVOID VERY SALTY FOODS LIKE PROCESSED CHIPS, SNACKS, OR FROZEN FOODS)
- LIMIT FOODS WITH PROCESSED SUGAR (FRESH FRUITS AND HONEY IS OKAY, JUST NO PROCESSED SUGARS), NO CANDY, COOKIES, DESSERTS, ICE CREAM
- DEEP-FRIED FOODS/GREASY FOODS
- SPICY FOOD AND HOT SAUCE

AVOID FOR 1 WEEK PRIOR

- ALL CAFFEINE (BOTH COFFEE AND CAFFEINATED TEA) MUST BE ELIMINATED FOR AT LEAST 1 WEEK BEFORE YOU ARRIVE OR YOU MAY EXPERIENCE VERY PAINFUL HEADACHES
- ALL PROCESSED, WHITE, OR CANE, SUGAR (WHOLE, FRESH FRUITS ARE OKAY, HONEY IS OKAY)
- ANY PICKLED FOODS
- FERMENTED FOODS (KOMBUCHA, SAUERKRAUT, KIMCHI, MISO)
- OVERLY RIPE FRUITS THAT HAVE TURNED BROWN
- ALL DAIRY (MILK, CHEESE, BUTTER, YOGURT, ICE CREAM)
- ICED DRINKS (COOL IS OKAY, BUT AVOID VERY COLD OR ICED BEVERAGES)

2-3 DAYS BEFORE YOUR RETREAT, PLEASE REMOVE ALL ADDED SALT FROM YOUR DIET (AS BEST YOU CAN)



WHAT YOU CAN HAVE....

- HERBAL TEA
- HERBAL MUSHROOM OR DANDELION COFFEE SUBSTITUTE
- FRESH JUICES (LOW IN SUGAR)
- SMOOTHIES (LOW ON ICE)
- CHICKEN, TURKEY, EGGS
- FISH, SHRIMP, AND SEAFOOD
- GRAINS: RICE, QUINOA, CORN, WHEAT, BULGAR, COUSCOUS, BUCKWHEAT
- ALL VEGETABLES AND FRUITS
- POTATOES, SWEET POTATOES
- NON-DAIRY YOGURT (SUGAR-FREE)
- SUGAR-FREE NUT MILK, OAT MILK, COCONUT MILK
- COOK WITH COCONUT OIL, AVOCADO OIL, GHEE, AND OLIVE OIL
- DATES AND HONEY (IN MODERATION),
- SEA SALT (UP UNTIL 2 DAYS BEFORE)
- HEALTHY SNACKS SUCH AS HUMMUS, GUACAMOLE, NON-DAIRY DIPS, CARROT/CELERY STICKS, LOW-SODIUM TURKEY JERKY, RX BARS, LARA BARS, SEED CRACKERS, NUT CRACKERS, SUGAR-FREE GRANOLA, LOW-SODIUM TORTILLA CHIPS, BAKED CRACKERS, KALE CHIPS, DEHYDRATED FRUITS (SUGAR-FREE), CHIA PUDDING,
- DARK CHOCOLATE (80% OR MORE), CACAO
- SUPERFOODS LIKE CACAO, MACA, SPIRULINA, GREEN POWDER, TURMERIC/GINGER, BEE POLLEN, CACAO NIBS, CHLORELLA
- ALL NUTS AND SEEDS (LOW SODIUM OR UNSALTED)
- HOMEMADE SAUCES, DRESSINGS, AND VINAIGRETTES
- LOW-SODIUM ELECTROLYTES OR TRACE MINERALS FOR TRAVEL TO COSTA RICA

IF YOU NEED SOME RECIPE OR GROCERY-SHOPPING SUPPORT, FEEL FREE TO REACH OUT TO US



PACKING

Your retreat space is nestled in the beautiful Guanacaste Peninsula in Costa Rica. During the dry season, which spans from mid-December to April, the weather is typically sunny and clear, and very hot. The rainy season, which extends from May to November, is beautifully green, lush, and tropical. Even though it rains more, Costa Rica is beautiful during this time. Additionally, there aren't as many tourists. Rainfall often occurs in the afternoon, but the mornings are usually sunny.



- Hiking boots or good athletic shoes for trekking and hiking, and a pair of sandals.
- Be sure to bring at least one hat or headscarf. You will want it throughout the week, but it is necessary after your last ceremony to protect your crown for three days.
- A reliable small handheld flashlight or headlamp that has both a red light and white light setting (the red flashlight is necessary for the ceremony).
- Reusable water bottle for ceremonies.
- Bathing suit for the sweat lodge, plant baths, and swimming.
- Sunscreen and sunglasses and mosquito repellent.
- We recommend bringing your own toiletries since we will not be going into town during the retreat.
- A notebook or journal for integration work.
- Rain jacket, especially if you are coming in the rainy season.
- Long sleeves, light sweaters, and socks for the nighttime ceremonies. You will want layers, as sometimes the medicine can make you feel cold.
- Lightweight pants and long sleeves to protect yourself from mosquitoes, and shorts for the daytime. We are in the tropics!
- Any instrument you can play and any totems, offerings, or crystals for the altar.
- Your remaining balance in cash (USD).
- If you want to donate to the retreat, bring a box of your favorite herbal tea to share.

