

Anam Cara

HEALING RETREATS



Nosara, Costa Rica

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 for powerful ceremonies with Shipibo Ayahuasca. Please read this document thoroughly and take the dieta seriously, it will play a large role in how your ceremonies unfold. In the weeks or months before your retreat begins, it's 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. We are here for you if things get intense or bumpy.

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, and sharing circles to help you expand your resources, attune more deeply with your body, and begin building safety and connection with your facilitators and group members.

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 preparation and dieta that is necessary to have a clean and safe connection with the medicine. We look forward to diving into this beautiful work with each of you and supporting you every stage of the journey.



TRAVEL

- Our beautiful retreat center is located on the Guanacaste Peninsula in Costa Rica, approximately a 20-minute drive from the popular Guiones area of Nosara.
- International flights go to either Liberia Airport (LIR) or the capital, San Jose (SJO).
- If you fly to Liberia, you'll arrange ground transportation from the airport to Nosara town, a 2-3 hour drive (depending on the road conditions/season). 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 (private or shared). Your hotel or Airbnb in Nosara can arrange this transport for you.
- Traveling to San Jose Airport may be easier for most. If you fly to SJO, you can then connect on an easy 30-minute domestic flight which brings you right into Nosara.
 - Sansa Airlines is the only airline for domestic flights and you'll have to purchase directly on their website (www.flysansa.com). Their flights do not show up on travel agency websites or Google flights. Give yourself 1.5 - 2 hours to connect and go through customs before your domestic flight.
- You'll need a valid passport that doesn't expire for at least 6 months to enter Costa Rica. They will not let you board your flight if your expiration date is within 6 months.
- All non-resident travelers must possess a return ticket out of Costa Rica in order to enter.
 - Travelers coming from certain countries (NOT the US) will also need to possess a Yellow Fever Vaccination Certificate to enter, check online for regulations.
- 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.
- We recommend staying close to Guiones Beach or Playa Pelada, there are lots of great boutique hotels and Airbnbs along the beach strip which will be walkable to restaurants, yoga, spas, and the beautiful healing community of Nosara.
- 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'll need to arrive at the retreat venue around 3pm on day 1 of the retreat. It's a short 20-minute drive to our beautiful venue from Guiones Beach. Your hotel or Airbnb will be able to assist you with taxi services in Nosara, and it should only cost around \$20-30 USD.



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.

It is of the utmost importance that you share all of your past and current medication use, health history, and significant family medical history in detail.

- Failure to disclose medications or health information can be extremely dangerous and could disqualify you from participating. Having trust and transparency with us is imperative to this work. We appreciate your full honesty so we can keep everyone safe!
- 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.
- 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. Please let us know about any prescriptions ASAP.
- 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, please let us know.
- 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. (Reiki, Energy work, Akashic records, past life journeys, etc).
- 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.



DIETA

We will all be following a Shipibo 'dieta' (diet) in alignment with Ayahuasca and the Shipibo healers we'll 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 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 go through many years, or often decades, of rigorous isolation and elimination diets, completely secluded in nature where they withhold from all technology, sex, salt, stimulation, and nearly all foods except rice or plantains, and submerge themselves in nature for 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 to strengthen their spirit and acquire profound shamanic healing tools.

We must cleanse ourselves before the retreat 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. If you do this, the benefits will be profound!

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 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 (may be longer than 1 month)
- 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, just avoid very salty foods like processed chips, snacks)
- 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
- Cease all vitamins, supplements, and protein powders

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 DAYS BEFORE

- Please remove all ADDED salt from your diet (as best you can)

WHAT YOU CAN HAVE

- Herbal tea, Herbal mushroom tea/coffee, dandelion/chicory coffee substitute
- fresh juices (low in sugar)
- smoothies (no ice for 1 week before)
- poultry: chicken, turkey, eggs
- seafood: fish, shrimp, shellfish
- grains: rice, quinoa, corn, wheat, bulgar, couscous, buckwheat
- All vegetables and fruits
- Potatoes, sweet potatoes
- Non-dairy yogurt (sugar-free, check ingredients for processed chemicals)
- Sugar-free nut milk, oat milk, coconut milk
- Cook with cold-pressed virgin coconut oil, olive oil, and ghee
- Dates and honey as sweeteners
- Sea salt
- Healthy snacks: hummus, guacamole, non-dairy dips, carrot/celery sticks, low-sodium turkey jerky, RX Bars, Lara Bars, seed crackers, but crackers, sugar-free granola, low-sodium tortilla chips, baked chips/crackers/veggie chips, kale chips, chia pudding with nut milk, sugar-free dried fruits
- Dark chocolate (80% or more), raw cacao
- Superfoods like cacao, spirulina, greens powder, turmeric, ginger, bee pollen, cacao nibs, chlorella
- nuts and seeds
- Homemade sauces, dressings, salsas
- Low-sodium electrolytes and trace minerals for travel



PACKING

Your retreat space is nestled in the beautiful Guanacaste Peninsula in Costa Rica. During the dry season, which spans from mid-December to early April, the weather is typically sunny, clear, and very hot. The rainy season, which extends from May to November, is beautifully green, lush, rainy, and tropical. Even though it rains more, Costa Rica is beautiful during this time.

- 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 from the sun for three days. (please don't forget this)
- 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 plant baths, and swimming.
- Sunscreen, sunglasses, and (NATURAL) mosquito repellent.
- We recommend bringing your own toiletries since we will not be going into town during the retreat.
- Sandals
- Eye mask for breathwork and sleeping in (ceremonies can go late)
- Loose, flowy comfortable clothes for ceremony
- A box of your favorite caffeine-free herbal tea (bags or looseleaf) to share
- A notebook or journal for integration
- Rain jacket, 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
- Any totems, keepsakes, offerings, or crystals for the altar
- Your remaining balance in cash (USD).

