



## COSTA RICA BOUND

A story of self discovery, pushing limits and changing course all the way to Central America.

Daydreaming was always a big thing for me. I could think of so many ways to live my life yet I didn't know how to change course from what I had already started. One cold and rainy day in Ottawa, I asked myself why was I still living here? Why was I working at a job that didn't fulfill me and why was I paying for things I didn't even want? I had grown up in this very neighbourhood, followed the path I had designed for myself which included acquiring a high level education, living in a comfortable home and travelling as much as I could, when my very limited vacation days would allow it. Nothing seemed to quiet my deep desire to escape and explore the world around me.

A few years later, I found myself working in Toronto in an extremely stressful environment and would come home at night tired, defeated and at times even crying. Something wasn't right and I had to change things up, but how? Intention, that's how. I started to envision a life

without borders, no alarm clock waking me up, no commuting to work and spending twelve glorious hours of my day doing something that didn't bring joy to my life. That's when things dramatically changed. Costa Rica had always been on my travel radar but soon it would become the place I would call home. I was now waking up to the sound of howler monkeys in the distance, colourful scarlet macaws flying overhead and even pumas in my backyard. My 9 to 5 had morphed into a life of happiness and adventure.

I thought to myself, if I am feeling confused and trapped by my life choices, certainly others do to? That's when a great idea came to mind and six months later I was flying to Costa Rica with a group of adventurous souls to the lush rainforest of Costa Rica. With the help of an inspiring friend, I decided to film a documentary pilot about overworked urbanites needing to step out of their everyday lives to reconnect with

themselves and the world around them. Together we climbed waterfalls, hiked verdant trails teeming with exotic wildlife and disconnected from everything except for the empowering nature around us. It became the type of trip that completely replenished and energized your mind, body and soul. Once finished, I knew there would be much more to this experience. It was the start of a new way of travelling and the birth of what today is known as Rainforest Reef Escape.

I now lead small-group adventure retreats in Costa Rica, bringing curious and adventurous souls to the the most majestic and prolific rainforest in all of Central America. The Osa Peninsula, located in the southwest corner of the country, almost Panama, is described by National Geographic Magazine as "the most biologically intense place on Earth". It is here that we encounter all four species of monkeys, tropical birds like toucans and macaws, and even

wildcats like pumas and jaguars call this place home. It is by far the most impressive spot to discover bountiful wildlife and breathtaking sceneries in all of the country.

Yoga was and remains to this day one of the best ways I can unwind from all of the craziness in my daily life. Breathing, moving every part of my tired body and meditating continues to be my most cherished way to escape. Now I provide a platform for others to do this in Mother Nature's playground. Every practice is surrounded by the lush tropical rainforest and warm Pacific Ocean. Everyday we hike around looking for swinging monkeys in the canopy, colourful macaws feeding from almond trees, pregnant sea turtles wandering onto the beach to lay their eggs, and even dolphins and humpback whales jumping in the open ocean. It feels like a dream and yet I never seem to awake from it. Time truly does stand still here. That's how I came to know the power of intention.



**TEACHERS**, try this unique yoga retreat with your students! One free spot for YOU with 8 or more in your group!

If you are a yoga teacher that would like to lead a fun and exciting retreat with us or perhaps you'd love to join one of our fun yoga groups, contact us at info@rrescape.com. Teachers with eight or more in their groups come for free! Now that's a pretty great travel-teach opportunity if we do say so ourselves! Be one of the few to discover this most unique place on Earth. Book your retreat today and be part of this ongoing journey with us here at Rainforest Reef Escape!

For more information about Martine and Rainforest Reef Escape, please visit [www.rrescape.com](http://www.rrescape.com).



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