

Eagle's Wing

Centre for Contemporary Shamanism

PLANT SPIRIT

SHAMANISM RETREAT

ANDEAN

&

AMAZON RAINFOREST

2008 RETREAT

PROGRAMME

WWW.SHAMANISM.CO.UK

Introduction We are pleased to present a dedicated programmes in the Andes and the Amazon rainforest, which is focussed on an inner and deep self-exploration and encounter with the spiritual power of the land. This is an adventure into the magical world of the Andes, the Rainforest, and a transformative experience of the ancient mystical rituals of the plant spirit medicines.

Dates

In 2008 we will be holding two Retreat programmes, our dates are;

Retreat Programme 1.

March 8th - 14th incl. - San Pedro, Coca , and the Spiritual Traditions of the Andes.

March 15th - 29th incl. - Amazon Retreat, Ayahuasca, and Plant Spirit Medicines.

Retreat Programme 2.

July 19th - August 2nd incl. - Amazon Retreat, Ayahuasca, and Plant Spirit Medicines.

August 3rd - 9th incl. - Optional Extension week.

Retreat Programme 1. March 8th - 14th incl.

As a prologue to the Amazon retreat this optional week expands on our work with the shamanic tradition of the Andes. Working with San Pedro Maestro Shaman Juan Navarro, and Coca Leaf Diviner & traditional Healer Doris Rivera Lenz. This is an opportunity to experience the rich and powerful spiritual legacy of the Andean civilization which is only now being properly recognised after 500 years of obscurity

The Venue: Santa Eulalia

Santa Eulalia is a tranquil valley lying one hour inland from Lima at around 800 meters. Although surrounded by very dry hills, irrigation enables lush gardens to flourish all the year round and there is usually sun and pleasant temperatures. The valley is 50 Km North of Lima and is regarded as the gateway to the central Andes. The valley is home to many species of birds including endemic varieties, and the area is a highlight for bird-watching tours.



Our Lodge consists of about a dozen bungalows with cooking facilities (so we can make our own teas and coffees etc) set in attractive gardens where we can conduct our meetings and ceremonies. Food is good and largely vegetarian. There are also excursions to visit local caves, and ruins.

The Maestros we will be working with at our Andean Retreat



DORIS RIVERA LENZ

Doris has lived in Cusco for many years conducting ofrendas and reading coca leaves for dozens of people every week - both local as well as from far flung places. She has worked with many of our Eagles Wing groups on Peru journeys so far.

The coca leaf has been sacred to Andean people since the dawn of pre-Colombian civilization. When asked about the source of the information she divines from them, she says:

"They give me such a powerful awareness it is as though an energy comes into me from just touching them. I invoke Mother Nature and the spirit of the coca, and with just seven leaves, the answer comes, as though through an open doorway."

Healing diagnosis

An ancient method of diagnosing illness, still common in Peru, is to rub an egg over the body of the patient. Doris is gifted in this tradition and will prescribe remedies which include medicinal herbs.

The ofrenda

After preparation we will take part in a dawn 'ofrenda' which is the most important ceremony used by Andean Indians to relate with Mother Earth. There will be talk and discussion about such ideas as Pachacuti (the Andean concept of time), Andean myths, and healing methods, also practical healing and divinatory sessions plus the opportunity of private sessions with Doris.

JUAN NAVARRO

We will work again with maestro Juan Navarro to meet the spirit of San Pedro, a gentle and powerful healing medicine, which was of central importance to early pre-Colombian civilizations, such as the Chavin, 800BC, and the Mochica, 500AD. To these primordial people the cactus itself was considered the God Achuma.

Juan Navarro was born in the highland village of Somate, department of Piura. He is a descendant of a long lineage of healers and shamans working with the magical powers of Las Huaringas. These Sacred Lakes stand at 3,500 meters and have been revered since earliest Peruvian civilization.

During the all-night sessions Juan works untiringly with his two sons in an intricate sequence of processes, including invocation, diagnosis, divination, and healing with natural objects, or *artes*. The artes are initially placed on the maestro's altar or *mesa*, and are an astonishing and beautiful array of shells, swords, magnets, quartzes, objects resembling sexual organs, rocks which spark when struck together, and stones from animals' stomachs, which they have swallowed to aid digestion!



THERE ARE DOWNLOADABLE ARTICLES ON OUR WEBSITE ABOUT BOTH JUAN NAVARRO, AND DORIS RIVERA LENZ. VISIT OUR ARTICLE SECTION AT WWW.SHAMANISM.CO.UK

PLANT SPIRIT SHAMANISM RETREAT - 2008 DATES

March 15th - 29th incl.

July 19th - August 9th incl.

Mishana Private Retreat Centre

This programme will take place in the Mishana Private Retreat Centre. We have 57 Hectares (140 acres) of land with a lodge in the Allpahuayo Mishana National Reserve in the department of Loreto, Peru. Our lodge is located directly on the river which is part of a 58,070 hectare nature reserve.

Due to a combination of geological factors and diverse soil types, the reserve supports a unique community of plant and animal species. It is the 'jewel' in the crown for bird watchers and contains dozens of species which are unique to this area. The Reserve contains one of the highest biodiversities known in the Amazon basin. Our Lodge is located directly on the Rio Nanay which is a tributary of the Amazon River.



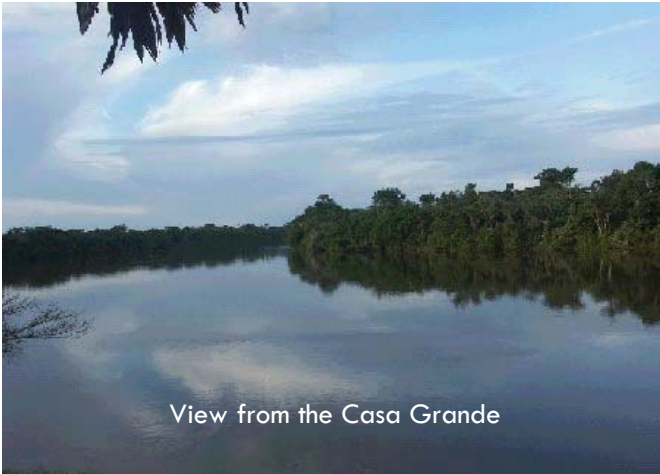
The journey to our lodge from Iquitos takes two hours in our power boat. We are situated in-between two bends of the river giving an amazing panoramic view. The boat is always available so trips can be made to some interesting, and extraordinarily beautiful places along the river.

We have the dedicated services of one of our maestro shamans, Javier Arevalo, Artidoro, and others. Included in the program are individual personal healing or consultative sessions by our shamans, based upon your personal needs. The maestros will also provide experiential teachings about the fascinating medicinal and psycho-spiritual properties of the local plants. Participants can choose their plant medicine which will be made freshly for them.



Our accommodation is in comfortable traditional cabins or *tambos* (individual dieting huts), a leaf roof supported by poles and with open sides (the most intimate way to sleep in the jungle). The beds benefit from comfortable mattresses and fly nets when necessary. The *tambos* are spread out to assure privacy and minimum disturbance from others. Participants have a choice of using either the rooms in the 'Casa Grande' annex or *tambos* for their retreat. Our drinking water is drawn from a deep bore artesian

well and has been certified for drinking by the Iquitos University Laboratory



During the day when there are no activities, there will be hammocks to relax in, and you can read, or wander into the forest, or swim in the river (there is a small sandy beach). Our ceremonies and meeting will be held in the Casa Grande which has an open platform on stilts directly on the river affording a magnificent view of the rainforest and star filled sky. On occasions we use the *maloca* (ceremonial temple), a large circular *tambo* made of natural materials. We will eat our meals in the lodge, the traditional meeting place, where food is cooked on a wood fire.

Single Accommodation

One of the unique characteristics of this programme is that we offer single accommodation throughout both in the hotels in Lima, Iquitos, and at our Centre in Mishana. This ensures that participants can obtain the maximum benefit from their encounter with the plants. The Diet really needs to be taken in solitude and personal retreat without distractions. This is a defining characteristic of this programme. Typically other programmes do not offer this and dormitory / shared accommodation is usually the rule.

Our Tambos (individual accommodation huts) are all different and are spread out some with more isolation than others. We also have accommodation rooms with a river view in the wing of our Grande Casa for those who would prefer being close to the main facilities.

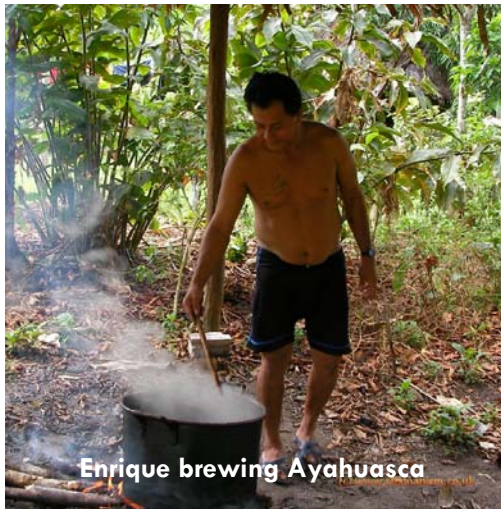
Excursions: There will be opportunities to make night time dugout canoe fishing trips with Pedro our hunting guide. Guided walks and power boat trips along the river and ox-bow lakes will be offered daily. There will also be a resident craftswoman to demonstrate and teach us to make the unique Amazonian crafts and textiles.



Individual Consultation & Healing: Most afternoons the Shaman is available for an individual consultation, in which you can discuss (with translator) your health or other personal concerns directly with the maestro.

Ayahuasca Journey - the proposal

Our intention in this journey is to provide the conditions and orientation to enable participants to follow a proper diet, and for it to be as near as possible to what indigenous people have done for thousands of years, (although we can avoid unnecessary hardship, in any case a diet is not a trial of endurance).



The diet is a journey of self-exploration and the maestro is there to give support, not to impress us with a 'show', as do some of the ayahuasca shamans who work with Westerners. It is tempting to imagine that shamans with the gift for engendering powerful experiences in their clients are necessarily spiritually evolved and benevolent, but unfortunately this is not always the case. It is more important that the shaman is an evolved and impeccable person, who will guide us to learn for ourselves and benefit from our experiences in safety

Participants will undertake to 'diet' a plant for a full six to eight days, selecting their plant from a range of options which will be explained by the maestro and depend on individual requirements. Some plants are good for specific ailments as, for example Chuchuhuasi for arthritis and other bone conditions, although there is always a magical world opened up by the plant spirit. Other plants have specific spiritual benefits. Chirisanango and Ushpahuasanango, for example, open up the heart and are healing to emotions. Guayusa works very curiously on one's dreams, affording an experience of being conscious while in fact asleep or dreaming. The plants used will all be compatible with Ayahuasca so that we can benefit from the plant diet during Ayahuasca ceremonies. There will be a programme of talks, exercises, individual sessions and group meetings without prejudicing the spirit of the diet. This is a way to learn from observation and intimate contact with nature, practical artistic exercises using local materials.

We will participate in the gathering and preparation of Ayahuasca, a prolonged ritual in which power is invoked from the planta maestra. We will learn about healing plants and how to find them

The Shaman's Diet

For a future shaman or person seeking wisdom, the plant diet is the first step in the journey of initiation, however it can also be used to cure physical illness or as a means of achieving spiritual well being. During the diet a concoction made from your chosen teacher plant is usually brought to you each morning by the maestro and drunk on awakening. After you have got to know a plant spirit in this way, it becomes your ally and a shaman can then use it for healing his clients.



'La dieta es solo' Pablo Amaringo.

A diet for a serious illness may last for several months and sometimes in the process, the person discovers his ability to heal, decides to apprentice himself, and goes on to diet many more plants. The apprentice's diet is normally undertaken deep in the forest, and alone with the maestro, but in practice it can be very difficult to find ideal conditions of tranquillity, support, the proper food and distance from temptation, yet with adequate conditions of comfort.



Sunset at Mishana

The most important things to avoid are pork, red meat, fat, salt, sugar, alcohol, drugs - including medicines - and sexual activity. This diet is begun in a more liberal form the week before starting to take the plant, and is continued for a while afterwards. Its purpose is to prepare the body

and nervous system for the powerful knowledge and expansion of consciousness given by teacher plants. In everyday life, the mind creates the illusion that we are separate from reality, and thus protects us, like a veil, from experiencing the vastness of the universe. Access to the truth without preparation could be a radical shock to the system.

Teacher plants act as a bridge to a realm of knowledge which goes beyond individuals or plants, however they vary greatly, as each plant shows us its own world. Ajo Sacha, for example, tunes you in to the reality of the rain forest, sharpening the senses and inhibiting body odour through its own garlic smell, so that you will not be detected by animals in the forest. It has been used to improve hunting skills for thousands of years. The magical world to which we are transported by plants is not accessible through the verbal rational mind but through dream language. Thus dreams act like doorways during a plant diet and connect us with the plant spirit.

Diets are not invented by maestros, they are given by the plant spirits themselves, but there is more to it than simply abstaining from certain foods and activities. It involves a state of purification, retreat, commitment, and respect for our connection with everything around us - above all the rain forest. When we listen to our dreams, they become more real, and equally important as everyday life. For this reason we do not encourage distracting or libidinous thoughts, dreams or fantasies.



Shipibo Maestro Benjamin Ochavano, preparing Ayahuasca

To quote the Shipibo maestro Guillermo Arevalo who worked with our group on the February 2003 Retreat; *“Whether the diet is to heal the body or the spirit or whether it is part of an apprenticeship, what makes it work is your good intention towards the diet. Also the good intention of the maestro who helps make the connection with the spirit of the plant. He must know how to get into the altered state to be in contact himself first. They are beings, which have their own forms or they can be like human beings with faces and bodies. When the spirit accepts the dieter, and the dieter has the will, the spirit grants them energy. The path to knowledge opens, the healing takes place, as the case may be.”*

THE SHAMANS WE WORK WITH AT OUR RETREATS

We are very delighted to have secured the services of some of the most experienced shamans in the region, during our Retreats we will work with one of the following shamans; Artidoro Aro Cardenas, Shipibos maestros; Enrique Lopez, Leoncio Garcia, and Benjamin Ochavano.

The Maestro - Enrique Lopez

Enrique Lopez is a Shipibo shaman, he is originally from the Shipibo community of Roaboya on the River Ucayali. He started his apprenticeship as a shaman with his grandfather when he was 10 years old. We worked with Enrique at our last retreat, and found his ayahuasca to be very potent. His chants are all in the native Shipibo language which adds another dimension to the ceremonies. Enrique is knowledgeable about plant medicines and diets. The Shipibo people are regarded as masters of Ayahuasca. Enrique has a gentle and caring quality in his work with our participants. As a note his father in law is the elder shaman Benjamin Ochavano whom we also work with.

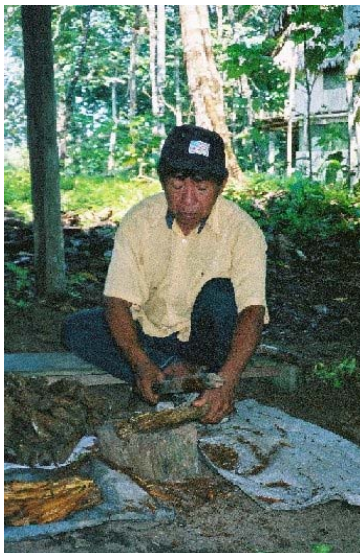
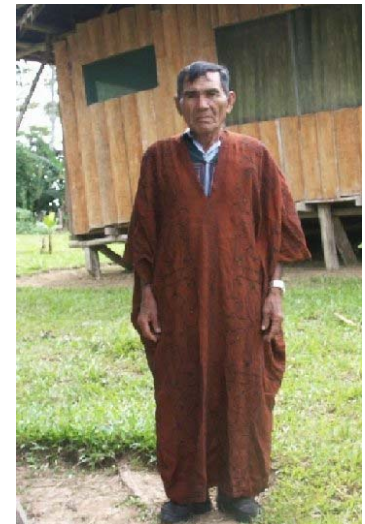


Artidoro Aro Cardenas

We have worked with Maestro Artidoro on our previous Amazon Retreat, and again we were greatly impressed with his knowledge of medicinal and power plants, and his compassion and support for the participants. Although Artidoro is Mestizo he has lived amongst the Ashaninka Indians for many years, and has learned their languages which result in that many of his chants come from a variety of indigenous groups including the Ashaninka, Cashibo, and Capanaua .

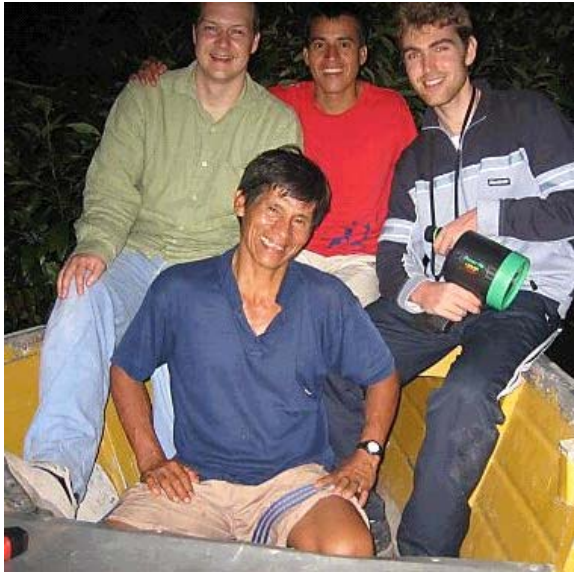
Leoncio Garcia

The Shipibo maestro is now in his mid 70's with the appearance of a man in his 50's. He was born in the Shipibo community of San Francisco by Yarina Cocha (an oxbow lake near Pucallpa). On a number of occasions he has worked with medical doctors in various cities in Peru. Don Leoncio also founded a healing centre near Nina Rumi on the Rio Nanay.



Benjamin Ochavano

Is a traditional Shipibo Moraya (elder shaman). He is in his late seventies. His chants (Icaros) sung in the Shipibo language, are extraordinary beautiful and powerful.



Marcio (foreground), our boatman



Magnolia, our housekeeper and cook



Pedro, our jungle guide, and groundsman

Our Support Team at Mishana.



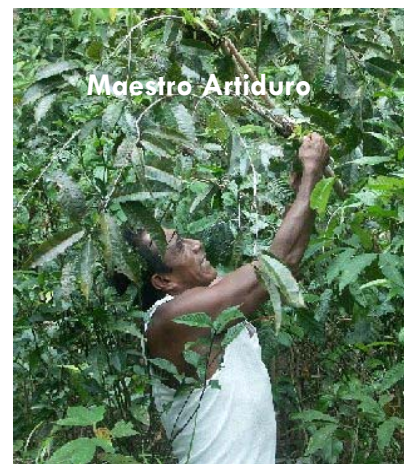
The Plants

Working with teacher plants is known as the 'shaman's diet'. The purpose of the diet is to prepare the body and nervous system for the powerful knowledge and expansion of consciousness given by teacher plants. In everyday life, the mind creates the illusion that we are separate from reality, and thus protects us, like a veil, from experiencing the vastness of the universe. Access to the truth without preparation could be a radical shock to the system. It offers a significant challenge for the rational Western mind to come to terms with the teacher plants, and a leap of imagination is required to incorporate the 'other' consciousness of the plant.

The magical world to which we are transported by plants is not accessible through the verbal rational mind but through dream language or an expansion of the imagination. Thus dreams & our imaginative powers act like doorways during a plant diet and connect us with the plant spirit.

Some of the Plants that are available.

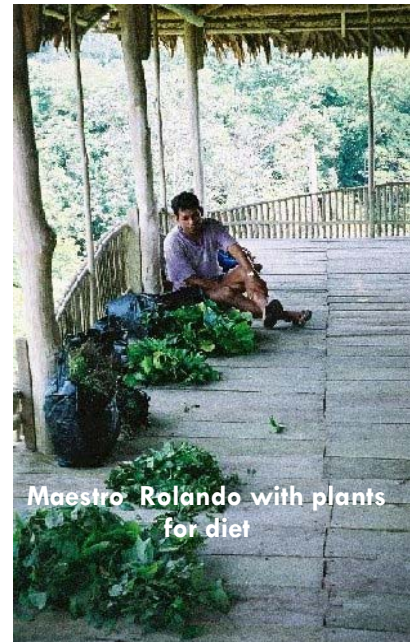
- Mocura;** taken orally or used in floral baths to raise energy, or take you out of a *saladera* (a run of bad luck, inertia, sense of not living to the full). This plant gives mental strength and you can feel its effects as also with *ajosacha*, both are varieties of garlic and have a penetrating aroma. Mental strength means it could be good to counter shyness, find one's personal value or authority. Medicinal properties include asthma, bronchitis, reduction of fat and cholesterol. Another of its properties is that it burns of excess fat.
- Piñon Colorado;** this plant has short lived effect after drinking but helps dreaming later on when you go to sleep. Piñon Colorado can also be worked with as a *planta maestra* (teacher plant). Medicinal properties include dealing with Insect bites and stings, vaginal infections, and bronchitis. It is possible to take the resin which is much stronger but toxic if too much ingested. The resin can be applied directly to the skin.
- Chirisanango;** this plant is good for colds and arthritis and has the effect of heating up the body, so much so that the maestro advises a cold shower after each dose! This plant can be used in baths for good luck, and bring success to fishing, hunting etc. This *planta maestra* also makes possible for people to open up their heart to feel love for people and animals, and identify with other people as though brothers and sisters.



It grows mainly in the Upper Amazon and only a few *restingas* (high ground which never floods) in the Lower Amazon. The shamans say that plants connect us with nature because they take their nourishment directly from the earth, as well as the sun's rays, the air. They allow us to know and recognize ourselves. A shaman must know this and must love his people to heal them. The gift of Chirisanango is self esteem i.e the ability to recognise ourselves.

- **Guayusa;** It is good for excessive acidity and other problems in the stomach and bile. Also it is both energizing and relaxing at the same time and develops mental strength. This also has the most interesting effect of giving lucid dreams i.e when you are dreaming you are aware that you are dreaming. The plant is also known as the "watchman's plant", as even when sleeping you are aware of the outer physical surroundings.

On a personal note, I found the experience with this plant also to be quite incredible. I found that the usual boundary between sleeping and being awake to be more fluid than I had anticipated. Even now, sometime after taking the plant my dreams are more colourful, richer, and lucid than before. For those interested in 'dreaming' this is certainly the plant to explore.



- **Ajo Sacha;** An important planta maestra in the initiation of Amazonian shamans. Mental strength, acuity of mind, saladera (explained above), for riding spells, self healing. Originally used to enhance hunting skills by covering up human smell with the garlic smell of Ajo Sacha.

On another personal note, I found my senses being altered and enhanced with this plant. I could zoom in and focus on sounds emanating from the rainforest, my sense of smell became sharper, and in some ineffable way I could tune into the breathing or rhythm of the rainforest. The sound of insects and birds was no longer a random phenomenon, these sounds became a rhythmic breath, rising and falling. No wonder that it is used for hunting as one's sense are heightened in an incredible way.

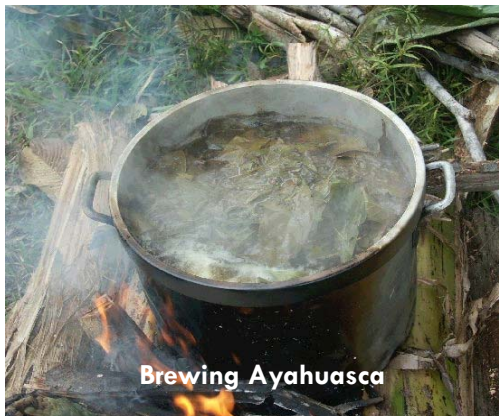
- **Icoja;** A bark used for malaria, fever, an astringent, disinfectant for healing septic wounds. Used against Uta - a kind of leprosy found in the Amazon. Wounds are washed directly with this plant, and it is also used for an infectious disease (Pilagra) in children.
- **Chanca piedra;** Used for Kidney problems especially kidney stones (hence the name 'stone crusher'), gall bladder, disinfectant. This is recognised as a gall bladder and liver tonic. It is also used for cleansing the urinary system and for dealing with intestinal parasites. This plant is only used for its many pharmaceutical properties, not a planta maestra per se.

The underlying truth that is revealed in working with the plant spirit or consciousness is that we are not separate from the natural world. We perceive ourselves to be separate beings with our minds firmly embedded within our being (typically our head). The plants can show you that this way of being is an illusion and that we are all connected, all of us and everything else is a discrete element in the great universal field of consciousness. This is an area where the ancient knowledge of the peoples of the rainforest and modern quantum physics point in the very same direction, "Reality is an illusion, albeit a persistent one' Albert Einstein.

Another way of seeing the shaman's diet is that like the platitude 'all roads lead to Rome', all plants lead through different paths of experiences to the same place, i.e a deep and expanded understanding of one's place in the world around us and a recognition of self as an intrinsic element of this.

AYAHUASCA

After being virtually ignored by Western civilization for centuries, there has been a huge surge of interest in Ayahuasca recently. There is a growing belief that it is a kind of 'medicine for our times', giving hope to people with 'incurable' diseases like cancer and HIV, drug addictions and inspiring answers to the big ecological problems of modern civilization.



Spirituality is at the centre of the Ayahuasca experience. Purification and cleansing of body, mind, and spirit in a shamanic ceremony can be the beginning of a process of profound personal and spiritual discovery and transformation. This process can continue indefinitely even if one never drinks Ayahuasca again. One thing is sure, and that is that every person gets a unique experience. We believe that by seriously looking at the way Ayahuasca is used we can improve our life experience and benefit more from this medicine.

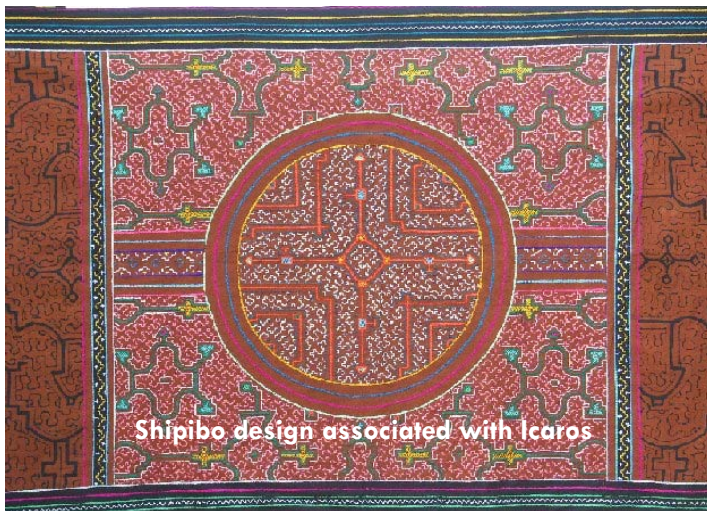
Ayahuasca is the jungle medicine of the upper Amazon. It is made from the ayahuasca vine (*Banisteriopsis Caapi*) and the leaf of the Chacruna plant (*Psychotria Viridis*). The two make a potent medicine, which takes one into the visionary world. The vine is an inhibitor, which contains harmala and harmaline among other alkaloids, and the leaf contains vision-inducing alkaloids. As with all natural medicines, it is a mixture of many alkaloids that makes their unique properties. For example, *Peyote*, the cactus used by the North Native Americans, is said to contain 32 active alkaloids, so when one of those alkaloids, mescaline (LSD) is synthesised in a laboratory, contrary to popular opinion, the result is not at all the same.

The oldest known object related to the use of ayahuasca is a ceremonial cup, hewn out of stone, with engraved ornamentation, which was found in the Pastaza culture of the Ecuadorian Amazon from 500 B.C. to 50 A.D. It is deposited in the collection of the Ethnological Museum of the Central University (Quito, Ecuador). This indicates that ayahuasca potions were known and used at least 2,500 years ago. Ayahuasca is a name derived from two Quechua words: *aya* means spirit, ancestor, deceased person, and *huasca* means vine or rope, hence it is known as *vine of the dead* or *vine of the soul*. It is also known by many other local names including *yaje*, *caapi*, *natema*, *pinde*, *daime*, *mihi*, & *dapa*. It plays a central role in the spiritual, religious and cultural traditions of the Indigenous and Mestizo (mixed blood) peoples of the upper Amazon, Orinoco plains and the Pacific coast of Colombia and Ecuador.



The plants are collected from the rainforest in a sacred way and it is said that a shaman can find plentiful sources of the vine by listening for the 'drumbeat' that emanates from them. The mixture is prepared by cutting the vines to cookable lengths, scraping and cleaning them, pounding them into a pulp. Meanwhile the Chacruna leaves are picked and cleaned.

Medicines like ayahuasca can help us along our path but we still have to do the work ourselves. My experience is that these kinds of allies can help us open the doors of perception, but what we do when we get there is entirely our own challenge.



Shipibo design associated with Icaros

The Icaros

Integral to the ceremony are the chants that the shaman sings. These are known as Icaros, and the chant will direct the nature of the ceremony or visionary experience for the group and for individuals as the shaman during the ceremony will chant specific Icaros for that person's needs.

The words of the chants are symbolic stories telling of the ability of nature to heal itself. For example the crystalline waters from a stream wash the unwell person,

while coloured flowers attract the hummingbirds whose delicate wings fan healing energies etc. You might see such things in your visions but the essence which cures you is perhaps more likely to be the understanding of what is happening in your life, allowing inner feelings to unblock so that bitterness and anger can change to ecstasy and love. To awaken from the 'illusion of being alive' is to experience life itself.

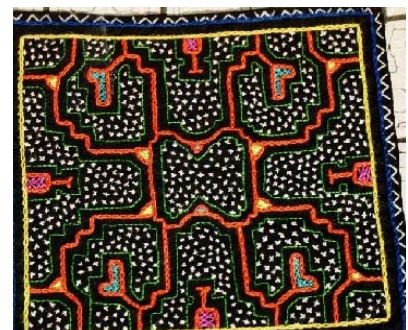
There are several different kinds of Icaros, at the beginning of the session. Their purpose is to provoke the *mareacion* or effects, and, in the words of Javier Arevalo, 'to render the mind susceptible for visions to penetrate, then the curtains can open for the start of the theatre'.

Other Icaros call the spirit of Ayahuasca to open visions 'as though exposing the optic nerve to light'. Alternatively, if the visions are too strong, the same spirit can be made to fly away in order to bring the person back to normality. There are Icaros for calling the 'doctors', or plant spirits, for healing, while other Icaros call animal spirits, which protect and rid patients of spells.

Preparation for the Ayahuasca Experience

When a person drinks Ayahuasca, especially with a trusted shaman, there is a chance to learn and trust the plant. You discover that it works in its own way. It is a great moment getting to this point. Then there is the question of whether the plant trusts us, because it can be abused and used for getting the wrong kind of personal power. Without intention, vision, preparation, and a shaman, it is a drug not a healing medicine.

A major difficulty for Westerners is the diet and the living conditions in the rainforest. There is also the care clients need afterwards, as one is extremely vulnerable after drinking Ayahuasca. Also some of our attitudes need to change, for example some people find vomiting unpleasant.



In the Ayahuasca ceremony purgative cleansing of the physical body is an essential preparation for the new level of emerging consciousness. Vomiting and occasionally brief diarrhoea are common effects during the initial sessions.

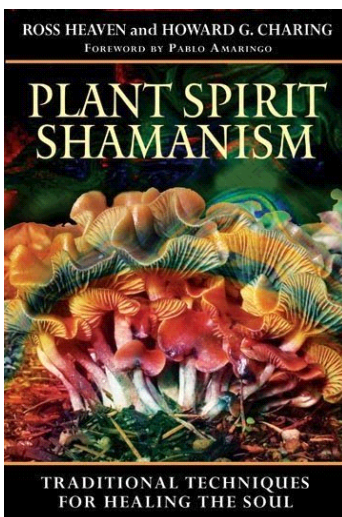
The Diet

An integral element of this preparation is to undertake a diet intended to reduce excessive sugar, salt, oils, pork, fat, and spicy food in the body in preparation to be in communion with the spirit of Ayahuasca. Reduction of these should commence as soon as one commits to the experience.

Pork in particular is considered to be impure and is studiously avoided by Ayahuasca practitioners. Complete abstinence from pork and lard for at least two weeks prior to the first ceremony is recommended to participants to reduce the impact of the purge. It is also recommended that this abstinence continue for at least two weeks after the final ceremony.

In the initiatory diet for those seeking personal cleansing and healing, chicken, fish, wild game meat, fruits, and vegetables may be eaten but with little if any salt, sugar, oils or spices. The cleansing effect and strength of the visionary experience can be greatly enriched by one's commitment to these preparations.

Sexual abstinence also forms part of the diet and is a traditional requirement of Ayahuasca cleansing and healing. We recommend abstinence from sexual activity for a few days prior to the ceremony, and to continue a day or two after the last ceremony.



Many of the plants and descriptions of the practices are in the book **PLANT SPIRIT SHAMANISM**, with a foreword by Pablo Amaringo famous for his paintings depicting the magical world of Ayahuasca and the Rainforest. Published by Destiny Books (USA) September 2006.

FURTHER READING ON AYAHUASCA

- The Cosmic Serpent, Jeremy Narby (Tarcher, 1999)
- Sacred Vine of Spirits: Ayahuasca, edited by Ralph Metzner
- Ayahuasca: The Visionary and Healing Powers of the Vine of the Soul, Joan Parisi Wilcox (Park Street Press, 2005)
- Wizard of the Upper Amazon: The Story of Manuel Cordova-Rios, Cordova-Rice Lamb (North Atlantic Books, 1986)
- Plant Spirit Shamanism, Charing & Heaven (Destiny Books USA, 2006)

Some of the Downloadable PDF articles on our website
www.shamanism.co.uk



MEDICAL PRECAUTIONS

It is important to know that, in some cases, the consumption of Ayahuasca in combination with some groups of prescription & non-prescription medicines can bear health risks.

1. Prescription Medicines

If you are taking prescription medication (including antibiotics), are subject to high blood pressure, have a heart condition, or are under treatment for any health condition), you need to consult your Doctor or Physician. Those with a condition of chronic high blood pressure should not drink Ayahuasca.

1.1 Anti-depressants

Ayahuasca (Banisteriopsis Caapi) contains MAOI's (monoamine oxidase inhibitors) generally in the form of harmine and harmaline therefore Medical consultation is essential if you are taking Prozac or other antidepressants affecting serotonin levels, i.e. serotonin selective re-uptake inhibitors (SSRI).

SSRI's block the reuptake of serotonin in the brain and because MAOI's inhibit breakdown of serotonin, the combination of MAOI's and SSRI's can lead to too high levels of serotonin in the brain. SSRI's are much more common than MAOI's which are found in some anti-depressants. It is advised that you consult your Doctor or Physician about the use of temporary monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOI).

These medications generally require a period of six to eight weeks to completely clear the system and must be reduced gradually.

2. Non-Prescription Medicines

Non-prescription medications such as antihistamines, dietary aids, amphetamines and derivatives, and some natural herbal medicines, i.e. those containing ephedrine, high levels of caffeine, or other stimulants, may also cause adverse reactions. We recommend that you discontinue all such medications, drugs, and herbs for at least one week prior to and following work with Ayahuasca.

3. Recreational Drugs

Avoid all recreational drugs, in particular MDMA (Ecstasy), cocaine, heroin. Also do not drink alcohol on the day of the ceremony.

4. Mental Health

Those with a history of psychiatric disorder, instability, or have a diagnosed mental disorder should not drink Ayahuasca.

5. Herbal Remedies

Use of herbal remedies for depression such as St John's Wort (which also influence the serotonin levels) need to be discontinued as per 2 above



Plants at Belen Market Iquitos

SUMMARY ITINERARY & COSTS

Andean & Amazon Retreat Programme - March 8th - 29th incl.

Day 1 Saturday, Arrive in Lima & Transfer to Hotel. Overnight at the comfortable 3 Star Hotel La Castellana in the Miraflores district of Lima.

Day 2 Sunday, Private bus to our lodge at Santa Eulalia. Welcome Andean Dinner. Introduction to Maestros, Juan Navarro & Doris Rivera Lenz

Day 3 Monday, Sessions with Maestros. All night San Pedro Cactus Ceremony with Juan Navarro

Day 4 Tuesday, Sessions with Maestros, Sight seeing tour of valley

Day 5 Wednesday, Sessions with Maestros. All night San Pedro Cactus Ceremony with Juan Navarro

Day 6 Thursday, Sessions with Maestros. All night San Pedro Cactus Ceremony with Juan Navarro

Day 7 Friday, Personal time, Sessions with Maestros

Day 8 Saturday, Bus to Lima airport for flight to Iquitos. Overnight at Three star Hotel Victoria Regia .

Day 9 Sunday, Pick up at Lima hotel for transfer to airport (the Amazon Retreat participants) by our Ground Agent. In Iquitos, we overnight at Three star Hotel Victoria Regia. There is free time for going to the market to buy jungle plants and products, or to sit on the Malecon and view the river. Alternatively, we can help you arrange optional excursions to visit the botanical gardens and sandy beach for swimming at Quistacocha, or to see the Bora Indians .

Day 10 Monday, Go to Mishana by power boat to the Mishana Private Retreat Centre, introduction, make decision of plant to be dieted. Welcome Jungle Dinner.

Day 11 - 18, Start plant diet with up to seven Ayahuasca sessions.

Day 19 'Cut' the diet for, end to drinking plants but continue with 'liberal' diet. Final evening meeting and supper.

Day 20, mid morning departure by power boat to Iquitos for relaxation in luxury Three star Hotel Victoria Regia with swimming pool located near the Malecon overlooking the Amazon.

Day 21, Morning Flight returning to Lima. Time at own disposition. Overnight at Hotel La Castellana

Day 22, International Return Flights

COSTS March 8th - 29th 2008 £2,300, US\$ & EURO at FXS RATES + International airfare

AMAZON TWO WEEKS ONLY March 15th - 29th . Costs £1700 ; US\$ & EURO at FX RATES.

We can accept Credit Card Payments etc. via PayPal method.

SUMMARY ITINERARY & COSTS - Amazon Retreat: July 19th - August 9th.

Day 1 Saturday, Arrive in Lima & Transfer to Hotel. Overnight at the comfortable 3 Star Hotel La Castellana in the Miraflores district of Lima.

Day 2 Sunday, Late morning fly Lima-Iquitos, transfer from the airport to port then by power boat to the Mishana Private Retreat Centre, introduction, make decision of plant to be dieted. Welcome Jungle Dinner. *NOTE: Due to changes in flights to Iquitos, we may need to overnight in Iquitos and proceed to Mishana in the morning.*

Days 3 , 4, 5, 6, 7 , 8, 9 , & 10 Start plant diet with up to seven Ayahuasca sessions.

Day 11 'Cut' the diet for participants on two week programme, end to drinking plants but continue with 'liberal' diet. Final evening meeting and supper.

Day 12 Wednesday, mid morning departure for participants on two week programme leave Mishana by power boat to Iquitos for relaxation in luxury Three star Hotel Victoria Regia with swimming pool located near the Malecon overlooking the Amazon. Participants on three week programme enjoy a full week longer at Mishana. At Mishana we take a little break before continuing with the Plant Diet and Ayahuasca Sessions After the break we continue with the Plant Diet and Ayahuasca Sessions with Javier.

Days 13 Thursday, participants on two week programme, free time for going to the market to buy jungle plants and products, to sit on the Malecon and dream over a view of the river or write a journal. Alternatively, we can help you arrange optional excursions to visit the botanical gardens and sandy beach for swimming at Quistacocha, or to see the Bora Indians .

Day 14 Friday, participants on two week programme, morning Flight returning to Lima. Time at own disposition. Overnight at Hotel La Castellana. Mishana resume Plant Diet and Ayahuasca Sessions

Day 15 Saturday, Plant Diet and Ayahuasca Sessions, International Saturday Return Flights for Participants on two week programme.

Day 16 Sunday, Continue Plant Diet and Ayahuasca Sessions,

Day 17 Monday, Continue Plant Diet and Ayahuasca Sessions

Day 18 Tuesday, Close Plant Diet

Day 19 Wednesday, Return to Iquitos. leave Mishana by power boat to Iquitos for relaxation in luxury Three star Hotel Victoria Regia with swimming pool located near the Malecon overlooking the Amazon

Day 20 Thursday, Free time in Iquitos, Farewell Dinner

Day 21 Friday, Morning Flight returning to Lima. Time at own disposition. Overnight at Hotel La Castellana.

Day 22 International Return Flights

COSTS July 19th - August 2nd 2008; £1,700, US\$ & EURO at FXS RATES + International airfare

Extension week: August 3rd – 9th. Costs £700 ; US\$ & EURO at FX RATES.

We can accept Credit Card Payments etc. via PayPal method.

WHAT THE PRICE INCLUDES:

- **Single Accommodation throughout** Note: no single accommodation surcharge.
- All transport from Lima hotel to and from our Retreat Centre at Mishana, including internal flights
- All transport from Lima hotel to and from our Andean Lodge
- Breakfast throughout plus all meals at the lodge & welcome celebration dinner in Iquitos.
- Permits to enter the Mishana Reserve.
- All Ceremonies and services from shamans at the Retreat Centre.
- All tips for portorage etc

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE:

- International airfare
- Transportation to and from your Airport of Departure
- Transfers from Lima airport on arrival to the Hotel, and departure transfer to the airport from the hotel.
- Local airport taxes (approx US \$5 per flight)
- International departure tax currently US \$30 from Lima
- Additional meals & drinks
- Peru Visa costs for non EEC or USA nationals
- Personal expenditure such as drinks, laundry
- Travel Insurance
- Additional nights either before or after the tour (we can book them for you)
- Additional tips & gratuities & individual plant medicines from the shamans

Participant's Comments & Feedback

- Howard described Mishana as 'paradise', this was not an exaggeration. Ten out of Ten! **Mazzie S.**
- I felt it was a real privilege to just walk in and experience the best of the best, to benefit from the research, contacts and knowledge gained by Howard and Peter was priceless. The trip really could not have been better organised - not only did it take the stress out of travelling but the support and advice that was on offer from them both was wonderful. There was something that Howard said right at the start of the trip that made me change my way of thinking and it resulted in me using my experience to the fullest.



I tried to leave my expectations at home - which it didn't live up too, but in a way it was so much more. For me personally, I feel like the changes have been subtle - like a whisper that is more effective than shouting. I actually learnt just as much from the others on the trip - hearing about their experiences and lives. It was a beautiful way to get to know someone on quite a personally level that you would have not have otherwise meet - let alone become friends with.

It was an individual journey and an unforgettable experience ... and one that I'm still digesting and learning from even after returning home. **Belinda N.**

- I am privileged to have taken part in your programme that, as far as I know, is unique. Emphasise the Retreat aspect - participants can choose the extent that they interact with others and can stay in the tambo to which their food will be delivered. And, the companionship and support was great. No criticisms. Lots of laughter and relaxation. Radical emotional and spiritual changes inaugurated. That's all. **Chris W.**
- Life's been great since i got back. What a magical time we had in the Amazon top stuff. The ayahuasca ceremony for me was magical. Magic in the way that it showed me great understanding about myself, showed me things about my mind and how my mind keeps me in chaos at times. When i really relaxed and let go of my fears the ceremonies was so deep and loving and beautiful. Ayahuasca took me on a beautiful journey about me. I had a fantastic journey to the jungle i have learnt so much and i no it's just the beginning. I do miss the easiness of the place, the quietness, the noises of the jungle and i would love to do ayahuasca again. **Graham C.**
- The trip was fantastic. The magical noises of the jungle and the strength of the connections with the plants through the experience of dieting and by being immersed in the midst of such a diverse, rich, natural environment made this the experience of a lifetime. I can thoroughly recommend it to anyone. **Jenny J.**
- For me one of the highlights of the Medicine week was Nature itself - being out in the heat in the midst of miles of dense and staggering beautiful greenery, listening to the nocturnal sounds of the rainforest and the rain itself - and at dawn sitting at the edge of the deep flowing river, early morning mists drifting just above the surface - if I never saw another sight I would have died happy. Nature at its raw best and not a car in site - now that's paradise! **Jackie S.**
- "My Ayahuasca experience was weird and wonderful, delightful in some ways and disappointing in others. Expectations should definitely be left at home for 'first-timers!' Each experience with the 'Vine of the soul' is unique, clearly working on different levels - revealing only the brutal honest truth.

Peru was a fantastic experience - Friendly locals, wonderfully hot and humid climate (if that's what you like,) daily rain showers in the jungle, jungle treks and Noa's nightclub in Iquitos. And then there's 'Ari's Burger Bar' home of the tastiest natural concoctions ever...definitely enough to take me back for more!!"



I had very high expectations about this trip. I thought it might change my life.... and it did. I was looking for inspiration and a new direction, and this trip gave me that and much more. Ayahuasca helped me to experience how beautiful life is, to feel the wonders of being alive and to see the love that exists between all beings.

Talking to the shamans was so fulfilling that I felt really privileged to be able to receive their knowledge and their love. And all this was happening in such a beautiful place, the jungle with its unimaginable sounds, especially at night...., with its slow, joyful pace! And then life with the other participants: I have never felt so closed so quickly with any group of people before and some have become friends. Ah!... and breakfast in bed after ayahuasca nights! Definitely a trip of life time.

Lucia H.



- My main feeling is one of gratitude. This trip enabled a doorway to be opened for me with grace, a quality I find very important. And there was much else of great richness to enjoy. The landscape the sounds, the integrity of all of you, the skill and knowledge of the shamans, the singing, the conversations, the generosity of the group. I thank you for your bravery in organizing such a trip...

Juliet S.

- For me it was an amazing journey not only in the magnificent rain forest but also in myself. I have slept in the whole jungle period in a tambo allowed me to be as much alone as I wanted to be. It was really nice to go to sleep with the noise of the forest and to wake up with birds and monkeys on the roof.



The Ayahuasca has given me insights in past events that had been stopping me living fully and certainly empowered my happiness. Other insights about how my brain perceives the world enables me to journey and dream in a far more real fashion. I have never felt so much love from the universe for me and me for the universe as during one of the sessions. After the sessions, I am a much freer person and am no longer "needy"; this means my relations with people are changing again.

I had chosen the Chiric Sanango as a herbal medicine during my stay and I have also taken a big bottle home. I am learning a lot about my body and spirit through the plant, it nearly feels like I communicate with my cells. Besides all this fantastic, the diet is not really fancy food, some Ayahuasca

purges are hard (not as hard as from bad food). But during the purges, I have had the biggest

lessons. I would advise this trip to anybody who wants self development and follow its own individuation process. Thanks Howard for finding the way and be willing to take the risks.

Else G.

- Howard & Peter, Thanks you for opening my eyes, mind, and senses! I will never be the same. Good luck with continuing your development of spiritual growth as I know I will be. Love
Susan P. (USA) 27 Jan 2007.

- Thanks to everyone in the universe, I hope the best journey for all. May we repair our world and minds.

Rick W. (USA) 31 Jan 2007.

- This is the start of a new chapter. It's meant to be. Thank you for being a catalyser in my real journey of this life time. Thank you for showing me the way ahead. Peace and love to you all. Always.

Daslie C. (UK) Feb 7 2007

Journey facilitators

Howard G. Charing

Peter Cloudsley

For enquiries contact Howard at (44)1273 882027,

Email: eagleswing@shamanism.co.uk

Payment Schedule.

1. To reserve your place £500 non-refundable deposit
2. The final balance of £1200 payable 6 weeks prior to start of Retreat.
3. If Choosing the extension Week final balance of £1900 payable 6 weeks prior to start of Retreat.

Cancellation Policy.

If cancellation is necessary, the deposit is non-refundable. For cancellation participants must send cancellation notice in writing to H G. Charing 70 Islingword Street, Brighton BN2 9US or email to; eagleswing@shamanism.co.uk. The receiving date determines the cancellation date.

		Time Prior to Departure Cancellation Fee
More than 2 months	£500 Non Refundable Deposit	
42 to 31 days	50% of tour price	
30 days or less	75% of Tour price	

What to do now

Please fill in the attached booking form, a non-refundable deposit of £500, and the signed agreement forms as soon as possible and return it to;

H G. Charing

70 Islingword Street

Brighton BN2 9US

Tel: 01273 882027 (Howard's telephone number).

International (44) 1273 882027

email: eagleswing@shamanism.co.uk

www.shamanism.co.uk

You will receive confirmation on receipt of your deposit and a pre-departure / what to bring info. The full deposit and balance payment are detailed in the above schedule.

Personal Travel & Health insurance is mandatory for this journey.

BOOKING FORM - PLANT SPIRIT SHAMANISM RETREAT 2008

PLEASE INDICATE RETREAT DATE

Andes & Amazon March 8 th - 29 th 2008	<input type="checkbox"/>	Only Amazon March 15 th - 29 th 2008	<input type="checkbox"/>
July 19 th - August 2 nd 2008	<input type="checkbox"/>	Extension week August 3 rd - 9 th 2008	<input type="checkbox"/>

Note: The following information is needed to book your internal flights and hotels in Peru.

Name (as in passport)	
Address & Postcode	
Date of Birth	
Telephone number	
Email address	
Passport Number	
Nationality	

**RETURN FORM WITH DEPOSIT TO;
H G. CHARING, 70 ISLINGWORD STREET, BRIGHTON BN2 9US, ENGLAND**

AGREEMENT

PLANT SPIRIT SHAMANISM RETREAT

This Agreement is between Howard G Charing ("the Organisers") on the one part and _____ (your name) on the other part ("the Participant").

1. The Participant agrees to take part in medicine ceremonies with the Organisers and their assistants.
2. The Organisers will do their utmost to ensure the safety and comfort of the Participant.
3. The Participant has agreed to make any confidential disclosures (in writing) at the time of booking regarding their medical conditions and/or use of medication as outlined in the guidelines supplied by the Organisers. The Participant also agrees to inform the Organisers of any change in their medical circumstances.
4. The Organisers have recommended to the Participant prior to entry into this Agreement that he or she seek and obtain medical advice as to the effect of plant medicines singly and in combination with any medication they are taking.
5. The Participant has the option of taking any, all, or none of the plant medicines on offer and should he or she wish to take them, has conducted appropriate research into the likely effects.
6. The Participant has been advised that ayahuasca is a visionary plant and is clear on the meaning of this. Some reference sources have been provided which describe the ayahuasca experience and the Participant has conducted other research where appropriate to satisfy him or herself of the effects that may be produced.
7. The Participant and the Organisers reiterate their understanding that by signing this Agreement the Participant accepts full responsibility for participating in plant medicine ceremonies.

SIGNED:

DATED:

(The minimum age for participants is 18 years)

**RETURN FORM WITH DEPOSIT TO;
H G. CHARING, 70 ISLINGWORD STREET, BRIGHTON BN2 9US, ENGLAND**



HOWARD G CHARING, is a director of the Eagle's Wing Centre for Contemporary Shamanism, founded by Leo Rutherford, which is now celebrating its 26th anniversary. For the past nine years he has organised journeys to the Amazon Rainforest to work with the ayahuasca shamans and the sacred 'jungle doctors' (healing and visionary plants) of this area. Howard has written numerous articles about the Amazonian and Andean plant medicines, and has worked with some of the most respected shamans in these regions. He was baptised by the Shipibo Indians in the Amazon.

His book **Plant Spirit Shamanism** is published by Destiny Books (USA)



PETER CLOUDSLEY, Since 1980, Peter has been researching Peruvian fiesta music. He has built up a documented archive of traditional music and interviews, and has collected for the British Museum. Throughout this time he has travelled extensively in Latin America, especially Peru, studying the wealth of music and diversity of popular religions. Peter has taught courses at the City Lit and elsewhere (on music and popular culture in Latin America) and speaks fluent Spanish & Portuguese. Peter has realized his dream of a private centre located in a beautiful part of the Rainforest in the Mishana nature reserve, and has developed the centre to be purpose built to support those who desire to fully immerse themselves in the Amazonian medicine practices.



EUGENE BERSUKER, a Yoga teacher, trained in India, Shivananda Saraswati School of Yoga. Traditional Hatha and Yoga for Healing. Yoga postures and meditations used to relieve tensions, purify mind/body, and raise vibrations. An instructor in Chi Gong, and Eugene is also a Licensed Massage Therapist - Swedish and Shiatsu.

Eugene will be offering Yoga and meditation classes, with individual massages available (fee payable).



VIEWS OF MISHANA RETREAT CENTRE



www.shamanism.co.uk