

7 WAYS TO INSPIRE
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TAKE YOUR mind on holiday

You don't need to travel to gain inner peace. Here's how to enjoy a spiritual retreat from your sofa...

Much is known about the power of the mind to create thoughts and feelings that can boost our wellbeing. But how about taking things a step further and using your mind to help you travel to a place of inner peace and tranquillity without even leaving your home?

'It's perfectly possible to sit in your living room and trick the body into feeling like it's on a retreat in paradise,' says yoga teacher, reiki healer and holistic coach Michelle Taylor. 'The mind/body connection is a powerful one. Your mind can transport you anywhere you wish.'

The question is where do you want to go? Start by thinking about how you want to feel and where you think you would most feel that way. Always start with your emotions. If you want to feel relaxed and free from worries, where do you imagine yourself feeling like that? Try to remember a peaceful place you've been to and how you felt there. Here's what to do next...

STEP 1

Create a space

You're about to take your mind on holiday, so find a designated space where you can create a calm atmosphere. A cluttered space is a cluttered mind and you may find it hard to switch off and imagine you are on a sunny beach when you can see a pile of washing out of the corner of your eye! Claim a room, or simply a spot in a room, to dedicate time to yourself. Keep it clear of clutter and set it up as your sacred space. Soft lighting helps and candles are soothing with their gentle, low light. Gather a yoga mat, cushions, blanket, comfy clothes and get settled.

STEP 2

Begin meditating

Sitting comfortably, start by taking slow, deep breaths. Scan your body from head to toe, noticing any tension along the way. Focus on relaxing the jaw, eyebrows and shoulders. You may start to see colours and shapes. Start

to imagine the place you want to be. Feel the warm sun on your skin, the sand under your feet or the smell of damp grass in the air.

STEP 3

Soothing music

Use sounds to help immerse yourself in the location you want to transport yourself to. Music services have plenty of choice of playlists and albums. For example, the Nature Sounds playlist on Apple Music will set the mood.

STEP 4

Stimulating scents

Our sense of smell can be a powerful tool in conjuring memories and sparking our imagination. Essential oils can also reduce anxious feelings, alleviate stress and improve our mood. You can tailor a blend to the journey you want to take. For example, if you want to find

yourself at the beach, try diffusing three drops each of lemongrass, sweet orange and bergamot with one drop of peppermint for an uplifting, summery scent. If it's the scent of the forest that you want to recreate, try mixing five drops of cedarwood, three of cypress and one of white fir.

STEP 5

Crystals can help

Decorate your sacred space with precious stones. For a general sense of peace, choose amethyst for calmness and spiritual connection, and rose quartz for feeling a sense of love. For an uplifting, summery beach vibe, try crystals linked with joy and happiness, such as sunny yellow citrine and sunstone. For a grounding experience, black obsidian and smoky quartz are associated with our root chakra, where our sense of security lies.

✿ **More info** on Michelle and her work, visit livehappy.livehealthy.co.uk

Try it
now!

Pause and pose

Yoga poses that will help you relax into your mind retreat and embrace your virtual travels

BUTTERFLY FOLD

Sitting on the floor, bring the soles of your feet together. Move them away from your hips to create a diamond. Hinge from the hips to flow your body forward. Relax and round your spine, gently folding towards your toes.



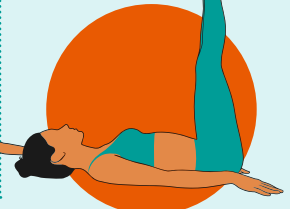
CHILD'S POSE

On your hands and knees, bring your knees together. Lower your body down over your knees, gently pushing your bottom towards your heels. Rest your forehead on the floor, with arms outstretched.



LEGS UP THE WALL

Lay yourself down and place your legs up the wall. The closer you bring yourself to the wall, the stronger the stretch. This is a lovely passive pose.



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Meet some of our Experts Live panel



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