



simple serenity

## Yoga on the Go

### ***A few easy stretches for relaxed traveling***

Traveling for work or pleasure can be challenging for anyone. Long flights, confined spaces, lots of walking and constant scheduling demands can create tired bodies, tight muscles and aching joints. Fortunately, there is a remedy that can go with you on your next journey: yoga.

As I write this, I am flying from Amsterdam to Casablanca. The space is cramped, every muscle is tight and my hips feel fused to the seat beneath me. Fortunately, once in my room at the hotel, I will be able to use fundamental yoga stretches I've learned to bring a much needed release and relaxation.

No special equipment or skills are needed to practice simple yoga stretches. Even breathing in and out slowly through the nose is very calming. Taking a few moments to slow things down, breathe deeply and allow the body to relax can be a welcomed respite from an on-the-go pace.

We begin with the breath – inhaling deeply through the nose, letting the belly expand and then exhaling through the nose as well, slowly and completely, allowing the whole body to relax. Continue breathing slowly in and out of the nose as you do the following poses:

### **Seated Eagle**

*Good for: stretching the upper back and shoulders, relaxing tension and tightness*

What to do: Sit cross legged (or as you are in an airplane or on a train). Cross your right arm under your left arm and bring the backs of your hands together or toward one another. Lift the elbows to shoulder height and extend your “wrapped arms” forward. Hold for five breaths. Repeat, crossing the left arm under the right arm this time.

### **Reclined Pigeon**

*Good for: opening the outer hip, creating space and comfort*

What to do: Lie on your back. Cross your right ankle over your left knee. Reach your right arm through your legs and your left arm outside of your left leg and clasp the hands, gently pulling the legs toward you. Relaxing your right outer hip, hold this pose for five breaths and then change legs.

### **Reclining Butterfly**

*Good for: relaxing and opening inner thighs and hips*

What to do: Lie on your back and bring the soles of your feet together, knees splayed outward. Draw your heels toward your groin with arms at your side, about 45 degrees from your body. Palms should be up and eyes soft and closed. Hold this pose for three to five minutes. (*Don't do this if you have knee or lower back pain*).



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### **Child's Pose**

*Good for: stretching upper back, ribs, arms and shoulders*

What to do: come onto all fours, extending your arms in front of you, turn your toes backward and melt your heart down toward the floor as your hips come gently toward the heels. Hold the pose for five full breaths, allowing the upper body to relax with each breath.

### **Downward Facing Dog**

*Good for: stretching and energizing every muscle in the body*

What to do: Downward facing dog is an inverted V. Come onto all fours with hands shoulder-width apart, fingers splayed, index finger pressing down firmly. Curl the toes under and extend the "sitz bones" (the lowest part of the pelvis) back while beginning to straighten the legs. Press your heels toward the floor and let the head and neck relax. Hold this pose for five full breaths. *(If this pose is all you do, it will benefit every muscle in the entire body. Don't do this pose, though, if you have wrist pain, high blood pressure or glaucoma).*

### **Sphinx**

*Good for: low back pain from walking or sitting for long periods of time*

What to do: Lie on your belly with your elbows directly under your shoulders, palms facing down. Legs are extended behind you, not too far apart, with shoulders relaxed and the gaze forward. Hold this pose for five breaths.

Doing these few yoga poses during your next trip will contribute greatly to a more relaxed and enjoyable experience. If you are traveling alone, find a private spot and enjoy. If you are traveling with others, invite them to join you. There is plenty of relaxation and travel comfort to go around!