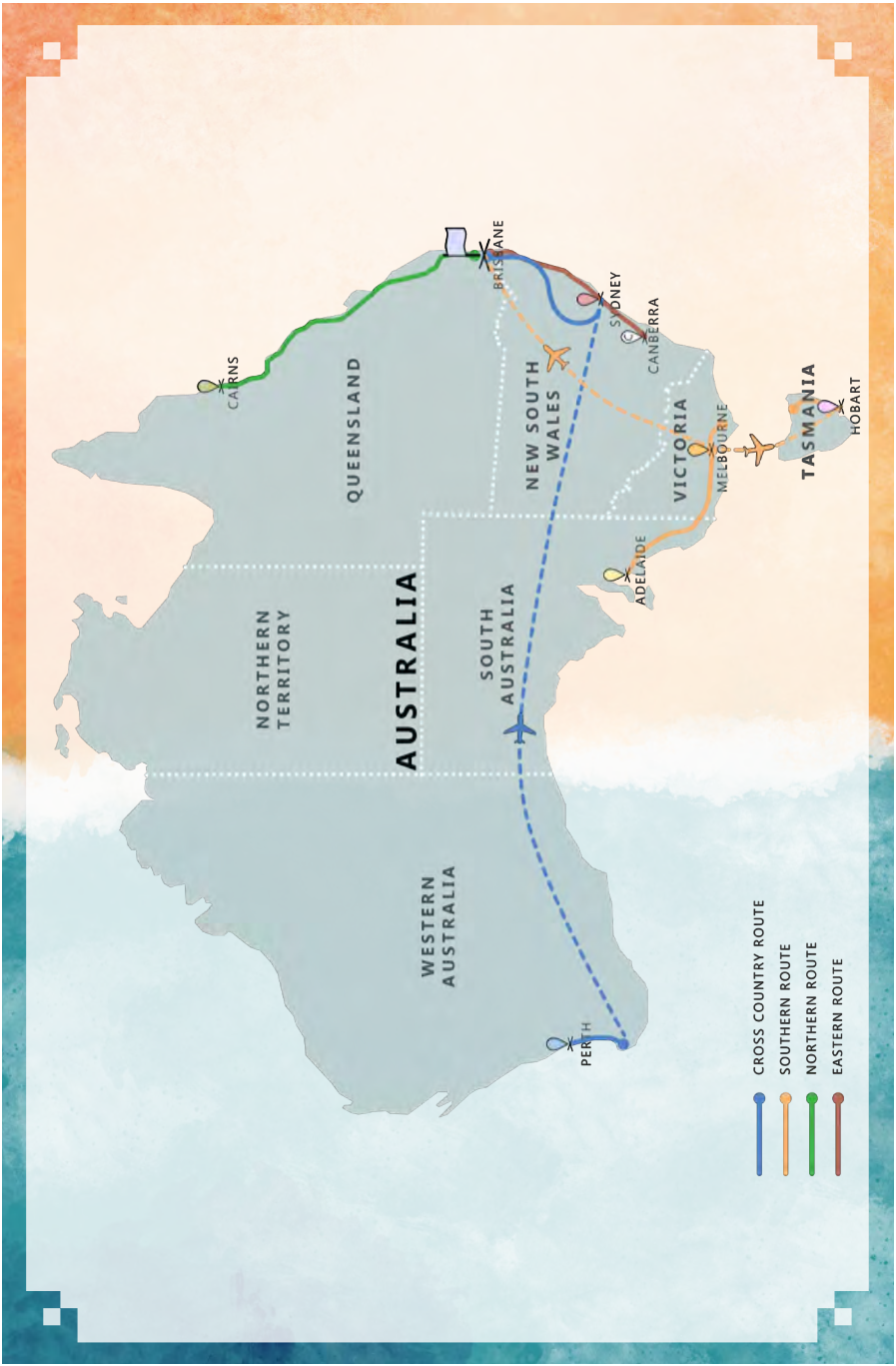




*The
Meditate
Australia
Tour*



- CROSS COUNTRY ROUTE
- SOUTHERN ROUTE
- NORTHERN ROUTE
- EASTERN ROUTE

DEDICATION

We dedicate this book to our dearest Mother, Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi, the perennial source of joy, wisdom and growth within us.

O Mā, please accept our humble effort to capture the infinite blessings you have showered upon us throughout this Meditate Australia Tour. Let such experiences bring us closer and deeper together, as we strive to become worthier instruments of your love.





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Preface

Three weeks, 34 locations, 150+ programs, 2500+ seekers. In July 2019, the Australian Collective hosted one of its biggest and most dynamic projects - the Meditate Australia Tour. It took 7 months of rigorous planning, introspection and dedication by yogis from small towns and bustling cities to bring the MAT to life. While blessings were shared immensely during the tour, most of us know this project yielded so much more. For many, this journey began several months prior, inspiring growth in ways one could never have imagined.

“It only takes a spark...”

MAT was born out of the success of the Love America Tour, which took place in 2018. Devindra Payment (Canada), Qasim Rashid (UK), Shaun Premnath (Australia) and Rennie Berry (Australia) initiated the MAT conversation rather spontaneously. Shaun and Rennie explain this in their tour recollections.

Shaun: “One night, there were a bunch of us at Burwood. We all got back after spending time with yogis at a picnic. We were actually joking with Devindra about how he is always on his computer working on the Love America Tour. Some of us were making jokes like ‘Love Australia’ and, as Australians, we would all try have some banter behind it. Whilst it was all good laughs, I went to bed thinking, ‘What if?’”

Soon, I was in discussion with various people. I roughly knew the Love America Model, so I was just using that to form ideas for an Australian version. At that time, I was also helping out with organising International Ganesha Puja as part of the Yuva Shakti team and talking to the Australian Council. The council was already thinking about doing a tour of some sort before or after the 2019 Maha-Ganesha Puja which was to take place at Uluru. So discussions were already there, but it was just a matter of timing.

Rennie: “Funnily enough, it was after Shri Ganesha Puja and the marriages that we all (everyone left in Cabella) were at Il Patio for the customary pizza dinner. It was then that I spoke to Qasim about the potential to do a ‘Love America style’ tour in Australia. He knew our desire to do a tour in Australia and we wanted it to be a tour that wasn’t just for yuvas, but all age groups. Qasim was keen and seeing that we had both previously worked together it was exciting to be finally

doing something that would bring the rest of the world to this incredible country, Australia - the home of our big brother, Shri Ganesha. Unbeknown to me, Shaun had had a similar conversation with Devindra.”

Shaun: “After Ganesha Puja, I came back to town and was busy with my work, so tour planning was put on the back burner. Meanwhile, Devindra and Qasim were already in conversation with our National Council. So after that, Qasim and I spoke towards the end of October 2018 and decided “Love Australia is happening. Shout it from the rooftop!”

I first announced it to the yuvas and told them this was going to happen; the responses were mind-blowing. Everyone was just saying, “YES! What do you need?” I had conversations with Rennie, Nathan, Pranav and Jahnavi. They formed the base team for the tour.”

Rennie: “It was quite funny when Shaun called us to ask our views because it was an easy conversation as we could see that the desire to do this tour was a lot bigger than we had even realised...”

Shaun: “So our first online meeting happened with Aunty Lyn Vasudeva and Andre Maynard just before Diwali, and it was from there that the first planning stages began.”

“...to get a fire going.”

During our first meeting it was clear that this tour had to be more than a yuva tour - including everyone with a desire to participate, regardless of their geographic or demographic position. On the surface, the goal of MAT was to reach as many seekers as possible across the continent. Deep down, we also desired a greater sense of unity and family within the Australian collective. As bold as it seemed, we knew for this tour to be a success, every instrument from Perth to Tin Can Bay would need to be involved. Eventually, we had over 150 yogis working across all aspects of the tour, many who had never even met their teammates before! It was certainly a grassroots effort, (hopefully) empowering each person to own their patch and contribute in their own unique way.

Apart from Her grace, one of the things that helped build this dynamic was having open communication. We tried to make resources and points of contact easily accessible. This took a while to achieve as we were all new to the game, but rewards were ample. A sense of trust formed as we talked about growth and

overcame any challenges together. Every story of progress shared via the newsletter, weekly meetings or in casual conversation, inspired confidence in our capability. Importantly, there developed a network of support between the yuvas and older yogis, exchanging years of tacit knowledge for fresh energy and new ideas. The feeling of love and family was absolutely immersive as we realised the power of a unified collective during our final weekend at Wamuran.

“And soon all those around...”

Common to any large project, many collectives took our announcement with a grain of salt. Some even thought it was a joke until we contacted them to see how they were progressing!

People were keen, no doubt. But many were grappling with the idea of what the tour could mean for them, whether they were even capable of committing to it and how they would begin. This was especially true for smaller collectives where hosting a national event was relatively uncommon.

As ancillary planning and weekly check-ins persisted, we worked through the hurdles - lack of resources, vibrationally heavy towns, the usual politics, etc. In larger collectives it was more about alleviating scepticism surrounding the tour's materialisation and clarifying technical details of our processes through one-on-one conversations with several yogis. Soon enough, each collective found their groove. When we travelled along our routes, our experiences at each stop were so unique and the standard of delivery was incredible. Some locations only had one faithful yogi planning all the accommodation, venues, promotions, meals and sightseeing for their part! Hearing stories in retrospect, this activity brought several yogis closer in their own collectives. Some even reconnected with the main collective after spending years apart. There was a thirst for something fresh all over Australia and, by the end, each collective really stepped up to the challenge wholeheartedly.

“...will warm up in its glowing”

Where reasoning fails, vibrations prevail. This is literally what sets a Sahaj event apart from the rest - and using our vibrations was fundamental to the MAT's success. Before and during the tour, we employed three main techniques. First, checking vibrations when making decisions on delicate matters or with multiple unknowns. For example, when deciding how much to charge the touring yogis, which route to place them on and which airline to book our flights with. This was a good way to eliminate the element of ego.

Second, using treatments to pre-empt or deal with obstacles. When working on Sahaja projects, we become a bullseye for negativity, as it tries to hinder the work of God. It creeps in from obscure places and turns progress into emotional turmoil. To combat this, we created a vibrational support team, responsible for holding regular foot soaks and paper burning sessions where many obstacles were resolved collectively. Of course, the organisers did plenty of their own clearing and touring yogis held regular clear-out sessions on tour.

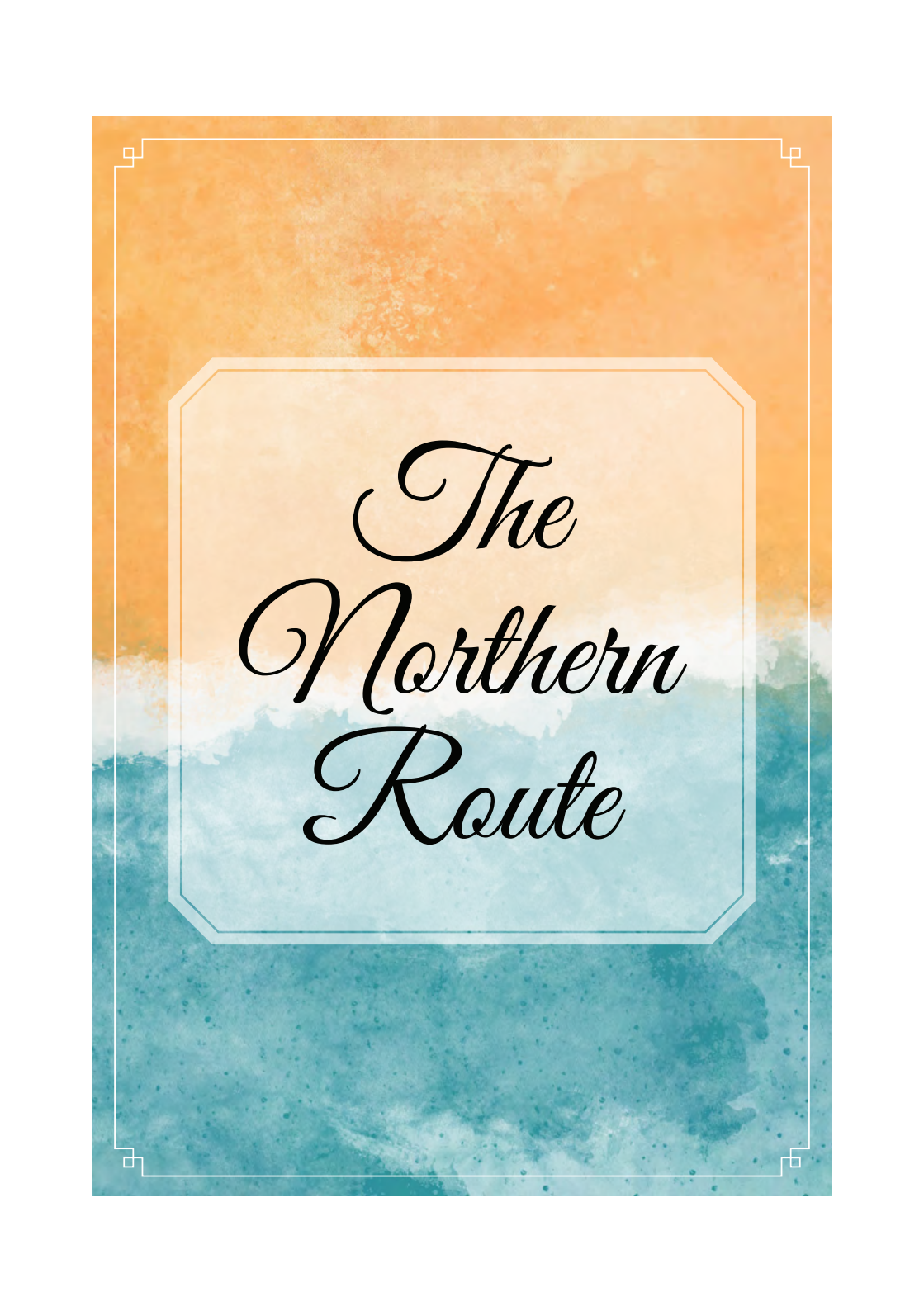
Finally, using treatments to address negativities attacking Sahaja Yoga in Australia from external sources. During our travels we visited places parched of seekers, severely caught up in the worldly maya. In such cases we chose to vibrate the town by offering havans, pouring vibrated water in local dams and burying vibrated coconuts wherever possible.

“You want to pass it on”

Lastly, we would like to thank all the people who have kindly shared their experiences for this recollection. A big thanks also goes to the MAT recollections team – Neelam, Jahnvi, Gabriel, Kush, Rani, Jenny and Kirsty – who have helped to pull the strings together and weave a wonderful narrative of contrasting colour, light and joy. We hope that you, dear reader, may enjoy these waves of love and dive deeper within.

With all our love,

- *M.A.T. Core Team*



*The
Northern
Route*



The Northern Route was greeted with coconuts, sunshine, and sublime moments at their launch pad in the Far North, before travelling southwards along Queensland's coast. Between Cairns and Brisbane, they visited 6 main regions - Townsville, Rockhampton (Raglan), Hervey Bay, Tin Can Bay, Maryborough and the Sunshine Coast. With only 9 yogis holding the fort across these areas, the team moved with intent from programs and flying to vibrational activities, triggering renewed vitality to previous efforts. This particularly international cohort was also treated to generous home-cooked meals and the occasional kangaroo-spotting and tree-climbing opportunity along the way. Exceptional interest from seekers in the Central Queensland area certainly sets a precedent for another regional tour in the future, if not regular weekly programs.

SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE, NORTHERN MOON



From beyond the plane window, the dawn light crept up across the slightly curved horizon. Stars gradually vanished into the wave of colour. Yet, the thin crescent of a waning moon, brilliant against a backdrop of deep blue, kept me company. Its sweet smile, peculiar to its orientation near the equator, had greeted me earlier as I woke from my fourth and final nap on my flight to Australia. Gazing at this unusual sight, I recalled the name of Bhala-chandra and smiled back in return. I kept my eye on the sky and its sliver of a silver white moon until the pilot made an announcement, and we dove back into a thick blanket of clouds on our descent to the hallowed land of Ganesh.

I would like to describe my first few days in Cairns, but I'll save you the details as I endured – what I would like to term – an ‘Intensive Mooladhara Detox Session’ (which was great for losing some extra weight!). This was coupled with a brain-jamming jetlag that seemed to freeze all my cognitive capabilities. What I do remember, however, were the sweet smiles that graced every face of the Rawal household and the Cairns collective as they ensured that all hands were on deck for the maiden voyage of the Northern Route of the Meditate Australia Tour. My first impression, on the other hand, wasn't a flattering one. When the majority of the tour participants funnelled into Cairns over the weekend and into the Queenslander house on Little Street, I greeted most of them with a feeble croak and a mat of dishevelled hair while I precariously hobbled around the house in pyjamas well past midday. But even in my less-than-great state, the Australian natural landscape continued to catch my attention. Its stunning assortment of flowers were like rays of sunlight made tangible with eye-watering bursts of yellow, orange and the reddest red.

Even so, these tropical flowers could not compare to the colour, depth, and variety of yogis, yuvas, and seekers who I had the pleasure of meeting over the following four weeks. While small in number, the Cairns collective was solid. The only program that wasn't attended well was one for families and kids, but if my memory serves me correct, it has been continued in another format. The collective has strong connections with the Cairns City Council which helped them to secure the key location of the Esplanade for self-realisation programs, as well as a handful of library programs, plus private corporate meditations at the council offices. We spent four evenings, under the stars or in rain, playing bhajans, dancing, and offering self-realisation to any seekers who came our way. There are many wonderful stories

from these evenings that others can recollect better than I, sitting as I was behind the mixer or busy engaging passers-by in theological debate! The highlight of each evening was usually the qawwalis or Jogwa which drew people in like bees looking for nectar.

One evening was especially memorable. Rain seemed to be a constant danger on the horizon for this outdoor program, and we continually checked and re-checked the weather report for the evening. The first evening when rain came pouring down, the crowds scattered for cover and we were left protecting the AV gear and instruments from damage. The following evening, the rain came our way again. However, instead of acquiescing to the elements, Tomas and Devdutt met this challenge head-on and began to drum the first beats of Jogwa. Gaspar followed on the harmonium, blasting harmonies and notes into the open air, while Anna, Madhavi, Jahnavi, Shivani, and Ganesh continued apace with the song. The audience was glued to their seats. Soon, as the second chorus rang out, people were up on their feet, dancing in the rain and clapping their hands to the thrum and drum of Jogwa. In between the rainclouds, I glimpsed a white smile: Bhala-chandra was there – watching all the while.

With this explosion of energy our trusty steeds – Helga and Zorro – zipped us down south into unexplored Queensland territory. This initial burst of energy was essential in order to retain our dynamism and good spirits, for the way down south was mired with challenges and obstacles. What had been an overflowing river of seekers turned into a trickle. On some days, this trickle only offered a few drops. I felt parched, thirsty and dry – spoilt as I'd been by the sheer number of seekers experienced during the past Love America Tour. In my ignorance, I forgot that Sahaja Yoga has never been about numbers, but the quality of its seekers. The maxim of 'quality over quantity', as familiar as it is, resounded in my ears with a new ring. For the first time – without the distraction of large groups – I could devote more time to each individual seeker who came across my path.

We had a lacklustre showing in Townsville. Our first program of the day was attended by a single person. Our second program was a no-show. We sat there in a beautifully lit wooden hall right across the Ross River with time on our hands. Faced with an obstacle, we chose the best course of action we could think of at that moment – meditate. The notes from Devdutt's bansuri swelled and echoed on the wood panelling, filling the space with the soft melodies of the flute. In that moment of meditation, my apathy was gradually replaced with resolve, with a detached certainty to observe events as they are, not as I would wish them to be. Krishna's words to Arjuna on the field of Kurukshetra rose to the surface of my mind:

‘Do thy work in the peace of Yoga and, free from selfish desires, be not moved in success or in failure.’

I rose from meditation and walked across to the river bed. A pathway adjoined where the river ran, with only a couple of people enjoying the late afternoon sun. From the corner of my eye, a man with a pink shirt, green shorts, and a quizzical look to him approached me from my right. I stopped him and said, “Would you like to try Sahaja Yoga meditation?” He looked me up and down and asked, “I’ve tried a couple of different meditations. What’s your one about?” With only the slightest encouragement, he agreed to join us.

He had tried a variety of meditation styles such as Twin Hearts and Hatha Yoga. I worked on him for quite a while, correcting imbalances in his Vishuddhi and Agnya chakras especially his Agnya. After a while he looked up at me and asked, “Can you smell cinnamon?” I was quite perplexed and commented that it was a slightly unusual side-effect. Yet, his system felt cleared and he left with a smile, a talk, and a handshake. Only later on did I read in Babamama’s autobiography that during self-realisation, it is indeed possible to smell distinct, sweet fragrances emanating from the palm of the hands or the head.

I resumed my position next to the riverbank while a delicate shower of rain fell from the sky. The surface of the river was dappled by raindrops, while small tortoises poked their heads above the surface near the bank. A runner ran by but didn’t respond to my greeting – airpods in and all. For a while I stood there, mesmerised by the play of water, light and life. Again, the runner proceeded from the other direction on her loop back my way. Determined, I jumped in front of her path.

Surprised, but intrigued she listened to my offer. Yet again, without much cajoling, she was happy to try meditation. Kitty worked on her and meditated with her for a long, long time – for well over an hour. When she received the beginner’s flyer at the end of the meditation, she laughed. She had tried Sahaja Yoga meditation before, had tried to keep up interest, but had chucked away her previous flyer only a couple of weeks prior to meeting us! And now it had come back to her.

From Townsville, Airlie Beach, and Rockhampton, to Tin Can Bay, Sunshine Coast and Wamuran, the tour sped along with the accompaniment of dance, laughter and song. A novel (or perhaps a novella) could be filled with the gnyana and learning derived from the experiences under the southern sun. A tour is truly a

unique event; it challenges you on many fronts, but it is through these challenges we can arise in victory with greater knowledge. My only regret is that I did not get to see a koala!

My flight back home departed from Brisbane under the cover of night. I looked out at the fading orange lights of the city as the plane flew due north, following the contour of the land as it met the ocean. Here, in a moonless starlit sky, I watched as the plane retraced our steps back up the coast. As it passed Cairns, I let out a sigh. No tears, no cry – for my heart was filled with wonder, gratitude, and a new high. Even though I flew through a moonless dark night, I knew that dawn was just beyond sight. May we forever be the instruments of Her boundless love.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Gabriel Kolanen (Finland, Northern Route)*

PLAY TO PRAY



This story is about two young boys who attended the public program at Maroochydore on the Sunshine Coast.

My role at the program was to oversee and interact with any children who came to the program with their parents. There was a good open space at the back of the room, with grass and a wonderful huge tree with a long table and seat under it.

Just as the program was to start a mum came in with her three children: two boys who were aged about 8 and 10 and a young girl who was about 2. So we went out into the open space with the two young boys. Of course, they were not very interested in interacting with a stranger – let alone the fact that they had been bought along to a meditation thing by their mum. These two boys then decided that wrestling and fighting were the best course of action in this situation and, of course, they weren't keen to interact with the stranger (me)! The older of the two boys was the ringleader with the younger one following his example. So when I asked a question like, "What's your name?" the answer came slowly. When I then tried asking more questions, they were met with a glance, a quick one-word response, followed by more wrestling and fighting. You could tell that these boys appeared to have had a bit of a hard life and that perhaps things were not that settled at home. From a teacher's perspective (which I am), you could see that the eldest boy could be a difficult student to have in a classroom.

So there I am thinking, 'Oh my gosh! What do I do? I don't want them running into the program and disturbing the seekers in there'. Of course, then the idea comes to mind to put the situation into bandhan and then everything changes. The right idea of how to interact with these boys comes to me and a softening of the feeling that this is too hard. Now, the right idea of how to interact involved me (60 years old) running around and playing bulrush with these boys. The eldest of the boys really enjoyed this and I kept making a bee-line for him and missing him, but he lapped it all up. Following this, when we chatted he gave more than one-word answers, he began to laugh and smile, and his face began to shine.

After quite some time, the eldest boy then decided that he wanted to make some origami things. We then all sat at the table under the tree and did some origami. The eldest one then shared with me how he had done this at school and he really enjoyed it. So here was this boy who previously would barely talk to me sharing his

personal feelings and experiences.

While we were doing this, the boys' mum came out and shared with me how she had asked them if they had wanted to go home and they had said, "No, we are having too much fun." She explained that this was very unusual as usually they can't wait to get home to go on their PlayStation.

These boys, the mum and the sister went home with smiles, joy and laughter within themselves and with shining faces.

So the point of me telling this story is that although I didn't get the boys to sit and 'meditate', the vibrations still worked through them. Our meditation was the sitting under the tree (maybe a bit like Buddha) and letting the vibrations work through them on a level that they were able to experience at that time. I think of them often and hope that this experience will stay with them and when they are old enough, they will seek it out and we will see them in the Sahaj collective.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Debbie Miller (Brisbane QLD, Northern Route)*

A WORLD OF PURE JOY



It was a dream come true to be involved in an Australian tour to give self-realisation. Personally, I feel the opportunity to participate in such an event is a privilege and blessing from Shri Mataji. MAT has given me opportunities to learn more about myself, continue my journey as a yogi, and to grow deeper in Sahaja Yoga

Initially, I was a bit unsure of how I will fit in with the yuvas but I soon realised that the spirit is not bound by age. The maturity and depth of my fellow tour members made it very clear to me that I can learn so much from all these yogis. It was a humbling experience!

It also gave me an insight into the future of the SY world and the assurance that Sahaja Yoga is in very capable hands. I also understood that we have all come to SY with our conditionings but the younger generation is different; the way they connect to the divine and the people around them. We have to go so much further and deeper as ‘old yogis’.

Regarding new people and self-realisation programs, the music and meditation format worked really well. Having programs in beautiful natural surroundings was so holistic, with Mother Earth facilitating deeper meditation. One becomes aware of the power of Mother Earth and the manifestation of Shri Ganesha at every moment during these programs.

The quality and enthusiasm of the seekers was especially amazing, as well as seeing the change in enthusiasm levels over the years. Times have changed, with some venues having seekers queuing up to get in.

Personally, I am so touched and humbled by the generosity and love of the hosting yogis, who opened their houses to a large group of touring yogis arriving at all odd hours of day and night. Their hospitality and care set a great and diverse example of contribution to the touring yogis. We really were treated like royalty.

I would suggest that every yogi around the world should take up the opportunity to join a Sahaj tour at least once. I feel it’s the best way to grow deeper and fulfil our duty to please our Divine Mother and accomplish Her vision of establishing SY in this world.

A beautiful world of love, laughter and pure joy is what the three-week MAT was for me!

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Mahima Morgan (Sydney NSW, Northern Route)*

THE WAY OF BHAKTI



The second stop of the Northern Route was Townsville. It was quite a tough town and we felt the left side very strongly. So, in the evening, we offered a havan to Shri Mataji. This havan was so strong that I no longer felt any negativity or catches remained on the left side.

At the Sunshine Coast, we offered a Mahalakshmi Puja to Shri Mataji. We were around 20 yoginis and yogis. The puja was so strong; it was a blast! After the puja, we sang bhajans and qawwalis and danced a bit. The vibrations were so strong it felt like we were with another 2,000 yogis. It was one of the strongest pujas I was involved in on the tour. This was the first group picture taken of our group as we were just about to leave Cairns. We had such a wonderful time in Cairns but no idea what wonders Mother had planned for us for the rest of the tour. We have so many lovely memories and grew so much together. By the end of the tour it didn't feel as though I'd only known some of the Northern tour members for four weeks but, rather, that I'd known them all my life.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Annapurna Jasmin Gherghe
(Austria, Northern Route)



Northern Route team ready to leave Cairns

5 MINUTES



We had a music program scheduled at 7 pm in the middle of the week. It was taking place in an industrial city called Rockhampton on the Northern Route. In the day time we had gone to print some flyers but the printer in the shop was out of order. Somehow, we managed to get the flyers printed and went to the city but it was quite empty as it was during working hours. However, the people we found did not have much interest in meditation. Later, we went to the concert venue but it was locked and was only due to open one hour before the program. So, instead, we decided to go to a park for a short music practice and dinner. I felt quite disappointed by all of these obstacles.

At 6 pm we went to the hall and it was completely dark outside. It felt as though nobody would come to the program and it was all useless. What to do? So we went ahead and got the stage, sound system, banners prepared. Waiting ... Silence.

And just five minutes before the program was about to start around 20 people formed a queue near the doors! All of them came inside and we had a wonderful program. A scientific but simple introduction by Pranav, a heart-opening raga sung by Anna and joyful qawwalis and bhangra dance performed by the Northern team. The people really enjoyed the meditation and entertainment and after the program I also felt so joyful and fresh, like a new-born. It taught me never to expect anything or react, just to witness.

- Tomas Drunga (*Lithuania, Northern Route*)

5 MINUTES



Pranav introducing Sahaja Yoga at the Rockhampton program



Public program in Rockhampton

A DIVINE PUZZLE



This tour felt like a gift from the Gods. It was the light at the end of a tunnel or perhaps a reward for good behaviour. It felt like everything was smooth and easy, with the challenges we faced easily overcome. Personally, it came as a surprise to be involved in the tour and it took a while for me to settle into the routine. This was made easier by the great souls on the tour. What an inspiration they are. The tour participants were pieces in a jigsaw that only the Divine could complete. Individual characters that added so much to the collective whole but were also as much fun to observe when they were doing their own thing. This meant both periods of laughing hysterically and feel-good group moments that still resonate. We seemed to click quickly and, as there weren't so many of us, it was natural to find alone time with each member to open up and share. Participating in the programs and concerts really opened my eyes to the seeking in northern Australia. Having visited previously, I had the impression of a population that was content with their material lives and had lost sight of their spiritual path as a result. This was far from the truth for most of the people we encountered during the tour. It was refreshing to see such deep seekers when I had seen so few during my previous time in Australia. Meeting these people with our lively crew was so much fun and made the tour three weeks of bliss. Finally, the collectives that hosted us made us feel so welcome. We were spoilt with food and love and without them the tour wouldn't have been possible. All in all, we couldn't have asked for more!

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Nicholas Tobias (United Kingdom, Northern Route)*

THE POWER OF HER PICTURE



The Northern Route started in Cairns. We had four evening music and meditation sessions on the Esplanade on the waterfront in the liveliest part of town. It was a prime venue with dozens of seekers passing by and getting their self-realisation each night. One of the resources we had was a condensed ‘One Mother For All’ exhibition as three double-sided, pull-up stands, with huge photographs of our Mother and a small text block containing extracts from Her talks underneath. The first few evenings for some reason or the other it was always left behind ... or not used. It was either raining or didn’t work. A small doubt about putting such confronting material out seemed to creep in and the thought was perhaps now was not the time to use this resource.

The space was sponsored by the local government and they had been very careful about what we were going to do with that space. This exhibition hadn’t been mentioned to them during the organising stages. On the last night though, it was drizzling again. This time I felt mightily drawn to the boxes with the banners in them. With strong winds all around, I kept looking away and trying to enjoy the beautiful music being played by our touring yogi(ni)s.

Within a few minutes, I found that I was standing there putting the second banner up. Somehow the first one was already up. As the second one was being set up, the number of seekers instantly doubled in the area and they read the banners as they were being set up, even though the banners were vigorously wobbling in the wind. We got the third one up and put some bags around them to keep them steady.

Ten huge photographs of our Mother were on display to the town, with angelic music and a light drizzle around. That night, the number of people who got their self-realisation must’ve been around 80 to 150 easily. From then on, these huge photographs were up everywhere, as soon as we got there.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Pranav Rawal (Cairns QLD, Northern Route)*

STORIES FROM THE ESPLANADE



(Transcript from Sunday recollections session about the Music and Meditation sessions on the Cairns Esplanade and Cairns Library)

We were giving self-realisation and everyone was quite into it. People would see that some meditation was going on and they'd run and come right to the front and sit in a perfect lotus position that I can't even do! So yeah, that was a good start. We had one lady who was about 50 years old and she was clapping along and she participated in all the self-realisation sessions – maybe about five or six of them. She was there until the last note. I went up to her after and said, “You looked like you were enjoying it”, and she said, “Yeah! I only came out to buy some milk. I'm coming back tomorrow with my two kids.”

She came back two days later with two little kids. The younger one must have been around eight years old. He was so cute and had little round glasses. They stayed again for like a good hour until it rained. The little kid went through the whole meditation three times. So blissed out. It was quite sweet.

There was one guy (who was maybe around 40 years old) who came with his bicycle and a big helmet. He stopped on the path a bit further away and then joined in for the self-realisation session. He was attracted by the music and stayed for the self-realisation. He had his bike between his legs standing up and had one hand on the handlebar while doing everything. He was really, really deep into it, you know. And I was just watching him and when he got to Agnya, I thought, ‘What is he gonna do about his helmet?’ And when they said, “Now we'll put our hand on our head”, he quickly undid the helmet strap and took it off!

We were really getting into it on the Esplanade. I think we'd transitioned into ‘Allah Hu’, and there was this big crowd of Muslim people who came and sat on the chairs and were singing along. The music then transitioned to ‘Mataji Mataji Mataji’ (singing) and they were so confused!

We also had programs with families bringing their children along. One lady came with a little child and she said, “My mum came to one of the corporate programs yesterday and told me to come here.” So we had a lot of seekers coming along via word-of-mouth as well. Yeah, that was pretty good. I was really surprised at how many people were attracted by the meditation. I thought we'd attract people

through the music and lose some when we started doing self-realisation. But no, so many people were genuinely attracted by the meditation. There were a lot of people who you wouldn't think would be interested, not necessarily hippie types.

We had one program in a beautiful room in the Cairns Library that was completely packed – about 36 or 37 people. There was one guy who had his arms crossed the whole time. He didn't join in with the self-realisation at all and just had his arms crossed. Then, at the end when we said, "Did anyone feel anything?", he raised his hand! Half way through the program, a third of the audience just left. And we thought, 'What's going on?'. It turned out that an English teacher, who was conducting English classes for Nepalese immigrants, thought she'd take her whole class to our program so that they could listen to English. So we realised that they didn't understand a word of what we said and, you know, because their class was over they had to leave. At least they got their self-realisation!

At the back of the hall, there was a whole group of Aboriginal people and they were so into it. While we were talking, they were looking at each other and they were showing each other the fingers that they felt tingling ... like, "Ah yeah, it's this one!" They asked so many questions at the end we couldn't stop them. They were asking about other Sahaja programs around the area. So yeah, we had some nice experiences.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Gaspar Hunt (Brisbane, QLD, Northern Route)*

1-800-QAWWALI



Madhavi: I feel like what was really unique about the Esplanade in Cairns was that we didn't have to go over to a single person and ask them to come and sit down. They were waiting for us before the program started. While we were setting up and doing the mic check, there was a crowd of people already sitting and waiting. That happened every single day and our programs ran for three to four hours sometimes and on a couple of days it rained and people stayed. They stayed the whole time and we had seekers coming back every single day to get the experience again. One of the things I noticed was that every single night when the Qawali started there would be a flock of people. So just to answer that question that uncle was asking – “What works in public programs?” – Qawwalis for sure are such a powerful drawcard for people.

And I think it's really interesting at the radio program we did the host asked us, “How's that really gonna work at the Esplanade, you know? It's so loud so how are people gonna meditate there?” We had a really loud Zumba class happening nearby literally every night and water aerobics in the pool behind us. But the venue worked so well despite the noise competition. The seekers had an amazing response that everything around them sort of disappeared. As yogis, it was such a relief not have to be like, “Come, sit down and get your self-realisation” and have to pull people in. It was totally just taken care of by our presence there. And the music was so nice; we loved it.

Gaspar: We had quite a big crowd; like a few people on seats and a lot of people sitting in front of the seats on big mats and a lot of people were crowding, standing all around. Then the music stopped and someone took the mic and said, “Right, now we're gonna do a meditation session”. All the people standing around just sparked up and like came and sat on the mats and filled every little space and it was as crowded as the puja yesterday ... sitting next to strangers, shoulder to shoulder. It was absolutely amazing – like, “We're gonna meditate. Ah! Great!”

Madhavi: They were asking for it. They were literally standing there and then it would rain and they would stay there and wait until they got to the end. Just amazing!

Jai Shri Mataji

- Gaspar Hunt (Brisbane, QLD) and Madhavi Shete (USA, Northern Route)

लीला (LEELA)



One of my most treasured experiences of helping organise this tour was learning the true meaning of being an instrument of the Divine. I am grateful for our Mother's infinite patience as it took several lessons for me to even begin this introspection. Over the past seven months, the organising team faced challenges of all sorts. While many were easily resolved through our vibrational artillery and common sense, we reached a stage with some issues where no amount of discussion, negotiation, paper burning, shoebeating, bandhans or any other Sahaj treatment under the sun seemed to work.

In such situations, all we could do was to humble down and surrender – not to give up but to understand that our limited intelligence could only fathom the tiniest part of God's Plan; that in fact, our job was not to 'organise' the tour but to be the hands of the Organiser through which the grander plans of Her Creation could unfold. Regardless of my purest intent, I had to recognise that everything was actually going according to Plan and all I had to do was rein in my ego and let Mother solve the problem – if there ever was one.

A prime example of this was during our final days in Brisbane when arranging logistics for the Queen Street Mall program. First of all, a few facts: we needed to organise transport for 70 touring yogis, plus program equipment. However, finding street parking for even one car in the city is often an onerous affair, let alone for nine cars. In addition, being a Friday afternoon meant the shops were open till late and locals would be flocking in for their weekly dose of retail therapy.

I had convinced myself that we would only take one tour van into the city and the rest of us would travel in by train. But as the days went by, I realised we would need to arrange multiple shuttles to Caboolture train station, each person would then need to buy an individual ticket (as the machine only dispensed one ticket at a time) and if we wanted to catch the half-hourly train punctually at 9 am, this process would need to start well in advance.

You would think that after all these months I would have learned to sit back and leave it to Mother. Instead, I mustered my complete human brain to consider all possibilities of getting group tickets so that we could in fact travel by train. I even rang Queensland Rail for group tickets and was told I would need to give details of every single passenger and an exact time of travel – very impractical for a yogi's

plan! My mother had also told me of a \$27 all-day parking ticket that was available in an underground Secure Park very close to the venue, but I dismissed it with all certainty that trains were the best way to go. Having exhausted my best efforts, I rang our CFO, Rennie. At first it seemed like a tricky situation, but as soon as I told her about the \$27/car parking ticket, she said, “We can totally afford that! It’s a no-brainer!” I let out a little laugh of embarrassment/relief and proceeded to book nine tickets for the following day.

We announced our grand transport plan after meditation that evening. All seemed well until we realised around the dining table that four of our cars would be too tall to enter into the parking lot! Fortunately, by this stage, I had learnt my lesson (well, sort of). I handed the baton over to Shri Hanuman and went to sleep.

It was Friday morning; the sun was shining in its full glory as were the radiant faces of our dear yogis. Everyone was ready and dressed to impress, instruments piled into the vans, all set to go. I sat with Gabriel in the van with the Mall permit, admittedly nervous about how the day was to unfold. I knew in my heart that everything would work out but I had yet to confirm the same in my intelligence. As we navigated through the maze of one-way city streets, I tried looking out for vacant parking spots and failed. We pulled into the Mall and I checked my WhatsApp messages for the latest news and, of course, Shri Hanuman had been working his magic. All four cars had found the most convenient parking spots even before the rest of us had made it into the underground parking lot!

Needless to say, Mother spent every moment with us that day, as she did all through all stages of this incredible tour. She gave me glimpses of what it would be like to live each moment in full surrender – to dissolve my worry and become one with Her Leela. Though my journey towards this state has only just begun, I know for sure that if the vibrations are in our favour and our desire is pure, nothing can stop us from being the purest instrument of Mother’s work. Every obstacle becomes a lesson and every success is a sweet blessing. Jai Shri Mataji.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Jahnvi Rawal (QLD, Northern Route co-leader)*

SURRENDER AND DETACHMENT



I was fortunate to be one of the people helping to organise this tour. The yuvas happened to be the ones who had time and energy to put in a large amount of the work for the tour. However, that also meant that we also didn't have much experience to back us up a lot of the time which, in hindsight, left a lot of room for spontaneity and working things out in a Sahaja way. The sheer size of what we were aiming to do was overwhelming at first but, strangely, it never really seemed an obstacle in our minds. Countless times there would be issues with bookings or even with finding ways to tell some regional collectives that the tour could only stop at their house for a few days and it really couldn't stay any longer if we were to reach Wamuran in time for Guru Puja. I found that I had to pray to Shri Shiva to be detached from my own expectations and Shri Hanumana to stop my own right side from interfering. Within a short time of this newfound direction in praying, things just came through week after week. We found vehicles that permitted younger drivers so suddenly the issue of drivers was solved. Musicians got their finances sorted from within their collectives spontaneously so that was also solved. Local governments gave us grants and set up programs and advertising for us! For months, every week things just moved along until the tour happened! It was amazing because any decision we were stuck at, we would check the vibrations and keep going. That is when the true meaning of witnessing and being an instrument for the divine became apparent. It also became a goal for me – seeing just how beautiful life can be for a yogi if we just take the jump to wholeheartedly do our Mother's work and push our own ego aside! The silent joy inside – something greater than fulfilment – was incredible!

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Pranav Rawal (Cairns QLD, Northern Route co-leader)*

THE ROCKY ROAD TO ROCKHAMPTON



We had a music and meditation evening at a coastal cattle town called Rockhampton (locally known as Rocky). The nearest active public program was at least a 600-km drive away. The idea of the tour was to support all the regional collectives but we needed a stop in the drive around this region. Mother organised it beautifully! We discovered a long-time yogi couple who lived an hour's drive away where we could stay and a yogi from the Brisbane collective – some 800 kms away – arranged the venue booking. Around two weeks out from the start of the tour, it all fell into place. We thought, 'There have been yogi expeditions through this area but not for a while and there was not really an established collective in this town itself'. We thought, 'Let's give it to them BIG!' It was a full-scale music and meditation session that was to be three hours long.

The tour group had prepared a dance and full run-sheet with MCs and all by the time we reached this town. This was a town with straightforward farmers and cattle graziers who are up early. This was an evening program on a weeknight. No physical advertising had been done and the organisers had only talked to the two local yogis on very few occasions over the phone. We really weren't sure about follow-up potential or even the appetite for something like meditation in such a place. We spent around \$50 on Facebook ads across three days so that there was some promotion. On the morning of the program, we went into the town and got some leaflets printed for doing some flyering in the streets. After going into numerous print shops that were too busy to do an on-the-spot order, we found one that would do it for us. We got around 120 of them before their printers jammed up. They had just bought new printers so were shocked at their end, and sent us off with 120 flyers for free! A small consolation when we were hoping to get a few hundred printed to hand out. By then we had lost a few hours and it was well past lunch time. We thought, 'Well, we'd better skip lunch for now and give out the flyers we have so people have some notice to arrange for some time and company to come with to our program that evening'.

We managed to hand out a grand total of 20 flyers over 2–3 hours, with 6–7 groups going off in different directions approaching whoever we could. It wasn't that people were disinterested, there was simply no-one. The locals were in the fields or in the offices. It was a feeling where all you could do was show up at the program and surrender. We picked up the keys to the venue and went there over 90 minutes before the start time for the program.

Once we were at the venue, we found out that the key-card would only let us in 30 minutes prior to the booking time. We had to set up a full music stage with six mics, an amplifier, two large speakers, all the wiring, carpets, tuning, sound-testing, etc. The best time we had done it beforehand was around 50 minutes. This was also in a huge echoey hall. We also had to remove all the tables from the area (around 40 of them) and set up the seating, along with an exhibition set and a welcome table, plus other miscellaneous things. Well, in true tour 'bubble' fashion, none of that registered and we thought, 'Let's just have dinner now as opposed to before the program and do what we can in the set-up time we have'. We got back into the venue 25 minutes before the start time and frantically split into teams to set up. Fifteen minutes before the start time there were cars in the carpark. Somehow time stopped! We were ready to go with five minutes to spare. Quite literally time must've stopped. There really wasn't any other explanation. We had just changed into our tour shirts and sat at the welcome desk when the first seekers came in. Around 15 people in a public program in Australia is usually a good showing, in a town with yogi presence. We thought if we had five here, that would be great!

We had around 30 seekers and they stayed for four hours. They had all felt the vibrations as well as the effect of the music. Their faces were shining and had the deepest questions! In fact, their only complaint – rather aggressively – was that they would have to drive 600 kms for a follow-up program!

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Pranav Rawal (Cairns QLD, Northern Route co-leader)*

250 YOGIS, 5 DAYS, AND 1 CARPET PYTHON



When I first heard about the proposed MAT I thought, ‘Wonderful!’ as we have not had a tour since the Realise Australia Tour in 2006. In those days, there was no Facebook or social media to speak of and we planned our section of the tour by scribbling on a large wall planner. We searched a big map of Queensland and honed in on the towns of interest, booking the venues in advance and writing up ads and editorials for the local newspapers. Then, a few of us drove up there and did postering and leafleting over a couple of weekends.

This time, however, the focus was more on Facebook and social media promotion and the printed material was of a very high standard.

Panic set in, however, when Debbie first announced there would be 250+ people coming to Wamuran! Arrgh! Where were we going to house them all? Was there enough parking space? Do we have enough water? Doesn’t it normally rain during Guru Puja? Over the coming weeks, we set about answering these questions and more. Two large marquees were ordered, along with a large skip, ten portaloos and 60 inflatable mattresses. Cooking rosters were created and teams of yogis were sent out into the field on a mission to buy food and supplies. Our parking area had been reduced significantly after the new puja hall was built so we ordered a large earth-moving machine to clear more trees and lay down gravel. The grass was mowed and the lawns watered, plus 300 new native plants were planted.

Two weeks before the puja, it rained and rained and everything turned green and muddy. Thankfully, the rain stopped in time and the ashram looked glorious.

I travelled to Rockhampton with some sound gear to help set up for the program at Bauhinia House. The yuvas had been hosted by Rob and Jan at Raglan. It didn’t take long to set up everything and soon the seekers arrived. The yuvas began with a few lively songs and the vibrations were tremendous. Then the self-realisation, followed by an amazing dance which had everybody on their feet. The seekers didn’t want to leave and stayed for some time chatting and finding out more about Sahaja Yoga.

It was so wonderful seeing these young yogis so confidently and capably running the program from start to finish and enjoying every moment of it. Nothing was too

much trouble and I felt that this is the ‘new wave’ that we had dared to hope for carrying Shri Mataji’s vision into the future.

Then, on to Wamuran where, amazingly, everyone was able to fit in – and it seemed our planning had more or less succeeded. Of course, our resident carpet python, ‘Sir Hiss’ was a great talking point and it seems he was appreciated by more than one yogini judging by the screams we heard!

The entertainment night and Guru Puja itself was the culmination of a fantastic week and will go down as one of the best yet. The music was of an extremely high standard – equal to any of the best musicians around. The dancing and heartfelt joy was visible for all to see.

Then came the seminar where personal insights and revelations – often of a tender and intimate nature – were shared with the collective, confirming what we already know: that we really are all one. All too soon, the ashram was quiet once more and the ‘big cleanup’ began. Even Sir Hiss had moved on but a few kangaroos ventured in during the early morning hours.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Peter Hewitson (Wamuran, QLD, Northern Route)*

MOTHER'S WAY IN TIN CAN BAY



It's difficult to recall all the joyful moments at my place as so much happened in just 24 hours with all these beautiful, happy people entering my home for the first time. They made themselves very comfortable; it seemed as though they've been living there for ever. I turned the tv on to keep them busy while I was preparing dinner but they were not interested. They sat around the table playing guessing games and riddles. There was much shouting and laughter while I was panicking in the kitchen but, fortunately, Jahnvi and Mahima came to my rescue.

Sometime later we had a powerful clearing session with lemons and a meditation. Some of us went to bed early (including me) – others much later – but we were all up at 5 am as we had a busy schedule the next day with six programs and a visit to Tin Can Bay at 8 am to see the dolphins. We had plenty of time to enjoy them before the cars headed to Maryborough and Hervey Bay.

The small town of Tin Can Bay attracted 11 seekers, most of whom were elderly but very receptive and interested. Some of them stayed on after the program for a cuppa and a chat. They were amazed by the MAT, having Madhavi from Canada and Kitty from Germany, and the fact that we did not charge any fees. Before leaving, a lady handed me a brown paper bag with a donation of \$150 in it. I was astonished by such generosity so we must have made quite an impression!

We ate lunch by the sea at Cooloola Cove Bay not far from where I live, followed by a footsoak. The tide was very low so we had to walk a long way in the muddy sand but it was fun and the weather was perfect.

Next, we drove to Maryborough. I wanted to attend the Town Hall program, while Madhavi and Kitty joined the Hervey Bay group. Eleven people received their self-realisation in Maryborough.

When I arrived in Hervey Bay, it was the end of the last program on the Esplanade. People were meditating to the sound of Devdutt's flute, then a last bhajan and it was all over.

Two very interested ladies stayed and interviewed some yogis; they were very reluctant to leave. It was getting dark – time for dinner – but some yogis went for a swim instead and played volleyball in the dark sea. After play time, we had fish

and chips; a perfect dinner and place to end a very wonderful day. The Hervey Bay programs were very successful with 29 very keen seekers.

Thank you, Pranav, for driving my car home as I don't feel safe driving at night anymore. Back at my place they had to pack up their luggage and all the gear into the cars. It was 9 pm by then so I made coffee for those who wanted to stay awake for the next two hours' drive to the Sunshine Coast.

Once again, my house was quiet and empty. The yogis had left and I missed them already.

Thank you, Shri Mataji for allowing me to be your instrument for this wonderful event.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Alexandra Vernier (Tin Can Bay, QLD) - Northern Route

ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND HANDS



It was really great to have a large group of yuvas coming to Cairns! It's something we don't normally see in Cairns as most of our collective are mature-age yogis. From day one they were full of energy and it was nice to see the different subtle ways they were able to awaken the attention of the seekers. I was stunned at how multi-skilled they all were! One day one yuva would sing in a beautiful voice; the next day they played an instrument like they were 'ringing a bell'.

But it was not only their musical talent. It also included anything from being very creative with their drawings, brilliant at making you laugh and even bluffing you with a card trick that you'd swear was magic!

Such wonderful leadership rising up in Sahaja Yoga around the world!

The subtlety, the dynamism and the enthusiasm of the Northern MAT tour really energised our local collective and left us with a new perspective and a fresh outlook on how we can reach the seekers in the future.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Wayne Ellis (Cairns, QLD, Northern Route)*

RED ROSE PETALS



Sunshine Coast – everything worked out to be just the right size and scope for Leela, Hetty and I, as well as our 14 MAT visitors to manage. Before the tour I had spent a good few weeks ringing around, being shuffled from one person to another, sending emails and follow-up messages trying to set up corporate and public service in-house programs.

In the end, we had bookings for one café and the five Sunshine Coast hospitals, all on at the same time in five different locations. As it turned out, this meant that there were two yuvas for each hospital site and some who had mainly been in the background up till then had a more up-front experience. At these programs, at the public program at Milwell Hall and all through their time with us here, I was amazed at how focused, on task and powerful the yuvas were.

There were many highlights of the MAT tour on the Sunshine Coast but the puja at my place is one I'd like to share. We had scheduled Monday as a free day and thought it would be great to have a MahaLakshmi Puja for the Sunshine Coast that evening. The Sunshine Coast collective at this stage is basically we three ladies. Being active in Sahaja Yoga, looking after our work and family responsibilities and keeping in balance can be something of a challenge. I was very excited (and somewhat nervous) to be having a puja at my new home for the first time in my life. Leela was wonderful. She arrived with arms full of photos, beautiful plates and items for puja set-up and lots of experience. Under her guidance, the back entertainment area of my home was transformed beyond recognition. She came up with so many beautiful little touches so the vibrations were already flowing before anyone arrived. I'll leave you to look at the photos for that detail.

The entertainment room where the puja was set up looks out directly on to the canal at Mooloolaba and there's plenty of distractions outside that back door. Hetty and the yuvas arrived for puja and immediately settled themselves with their instruments into the puja room and began playing beautiful bhajans with full energy and attention. By the time the puja meal was relatively under control (thanks to Mahima for managing the rice) and everything was ready to start, we were all feeling very calm and balanced.

Vijaya was our pujari and started us off powerfully with Aum three times. Amazingly effective. Then we sang Shri Mataji's three great mantras and things

went infinite right from the start. It felt like we travelled forever through the singing. The vibrations were so strong all through the puja. We were blessed to have an amazingly talented group of musicians and singers on our leg of the tour. The music and bhajans were so deep, full of energy and joy. It was one of the strongest pujas I have ever attended. I'm sure that it has created a beautiful foundation for future growth in the Sunshine Coast area. Afterwards, when I dismantled the puja, I put all of the red rose petals, daisies and the coconut into the canal at the back of our place. They all spread out on the surface of the outgoing tide, taking all of that love around the canals and out to sea.

The next day I travelled with Anna and Nick for the program at Maleny Hospital. Once again, the stand-out aspect for me there was the focus these two wonderful young people brought to the event. We had to wait for some time in the reception area near the busy waiting room. While I was looking around at the scenery, Anna immediately went deeply into meditation, followed by Nick. The vibrations were pumping out. The waiting room was no quieter but, all of a sudden, eyes were noticeably bright and animated and the whole mood of the place lifted. As it turned out there was only one lucky seeker who had the program all to themselves. It was a lesson to me though about how much difference you can make just by bringing your A-game to an event right from the start.

We are all still feeling the blessings and growth from this tour and if our desire has anything to do with it, there will be many more.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Erin Redfern (*Sunshine Coast, QLD, Northern Route*)

WATER IN THE DESERT



When I first heard about MAT I thought, ‘Great idea, but who will make it happen?’ We are a tiny collective, a small band of musketeers, doing weekly programs with barely a trickle of stayers. The effort, enthusiasm and any newcomers invariably get drawn away to bigger centres. I was pretty cautious about dipping my toes in.

Then family business got in the way and I had no time for MAT anyway. But gradually I noticed myself seeking out little jobs to do for MAT because I found that it offered relief and joy from a string of emotional quagmires. We cautiously booked some venues and started showing the Love America Tour material around to people. Step by step, it started to take its own course. The Cairns Regional Council encouraged us to develop our ideas, we revised our bookings again and again, and applied for in-kind grant assistance.

As it grew, each of the reluctant yogis in our collective had a new light in their eyes as each one found their groove working out their own passion – the master shopper, the spin doctor, the IT guru, the master chef, stores manager. It was like a sprouting plant after the rain. I believe we started to see each other in a more positive light – more in terms of our strengths and not our shortcomings. We were happy to let one another manage their patch and make decisions on our behalf: what this poster should look like, which hall was better, which company to approach, what to post online. Like lots of different leaves of the same tree. We learned too about an invisible virtual world online where people can be so connected. Why did I doubt? Mother works it out.

As each member of the tour group arrived – each one from a different place – they brought with them a mounting level of vibrations. It was almost palpable, like kind of a bubble of vibrations that was not only full of joy but had a magnetism of its own.

I found myself waking up early in the morning and not being bothered about anything else but getting to the little tour accommodation huddle down the road for morning meditation – just craving for my fix of their vibrations. It has been a long time since I have had that feeling. ‘How smart was Glenda for volunteering to be the breakfast aunty?’ I thought. ‘She will be already there!’

Over 300 people got their self-realisation in Cairns during those four days. We had organised some outdoor venues and many times the rain threatened to dampen our efforts. We checked the weather reports each morning, but the enthusiasm and bandhans of the MAT 'bubble' reigned triumphant.

Thoroughly exhausted, I took myself to the afternoon program on the Esplanade and just slumped in a chair. I couldn't move a muscle. Mera Piya ghar aaya – Oo Laalni started blasting out across the lawn, the lagoon, the street into the ether through the drizzling rain. Near the front, people just stayed sitting on the grass in the drizzling rain. Children near me were dragging their parents back into the crowd for the dancing. Some older people walking by stopped to do some line dancing to the tabla beat. One man who was there didn't even bother to get off his bicycle to get his self-realisation. He just put out his hands while perched on his bike seat. I am not sure whether it was rain or tears of joy streaming down my cheeks ... like water in the desert.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Tilda Rawal (Cairns, QLD, Northern Route)*

CLOSE TO HEAVEN



Having the MAT tour group of 14 people staying in our house was an amazing experience. I imagine that it must have been like being with Shri Mataji. For me, it was like living in a different universe and on a different time scale. Normally, I like to have peace and quiet in my home but, instead, I just wanted to sit in the middle of it all and hang out with the MAT group.

As a relatively new yogi, it was amazing to see a group of young people aged between 15 and 20-something, who were all single, being together without flirting, drinking alcohol, or being busy with clothes, make-up and their appearance. Everyone being completely one and connected together. There were 15 people in my open living room and at least 7 in the kitchen, yet no one was ever in my way! There was no pretence, no fake smiles or fake fun, no reacting to anyone – everything happened in harmony without any trace of friction. Awesome!

If anyone needed attention, they would receive attention and hugs from their brothers and sisters. They must have worked out some of my stuff as well as I felt great for days afterward as some of my issues were resolved. I accompanied two yuvas to the presentation at Nambour Hospital for a staff meditation program and observed that it wasn't really about what they said; their peaceful shining presence and being was enough.

Previously, I didn't know this kind of being together – this state of collectivity – existed. It's definitely as close to heaven on earth as you can get!

Spending some time with Mahima (the group's tour mum) was fantastic as well. Our non-yogi daughter could feel the good vibes and she saw that our dog (which is normally scared of small groups of people) wanting to be right in the middle of it enjoying everything.

The puja in Erin's house (including the wonderful music) was off-the-scale joy and bliss. An experience like this can only be felt by the heart and there are insufficient words to describe the joy.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Hetty Hensen (Sunshine Coast QLD, Northern Route)

THE NORTHERN ROUTE



Early breakfast at Aunty Alexandra's house in Tin Can Bay

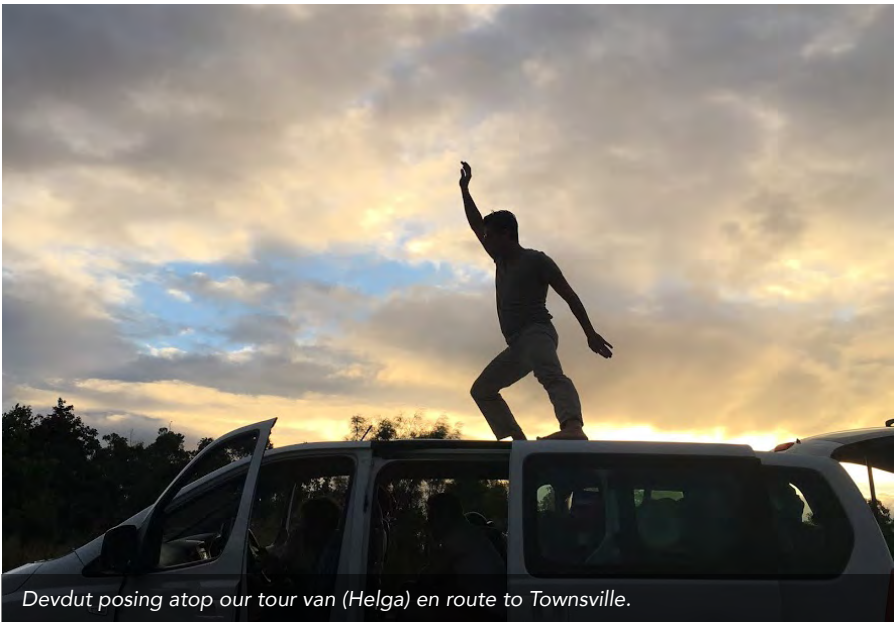


(L to R) Malte, Madhavi, Jahnvi, Pranav and Devdutt at ABC Radio for a pre-tour promo slot.

THE NORTHERN ROUTE



Northern Team with Aunty Alexandra after greeting the dolphins at Tin Can Bay



Devdut posing atop our tour van (Helga) en route to Townsville.

THE NORTHERN ROUTE



Gabriel and Ganesha having a post-havan bro moment



"Alright, let's go everyone! Devduti! Get off the tree!"

THE NORTHERN ROUTE



Our happy tour child, Shivani, handing out some freshly printed flyers



Gabriel and Shivani foraging for interesting flora in Rockhampton's wilderness

THE NORTHERN ROUTE



Full body soak in Hervey Bay after a long day of programs



Northern Route musicians serenading the audience on the foreshore in Hervey Bay, QLD

THE NORTHERN ROUTE



Ganesh Jakob at the Queen St Mall program in Brisbane



(L to R) Gabriel, Devdut, Ganesh, Malte and Nick joining in the realisation session at the Queen St Mall program in Brisbane

THE NORTHERN ROUTE



A baby freshwater turtle perched on a branch at Lake Eacham, QLD



*Impromptu stop to appreciate a beautiful rainbow en route to Townsville.
Model: Madhavi Shete*

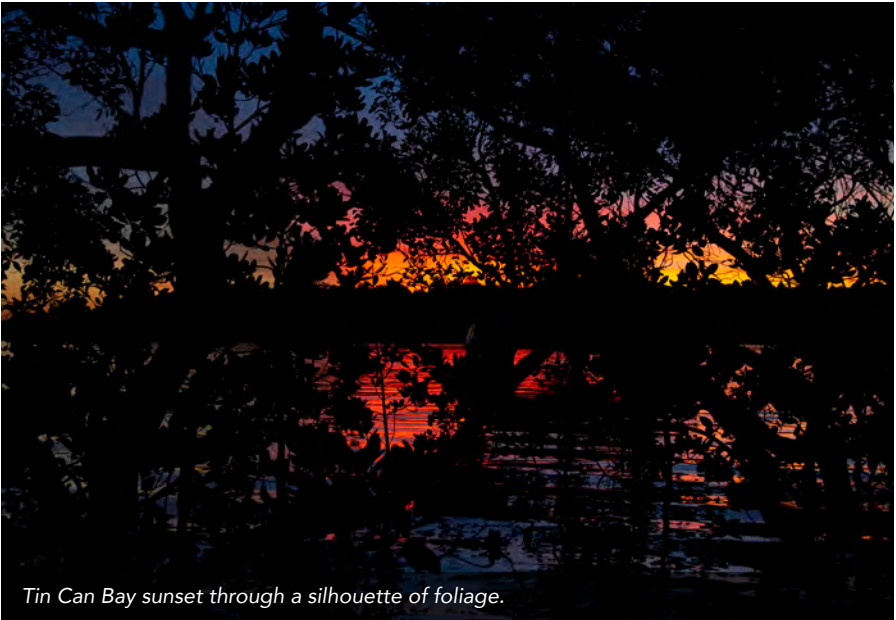
THE NORTHERN ROUTE



THE NORTHERN ROUTE



Annapurna, Devdut and Malte (L to R) on a spontaneous sunrise bushwalk in Raglan, QLD



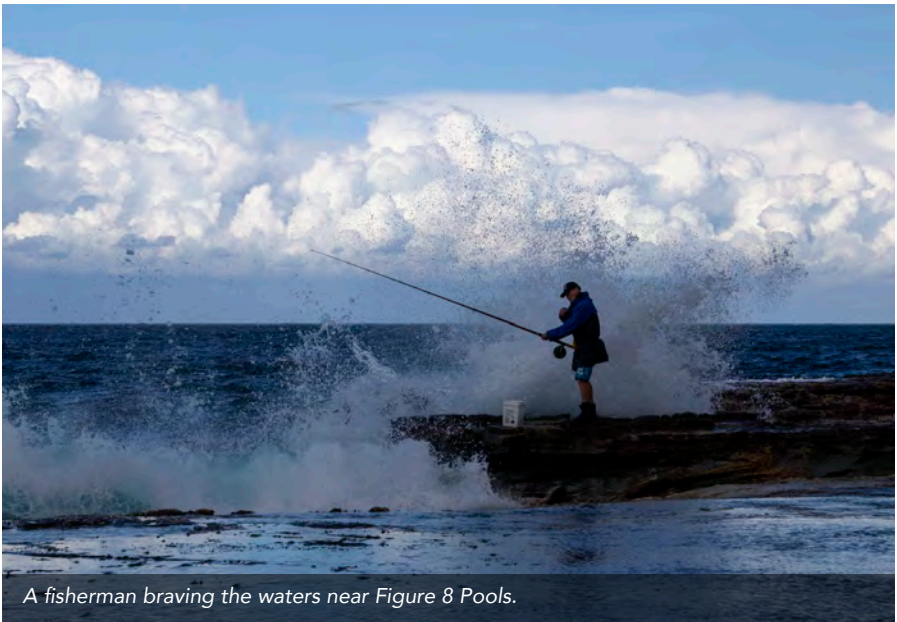
Tin Can Bay sunset through a silhouette of foliage.

THE NORTHERN ROUTE





Wildlife near Hell's Gates, Noosa Heads.



A fisherman braving the waters near Figure 8 Pools.



Devdut and the dholak posing for a quick one atop our tour van (Helga) on the way to Townsville.



Feeding carrots to the timid wallabies at our campsite on Lake Proserpine, QLD



*Down time = rehearsal time at Uncle Edwin's house in Townsville.
Musicians: Devdut (Bansuri), Ganesh (Harmonium) and Tomas (Tabla)*



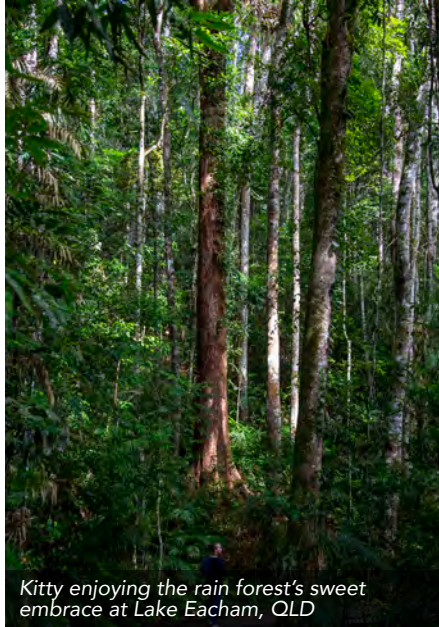
Jam session after Shri Ganesha Puja at Wamuran. Musicians: Devdut (Bansuri), Laxman (Sarangi), Sahil (Tabla), Siddhant (harmonium) and Vedant (Tabla)



Our international guest, Devdut, amazed by Queensland's tropical foliage.



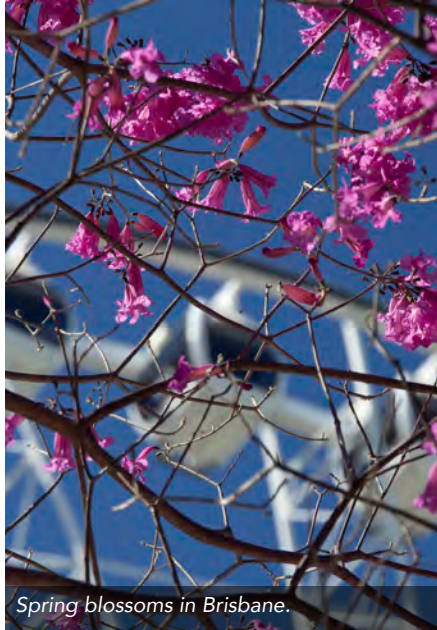
Northern Team with Sunshine Coast and Brisbane yogis after our program at the Milwell Road Community Centre, Maroochydore.



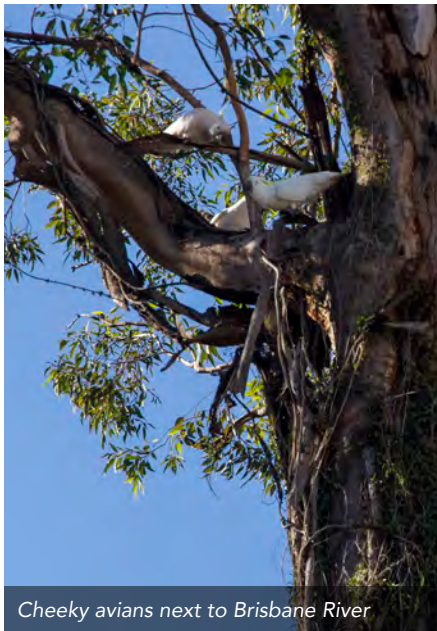
Kitty enjoying the rain forest's sweet embrace at Lake Eacham, QLD



A sliver of a silver white crescent moon, Cairns Esplanade.



Spring blossoms in Brisbane.



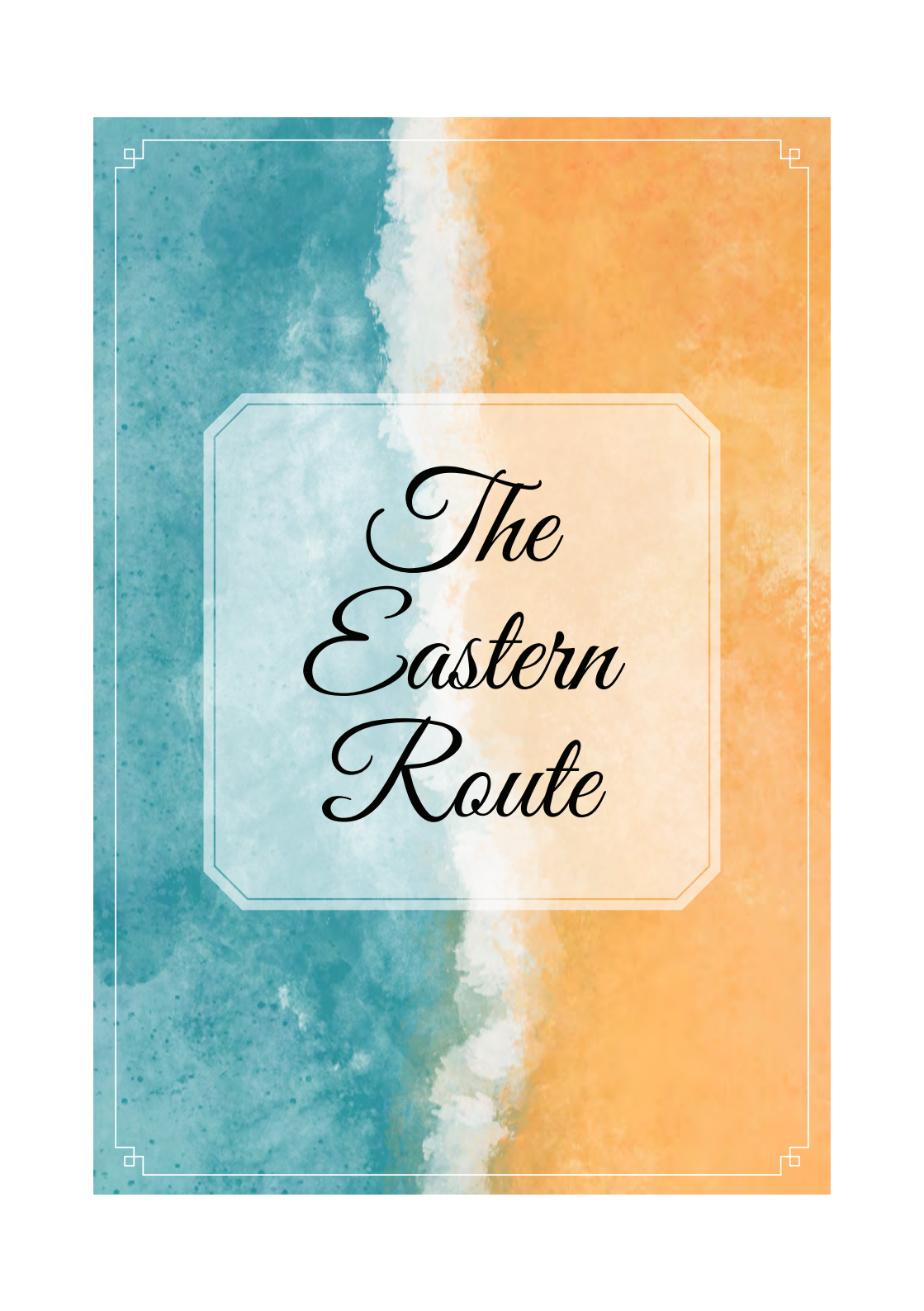
Cheeky avians next to Brisbane River



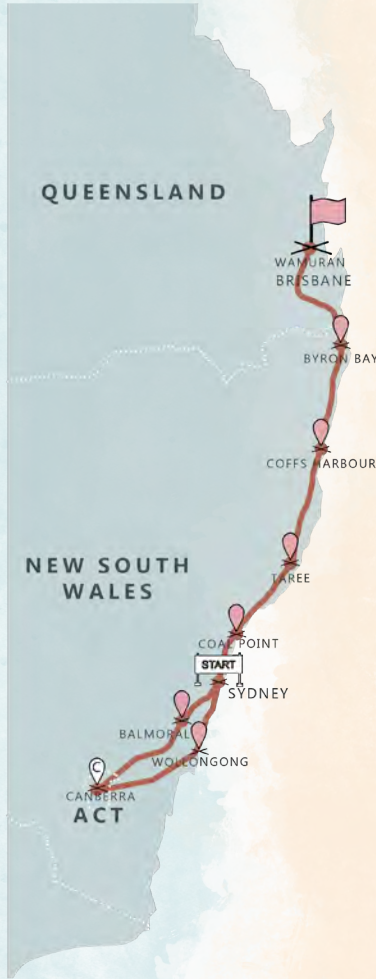
Northern Team with some local yogis before departing from Cairns



Overlooking Brisbane River from Kangaroo Point.



*The
Eastern
Route*



The Eastern squad boasted a dynamic team of mixed ages, touring the well-trodden trail from Canberra to Brisbane. Despite organisational challenges, their final itinerary was packed with programs (up to 12 in one day!) and crucial moments of chatter, cosy meditations and apple crumble. Host collectives lined-up a colourful variety of events in public spaces, government organisations and prestigious institutions like the National Press Club. As they travelled the coast through Kiama, Wollongong, Sydney, Newcastle, Taree, Coffs Harbour, Byron Bay, Gold Coast and Logan, the team indulged in Australia's stunning repertoire of beaches, creating eternal moments of collective growth and gratitude.

HOW WE GROW



From the very outset of the tour I firmly believed there were very few seekers left on the Earth; that people were no longer searching for God. One of the very greatest blessings for me during the tour was how Shri Mataji showed me this belief was not reality.

I saw that there are seekers now just as there were in the past. Seekers who have been so worn down by trying to exist in what is arguably one of the most spiritually difficult times in history that they have lost all connection with the purest of desires – to know God.

People came in their hundreds to get their self-realisation. I saw people completely transformed after five minutes of meditation; the radiance in their faces, the questions they asked which reflected the depth they had.

I remember the office worker who mentioned he had spent six months in the Himalayas not sure what he had been searching for. I remember the lady who had spent three years meditating on her own after getting her self-realisation from someone she met on the street. The father who brought his young children because he wanted a better life for them. The woman in Byron Bay who had meditated daily for the last year after reading ‘Silence Your Mind’ but who had never met another yogi.

I felt a connection with each person I witnessed getting their self-realisation; that connection of the heart, the deepest of all connections.

Just as we bore witness to seekers changing before our eyes, we also changed day by day. We became stronger, purer, better versions of ourselves as we became reacquainted with the powers Shri Mataji has blessed us with and the joy that comes when using them. We remembered our purpose. May we never forget again.

‘In Sahaja Yoga you not only grow as a plant but also as the source of the plant’.
Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi. Devotion, Compassion, Truth. London, 1982

Jai Shri Mataji

- Jenny Zappavigna (Sydney NSW, Eastern Route)

ONE BIG FAMILY



This MAT tour was very special as all Sahaja tours are. It felt like we were part of something important that was happening for the country, for the world. Each location had its particular vibe and you really got a chance to speak with the seekers and find out what brought them to this meditation. For example, in the corporate programs, the people were keen to get some deeper sense of fulfilment in their lives and wanted to incorporate it into their regular work days.

As a yogi on tour, you felt privileged to be hosted by all these wonderful local yogis who had put so much love and attention towards making us feel at home and preparing the various venues. It makes you realise that we are one big family and that we would happily host our Australian family when they come over to our respective countries. Following on from that idea, it makes sense to go on these tours and actively help in the establishment of Sahaja Yoga in different countries, as well as build stronger relationships between us as a whole. You can never have too many brothers and sisters!

Jai Shri Mataji

- Alice Tomlinson (France, Eastern Route)

WITH LOVE FROM WASHINGTON 1



We were truly blessed and privileged to be part of the east coast route on the Meditate Australia Tour. Although we were only able to participate for the last five days of the tour, it was a spiritually elevating experience.

We had a great mix of yogis of all ages and it felt like a perfect family. The hosting yogis were kind and supportive. Shri Mataji's love and presence could be felt everywhere.

The MAT public programs were well organised, especially the ones on the Sunshine Coast and mall area in Brisbane. We should do more of these during Sahaja tours as we get better participation and experience the joy of spontaneity. Library programs are better suited for follow-ups or if done during evening time. Morning hours can be spent meditating, clearing etc. Lastly, active participation from local yogis in the public programs and advertising would be helpful as they can connect better with the local people.

Thanks for organising the Mediate Australia Tour and hoping to meet everyone in the USA soon for the next Love America Tour! You all are amazing in every way. Keep up this great work for Shri Mataji as the world needs this more than ever now.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Sunita Nath (Washington DC, Eastern Route)

BE THE INSTRUMENT



Just felt like sharing a few experiences since we decided to attend the Meditate Australia Tour. It has been a joyful experience and hard to express in words but I will try to do so!

The tour yogis from Washington DC got together spontaneously in January when a yogini invited a few of us to her house for a social event. The tour had just started and the first communication had been sent out. We just had a high-level idea but somehow everyone who felt like attending the tour was present that day. It just worked out beautifully from that point, from booking tickets to getting our visas. Shri Mataji cleared the path for us to attend the tour.

We had a booth in the Logan Mall and for one hour no seekers showed any interest in getting their self-realisation. It made a few of us wonder what was happening. Suddenly, one yogini had the idea that we should start giving vibrations to each other. As soon as she started giving vibrations to me, I could feel the vibrations flow in the mall and seekers started stopping by the booth and getting their self-realisation. It was quite interesting to see how our pure desire to give vibrations spread throughout the mall!

We were doing a public program at a library in Logan and not a single seeker had shown up five minutes before the start of the program. Feeling a bit disheartened with the response, we suddenly remembered that we should invite Shri Mataji to the program. As soon as we did this, seekers started coming. We realised how important it is to invite Shri Mataji to everything we do. Nothing happens without her permission and presence.

This is a personal experience at my workplace. The deployment date for one of my projects kept changing from May which made it difficult to book a ticket for Australia. Surprisingly, my manager approved the leave and the business came up with a change request that required additional time which meant that the deployment date was moved from 14 July (the date I was due to fly) to two weeks after I returned from Australia. If we give priority to Sahaja work, other things work out automatically. We just have to have faith and do it.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Sunita Nath (Washington DC, Eastern Route)

WITH LOVE FROM WASHINGTON 2



Hi all Sahaj Yogis, Jai Shri Mataji!

I had never thought about visiting Australia. Our plans were to visit Myanmar (Burma) which is my birth place. I left this country in 1966 when I was 14 years old and now I am almost 52 years. We are in the hands of Shri Mataji – like puppets with the strings in her hands, the way she wants. She is the Doer, She is the Enjoyer, we do nothing.

We reached Brisbane and joined the Meditate Australia Tour and experienced a lot at the Esplanade Street beach. People from Oman, ladies wearing scarves who all sat for meditation and got their self-realisation. It was so crowded that others had to wait for the next session, as time was running out to close. All the yogis and yoginis made this tour successful.

On a different note, when we reach the ashram the Puja place. Debbie showed me the restroom and shower room and I was the first person to have a shower at 5 am. The first day and second day were okay but on the third day two pythons were leaning in the middle of the shower room so we couldn't go in.

Finally, I want to say that there was a lot of love, affection, respect and wonderful experiences shared. At the end 'Maa' Tere Aane Ki jab Khabar Mehke, Tere Aane se yeh sara Ghar Mahke, Is Mahk say sara Sahaj yoga Mahke.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Sudhir Khetarpal (Washington DC, Eastern Route)*

A DAY IN BYRON BAY



During the East Coast tour, we had a program in the town of Byron Bay on 13th July 2019. This town is located a few hours south of Brisbane and is notorious for being a centre of New Age thinking, along with all the negative habits associated with that. The actual area is very beautiful. Rich red soils, lots of farms, a line of hills in the distance and a beautiful coastline. The town itself though is very heavy vibrationally. We set up in a function centre on the main street, with Rajat, Alice and I standing outside passing out flyers and trying to get people interested. Most of them weren't. Rajat did manage to give self-realisation to two people nearby but, essentially, we ruled it out as a failure and went upstairs for the program. I think three people attended, two of whom had some Sahaj experience (one had learnt it out of a book!). They were eager to start a Sahaj group in Byron. The third person was not alright. She admitted to a bit of drug use, Pentecostalism and had some serious mental blocks (and also physical problems). I was the person who spoke to her which is why I'm writing about it. She couldn't remember any of the mantras, insisted we work on her (she had no conception of doing it herself) and kept repeating this over and over. The others were okay, though, and we had a nice lunch afterwards before going down to the beach for clearing. East of the town is a headland with a white lighthouse and it's the easternmost part of Australia. All the heaviness dropped away up there. There were whales and dolphins breaching, huge cliffs and the setting sky. We were there with half the town's tourists but it was so quiet among the trees. Afterwards, Sadhana and Shaun drove us to a camping spot south for us to sleep.

- *Chaitanya Fisher (Canberra ACT, Eastern Route)*

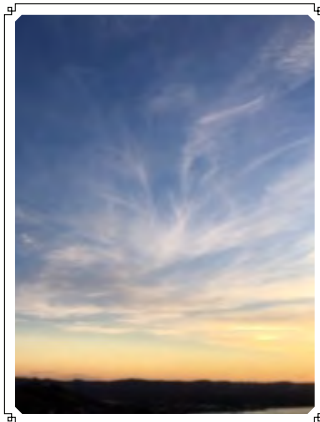
SURF'S UP!



So this is about Surfers Paradise. That was actually really a big blessing as it was a big market with all the market stalls in a big row. But on the first night the tent we were allocated was separate, in the middle of the square. So each direction that you came from, you would just see huge pictures of Shri Mataji everywhere because we had the stall and people were coming in from every side. So, at some point, things were really happening. We had a lot of dynamic people who were pulling people in and it was flowing so nicely. It felt as though the heavens above that little stall just opened and so many blessings just showered on that little square. You couldn't run away from it; any direction you came from, people would just be drawn in to it. It was a really special experience because previous times the pop-ups were good but weren't as successful. So we were kind of sceptical like, 'Oh, a lot of pop-ups are going to be so tiring to get people in'. But at Surfers Paradise there was something about the vibrations that just drew people to it. Like we had this young boy who must have been 15 years old. He just came up with his brother and he was like, "What is this?" And I said, "This is meditation. Do you want to try it?" He said, "Yeah, yeah, I want to try it." And immediately he had no doubts about it. He wasn't shy about it at all. He felt it immediately and that was really special. I think those four hours that we were there were very magical.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Neelam Kumar (Holland, Eastern Route)



Byron Bay lighthouse and sunset

"YOU! COME! MEDITATE!"



Towards the end of the tour, I had a funny experience ... Tim was just saying about shaking, so it reminded me of a little story. Everyone was having dinner and just a few of us were still at the stall. I was meditating and was in a really, really deep state. Suddenly, I opened my eyes and a few metres away from me, there's a guy who is just looking at the stall. And I don't know why but I was just like, "You! Come! Meditate!" *laugh* He was like, "Me? No, not me, not me!" And I just kept saying, "Yes, you come, come!" You know how you just have a feeling sometimes. He was so shy and kept saying, "No." So I said, "Okay, fine," and I just continued meditating. But then he stayed and was just watching. Then Aunty Olga started talking to him and I was just listening to their conversation. So she was explaining about meditation. He was like, "Oh yes, but meditation, I don't understand how you do it. Nothing actually happens, you just sit down there". And they kept talking for five minutes. At some point, I just opened my eyes and I looked at him and I was like, "Man, you have to stop talking. Just come and try it". *laugh* So I just went up to him and said, "Let's stop talking about it right now. You just have to experience it." The confidence just came into me. I just pulled up a chair and I was like, "Sit down". *laugh* Basically, during the self-realisation the vibrations were so strong but I was shaking. I had never experienced that before while giving self-realisation. I was shaking and so I thought to myself, 'Okay ... something a bit dodgy is going on'. The vibrations were really strong but also kind of heavy. Then he opened his eyes. You know when you see that change in people ... their eyes are transformed ... and it was such a deep experience, and he was sharing how he felt. At some point, he was like, "Yeah, you know I really felt my spirit. I really felt my kundalini but I have some spirits living inside of me". *gasp* I was like, "Oh, this is why I was shaking!" It was so intense! But I was like, "Man, you need to stick to Sahaja Yoga otherwise you cannot get rid of this. The kundalini has the power to help you get rid of these spirits inside of you. This can change your life." After that I ran down to the beach to footsoak.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Neelam Kumar (Holland, Eastern Route)

WHAT IF?



To summarise this whole experience in one sitting is something I'm struggling with because there has been so many great experiences, both personally and as part of the Australian Yuva Shakti. But I hope I will do justice in this write-up.

Growing up in the Yuva Shakti in Australia, I have always observed how active the yuvas are in other parts of the world. Some of them have come to visit us, and shared stories with us about being around Shri Mataji and feeling Her love. Others would tell us about the projects they are involved in to help nurture the growth of Sahaja Yoga. What had always interested me was how the Australians would spend a lot of the time going over to America/India/Europe for tours or Sahaj projects. But for some reason, when it came to discussing an international project that we had in Australia, I struggled to talk about it.

I noticed this happened in 2018 when a lot of the Yuva Shakti (myself included) were involved in the Love America Tour, both as participants and also organisers. We were also lucky to have Devindra Payment from Sydney who decided to spend time here with us. At one point, I was the route leader for the Northwest route and was about to make plans to go over. Alas, I could not go due to studies complications (but really Shri Mataji had other things in mind for me as we all know how our Mother works). So, when Devindra was present, I just helped him wherever I could.

One night, there was a bunch of us at Burwood. We all got back after spending time with yogis at a picnic. We were actually making jokes with Devindra about how he is always on the computer and the words 'Love America' came out. Some of us were making jokes like 'Love Australia' and as Australians, we would all try to poke fun and have some banter behind it. While it was all good laughs, I went to bed thinking, 'What if?'

I thought long and hard about it when I was driving back to my parents' place from Burwood ashram. The idea was: could this work and if so, how? Earlier in 2018, Shabri had organised the Areh WA tour which involved a week tour in Western Australia. And at Guru Puja that year, I was speaking to Aunty Sangeetha from Adelaide and she was saying that Adelaide still needs an ashram and how they still don't have a place where collectivity can grow. The collective is strong in small numbers but growth has always been an issue. They felt an ashram could be the

thing that would help with this. I talked to her about a tour happening there in Adelaide but, at that time, it just made sense to get the ashram first and then the tour could work out.

During that time, I was already in discussion with various people. I already roughly knew the Love America tour model so I was just using that to form ideas for an Australian version. At that time, I was also helping out with organising Ganesha Puja as I was part of the Yuva Shakti team and talking to the Australian Council. The council was already thinking about doing a tour of some sort before or after the 2019 MahaGanesha Puja which was going to happen at Uluru, a Shri Ganesha Swayambhu. So discussion was already taking place but it was just the timing of it.

After 2018 Ganesha Puja, I came back to town and was busy with my studies and work and so tour planning went on the back burner. During my idle time, Devindra and Qasim were already in conversation with our Australian National Council. So, after that, Qasim and I spoke towards the end of October last year and said, “Love Australia is happening. Shout it from the roof tops!”.

When I first announced it to the yuvas and told them this is happening, the responses were mind-blowing. Everyone just saying, “YES! What do you need?” I had conversations with Rennie, Nathan, Pranav and Jahnvi. They were the first few people who formed the base team for the Mediate Australia Tour. Our first call happened with the national councillors just before Diwali and it was from there that the first planning stages commenced.

As the calls kept going, I wondered what my role was meant to be in the grand scheme of things. Now that this movement has begun, what was I meant to do? I realised that my tour experience was limited and that I wasn't a tour veteran. The number of tours I'd done previously could be counted on my fingers. And none of them I'd been actually involved in organising. I was just included because they needed a musician so I just enjoyed the ride and that's what I did. Now that this vehicle had its engine, what was my role in it?

I kept questioning myself and what I was meant to be doing. At some point, I did feel that my work here is done and the MAT team could look after it themselves. Among the four of them, I didn't feel as though I deserved to be in the team at all. At this point, I was about to go to London for a family vacation anyway so I was just joining in – just listening where and when I could. Sometimes I felt as though whenever I opened my mouth it was a very ‘foot in mouth’ moment. You could tell how green I was in this whole ‘organising’ business!

When it came to deciding the route leaders, it felt obvious that Sadhana was meant to be a route leader. So I said, “I’ll help out where possible. Just tell me what to do.” But as we kept holding our meetings, I always doubted myself and asked, “Should I even be on this call? Am I meant to be here?” I would always surrender this but every time anything tour related came up, I didn’t know how to answer it because I had no idea what was going on. To the collective, there were already different people who were managing it. So I felt like my work here is done and I should let it do its thing.

But, something in me felt that I should still join in with the calls and so I just keep in the loop. I would be in the calls while driving from a 10-hour sound gig, after a concert, after a rehearsal, while finishing a deadline. I was multi-tasking many things. Funnily enough, Rennie would always find a way to talk to me or somehow get me to do things for her. The route leaders were getting organised. But then Sadhana passed some work to me because she was going to Vashi. So I took on some of the workload. It was now April and Easter was just around the corner.

Again, I sat around and just twiddled my thumbs during the calls. I honestly felt that being the route leader was never my calling. I don’t have the experience or the maturity to take on such a role. But I felt that being a route leader was something that I needed to do in order to further develop my deep bhakti and shraddha for Shri Mataji.

When I took the role on, there were lots of things that needed to be organised and done. Although I was just covering for Sadhana, it was clear that we needed to really get things organised. At one point, it looked like we had nothing organised. We were three months out from the start of the MAT tour and we still didn’t have any rough schedule outlined! That was how worried I was.

After speaking with Sadhana, she told me who was on the team and what was going on. While she was doing a lot of the talking, I had big shoes to fill. Sadhana and I are basically a bro and sis pair that would argue on the smallest of things, but there was always this feeling of mutual respect for one another. I knew how she worked and she knew how I worked. We were always having B1/B2 moments with each other even before the tour. (I would be B1 and she would be B2. She’d probably disagree if she reads this but let’s just roll with that!) We both just knew what needed to be done; however, I think we also had the strongest desire between the two of us because we have had the pleasure of growing up together and knowing what Sahaja Yoga was like when we were teenagers compared to what it is today. Both of us had always wanted an Australian tour to take place. So our desire

manifested from us having no concrete programs on our route to having almost 60 programs. We even had to say “No” to programs because we were concerned about not burning out the participants!

There were lots of back and forth moments; times where people were ‘all over me’ and phoning me to make sure ‘I get things right on the website’. I even had a yogi call me while I was doing an exam (that was not a fun day for sure!). Nonetheless, I was speaking to one of our hosts for the tour and I was asking myself, “Why did I keep going when I had plenty of reasons to just let things flow in their own direction”.

And I can summarise my reasons in the following three points:

1. Boost dynamism within the general collective and with Yuva Shakti
Regarding some of the yuvas today, I can remember carrying them or feeding them when they were babies. So the talk of ‘tomorrow’s people’ is now! We need to take more action spreading Sahaja Yoga in today’s world. The Meditate Australia Tour was the platform for us to step up and allow us to spread Sahaja Yoga with ease. This tour was not to be claimed by any individual. It was only through the collective desire of the Yuva Shakti that this tour happened. There’s no going back now after what we did. We all feel the love and the only way to maximise it is to keep being dynamic and be active in Sahaja Yoga!
2. The world we build for tomorrow
I’ve always wondered about the fact that a lot of realised souls are being born into Sahaja Yoga. I have had the privilege of them being fond of me and finding confidence in me for love and joy. As an older uncle, I felt it was our responsibility as the Yuva Shakti to help create a world and environment where these kids can grow and still feel Shri Mataji’s love flow through them as though She was physically present.
3. To help understand how we can build a world Sahaja Yoga collective
South East Asia as a collective is growing and Australia happens to be in the centre of it all. It makes complete sense for Australia to help partner with the other countries and build stronger relationship with our brothers and sisters who are our neighbours. We need to let them know that they have a family here and we can assist with the spread of Sahaja Yoga in their country and help build a strong collective on this side of the world.

It is for these three reasons that I strongly felt the tour brought to light all of these themes. And I would say this tour will not be the last. But it will be an important vehicle that can help spread Sahaja Yoga in today's world and the future. For me personally, I have matured a lot more and really enjoyed my time being a part of it. To say that this was all me is an absolute left Vishuddhi and an Ego thing. But more so, a collective initiative to help turn Sahaja Yoga into a new leaf with Shri Mataji guiding us through every step of the way.

To you, the reader, all I ask from you is simple. When you read this, please don't treat this as my recount of the tour organisation or participation. Consider it more that you too can also do something as revolutionary as this. Regardless of the number of years you are in Sahaj or whether you are experienced enough, Shri Mataji has put you in particular spots in life because you are either an instrument for someone or something. You need to be honest with yourself and with your meditation and remember that Shri Mataji does it all, even if you feel that you can't do it. You need to always have a belief in the bigger picture and the vision of your project, even though sometimes you feel negativities might be hitting you left, right and centre. But once it's done and good to go, things will change. Believe and let the vibrations always guide you.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Shaun Premnath (*NSW, Eastern Route Co-Leader*)

"AFTER ALL, WE DO HAVE THE SAME MOTHER!"



It was fabulous to have a Meditate Australia Tour. We were so excited to help with the preparations, including booking the venues for Brisbane, Logan, Gold Coast and Byron Bay. We thought it will be easy to book venues, not realising how much administration would be involved. We got a lot of experience and learnt a lot.

It was all worth the effort, however, to then meet the touring group of yogis from the South, who were very keen and full of enthusiasm. We had prepared the houses, the beds, the food, waiting for them to arrive. We were a bit nervous.

The whole group – 17 of them – arrived and met for dinner at the Beckerton's place. It was packed. Afterwards, we had a lovely meditation and then my eight charges followed me in their van to my place to settle down for the night. There were six females and two males while nine yogis stayed at the Beckerton's home. They were mostly yuvas, with a sprinkling of older yogis who just couldn't resist coming on tour and who were supportive in every way.

They were absolutely great and we were able to work out the sleeping arrangements very quickly. I realised that there was no need to be nervous because as soon as we met, we knew we were family and we were all perfectly comfortable with each other. After all, even though most of us had never met before, we do have the same Mother!

Every morning, we would get up early and meet at the Beckerton's for breakfast and meditation before heading off to their program venues to give self-realisation. Every morning, the group would humbly ask for blessings from Mother for a successful program. While the touring group was at the programs, Vasantha, Vinola and I (Coralie) would go shopping for lunch ingredients and make them a packed lunch to take on to the afternoon venues. One night they travelled to Surfers Paradise on the Gold Coast (about 40 minutes away) to have their stall at the night markets. It was so much fun, with lots of people getting their self-realisation.

It was great having so many yogis from overseas travelling on this tour. In our house we had yogis from America, Holland, Sweden, England, France and Australia. Everyone worked together really well. I so enjoyed meeting them all.

After the Gold Coast and Logan stint, it was time for the Grand Finale Concert in the Queen Street Mall in the centre of Brisbane city. The music and singing of bhajans and qwaalis by the touring yogis was so good that it attracted large crowds during the whole time they were there (which was about three hours). During a breaks in the songs, they gave self-realisation to the crowd. The vibrations were very strong. It was a bit like a whirlwind of vibrations. After the mall, we all went to Wamuran for the Guru Puja weekend.

I will always remember the yuvas from the MAT tour and other local yuvas sitting around in a circle and talking and laughing. I just enjoyed watching them so much.

I felt that these young people are great role models who can change society, especially helping the young people out there who are a bit lost and are wondering what to do with their lives and need some inspiration.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Coralie Jessop (Logan, QLD, Eastern Route)

A DREAM COME TRUE



It has been a while since Mother came in my dream. During preparations for MAT, there was a great desire to do programs for working professionals. Working for the corporate world, the stress was evident. My heart and compassion was going all out towards those tired souls who had reached their epitome of seeking and just wanted relief, a breath of cool air, a sigh of relief. With this pure desire, a proposal to HR about MAT Tour meditation sessions got organised with Mother's blessings. And as the working of Divine is, an angel from the HR team took the initiative on board. She contacted the MAT organisers and arranged for 30+ back-to-back meditation sessions across 3 different office locations in one day. During the sessions, many corporate employees enjoyed the bliss of meditation and some came back to attend multiple sessions. My heart was filled with gratitude towards Mother for Her unending compassion, and my soul rested in peace. I had given back to my organisation – a service they truly needed.

On a beautiful morning, after the tour had finished, Mother came into my dream. In the dream, I was sitting on the floor meditating and Mother's hand approached. She was standing in front of me and offered Her hand. She asked me to kiss it. With complete awe towards the Divine Hand, I took it to my forehead for a pranam, and then kissed gently. Then Mother held both my hands tightly and pulled me up close towards Her. This was followed by the most memorable feeling of my life. Shri Mataji hugged me tight, very tight, radiating the same love and compassion that I felt for seekers. Mother was proud, so happy to see us, Her children doing Her work. With Mother holding me tight in Her arms, I could see the earth rotating around us. We were standing at the axis – Mother hugging Her child tightly with unending love. The entire world was revolving around us, including many Sahaja Yogi aunties and uncles. Shri Mataji said to continue doing Her work in the same way, with the same love for the seekers of this world.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Anonymous (Sydney, NSW, Eastern Route)*

THE EASTERN ROUTE



Beautiful view of one of the Glasshouse Mountains at sunrise.



Taree Library program

THE EASTERN ROUTE



Moments of bliss at the public program in Leichhardt, Sydney.



This is in Wollongong

THE EASTERN ROUTE



Singing bhajans in Wollongong



Also Port Macquarie

THE EASTERN ROUTE



Lookout point in Canberra.



Again in Port Macquarie

THE EASTERN ROUTE



Port Macquarie



Quick footsoak at Port Macquarie

THE EASTERN ROUTE



Eastern Route aunties! (L to R) Jenny, Lyn and Olga



Newcastle program.

THE EASTERN ROUTE



Surfers Paradise. It was next to the beach and a lot of people came!



Wingham library program

THE EASTERN ROUTE





*The
Southern
Route*



A small but sure team of musketeers championed the efforts down south in Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. With two sets of flights and three sets of van hire, this route had more than its fair share of logistical exercise. Nevertheless, Shri Hanuman's hand and some effective marketing rendered their events an overall success - many recalling moments of serene meditation, conversations with seekers and beautiful serenades. Though present in other recollections too, the passages that follow highlight an innate sense of confidence that was born out of the Southern Route's adventures. Not to mention their encounters with some quintessentially Australian wildlife and landscapes, before heading up to join the others for the final program in Brisbane.

SYNCED WITH KUNDALINI



One of the greatest joys – amidst too many to even try putting into words – of being on Southern Route tour for the first week was seeing the yuvas grow in confidence.

Some felt so daunted at the thought of presenting workshops that they felt sick and were busy preparing presentations word for word into the wee hours of the morning.

Within a few days, the vibrations were flowing. By the end of the tour, their spirits were beaming, pure expressions, both in front of audiences and in rap videos that had them clearly synced with kundalini. In the joy. Blissful to watch over and over again, and to feel so much Motherly love for the yuvas I spent time with and who I watched grow from fledglings into flamingos.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Julia Hebaiter (Melbourne VIC, Southern Route)*

THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART



It is a very fulfilling feeling to be able to share this experience of inner peace through meditation with other people and witness the positive reactions of the seekers. Whenever I asked the attendees to put their hand on their hearts during the self-realisation process and try to focus and feel their true self within, the atmosphere during the classes would always change in an instant. Complete silence, stillness and peace would grow in the room. I often noticed how people's faces would change after any of our self-realisation sessions. Their faces would become brighter, happier and would have a certain glow to them that I can't seem to describe perfectly in words.

There was in particular a young French attendee who I managed to speak to in French after one of our programs in Melbourne. I had noticed that she was feeling a little nervous but also eager to try out the meditation even before the program had started. She sat in the front row next to me with a notebook in her hand and was reading about Shri Mataji on her phone. I found it interesting how we managed to connect immediately. After the session, I asked her how she felt during the meditation and, as we talked, she started to open up about her life and her past. She told me that she had never felt this way before in her life and that she had been looking for something as special as this for a while! This seeker had tried mindfulness and visualisation but these two types of meditation never allowed her to enter into that state of complete surrender, serenity and silence that she felt during our session. She was also very impressed and interested by the music that was performed during the program and kept on repeating that she really felt a connection to the music and wanted to know the meaning of the two bhajans that we had sung (Jago kundalini Ma and Dhyanaaterangale). She said, "The moment I heard the music, it really felt as if the thoughts in my mind were being blown away by a certain breeze. They just seemed to have disappeared in an instant."

By the end of our discussion, she wanted to sign up for the upcoming programs in Melbourne and ended up joining us again the very next day at the State Library program. It was a beautiful experience to speak with her!

Jai Shri Mataji

- Angelina Nina Sreshthaputra (Thailand, Southern Route)

ALL THE WAY



It was one of the first days of the tour and we were driving down the Great Ocean Road when Karty asked all of us who would like to give the program in Geelong. Bernie and me looked at each other and raised our hands. It would be the first meditation we would lead.

When we arrived at the community centre in Geelong it was already dark outside. Everyone was a bit tired and we didn't know how many people to expect at the program. I even asked Karty in the beginning of the program and he said, "Yeah, you know, like three or four people maybe". The local yogi welcomed us and in the meditation hall a stage with a sound system was already set up. Bernie and I were nervously walking up and down when someone asked if there were too many chairs set up because they feared many of them would remain empty if only a few seekers showed up and it wouldn't look good on social media. I had this little feeling that it was going to be big. Everyone was saying that not many people were going to come but everything was set up. I replied, "No, put out all the chairs we have. We have to expect all the seekers to come. We arrange everything for the seekers and the rest is up to the Divine." So we arranged all the chairs we had.

To our great surprise, however, one seeker after the other entered the meditation hall once we were ready. It turned out that more than 20 seekers had found their way to the program that evening!

Everything was ready and Bernie and I started the meditation. I guided seekers through the self-realisation process and with every chakra we went up, I was feeling how everyone's attention gets clearer and clearer and our thoughts become more and more silent. When we reached the Sahastrara, everyone was in thoughtless awareness and I was feeling vibrations in my hands more strongly than I usually do. It was tremendously cool. I was feeling how Mother's love was flowing through all of us. Her presence was filling the whole room. On the top of my head the vibrations were soothing like a fountain and strong like a volcanic eruption at the same time. We stayed in thoughtlessness for several minutes, enjoying the bliss of inner peace. I could not stop smiling and I looked across to my left. Bernie had the same smile on his face as he was also feeling what was happening. It was in that moment that I knew that all the seekers got their self-realisation.

Even after the meditation was finished, my smile would not disappear. I was so deeply thankful to have felt that we all are instruments of our Mother to spread Her love and thus transform the world. If we open our hearts and really are instruments of Mother's love, this will touch every heart of every seeker – it's just beautiful.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Noah Maurer (Germany, Southern Route)*

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE SOUTH



We had about six or seven programs in Adelaide. We didn't know what to expect. At our first program, it was raining – cold and wet. We thought we'd be lucky if we got five to ten seekers at the most. And yeah, by the end of the night we had almost 20–25 seekers. Funnily enough, we were having dinner before that. We were eating pizzas in the room on the side and the program was due to start at 7.30 pm. One couple walked in at 6.30 pm and they were like, “Umm, is this the meditation class?”. Haha. “Ah yup! Straight this way!” Luckily, they were pretty keen and some of the local yogis were available to talk to them and even invited them to join us for pizza. Adelaide was such a great start. The collective there was so loving and they did so much work for us.

[Geelong Program] It was one of the best programs we had on our tour. We even had one person come from Cairns. People had been telling their relatives in Melbourne and Perth to come to these programs so the word is definitely spreading.

[About Tasmania] In Tasmania, everything was very well organised by the Frankcombes. Devonport was one of our most successful programs. Every day we had about 17 people attend. Even after we'd left, they had a follow-up program and there were about 15–16 people. Ben turned up as well (see John Davies' story). As most of you probably know, there is not much of a collective in Tasmania – a few yogis spread out here and there. Some of them are still new in Sahaja Yoga so they are not very confident about leading programs. The Frankcombes visit every now and then but nothing really regular is happening there.

We even found a yogi couple that came from Busselton, WA. They had received their self-realisation from Aunty Dale 16 years ago and they had been going to pujas but then stopped and left Sahaja Yoga because they had moved to Tasmania and there was no one there. Eventually, they kind of came back into Sahaja Yoga. They came to these programs because Aunty Dale contacted them and told them there was a program in Tasmania. The lady – Aunty Susie – brought a bouquet of roses for the altar. They were really happy with the program and immediately donated \$50 dollars that day and the next day towards the tour. They also offered their contact details and house for anyone who visits Tasmania in the future. They have a beautiful country property that can accommodate up to 30 people. I think that it would be really nice to see how Tasmania progresses because there are a few

established yogis there now and it could become a little collective. They are now running programs there so it would be really nice to see things turn out.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Kartikeya de Valle (Melbourne VIC, Southern Route)*

DO YOU SPEAK HINDI?



This was my first Sahaj tour and I was kind of nervous before starting because I had this idea that being born in Sahaja Yoga meant that you grow up with it and there are lots of questions you never really ask because they just never occur to you. There are some things you just never question. I had a slight worry in my heart that if someone asked me a question, I wouldn't be able to answer it or I would stammer. In the back of my mind I just kept thinking, we have to be presentable about Sahaja yoga to everyone so that they can see or sense that we are confident in what we know. My experience from the tour was so life-changing because I don't think I have ever felt as confident as I did on this tour – ever. The fear of not being able to answer questions just simply disappeared after the first or second day.

I remember after the first program that Patrick and I did together. I was sitting in the car afterwards and I just felt so fulfilled. I have never had the same feeling with music or getting a good grade or from anything else in life. Just a feeling of complete certainty and, yeah, life-changing.

At another program, I was standing outside with a poster board. It was windy so I was holding it up. A man walked past and I could tell he was Indian but I didn't want to just start talking to him in Hindi in case he was from Sri Lanka or something. (That has happened to me before and it made for a pretty awkward Uber ride!) So he came by and asked what it was and I told him it was a free meditation and that he could try it out because the program was starting in five minutes.

Then he asked a question and I said, “Haan (yes)” by accident – well, because he was Indian. And then he was like, “Oh, do you speak Hindi?” and I was like, “Yes!”. Being half Indian, I know there are lots of kids and yuvas here who are half Indian and ... umm, our Hindi is not as fluent as we want it to be. You'll understand what you're hearing and give short responses but that's about it. Yet, somehow, I managed to have a full conversation with him! I have never spoken so fluently and switched to Hindi so easily. Even with my mum, she speaks to me in Hindi and I respond in English. So it came out of nowhere – there was no way it was me – it was definitely Shri Mataji and it was incredible. I said things about the subtle system and the kundalini in Hindi! And so that was an incredible experience

for me just to feel that it's not us, nothing that we say is us, it's all Shri Mataji. That is where the confidence came from and that's why the tour was such a success.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Shivani Williams (Melbourne VIC, Southern Route)*

CALLING HOME



On this tour one of the things I noticed was that the ratio of the seekers who had a profound experience at all of the programs was quite high. When we were in Tasmania, there was one program we did in Devonport. I was standing outside trying to direct people in. I was kind of assessing the people as they come past – like, you know, ‘Yoga pants ... hmm maybe ...’

So I see this young guy on a skateboard came past and we were looking at each other and I’m just thinking, ‘Ah, am I going to tell him about this meditation? Ah nah. I’ll just give him the, uh, Australian nod.’ So he went on his way.

He came back about five minutes later and said, “Hey man, is it alright if I use your phone for a second?”

I was like, “Uhhm ...”

The young guy said, “I’ll sit down while I use it. My phone has been out of battery for two weeks and I’m kind of homeless at the moment.”

I said, “Ah yeah, okay”, and thought, ‘If he runs away with my phone I’ll just try and catch him’.

He was trying to call someone – I think it was his mother – and he wasn’t getting through. When he ended up getting hold of her, I was able to infer that he’d recently left home and he was couch surfing. He got emotional on the phone as his mother was in the car driving back to Hobart and she hadn’t waited around to meet and speak to him so he was a bit upset. He was trying to call someone for a lift and he looked the poster I was holding and said, “Oh, what is it? Meditation? I’ve been thinking of tryna do some of that.”

I said, “Look mate, why don’t you text some of your friends and if someone rings while we’re in there, I’ll just come and grab you?” and he said, “Yeah, alright”. I wasn’t sure though ... should I bring him in or not? Is it alright?

I brought him in anyway and he missed the introduction so he just had to sit down and start with the affirmations. I was sort of just keeping an eye on him because whenever someone tells me they’re homeless I’m just – you know – ready for anything. So after the self-realisation, Noah who the yogi leading the program asked the question (in a German accent), “So ... how did you feel?”

Ben – Ben was his name – put his hand up and said, “I know how I feel but it’s not very appropriate”. And I thought, ‘Oh noooo. What did I do?’ Anyhow, he stayed quiet and so did everyone else for a bit. And then Ben said, “Ah well, I just ah, I felt like the vibrations going up. It just cleared. It’s funny cause I’m an insomniac because I can’t stop thinking at night and I was actually able to go into thoughtlessness for a little while.”

Anyway, he really had a very profound experience. Ben came up to me at the end and said “Yeah, I just felt all my cells were realigning. I don’t know if you’ve done any drugs before. It’s like when you take drugs but ... for free?”

And Ben came to the follow-up program the following Wednesday and had a really good experience again.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *John Davies (Melbourne VIC, Southern Route)*

SHARING THE KNOWLEDGE, SHARING THE VIBRATIONS



So this was my first tour. And yes, it was a really intense experience actually. There was so much to learn from everyone and I feel as though everyone just ... had so much knowledge. Such different ways of doing everything – like presenting programs – and there was so much to learn.

For me, the biggest, most profound experience was at a Geelong festival. Bernie and Noah were leading and it was so good. We weren't expecting many people and we ended up having to put out more chairs and more chairs as more people came into the hall. I remember there was a group in the other room rehearsing for a play and they were screaming and yelling every ten seconds, especially during our silent meditation. But in our room, everyone's attention was so strong and so perfect that no one was really bothered. At the end of the program, we put our hand over our Sahasrara and it was so cool; it was really just such an amazing experience. And I think we ended up clearing everyone's chakras during that workshop.

We asked everyone if we could go behind them to work on them and that was something we hadn't done previously. So there was this guy in the front and I don't know why, but I just walked over to him. He was wearing a hat, hoodie and scarf and he looked like a tradie dressed for the winter. I went over to him and there was no space for me to work on him so I asked him to move a bit forward and he just wouldn't move. He was sitting up straight – completely straight – with his hands fully open and I had to shake him really hard to get him to move. No, literally ... I had to shake him! At the end, I felt above his Sahasrara and it was so cool; it was crazy. He even told Leela that he felt really great after being worked on. I never experienced that anywhere else – it was really awesome.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Tim Arnautoiu (Melbourne, VIC, Southern Route)*

TRAILHEADS INTO TASMANIA



We were one week into living the amazing and joyous Meditate Australia tour life and Tasmania was just another of the various stops on our journey down south. We conducted programs in Hobart, Launceston, and Devonport. During our short stay there, all the tour participants were eager to give our best at the public programs. Particularly in Devonport, the seekers were really responsive and most of them were able to feel the cool breeze. We had seekers who'd previously found out a little about Sahaja Yoga and wanted to understand it better to get into deeper meditation. They were so happy with the experience that they attended both programs that took place over the weekend. They brought flowers for the altar, donated money for the tour and even invited us to stay at their farm. Tasmania is a stunning island and we enjoyed the beautiful landscapes and scenery, along with the abundance of adorable wildlife!

SHRI MATAJI'S WORDS ABOUT TASMANIA

Yogi: Shri Mother, will we ever be able to go to Tasmania?

Shri Mataji: [HINDI] That's [INAUDIBLE]. Yes, they have to come. They have to come here. Like you see, Sicily, we are now having lots of Sahaja Yogis there. They all came down. Then I can now go to Sicily. We have very great people in Tasmania. Now that's the point. So when they will come and they'll get their Realization then I can go. You see, if I go to a place it is like the, should I say, the seeds being sprouted and nobody to look after.

Yogi: There were quite a number of people who came from Tasmania. I think some of them wonder if they could ever go back.

Shri Mataji: They should. They should. They should go with their bandhans and try to save their country. They should. If they go and establish it, I'll definitely go. It's quite a remarkable place that Tasmania is. Talisman means, 'all these secret magic'. From that Tasmania word must have come.

Yogi: How many Tasmanians are there here?

Shri Mataji: Still very few, to fight those negativities there.
(Sydney Airport, Australia, February 1992)

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Leela Veronica Daniel (UK, Southern Route)*

ALL IT TAKES IS SOME PIZZA AND PATIENCE



It was after Shri Ganesha Puja and the marriages that we all (anyone and everyone left in Cabella) were at Il Patio for the customary pizza dinner. It was then that I spoke to Qasim about the potential to do a “Love America style” tour in Australia. He knew our desire to do a tour in Australia and we wanted it to be a tour that wasn’t just for yuvas, but all age groups.

Qasim was keen and seeing that we had both worked together it was exciting to be finally doing something that would bring the rest of the world to this incredible country, Australia - the home of our big brother, Shri Ganesha. Unbeknownst to me, Shaun had had a similar conversation with Devindra. It was quite funny when Shaun called us to ask our views because it was an easy conversation as we could see that the desire to do this tour was a lot bigger than we even realised.

Nothing can quite compare to what working on the MAT tour involved. In just over 7 months, we collectively managed to organise 4 simultaneous tours which not only involved van hire, accommodation, venues, promotions but also internal flights. We had help from local and international Yogis, allowing us all to connect nationally and internationally in a way that was truly special.

As someone who is still fairly new to Sahaja Yoga, my motivation to do this tour was from the experience of having had my own realisation. Getting your realisation is not something you can easily put into words. It is something one has to experience for themselves. The first time you feel your kundalini rise is something you can never fully understand or explain, but it’s an experience you will never forget. Also, the life changing journey that follows is one that you want to be able to share with as many people as possible.

As an organiser and a mum to a young child, I couldn’t make it to many programs. I did however attend programs in Tasmania and the State Library of Victoria program, one of the last programs on the Southern Route. It was here that I got to attend the entire program and towards the end, when the girls (Shivani, Nirmala, Nina and Leela) started to sing, I felt a coolness in my head that just kept increasing as they reached each higher note and then all of a sudden I felt so cool in my head. Tears started to flow and I couldn’t stop them. My hands were cool, my head was cool, I was completely thoughtless. The entire room was silent, even the children didn’t make a sound. In that moment, I knew what we had done was what Shri Mataji would’ve wanted us to do.

I never had the chance to see Shri Mataji, but in that moment, as I was crying uncontrollably, I felt so much love in my heart. I just knew she was there with all of us, and it was only with Her Grace that we achieved our dream of making this tour happen.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Rennie Berry (Melbourne VIC, Finance and Southern Route)*

WINTER CABIN WARMTH



It was a delightful feeling when Sarah and I were contacted by the yuvas for assistance with the Tasmanian section of the Meditate Australia Tour. Our previous knowledge of Tasmania came into play and the venues and accommodation fell into place very easily and quickly. The two cities of Launceston and Devonport were covered by two groups who drove to and fro each day from Hobart.

The beautiful landscape was constantly mentioned by everyone. One group stayed in the cabins in Hobart each day and cooked delicious meals (which the yuvas obviously enjoyed!) and also presented the Hobart programs. Twenty-four yogis eating in a six-berth cabin – very memorable! It was a special time where youth displayed its delightful humour and strong desire to ‘have a go’. We congratulate them for their freshness and irrepressible character. I had the feeling that Shri Mataji was watching over with a big smile and occasional laughter.

To me, this whole venture gave Sahaja Yoga a boost; a chance for the younger generation to shine and display their knowledge and beautiful humanity, which they do all have.

Thank you to the older yogis who gave their support. Thank you also to those who organised the Brisbane Mall program – very moving and a bit emotional for me personally.

And, of course, the biggest thank you goes to Our Divine Mother who has given us these delights and the ability to spread self-realisation – may it continue as this is our top priority.

Jai Shri Nirmala Ma.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Phillip Frankcombe (Organisers of TAS section, Southern Route)*

ABOUT THE ADELAIDE COLLECTIVE



This probably one of the first cities to get everything done. They did so much work for us that we basically just had to turn up. It was amazing! We didn't have to do anything. They were onto the advertising and, for such a small collective, it was just great to see their initiative. They definitely had a lot of enthusiasm and I think we have seen that among all the smaller collectives – probably because this was such a big project and they don't get a lot of yogis coming through their areas. So I think they really jumped on board with this initiative and were really keen to get this happening. So, a big round of applause to those yogis from regional towns!

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Kartikeya de Valle (Melbourne VIC, Southern Route leader)*

THE WARRIORS



Meeting the kids of my yuva group brought forth the recollection of Mothers words - your children will be the warriors of Sahaj.

What a blessing to have the opportunity to mother a whole gang of amazing souls who drenched our hearts with immense joy, love and amazement. Filling our days with blissful, vibrationally uplifting, soulfully satisfying moments.

Farewelling these warriors felt like sending them off to the battlefield. We had tear-filled eyes and hearts filled with love and blessings for these warriors of Mother's army.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Rita Skipper (Adelaide, SA)



THE SOUTHERN ROUTE



Seekers and yogis at the first program in Adelaide



Kartikeya giving realization at our very first Tour program in Adelaide

THE SOUTHERN ROUTE



At the Skipper's house - our beautiful home for the first leg of the Southern Route in Adelaide.



Bernat Lakatos recharging at Melbourne Airport in transit to Tasmania.



Blissed out at a program in Victoria



Three enchanted internationals greeting a local kangaroo at Wine Glass Bay lookout in Tasmania

THE SOUTHERN ROUTE



Noah Maurer maintaining his pure state on the Great Ocean Road



Bernat Lakatos balancing his right side in Robe, South Australia

THE SOUTHERN ROUTE



Downstairs at the Skipper's Home in Adelaide - rehearsing for the very first program for the Southern Route



Lad's cabin in Hobart, TAS.

THE SOUTHERN ROUTE



Balwyn house for Shivani's 21st birthday



Hobart, Tasmania - our big final dinner together with everyone after a day of three very successful programs across the island in Hobart, Launceston and Devonport

THE SOUTHERN ROUTE



Family time with Aunty Rita Skipper and puppy in Adelaide



Mandatory visit to Brunetti's in Carlton, Victoria for a celebratory lunch after the final program on the Southern Route



This route's final program was held at the State Library of Victoria. Bernat, John, Noah, Nirmala, Shivani, Nina, Kartikeya, Partick, Leela, Helena, Tarini and Tim with local yogis Mark, Nathan, Rennie, Sofia, Sahaj, Bhargav and Sahil.



Footsoaking along the Great Ocean Road, near Apollo Bay.



Setting up for a program in Geelong



Down time at our Mother's feet at Hiawatha Ashram, VIC

THE SOUTHERN ROUTE

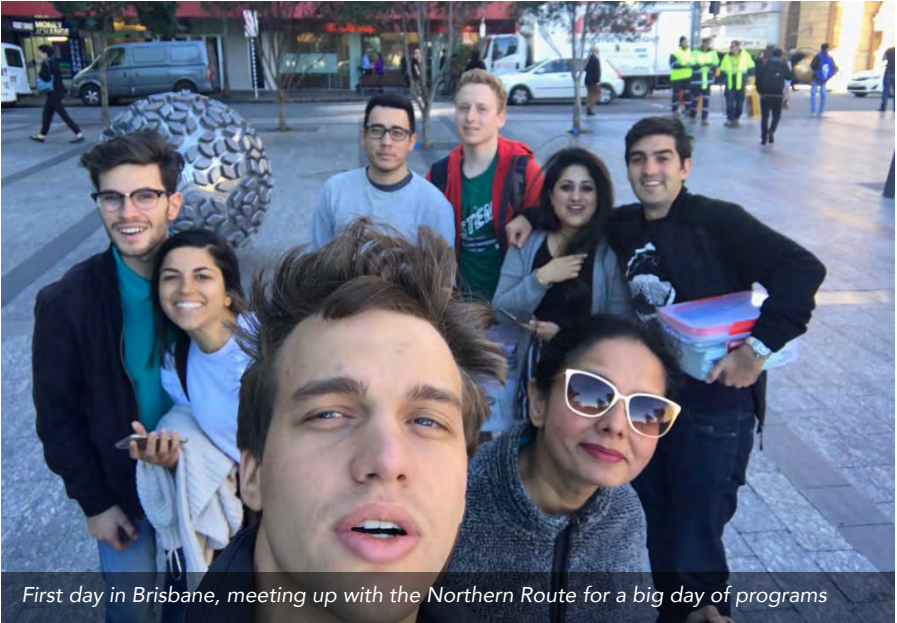


Group photo at Hiawatha Ashram, VIC



Left to right - Our lovely aunties, Denise, Bogunia and Astrid keeping our nabhis happy at Hiawatha Ashram, VIC

THE SOUTHERN ROUTE



First day in Brisbane, meeting up with the Northern Route for a big day of programs



Bendigo program with our local host, Uncle Daya.

THE SOUTHERN ROUTE



Dinner with local yogis at our accommodation in Balwyn, Melbourne



Dreamteam Noah and Bernat giving realisation at the Wyndham Vale program

THE SOUTHERN ROUTE



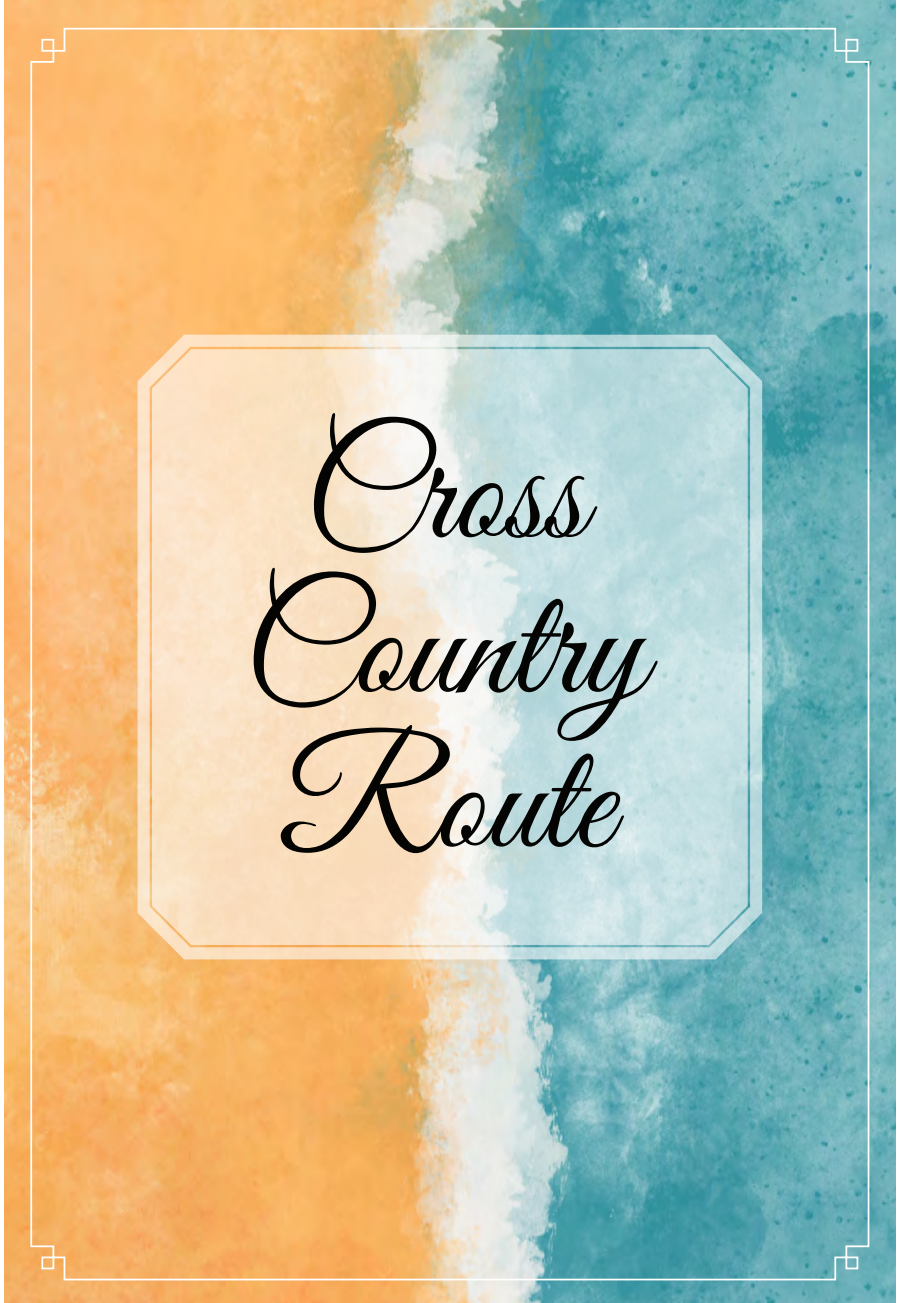
Morning drive to Devonport, TAS



We offered a puja to Shri Mataji and Shri Ganesha to inaugurate our journey through Australia's south.



A Mother For All exhibition at the State Library of Victoria



*Cross
Country
Route*



True to its name, the Cross Country Route had the pleasure of crusading along the east and west parts of the continent. They were treated to a variety of weather, landscapes, modes of transport, program formats and even group members! The first week was spent giving realisation in WA - Perth, Bunbury, Yallingup and Margaret River - featuring a successful revisit to the vibrated Perth Town Hall. After a five hour flight, they united with the Eastern Route for a big concert-program in Sydney, before journeying on to Penrith and Blue Mountains areas. Some of our young local yogis were swept up in the tour's magnetism rather unexpectedly here, occupying a final few seats towards regional country - Orange, Tamworth, Coffs Harbour, Toowoomba and Wamuran.

MORE THAN A BLUE SKY



During our last stop of the Meditate Australia Cross Country Route before meeting up with all the other completed routes and yogis for Guru Puja in Brisbane, we held some programs in Toowoomba, my newly adopted hometown. We held several different programs that day all over the city and outlying suburbs that were a great success. Many people felt the cool breeze of the Divine which is always a great source of joy in my heart but also inspires confidence in Mother's mission to put the world at ease and at peace.

After all the programs had finished, Uncle Jason, Odessa, Jatin, Vimal, Gabriel, Aunty Neena, Baptiste and I (who were in the first van) decided it was time to go back and rest. But as we came to Aunty Sara's house (the resident yogini), we had a sudden and spontaneous idea to continue on and to do some sightseeing down the dirt roads. So, we did this as we still had quite a bit of time to spare before the second van was due to arrive. Then Baptiste, who had been scouting the area via his phone, suggested the idea of exploring a nearby dam called Perseverance. As we arrived, we were immediately enveloped in a deep feeling of silence. All around us, we felt, heard and saw a virtually untouched landscape that drew us in further every moment to the point where we all agreed to have a footsoak.

There were some 'silent' protests flying around about the number of footsoaks we'd already had and so we shouldn't need to have more. However, that's part of someone else's story and the amount of experience and lessons this someone has learnt I believe would fill up a whole book! Eventually, I began to centre myself and, in doing so, I started to feel something was happening around me. It wasn't connected to my clearing or the footsoak I was having. I couldn't place where this strange sensation was emitting from. But I knew something was there around us – in the air. But before I could really pinpoint where this impression was coming from, that particular someone decided to start complaining about the dangerous aquatic creatures that may or may not want to take a bite of his 'touristy' body. So I let the matter rest. and we made our way back to the vans.

As I started the small hike back up the slope, I noticed Odessa staring off towards the slowly setting sun. I came alongside her and did the same thing because it was truly an astonishing view. She looked over to me after a few moments had passed and said quietly, "Can you see them?". I looked around wondering if she was talking about the birds that had just passed and replied, "Nah. I don't have my

glasses on, but I do see the general view and that's still pretty stunning". She looked slightly annoyed but said the same words again. "Can you see them?" and then, "I used to see them a lot more when I was in ISPS but I didn't expect to see them here." So I asked her what it was that she'd seen. She told me she saw hundreds of lights in the sky spiralling around themselves. She looked at me again and I must have looked pretty dumb because she then said to say the mantras to Shri Ganesha and then to Shri Shiva. I did so and looked back up at the sky. And I still saw nothing, just the same old sky. So in my head I started to think, 'What is the nicest way to tell someone that they might need to see a doctor?'

But as I continued to stare into the calm wilderness, I saw one and then another and another. I would have described them more like the firecrackers called Chakras (that seemed so accurately named at that moment) that are used in Diwali celebrations. They were so many whizzing around everywhere.

It was such a surreal experience. Later, on the way back home, I asked Aunty Neena if she had seen them too and she simply said, "Of course, they are the Ganas."

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Dominic Auer (Toowoomba QLD, Cross Country Route)*

WITH LOVE FROM AUSTRIA



I feel so fortunate that I got a chance to be part of the Meditate Australia Tour 2019.

It was my first visit to Australia and it was like a dream come true! I was in the land of Shri Ganesha, with so many dedicated yuvas and yogis from all over the world, spreading love through giving self-realisation. :)

Our route started in Perth, then on to Sydney and from Sydney we travelled by road to Brisbane. We gave self-realisation to many seekers in different programs and in different groups. We also did leafleting in shopping malls and streets. In Perth there was a Music and Meditation program in the Town Hall, where 20 years ago our Divine Mother was present in-person to give self-realisation.

We visited Gidgegannup ashram in Perth, Burwood ashram in Sydney and Wamuran ashram, and were involved in havans, pujas and many Sahaja treatments with local yogis.

I not only saw kangaroos, wombats and koalas for the first time in my life but also many flowers, birds and trees that I'd never seen before. I enjoyed seeing the sunrise and sunsets, as well as footsoaking at many beautiful beaches.

It was indeed a wonderful experience to be in this beautiful country.

Thank you, Mother!

Thanks to all the organisers for coordinating this amazing tour and also thanks to the local yogis for taking care of us!

Hope to see you all again. :)

(More from Kiran on a separate topic)

I remember one beautiful experience with one seeker who attended the program in Toowoomba. She'd got her self-realisation two years ago but as she was busy travelling, she didn't really meditate or do anything. After the program, she said that she still has Mother's photograph with her and she always carries it wherever

she goes. Although she didn't meditate regularly, whenever she has any problems, she does the self-realisation steps and it always helps her. It was so sweet. :)

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Kiran Schreuer (Austria, Cross Country Route)*

TOGETHER



So it's sunset on the west coast, gold over the ocean and crystal clear waves crashing before us. We are lined up in that quiet moment before the collective footsoak starts, when everyone is concentrating on their connection to their Spirit, first steps into the ocean and nature is alive with awareness, and all I feel is gratitude for the 'Sahaj Life'.

I never had an opportunity to be before Shri Mataji in Her physical form, am not from a Sahaj family, and I didn't come to Sahaja Yoga as part of a wave of seekers. I had never been a yuva. For me, it has always been a continuous unveiling of the beauty of the Divine and its manifestations. Travelling with such a varied group was a rich experience. In particular, seeing the development within each of us as Guru Puja approached and how each person managed themselves. The ratio of adults to yuvas was about 1:3 which made for a new experience also. The yuvas are new in the world, with lots to experience, master and adapt to and parents, aunts and uncles are needed on that road in a lightly balanced way. It was vitalising to experience how deeply and genuinely people were able to step forward and, in a moment, become what was needed for that seeker, for each other, and how beautifully the new experience was integrated. How very little external direction was needed and how great a role patience, understanding and compassion really has in manifesting Shri Mataji's requests of us. So looking forward to the next tour.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Jason Robinson (Sydney NSW, Cross Country Route)

A GOLDEN AFTERNOON



Coming on this tour taught us lessons we thought we had already learnt. The depth experienced was magnetic, the joy shared between us all made a group of strangers coherently joined in happy anarchy as we sped across the country. When you think you have experienced love you have to look again; love is a truth we take for granted. The gift we shared throughout the land became more meaningful in a little play where many people sneered, backed away from the opportunity and simply did not appear for pamphlets or programs. We felt disheartened, wanting to know what it meant about us – why – becoming caught up by pacing back and forth through these questions.

As an answer, an exact occurrence did not take place; this was a test of many layers which the seekers answered.

The depth and sincerity, their trepidation and confusion, their hearts and their eyes, their life journeys leading them ultimately, always and forever, spiralling toward Endless grace. This was it. That was forever. Witnessing throngs of souls pass by the stage in Queensland, in a mall of a modern era that had caused us to value things in multitudes. No matter what, it solidified as an act that would affect lives outside our comprehension.

Imagine ... imagine you walk out with exhaustion into the street, led gently up to the surface by an elevator with the softness of singing echoing toward you. Towards you, to everyone, dreamlike songs in the golden afternoon. We cannot count our impact like fruits in a basket but, rather, as a forest during autumn. Those who wish it will become fire. We have been put here in this place forever and always. Our journeys converged and the light was there. It warms without question. Love loves without question. Counting heads was absurdity so it was left behind in the dust.

Thank you all for making this idea a reality.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Odessa Cooper (Blue Mountains NSW, Cross Country route)

CAPTIVATED



One of the most joy giving moments visited me in Sydney during the public programme. At the end of the programme, we worked on the seekers. I happened to work on a girl named Fatima. At the end of the workshop she explained how she let go of all her thoughts, expectations, and worries – she even forgot where she was sitting. Indeed, Fatima seemed very joyful; her pupils dilated, her face was utterly relaxed and she was smiling in a content manner. We talked for a good half hour and it appeared that SY was exactly what she had been seeking. Fatima mentioned how after finishing her studies her life appeared quite meaningless due to its mundane nature. We shared insights about life and laughed. It was so simple yet so gratifying.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Kestutis Zakarauskas (Lithuania, Cross Country Route)*

AND THEN WE DANCED



I enjoyed the gentleness of our young realised souls, and how they so effortlessly bring light and balance into a room with waiting seekers.

Travelled the couple of hours ‘down south’ to a lovely old building in the middle of Bunbury.

These young adults – remembering them as babies – growing up surrounded by vibrations. Now doing what comes naturally and, as a part of them, it’s one – Mother and them.

We meditated, we danced, everyone’s kundalini rose and connected. We are in good hands!

Jai Shri Mataji

- Kathryn Armstrong (Bunbury WA, Cross Country Route)

POST-TOUR MANDURAH



I had the privilege of taking part in the follow-up programs in Mandurah. Here is an account of what happened. I felt so much joy there; Mandurah feels like a place that would be wonderful to go back to in the future.

The Mandurah program took place on 29 June 2019 at the Mandurah Seniors and Community Centre. Yogis and a small group of new people enjoyed a delightful program with music, joy and dancing. We then had a six-week follow-up program that took place at the same venue in a smaller room. A small group of people attended during the first weeks. One lady attended every session and a couple of people received their self-realisation who had not attended the initial program. All in all, it was a very joyful experience.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Ariane Kaub (Mandurah, WA, Cross Country Route)

LOVED EVERY MINUTE



For us here at Kurrajong Heights it was so great having yogis and yuvas coming to spread all the joy around the Hawkesbury and the Blue Mountains areas. The day started with Penrith programmes and children's craft workshops, which was followed by our programme held in Windsor Library with seven joyous yuvas and yogis from WA – also Austria – who spoke beautifully and played wonderful music that put our small group of seekers into meditation. It was such a treat for us to have live music at our programme, so much joy. Our group of seven headed back up to Kurrajong Heights for the night.

Next day started with a beautiful meditation and breakfast. Then we decided to head off a bit early to show everyone a few local sights on our way to the Wentworth Falls program. We went to Mt Banks for a walk which looks out to the Grose Valley Blue Mountains, then to the 'Emu cave' off Bells Line Road – an ancient cave with Aboriginal engravings dating back 2,500 years ago. We then headed off to Wentworth Falls for the program. Such a joyous time was spent with everyone! We loved every minute. Totally thought the tour was like the India tours, going from place to place, program to program, lots of beautiful music, chats over a meal, laughter, and hugs with yuvas and yogis – some of whom I had not met before. The feeling of love is always there; we are one beautiful, big family of our Mother.

Thank you MAT team. You all did a fantastic job of putting the tour together. The yuvas and yogis did such a wonderful job spreading the love and vibrations here. It was a time we won't forget and we are hoping there will be another tour again. Thank you, thank you again and much love from us at Kurrajong Heights.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Andrew and Pam Jones (Kurrajong Heights, NSW, Cross Country Route)



Cross Country team exploring the Emu Caves in the Blue Mountains

THE BUBBLE



Having been part of several tours in the past, we knew such events are very special and powerful. We had experienced the power of being in the bubble. For some reason, attending the whole tour was just not working out for us. With a heavy heart, we surrendered and prayed to Mother to bless us to be part of MAT.

Mother answered our prayers and we could attend the programs in Sydney with MAT. With merging of Eastern and Cross Country tour routes, programs were beautiful and full of joy. We finished Sydney MAT programs with a collective footsoak at Cronulla beach. After our foot-soak and a beautiful meditation, all the yuvas started playing at the beach. My husband and I walked to a rock and sat. As we were enjoying the sangha playing and laughing, we could witness 'The Bubble'. A strong thick aura of vibrations that engulfed the Sangha, engulfed each dedicated soul who had joined the tour to do Mother's work of spreading Her love. We were all in that Bubble. It was so strong and powerful, yet so light and fresh, with the character of 'Jeevan' - life-giving force to Humanity. As the sun was setting, my husband and I slowly started walking towards our car, thanking Mother for blessing us to be part of this Bubble. As our car started driving away from the Sangha, we felt ourselves slowly leaving The Bubble. When we reached home, we felt strongly in the protection and love of our Mother. The Bubble moved along the East Coast to its next destination where many seekers were waiting.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Anonymous (Sydney, NSW Eastern and Cross Country Route)

24-HOUR LUNCH



We were very thrilled when we heard that MAT was going ahead and that Perth would be one of the hosting cities. The joy of having yogis from around the world to help spread vibrations across our neck of the woods was beyond words. We had a couple of successful programs around Perth before heading down south for a few days to continue – and that is when this weird emotion of feeling ‘left out’, youngins call it FOMO (fear of missing out), started to set in. I went to work on Tuesday but it didn’t feel quite right. I told work I was heading out for lunch, got home and packed the car along with our dog, Oona. We drove straight to Bunbury in time for the public program and that felt absolutely right! We spent the night down there with the yogis and did both programs in Margaret River the very next day before heading back to Perth. The whole experience helped us realise how important it is to enjoy spontaneity and the spontaneous nature of our collectivity.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Shabri, Shreya and Oona Nambiar (Perth, WA, Cross Country Route)*

EYES CLOSED, HEARTS OPEN



We found it hard to stay away from the tour when they were here in Western Australia. There was something to learn from each of the tour participants, whether it was making the best cup of chai or a fresh approach to giving realisation. The beautiful heart of the West Australian collective was so open and it was such a lovely thing to be part of it. It really felt like something great was happening here and we weren't going to miss it! And then to see all the tours coming together in Wamuran and the epic Brisbane city mall programs was the cherry on the cake.

Jai Shri Mataji

- *Croiagh Foo (Perth WA, Cross Country Route)*

IT IS TUESDAY 16TH OF JULY



Sharon and I have packed up the car to head to Saras' and her husband's home at Hampton, which is about an hour's drive north of Toowoomba. This is where we and the MAT team from Perth will stay. We are very grateful that the MAT team went the extra mile to come and support Toowoomba as the other teams had already reached Wamuran. What a blessing it was!

A Havan is on the agenda for Tuesday night with programs on Wednesday in Crows Nest and Highfields (both north of Toowoomba) as well as the Toowoomba Uni, community centre and shopping centre

We arrived at Hampton around 11.30 am and the MAT team was to arrive around 4 pm. Surprise!! Surprise!! We received word from the MAT team that they were running 3 hours late, that is, they would not be arriving until around 7 pm. Undeterred, we proceeded to prepare the food for dinner and as much as we could of the Havan.

Finally the team arrived. Despite the long journey, they were still happy to do the Havan. Shri Kartikeya was the deity with 108 names taken in full length. This was the first Havan for the region and, although the temperature plummeted to -3 degrees that night, nobody complained and the vibrations were amazing.

Wednesday was an early start. The team was split in two with Shiva team doing the uni and community centre and Shakti team doing Crows Nest and Highfields programs. We would then meet up at the shopping centre.

Sharon and I were part of the Shakti Team. We set off at 8am to arrive at Crows Nest for Program at 8.30 am. Still only 4 degrees. Four seekers attended the program. Mohan gave realisation for the first time. Alex had brought his harmonium and sung a Shri Durga song to clear the heart chakra. During the song I felt the centre heart open like a flower outside of the chest. Just like you would see with a time lapse camera. Sharon said that she felt coolness moving around the three heart chakras. One of the seekers said that she didn't know what the song meant but tears rolled down her cheeks while Alex sang. All four seekers were keen to learn more.

On to Highfields where the program was held in the park rotunda. Three seekers turned up, two from Toowoomba program and one new but very sceptical lady who had a lot of issues. This did not deter the MAT Team who gave nothing but love and compassion. After a clearing session she left with a big smile and laughter.

Onto the shopping centre. We had a nice spot with enough facilities to give realisation. A Toowoomba regular came to help for the first time. He studied the handout so that he too could give realisation to others. He also attended his first Havan.

Although the seekers were not many, it was felt that they were seekers who needed a lot of attention. But where are the others?

We left the shopping centre around 5 pm to return to Saras' at Hampton. The others had returned early and some had gone to Lake Perseverance for a footsoak.

After being nourished by a meditation and footsoak, it was time for the MAT Team to take off for Wamuran – of course, after the usual group photos etc.

The whole time was such an experience. It truly felt as though we were indeed one. Like the ocean flowing and ebbing to get the job done. No one telling anyone what to do. No complaints. Just spontaneity and open hearts that gave so much joy.

Thank you Mother for giving us this most beautiful experience. It will never be forgotten.

JAI JAI SHRI MATAJI!!!!

Sharon and I stayed another night with Saras. On our journey home, Mother not only played a joke on us but also gave a blessing. However, that is Sharon's story.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Glenda Pollard (Toowoomba QLD, Cross Country Route)

BAP'S FIVE-FINGER RULE



- 1.) Only once you stop taking responsibility for the Divine's work and surrender to Shri Mataji are you able to feel the pure joy of your labour of Shri Shiva.
- 2.) Relying on the unplanned to work out is not fruitful, while leaving room and being prepared for spontaneity leads to the best outcomes.
- 3.) Not everyone likes Disney songs :o
- 4.) It's not good to over rely on others; have faith in your own vibrations and be your own guru.
- 5.) If you're confident in your explanation, there is no need to be reserved when talking to seekers; be open but use your discretion.

And as a footnote:

- 6.) All you need is a backpack, good company and a good attitude to survive a month in regional Australia. :)

The first point I came upon this realisation when I was being over-responsible and my right heart was catching. But when I was able to surrender it all to Shri Hanuman it gave me a chance to feel the joy of Shri Shiva in my left heart again.

The second point was from general observations including when we went into programs not fully prepared. In these cases when we didn't have proper bhajan practice beforehand we improvised. The result was that the songs may have been left sided, or we would have issues with the instruments. On the other hand when we did have a plan, but we had to adapt it, like picking up four people along the way, or the program layout wouldn't have been suitable at the venue, it worked out really well. So spontaneity doesn't mean going in blind and hoping for the best. It means being flexible in the face of change.

Jai Shri Mataji

- Baptiste (Perth, Cross Country Route)

CROSS COUNTRY ROUTE



King's Park sightseeing at Perth



Blue Mountains radio meditation

CROSS COUNTRY ROUTE



CROSS COUNTRY ROUTE



*The WA sub-team on the Cross Country Route:
(L to R) Neha, Gabriel, Kiran, Alex, Vimāl, Baptiste, Kes, Nina and Alexandra*



WA subteam again

CROSS COUNTRY ROUTE



"A Mother for All" exhibition at Perth Town Hall



Andre Maynard addressing the crowd before a concert program in the Perth Town Hall.



Daisy Cooper introducing the harmonium to a young seeker



Cosy camp breakfasts in the NSW hinterland.



Here from Lithuania sharing his knowledge of the subtle system with the seekers.



Rajat Lal giving self-realisation to seekers at Queen St Mall, Brisbane.

CROSS COUNTRY ROUTE



Seekers and yogis attending the tour's final program at Queen St Mall, Brisbane



Yogis sharing their tour memories with the collective after Guru Puja at Wamuran, QLD.

CROSS COUNTRY ROUTE



Alex Horry and Kes Zakaruskas moving to the beat en route.



"On this day my voice was so worn out and I was nervous that I wouldn't be able to hit the high notes properly but it turned out to be my best performance on the tour, so I was very happy. It was very spontaneous and effortless!" - Shivani Williams at Queen St Mall, Brisbane

EXTRAS

TRUTH

*Pinpointing a rainbow
In the blue and purple sky
Red blue and yellow
Through clouds of grey and white*

*Stopping by the sidewalk
To glance and breathe within
A moment of peace
In the hectic world we're in*

*Dancing in the rain
While a heavy car hums by
We smile and wave and laugh
Hands raised to touch the sky*

*Trees reaching tall
Beauty at its peak
Through happiness and harmony
Truth is all we seek*

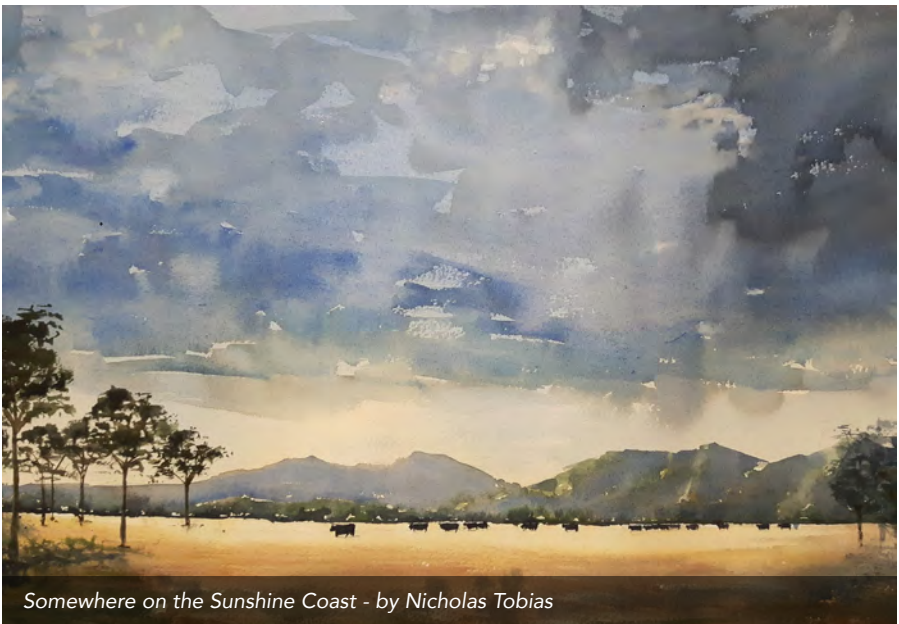
-By Shivani Gulati (Canada, Northern Route)



Portrait of Shivani Gulati - by Nicholas Tobias



*Portrait of Devdut Scialo playing bansuri by the sea in Tin Can Bay, QLD
- by Nicholas Tobias*



Somewhere on the Sunshine Coast - by Nicholas Tobias

Credits:

Curators: Gabriel Kolanen & Jahnavi Rawal

Layout & design: Kush More & Rani Morgan

Editors: Kirsty Ogden & Jenny Zappavigna

Transcribers: Neelam Kumar & Timothy Arnatoiu

