

STRESS MANAGING SPRING RETREAT /PG.2

waters. In the inter-tidal zone, pools formed by depressions in the sandstone are home to many small sea creatures. It's also a bird lover's paradise with a variety of birds that live and visit the island including tiny Winter Wren, stately Bald Eagle, Robins, Finches, Towhees, and in Spring the Hummingbirds and Swallows.

BACKGROUND

About Catherine D'Aoust

Catherine worked as an aeronautical engineer for Transport Canada until 1997. She then became a Certified Personal Fitness Trainer and set up GAIA Adventures to empower women to achieve healthy lives and encourage their participation in outdoor recreation. Her adventure programs include Hiking, Rock Climbing, Cross Country Skiing, Snow Shoeing, Kayaking, Group Running and Trail Running, Orienteering, Team Building Programs for companies.

Gulf Island Spring Retreat for Women – May 3, 4 2003

Enjoy a gulf island getaway and spend an adventure-filled weekend on beautiful Mayne Island. Learn how to kayak in protected waters, hike up Mount Parke to fabulous bluffs overlooking the ocean and experience magnificent scenery and wildlife. Meditate and recharge on gourmet food prepared for a local talented chef. Choose what activities and levels you like; it's an opportunity to rest or learn new outdoor skills as your heart desires.

For more information please contact Catherine D'Aoust:

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND INTERVIEWS:

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Female boomers follow your passion for empowerment and healthy living

Weekend retreat helps professional women recharge, through adventure, rest and good food

Vancouver, B.C. – “Up to a point, stress helps us work better. Beyond that point, it tears us apart” says Catherine D’Aoust, a fitness professional and founder of GAIA Adventures. She is leading a spring retreat on Mayne Island to help women professionals search for balance and time to recharge. The adventure weekend, on May 3 and 4, gives women the chance to escape to a beautiful Gulf Island and go hiking or sea kayaking or simply to relax and meditate in comfort. Under stress, we release hormones that increase our heart rate and blood pressure. Warning signs may include anxiety, fearfulness, anger, a tendency to cry, frustration, boredom, forgetfulness, or symptoms like headaches, backaches or insomnia. Health experts such as Herbert Benson, MD and author of the new book *The Breakout Principle* agree that in these times of war and economic uncertainty it is important to combat stress and to do it in an active healthy manner by connecting with nature and our neglected selves.

Balance, fun and rest

Simple, rhythmic activities such as kayaking and hiking are said to be key in triggering the “relaxation response” and reaching a healthy, balanced state. Experienced guides will lead the adventure through protected waters with a backdrop of magnificent scenery and abundant wildlife. The quiet country roads are perfect for cycling trips to spectacular beaches and it only takes 60 minutes to hike to the top of Mount Parke, with great views of the Gulf Islands and Vancouver Island. Catherine D’Aoust says “that there is a kind of balance between the natural system and the human system. “It is amazing how remote one can feel on the Gulf Island. In this place of natural beauty our rhythms become harmonized. And in terms of ultimate fulfillment, we create our own meaningful environment to realize the possibilities for uniqueness and growth and stress reduction.”

The beauty of Mayne Island

Mayne Island is known for its mild temperature weather and small friendly community. The sheer beauty of the surrounding ocean vistas, and flowering wild flowers is an inspiration to visitors. Much of the island is covered by trees – Douglas and Grand Fir, Western Red Cedar, Alder, Maple and Arbutus. Seals, sea-lions, salmon, sole and killer whales splash and swim in their