



WISDOMQUEST

A MODERN SHAMANIC EXPERIENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL WISDOM

IN THE MYTHICAL BASQUE PYRENEES

MAY - SEPTEMBER
PROGRAM & BROCHURE



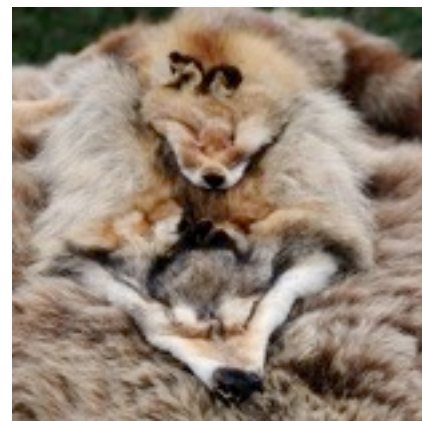
Photo by Sabine Chaloupy - June 2010 Gora Mendi

DISCOVER TRUE SELF-AWARENESS IN NATURE'S GRACE

A WISDOM QUEST IS A PROFOUND TRANSPERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITHIN NATURE THAT CREATES A DEEP TRANSFORMATION LASTING A LIFETIME. LEADERS, PROPHETS, POLITICIANS, PHILOSOPHERS, SPIRITUALISTS, ARTISTS AND INSPIRING INDIVIDUALS HAVE ALL GONE TOWARDS NATURE FOR DEEP INSPIRATION AND RETURNED WITH GREAT WISDOM THAT INFLUENCED THEIR LIVES AS WELL AS THE WORLD. AS A POWERFUL SHAMANIC RITE OF PASSAGE, THE WISDOM QUEST AWAKENS NEW AWARENESS OF OUR TRUE SELF, OUR PURPOSE, AND OUR CONNECTION TO SOURCE. THE EXPERIENCE CULTIVATES AUTHENTIC PRESENCE TOWARDS OUR SPIRITUAL NATURE.

THROUGH SACRED GUIDED MEDITATIONS, ANCIENT SHAMANIC INITIATIONS AND EXPERIENCED MODERN TEACHINGS, ONE EXPERIENCES CLARITY, CREATIVITY, SPIRIT, WISDOM, AND LIBERATION THROUGH THE WISDOM QUEST. WITHIN A MOMENT OF TIME, ALONE AND DEEPLY IMMERSSED IN NATURE, MENTAL, EMOTIONAL, SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL TRANSFORMATIONS OCCURS. ILLUMINATION BECOMES POSSIBLE.

THE WISDOM QUEST IS AN ENDURING AND MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE THAT HAS LIFE CHANGING CAPABILITIES. WITHIN EACH OF US THERE IS A SAFE PLACE OF REAL POWER, FOUND WITHIN NATURE'S GRACE, THAT HELPS US TRANSCEND OUR FEARS AND GENETIC IMPRINTS WHILE CLEANSING OUR LUMINOUS BODY. THE EXPERIENCE OF REGAINING AN OPEN HEART CONNECTION TO OURSELVES AND TO NATURE ITSELF BRINGS US DIRECTLY CLOSER TO SOURCE. THIS OPENING AWAKENS THE DEEPEST PLACE WITHIN EACH INDIVIDUAL TO HELP DISCOVER THE CORE OF OUR BEINGS.



TRADITIONALLY, INDIGENOUS PEOPLE FROM AROUND THE WORLD USED THE WISDOM QUEST AS A RITE OF PASSAGE INTO ADULthood. THE QUESTER, USUALLY AROUND 12-14 YEARS OF AGE, WOULD GIVE ALL HIS BELONGINGS TO GAIN HIS TRUE ESSENCE. LED TO A SACRED PLACE ON THE MOUNTAIN, THE QUESTER STAYS IN A CIRCLE REPRESENTING HIS SACRED SPACE CALLED THE MEDICINE WHEEL, TO GAIN A "WISDOM" OF HIS LIFE PURPOSE. AFTER THE IMMERSION IN NATURE, THE QUESTER WOULD RETURN TO THE COMMUNITY WITH HIS LIFE WISDOM. THE COMMUNITY WOULD CELEBRATE AND OFFER GIFTS, USUALLY SURMOUNTING TO MORE THEN THE QUESTER HAD BEFORE, ENABLING HIM TO REALIZE HIS WISDOM! THE BOY OR GIRL WAS WELCOMED INTO ADULthood. THE COMMUNITY GAINED A CLEAR AND PURPOSEFUL PERSON!



WISDOM QUEST EXPERIENCE

THROUGHOUT HUMAN EXISTENCE, CULTURES FROM AROUND THE WORLD HAVE REVERED THE RITE OF PASSAGE OF TOTAL IMMERSION IN NATURE. TODAY'S BUSINESS AND POLITICAL LEADERS HAVE FOUND THEIR TRUE PURPOSE BY FOLLOWING IN THE STEPS OF PAST PROPHETS, SPIRITUAL GUIDES AND WISE ELDERS IN COMMUNING ALONE IN NATURE. THUS ALLOWING THEM TO LEAD AND INSPIRE FROM A PLACE OF TRUE WISDOM.

ALONE IN NATURE'S GRACE, THE VEIL OF ILLUSION, NOISE AND POLLUTION WILL SLOWLY LIFT AWAY TO REVEAL OUR UNIQUE INNER VOICE - OUR OWN NATURE. IN THE SILENCE OF SOLITUDE AND BATHED IN THE POWER OF NATURE, WE ENCOUNTER OUR STRENGTH, COURAGE, CREATIVITY AND OUR CAPACITY TO FORGIVE AND TO LOVE. OUR TRUE ESSENCE IS REVEALED AS WE GIVE OURSELVES THIS MOMENT TO DANCE WITH THE UNIVERSAL FLOW.

THROUGH A PROGRAM OF PROPER GUIDANCE & TRADITIONAL SHAMANIC TEACHINGS, INDIVIDUALS COME BACK WITH A DEEPER SENSE OF PURPOSE, SECURITY AND CREATIVITY. A NATURE SOLO WISDOM QUEST HELPS REVEAL OUR TRUE PURPOSE, OUR DEEP SELF, AND INNER WISDOM, PURELY AND SIMPLY THROUGH THE POWER OF NATURE AND SPIRIT.

3 DAYS of TEACHINGS (SHAMANIC, BUDDHIST, TANTRIC)

- * LEARN DEEP MEDITATION TO QUIET THE MIND
- * LEARN THE UNIVERSAL 11 SACRED DIRECTIONS AND MEDICINE WHEEL TEACHINGS
- * LEARN PRINCIPLES OF QI-GONG
- * LEARN PRINCIPLES OF GROUNDING & RUNNING ENERGY
- * LEARN TOTEMIC EXPERIENCES
- * LEARN THE 5 ELEMENTS
- * LEARN THE I-CHING CONSCIOUSNESS
- * EXPERIENCE SWEAT LODGE PURIFICATION CEREMONY

NATURE IMMERSION 4 Days & Nights

- * IN NATURE BY YOURSELF
- * BUILD YOUR SACRED CIRCLE
- * LIVE A PROFOUNDLY CHANGING LIFE EXPERIENCE

RETURN & INTEGRATION 2 DAYS

- * INTEGRATION TEACHINGS - KEEPING THE SACRED
- * SHARING CIRCLE & JOURNALING
- * PLANT MEDICINE CEREMONY (OPTIONAL)

ACCOMMODATIONS

PITCHING A TENT ON THE PROPERTY IS FREE AND RECOMMENDED TO GET USED TO SLEEPING OUTSIDE. OTHERWISE WE HAVE ROOMS THAT ARE SHARED OR PRIVATE FOR A PRICE. MORE INFO IN AN EMAIL.

WHAT TO BRING:

AN EMAIL WITH ALL THE DETAILS WILL FOLLOW WITH CONFIRMATION OF PARTICIPATION.

- TENT, SLEEPING BAG, WOOL BLANKET ETC...

- SACRED OBJECTS LIKE GEMS, FEATHERS, NECKLACES, OR WHATEVER YOU DEEM SACRED TO YOU





THE WAY OF NATURE FELLOWSHIP

BIO-ENERGETICA IS PROUD TO BE A WAY OF NATURE FELLOW, REPRESENTING THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF DEEP NATURE IMMERSION THROUGH THE WAY OF NATURE IDEALOGY.

THROUGH FELLOWSHIPS ACROSS THE WORLD, HEADED BY THE WISDOM OF JOHN P. MILTON - A MODERN LEADER IN BRINGING PEOPLE TO REALIZE PURE SOURCE AWARENESS THROUGH NATURE, THE FOUNDER OF WAY OF NATURE, SACRED PASSAGE, AND THE SACRED LAND TRUST, AN AUTHOR AND SCIENTIST, SHAMAN, AND WISE ELDER - THE WAY OF NATURE FELLOWSHIP EMBODIES A DEEP CULTIVATION OF INTERFAITH, EARTH BASED CONNECTED SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES GLOBALLY.

USING 4 COMMON IDEAS, THE PARTNERS CREATE A GLOBAL CULTURE THAT HARMONIZES DEEP CULTIVATION, HEALING AND CONNECTION TO PURE SOURCE ENERGY AND EARTH BASED CONNECTION. A GLOBAL TRIBE IS ORGANIZED NATURALLY TO HELP RAISE CONSCIOUSNESS AND FORM NEW LEADERS FOR OUR WORLD, ALL USING SYNCHRONICITY AND SOURCE ENERGY AS A MAIN GUIDING FORCE, HELPING EVOLVE THE FUTURE WITH NATURE'S GRACE.

THE 4 COMMON IDEAS.

1. INTERFAITH
2. USE 13 PRINCIPLES
3. USE EARTH BASED SPIRITUALITY
4. GIVE BACK TO EARTH/ECOLOGY

THE 13 PRINCIPLES

1. ALL THINGS ARE CHANGING, COMING AND RETURNING TO SOURCE
2. COMMIT YOURSELF FULLY TO LIBERATION IN THIS LIFETIME
3. RELAX & SURRENDER TO LIFE
4. REMAIN IN THE NOW
5. CULTIVATE UNION WITH UNIVERSAL ENERGY
6. GO WITH THE FLOW
7. REST IN OPEN HEART & RADIATE LOVE
8. ACTIVATE UNCONDITIONAL LOVE AND COMPASSION
9. CUT THROUGH TO CLARITY
10. RETURN TO SOURCE
11. RECOGNIZE PURE SOURCE AWARENESS
12. BECOME A WARRIOR OF OPEN HEART AND LIBERATING SPIRIT
13. LAUGH AND TAKE THINGS LIGHTLY

SPECIAL WORLD RITE

ON MAY 14-22, EACH PARTNER ACROSS THE WORLD WILL GATHER AND ENTER INTO A GLOBAL CEREMONY TO HONOR THE EARTH, NATURE, AND THE CELESTIAL ENERGIES. TOGETHER WE UNITE IN FORCE BY CELEBRATING OUR CULTIVATION TO NATURE'S CONNECTION AND GUIDANCE. PERFORMING NATURE SOLOS, TRANSFORMATIONAL MEDITATION AND SHAMANIC RITUALS, WE WILL TOGETHER FORM AN INTERCONNECTED GRID OF DEEP ENERGETIC IMPACT TOWARDS RAISING AND DEVELOPING A UNITED ENERGY CONNECTION BETWEEN HUMANITY AND NATURE SPIRITS.

WAY OF NATURE

CONNECT DEEPLY WITH NATURE AND EARTH BY JOINING ONE OF THE MANY GROUPS WHO WILL GATHER ON EVERY CONTINENT AROUND THE WORLD. SEASONED GUIDES WILL PROVIDE CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS AND BASIC AWARENESS TRAINING TO SUPPORT YOUR NATURE QUEST SOLO EXPERIENCE.

WWW.SACREDPASSAGE.COM

WORLDNATUREQUEST.ORG





Clear Intentions Build Strong Spiritual Connections

MAY WISDOM QUEST

PRIVATE

JUNE WISDOM QUEST

7 DAY SOLO

SUMMER SOLSTICE

JULY WISDOM QUEST

PRIVATE

7 DAY SOLO

JUNE WAY OF NATURE

WORLD NATURE QUEST
1 DAY SOLO

JUNE 5

SEPTEMBER WISDOM QUEST

7 DAY SOLO

FALL EQUINOX

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

EACH MONTH HAS A
DIFFERENT ENERGY AND
SETS OF INTENTIONS
MAKING EACH UNIQUE

WHEN

PLEASE CHECK WWW.WISDOM-QUEST.COM FOR UPDATED DATES

PEOPLE ARE ASKED TO ARRIVE ON THURSDAY BY 6PM P.M., SO WE CAN SETTLE IN AND PREPARE SLEEPING SPACE. THERE WILL BE A MEETING FOR ALL TO ATTEND ON THURSDAY EVENING FOLLOWED BY A WELCOME DINNER. TEACHINGS BEGIN FRIDAY MORNING AND END SUNDAY EVENING WITH A SACRED SWEAT LODGE CEREMONY. THE WISDOM QUEST SOLO IMMERSION STARTS MONDAY TILL FRIDAY. ANOTHER SWEAT LODGE AND PLANT CEREMONY HAPPEN ON FRIDAY NIGHT. THE SHARING CIRCLE AND CLOSING CEREMONY HAPPEN ON SATURDAY. SO EACH WISDOM QUESTS BEGINS ON THURSDAY EVENING AND CONCLUDES AFTER THE CIRCLE IS CLOSED AND THE FINAL DINNER ON SATURDAY NIGHT 10 DAYS LATER. ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE EXPECTED TO BE PRESENT FROM BEGINNING TO END OF THE WISDOM QUEST.

WHERE

THE WISDOM QUESTS ARE HELD IN EUSKAL HERRIA, THE BASQUE COUNTRY, WITH BASE CAMP AT ARROSSA GARAYA IN THE SMALL VILLAGE OF ST. MARTIN D'AROSSA, WHICH IS 45 MINUTES DRIVE FROM THE BIARRITZ AIRPORT OR TRAIN STATION. PICK UP ARRANGEMENTS ARE COORDINATED BY ROSALIE@MANEXIBAR.COM

AIRPORT - BIARRITZ FRANCE

TRAIN STATION - BIARRITZ FRANCE

COST

\$2500-\$4750 DEPENDING ON ACCOMODATIONS.

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE TRAVEL OR OUTSIDE LODGING.

PITCHING A TENT ON PROPERTY IS FREE

- SHAMANIC & ENERGETIC TEACHINGS
- ORGANIC MEALS (9 IN TOTAL)
- SWEAT LODGE (2 PURIFICATION RITUALS)
- WISDOM QUEST (4 DAYS IN THE MOUNTAINS ALONE)
- PLANT MEDICINE (1 NIGHT OF RITUAL)
- TALKING CIRCLE CEREMONY
- LIVING SHAMANISM TAROT CARDS

PRIVATE WISDOM QUEST ARE AROUND 16K

LIMITED SPACE

IN ORDER TO KEEP THE WISDOM QUEST SACRED, SPACE IS LIMITED TO 12 PEOPLE PER QUEST. THE WISDOM QUESTS WILL FILL ON A FIRST COME FIRST SERVED BASIS AND UNFORTUNATELY ONCE OUR PERSON MARK IS MET, WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ACCEPT ADDITIONAL QUESTERS. WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING.





LOCATION - EUSKAL HERRIA

THE BASQUE PYRENEES ARE A MAGICAL AND LEGEND FILLED LAND THAT OFFER AN INCREDIBLE WILDLIFE, VIEWS, AND CLIMATES. THE BASQUE COUNTRY IS FULL OF MYTHS THAT INCLUDE ANCIENT BELIEFS IN THE LITTLE MAGICAL PEOPLE CALLED “LAMINAKS” OR FOR US KNOWN AS THE FAIRIES, GNOMES, SPRITES AND OTHERS. THEY ALSO HAVE THE “BASAJUN” WHICH ARE LIKE YETIS.

BESIDES THE UNIQUELY CLOSE ACCESS TO BOTH MOUNTAIN AND OCEAN, THE BASQUE COUNTRY’S WILD LIFE IS PROSPEROUS. GOLDEN EAGLES, BOOED EAGLES, 3 DIFFERENT TYPES OF HAWKS, 3 DIFFERENT TYPES OF VULTURES, FOXES, DEER, WOLVES, BEARS, WILD BOARS, MOUNTAIN GOATS, SNAKES, WILD HORSES KNOWN AS POTTOK MAKE THE IMMERSION THAT MUCH MORE INTENSE THROUGH THE POSSIBILITY OF TOTEMIC EXPERIENCES.

THE FOOD IN THE REGION IS WORLD KNOWN AND MUST BE TASTED AS WELL. RICH CULTURALLY, THE BASQUE COUNTRY IS HOME TO THE OLDEST INDIGENOUS TRIBE OF EUROPE...STILL FLOURISHING!



Through the Gate Unknown

EVERYONE WILL BE GATE-KEPT BEFORE REGISTRATION. GATEKEEPING CLARIFIES INTENTIONS FOR YOUR WISDOM QUEST. ONCE YOU HAVE SPOKEN TO ONE OF THE FOLLOWING PERSONS AND HAVE PASSED THROUGH THE GATE, PLEASE SEND THE REGISTRATION FORM AND PAYMENT 1 MONTH BEFORE THE WISDOM QUEST.

PLEASE CONTACT A GATEKEEPER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, WE WILL BE CLOSING THE GATES FOR EACH WISDOM QUEST 2 WEEKS PRIOR OR WHEN WE REACH THE 12 PERSON MARK.

THE GATEKEEPERS HELP YOU WITH INTENTIONS AND ANSWER QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE BEFORE REGISTERING. PLEASE CONTACT THEM!

GATE KEEPERS

MANEX IBAR

- ENGLISH & FRENCH
- +1.9179634778
- GUIDANCE@MANEXIBAR.COM

VICTORIA IBAR

- ENGLISH
- +34.639.979104
- VICTORIA@FREQUENCELIFE.COM

ROSALIE VALLS

- FRENCH
- +33 6. 26.16.03.98
- ROSALIE@MANEXIBAR.COM

THE GATEKEEPERS HELP GUIDE YOUR INTENTIONS BEGINNING THE WORK. TEACHERS GUIDE YOU THROUGH THE EXPERIENCE ALLOWING FOR DEEP



Personal Testimonials

"I signed up for the Wisdom Quest with Manex with some apprehension. I wasn't sure about the fasting part, didn't mind the being alone part, was worried about the heat and close quarters of the sweat lodge, and was worried about having to carry all of my water in with me. But I went anyway. It was pretty interesting not eating for four days. I was rarely hungry at all, which surprised me. The fasting actually helped me (finally) reach peace and a harmony with nature that I didn't expect. Perhaps I would describe it more as a surrender to all that is. I was located on top of a ridge that faced a magnificent set of mountains, with a deep, steep gorge between. The hawks and vultures hovered directly above me, the wild horses and sheep visited my camp and I became one with the rhythms of the mountain, in spite of myself! Every step of the way, I felt supported and loved by Manex's caring nature, humor and skill. I still think about my camp spot, pretty much every day. The sweat lodges were incredible experiences. I had great emotional releases with each of them and always felt safe and supported. The plant ceremony was done with such love and skill and was one of the most memorable experiences of my life. I am deeply grateful for my experiences."

- Kathy O. (San Francisco USA)

"Whether you have a wisdom on your quest or not, everyone should give themselves the luxury of four completely free days to just be. Afterwards, you find yourself craving to get back to that state."

- Patty T. (Brussels, BE)

The wisdom quest for me was an opportunity to reconnect with the earth and experience how closely connected we are to the cycles of nature. After the wisdom quest I have felt more centered, more connected to my inner voice. It was the opportunity to step back and look at my life from the outside to then come back with a better understanding of how I wanted to live my life. I highly recommend it also because in having all of the commodities we have in our ordinary life, we forget about how little we really need to feel truly happy. Nature is definitely the best medicine. Manex, was very involved in the process of each one of us, helping us in every step of the way, serving as a guide to the awakening of a new life in us. Forever grateful to the team of light workers."

- Valentina F. (Bogota Columbia)

"I felt that I needed a big change in my life, and to tell you the truth, i was expecting it. Leaving, going away, travelling all around the world... Thinking of where to go, I realized how big the world really is. So many places, so many people, so many things to see...that's when i first heard of the wisdom quest from a friend. In my search, the Wisdom Quest in the Basque Pyrenees during the summer Solstice and fall Equinox was introduced and slowly crept to the front of my mind. The call became clearer...soon I packed and set off for the adventure!

To get started, Manex, Shed and Bea delivered to me, like each participant, a true teaching for life and a deeply personal preparation that still resonates within my being today a year later. Besides the inner strength gained and the reconnection to Nature, I learned and realized, through this life changing experience, that I wasn't leaving to seek, but actually to find. And I can now tell you that I found the greatest thing any of us can find: I found MYSELF, here or there, or anywhere, but especially in the NOW, and now is loving each second of life..."

- Charlotte L. (London, UK)

Tribal gathering in the French Pyrenees

You've seen Bruce Parry dabbling with bizarre tribal ceremonies in the jungle ... now you can do the same in Europe

Stephanie Theobald

The Guardian, Saturday 11 September 2010

Article history

I am sitting on a mountaintop in the Pyrenees contemplating sucking the mint flavouring off my dental floss. This is the fourth day of my "vision quest", a rite of passage traditionally undertaken by young Native Americans. The idea is to go off alone into the mountains, immerse yourself in nature and then return to your community with your "vision". The Native Americans did it with no food, no water, no shelter, no clothes and no sleep, but we're having the luxury of just doing it with no food. On your return, the taking of the hallucinogenic self-discovery drug ayahuasca is an optional extra.

This is the ultimate escape holiday – the Duke of Edinburgh award with a Carlos Castaneda twist – and the idea is becoming more popular. There's a real thirst to find more wild places, to camp à la sauvage (those Bruce Parry-type TV shows may have something to do with it, as may the high-grossing film *Avatar*, which was basically a massive paean to going back to nature).

Up to now people who really wanted to "discover themselves" in such an epic way had to head off to the US or Brazil, but now it's on offer in Europe. And this claims to be so much more than self-discovery. A vision quest comes with the exciting promise of transformation, of taking you out of your skin and giving you a new, much more comfortable skin to come home with. Words such as "spiritual", "sacred" and "mystical" are used a lot, and the literature you are sent before you set off talks of how, during your four days alone and foodless on the mountain (3km from any other living soul), you will "hear the message from within or experience something from without".

Sitting on my mountain I'm not feeling very spiritual – because I'm so hungry. I have three bottles of water with me, and I sneaked a few pumpkin seeds into my rucksack, but today, on my final day, I have to return to base camp, in the Basque village of Saint-Martin-d'Arrossa outside Biarritz, and I'm wondering how I'm going to find the energy to dismantle my tent, let alone trek five hilly kilometres back to meet my fellow questers.



The questers set out to find their own piece of wilderness

(The five-hour hike here was a crash course in the topography of the Pyrenees: lots of steep slopes covered in bracken and wobbly grey stones and big holes you don't see at first and lots of thorny bushes. It's best to have a stick with you.)

The other questers are an aspirational bunch: a New York banker who looks like Mia Farrow, a professional French football player, an adviser from the Slovenian foreign ministry and – yes, really – the latest winner of the Finnish *X Factor*, a genial 25-year-old chap who seems mainly to be looking forward to the "plant medicine" ceremony at the end.

The place I've been camping alone in for the past four days is a beautiful part of the Pyrenees on the French-Spanish border – and yet I've swung from feeling angry ("I can't believe people have paid €950 to go delirious on a mountaintop!") to feeling hungry (an image of steak with roquefort sauce, frites and a glass of red wine is the strongest vision I've had so far), to feeling absolutely, extraordinarily exhilarated.

My tent is pitched on a 30m-square plateau above plains of lush fern, buttercups, pink campion and clover. Wild horses called *pottok* (pronounced pot-ee-ok) often swing by to eat (lucky bastards) and I become daily more attached to the views of distant mountains and to the wild green forest behind my tent. All I've got to do all day is stare at butterflies, discover streams and gasp at sunrises. In short, I am "living in the moment" – the holy grail of all modern meditation practices.

Yet fear also features quite heavily. It's not just the vultures and the black slugs. Come twilight, the forest feels eerie. A gigantic wizard in a black cloak – all bent and moldering with a big pointy chin – looms into view one evening as I go to get water from the stream. It takes me a few seconds to remember it's only a huge rotting tree stump.

My friends thought I was mad coming on this "holiday" because I'm afraid of the dark (and slightly convinced of the existence of witches, if I'm honest). For the first three days I always wait until daybreak before daring to come out of my tent to pee. On the fourth, when I make myself come out at night, I'm dazzled by the most beautiful golden moon. The night feels soft and gentle. I've never seen the Milky Way look so clear. Back in the tent, I feel happy to have conquered my fears, and then I hear that strange infernal wailing again from the woods behind me ...

The shamans back at base camp believe the wailing is the mythical mountain beast, the Sasquatch, as Native Americans call it, and I have to say, my slight belief in witches has now been replaced by a slight belief in the bigfoot.



Shed Lay, one of three shamans running the 'vision quest'. Photograph: Manex Ibar

Shamans are traditionally thought of as witch/healer people, and some have reinvented themselves today as life coaches with an extra magical dimension. This vision quest is run by a Basque-American shaman called Manex Ibar with help from two other shamans – a Vietnamese Frenchman called Shed Lay, and a kind of green Timothy Leary called John P

Milton. Milton, 70, was a pioneering ecologist in 1960s America. He points out that everyone is talking about "going green", but unless you get into nature in a more spiritual way, the world is never going to change.

But it's only on my last day on the mountain that the spiritual thing kicks in. I decide to rig up an Evian bottle shower (with string and a branch and a bit of gum for the stopper) to energise me for the trek back to base camp. I'm digging into the turf when I come over all Native American and feel bad about cutting into the skin of the earth.

I carry on though, and once the "shower" water hits me, I have a Lord Of The Flies moment. I suddenly feel ecstatic. I take all my clothes off and spend the next two hours (I have no watch but by now I can tell by the angle of the sun how time passes) running round with a spear playing at being a savage. I slightly regret not going nutty a bit earlier.

When I finally get back to base camp, I've hardly had time to enjoy the experience of creamy butter and cheese and thick spongy bread in my mouth when it's time for the plant medicine ceremony.

After a ritual in a blacked-out room involving sage and tobacco and salutations to north, east, south and west, I'm offered an egg cup full of sludgy liquid, ayahuasca, which is not illegal. Soon, blue snow starts falling behind my closed eyes and I start seeing black slugs. Then the man next to me throws up and the rhythmically undulating sound is a slug too, and suddenly my whole head is a slug – I am a slug.

The visuals get better after that. A carpet unrolling to reveal an Eldorado paradise; me in a pinball machine full of Liquorice Allsorts.

And then I see something amazing: a huge shaft of gold and pink light that goes up and up into space and on one side is an asymmetrical, well, kind of cosmic vulva thing. I almost don't dare to look too far up into it – it feels so incredible. As if this is the beginning of what life after death might look like.

And then it fades away and there's a lot of 1970s album cover stuff. The Mia Farrow banker, who has revealed movingly to the group that she's just recovered from cancer, tells me later about the "truly amazing healing energy" she felt in the room: "I felt this warm, pulsing sensation focused on the exact area where cancer was removed from my body."

Janice, a seemingly very straight recruitment officer from Brussels, declares it was "Fun — like being in a computer game!"

Three months after my vision quest, I still feel more energetic, more confident and with a bigger sense of what's important and what's not. It was definitely my most massive experience of the year. It's hard to explain, but I can see myself going back and doing this again. Next time I'd go to one of John Milton's vision quests in America. There's one when you go into a cave for nine days in complete darkness. It feels very womb-like in the end, apparently. You even get food.

• *Manex Ibar's remaining 2010 vision quest is next week (16-24 September) in Baztan in the Pyrenees (see website bio-energetica.org for more details). The retreat includes three days' tuition (chi gong, tai chi etc) in a house in Saint-Martin-d'Arrossa, and costs €950. More information at*

In Silence Comes Great Wisdom of Self

Manex Ibar (Hartza Xuria - White Bear) is a basque shaman, bio-energetician, clairvoyant and artist that leads people to a profound discovery of themselves through natural means. Manex provides private sessions and offers workshops in NY, Brussels, London, Paris, LA, and in his home in the pyrenees.

Having gone through 8 wisdom quests himself, including a 44 days nature immersion, and continuing with 1 a year, Manex is an experienced guide that teaches through personal experience and indigenous methods learned through his apprenticeship with several shaman teachers. His open heart and loving nature along

with his clairvoyance and deep knowledge helps individuals maximize their personal experience in nature solos, activating healing, creativity, wisdom and spirit.

PERSONAL SESSIONS

PRIVATE ONE ON ONE SESSIONS WITH MANEX IBAR ARE AVAILABLE BEFORE OR AFTER THE WISDOM QUEST. DUE TO TIME CONSTRAINTS, MANEX DOES NOT GIVE SESSIONS DURING THE QUEST. PLEASE BOOK AHEAD IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN HAVING A PRIVATE SESSION WITH MANEX. TO SET UP A PRIVATE ONE ON ONE SESSION, PLEASE CONTACT ROSALIE VALLS AT THE FOLLOWING EMAIL.

ROSALIE@MANEXIBAR.COM



www.manexibar.com

