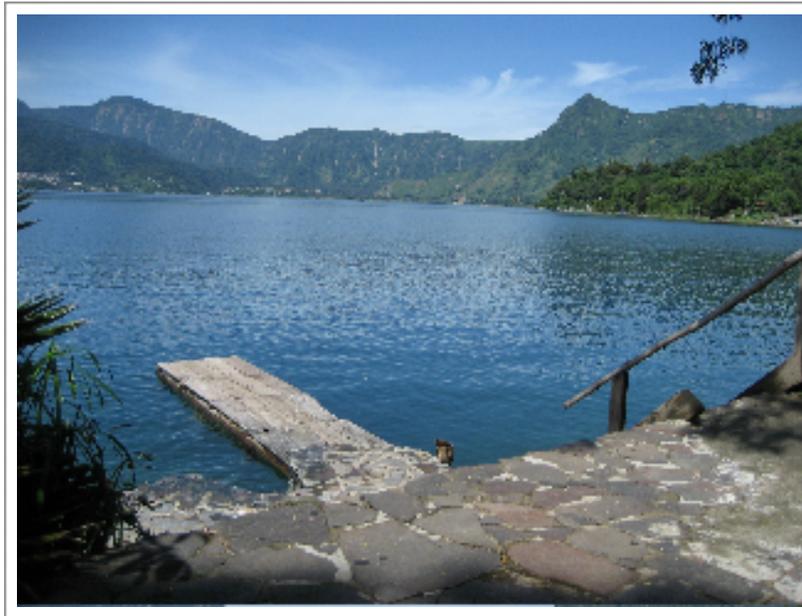


WRITE BY LAKE ATITLAN

with JOYCE MAYNARD

March 15 - 24, 2019



INFO PACKET 2019
(EVERY SINGLE THING YOU WOULD EVER NEED TO KNOW)

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

LOGISTICS

- When & Where (p. 3)
- Travel Documents & Immunizations (p. 4)
- Air Travel to Guatemala (p. 4)
- Booking Arrival & Departure Times (p. 4 - 5)
- Getting to Antigua the First Night (p. 5)
- Antigua (p. 5)
- Getting to the Lake from Antigua (p. 5)

THE WORKSHOP

- Manuscript (p. 6 - 7)
- Craft Talk Topics (p. 7 - 8)
- A Word from Joyce About Workshopping Sessions (p. 8 - 10)
- Schedule of the Workshop (p. 10 - 11)

WHO SHOULD ATTEND (p. 11 - 12)

YOUR FACULTY (p. 13)

FOOD (p. 14 - 15)

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES (p. 16)

LEAVING THE LAKE (p. 16 - 17)

COSTS, CANCELLATION POLICY & WHO TO PAY

- Tuition (p. 17 - 18)
- Housing (p. 18)
- Cancellation Policy & Payment Schedule (p. 19)

FINALLY... (p. 19)

LOGISTICS

When & Where

Arrive by 4 pm on March 15, 2019 into Guatemala City – a surprisingly modern airport, amazingly easy to navigate. Once you’ve collected your bags, you’ll travel by taxi or shuttle to the lovely nearby colonial town of Antigua, where our group will spend the first night getting acquainted and adjusting to Guatemala before making the two and a half hour journey to Lake Atitlan. We’ve booked hotel accommodations in a charming old colonial hotel a couple of blocks from the central square in Antigua. Around 6 pm, you’ll be met and greeted by part of my trusted team of workshop helpers, who will escort you to dinner with the group. (Note here: For those of you who’d like more time to explore Antigua something we heartily recommend – we suggest you fly in a day or two early. Antigua’s a very easy place to get around: safe, tourist-friendly, full of great shopping and fascinating sights. You may want to check out the market, step into a few churches, get a great cup of coffee and study life on the street, or walk through the central park. What other city do you know whose main fountain – dead center in the central park – features women with fountains spurting from their naked breasts?)

The next morning (Mar. 16th), after a traditional Guatemalan breakfast in Antigua, you’ll make the journey to Lake Atitlan, where the workshop begins in earnest. That evening, you will have a welcome dinner and short introductory talk by me at my house on the lake, in the magical little village of San Marcos La Laguna, where I live part time. The days of the actual workshopping sessions (Mar. 17th - 23rd) will start early in the morning and run all day into the evening. The final day, March 24th, is your departure date, so we have reserved that day for travel back to the airport.

Travel Documents & Immunizations

You will need a passport to enter Guatemala. If your passport is within three months of expiration, be sure to renew it before you leave, as you may encounter problems otherwise. We do recommend that you bring a photocopy of the first page of your passport and keep it separate from the passport itself.

You absolutely do not need any shots to enter the country, although it is always wise to be up to date on tetanus, hepatitis and rabies vaccinations when traveling to less developed countries.

Air Travel to Guatemala

The international airport you'll fly into is located in Guatemala City (GUA). It is newly renovated, very clean and easy to navigate, and getting through customs here, as well as baggage collection, tends to be easy. You can change a little money at the airport or pull a bit of cash out from the ATM, though it is always better to do this in Antigua because of the airport's exchange rate mark-up. Bring several 20 dollar bills, as easy payment for your ride to the hotel. Most people will take US dollars if they are not rumped, wrinkled, torn bills.

As for booking flights: We do not book your flights. Spirit and Taca airlines tend to be the cheapest. Direct flights to Guat City are available from Miami, Newark, Houston, Dallas, Atlanta, Charlotte, Los Angeles and Washington D.C. For those flying to Guatemala from other cities, a change of planes will be needed.

Booking Arrival and Departure Times

Please make sure that your flight will **arrive** in GUA *no later than 4 p.m. on the 15th*, if you plan to make the group dinner. If you arrive later than 4 p.m., you will not be able to make the group dinner on time, as the hotel

is an hour from the airport (longer with traffic) and you will need some time to check in. For safety reasons, we recommend that anyone who chooses to arrive after dark (9 p.m.) should pre-book a shuttle, rather than take a taxi to the hotel. And don't worry: all of this is explained over and over again for those who join the group.

When booking your **departing** flight, *do not book anything that will leave earlier than 1 p.m. on the 24th*. The trip from the lake to the airport will take you roughly three hours, getting you there around 11 a.m., and you want to allow time for "Guatemalan schedules" and delays. Travel advisories suggest checking in at least 2 hours prior to your flight at the airport.

Getting from Guatemala City to Antigua the first night

The trip from the airport to the hotel should take 45 minutes - 1.5 hours, depending on traffic. You have two choices:

1. Book a shuttle prior to arriving that will meet you with a driver and name card at the airport to take you to the hotel (\$40 - \$50)
2. Grab a taxi when you get to the airport (\$20). This is not difficult. We will help you with explicit instructions closer to the time.

Antigua

Your stay in Antigua on March 15th is included in your tuition package, as is the welcome dinner with the group and next morning's traditional Guatemalan breakfast. Feel free to take advantage of this opportunity to explore the incredibly rich history of this city, and come as early as possible! You can leave your bags in a locked area of reception until check-in, which is generally 2 p.m.

Getting to the Lake from Antigua

On the March 16th, we'll ask that you be checked out of your hotel room by 10:30 a.m, with luggage ready to be packed into our minivans that will take you all to the lake at 11 a.m. We'll have an experienced English-speaking guide in each minivan to fill you in on things along the way. You'll stop for a snack and bathroom break along the way. It's a spectacularly beautiful three hour drive. (Note here: Those who suffer motion sickness may wish to take some form of medication before the trip, as roads will be winding.) Once at the lake, you'll board a private boat at the dock in Panajachel (the port city on Lake Atitlan) for a 45-minute trip to San Marcos la Laguna, where you'll be met at the dock and escorted to your chosen lodging place for a shower and rest before meeting up with the group and the workshop faculty at my home.

THE WORKSHOP

Manuscript

Once accepted, I ask that every participant in the workshop submit a manuscript in advance, no more than 2,500 words typewritten, double spaced, with your name on the first page. Your manuscript may be a free standing piece of work (a story or personal essay) OR a chapter from a longer piece of work. If you are submitting a chapter or section from a longer work, please understand that the group has not read anything else from you, so it may be a good idea to include a few introductory sentences that help us understand the context for the writing we'll be thinking about. Over the course of the week, we'll be discussing each student's work, in a session dedicated to that writer.

You'll also be asked to send your manuscript to Melissa, who will format them all and send out a pdf file of the entire group's manuscripts. All

participants are encouraged to read their fellow writers' work before arriving at the workshop. Some manuscripts are sure to interest you more, some less so it is not mandatory. But we do ask that you print up all of those of the people whose workshop sessions held throughout the week you think you may wish to attend.

What works best is to keep this work in a loose-leaf binder. We also ask that you put an extra five or ten copies of your own work in your suitcase, for anyone who may not have a copy and want one. Printing is a logistical nightmare in Guatemala, so please come prepared.

The night before each workshop day, we will announce whose manuscript will be workshopped in each session, at what hour. That way, you can be prepared by having read the work in question, and you can decide too, which sessions have most relevance to your own growth as a writer.

We will devote one workshop session of roughly an hour to each writer's manuscript. Sometimes the work demands more time, and occasionally, less. You are likely to discover that the value of a workshopping experience is not always measured by the clock. But we can assure you, we consider each writer's work very closely, and in a way that should be deeply valuable not only to the author of that particular work but to all of those attending the session.

Craft Talk Topics

Some specific areas we'll explore over the course of the week in the craft talks include (in no particular order) locating one's story, voice, language, dialogue, character, the editing process, the ethical issues of writing memoir, the discipline of the writing day, story arc, point of view,

metaphor, point of entry, endings. We'll also talk about the writing process, getting through writer's block, and maintaining inspiration.

We will touch on the issues of the marketplace, and publishing, but I like to make clear at the outset that I have made a conscious decision in creating this workshop to focus on the work, not on sales, or publication. Many who attend will be pursuing publication. I always say that the best way I know for a writer to get her work published is to create the best work possible. That—more than getting an agent, writing a proposal or a query letter—will be our concern throughout our week together.

And by the way: though I believe I will have a great deal to offer you, it won't just be the teaching that provides instruction. Part of the beauty of a writing workshop is the opportunity it provides, to every participant, to learn from every other participant. Often, too, writers at my workshops go home having found, for themselves, writer friends who continue to provide an eye for their work, a source of support and community for years to come.

A Word on the Workshopping Process

One common misconception about the workshop process is the notion that the time spent having one's own work examined and discussed is likely to be the most important part of the week for that writer. I've often found that it's often the less emotionally-wrought experience of hearing another writer's work explored in the workshop process that writers learn the most. So many of the issues we talk about in connection to one particular manuscript are likely to resonate for so many others in the workshop, as well.

I've heard of workshops (and writers who teach in them) in which the instructor takes a very general, pat-on-the-head approach. I've also seen

the opposite, and watched students emerge in tears from some session or other, with all aspiration to write another word extinguished.

My own style, and that of the guest faculty I invite to join me as teachers in my workshops, falls in neither category. I ask a lot of each writer I work with, and look to each to produce not simply entertaining or mildly enjoyable work, but something that goes deeper and stands as more authentic than anything he or she has produced before.

We'll be working hard on aspects of craft, of course. But in my teaching, we will also ask you to go somewhere that has less to do with technique than with personal courage: namely, to examine aspects of your story you may never have looked at before. In the case of memoir, this will involve not only your writing but, inevitably, your life. Fiction writers go just as deep, of course. They simply choose a different form for putting the story on the page.

I know well from the experience of writing my own memoirs, *At Home in the World* and *The Best of Us*, that this process is frequently uncomfortable, even painful. But it is also the route to growth and power for a writer. The fact that writing memoir may also be cathartic is surely true, though I'll be looking for more than the catharsis of getting a difficult experience off your chest. I would not expect any reader to shell out \$25 on my catharsis, and we will hold you to that standard of good writing, not simply good healing.

Because I have done this kind of work in my own writing life, I am well aware of how hard it is. This is actually one of the reasons I love to locate this workshop where I do—at what is likely to be, for many of you, one of the most beautiful and other-worldly places you will ever see. (Although also, please keep in mind that this is a rustic location. No cable television

on Lake Atitlan. No air conditioning. No room service. No concierge. And you may well encounter the occasional spider. Not the biting kind.)

But if you're going to be venturing into new and challenging territory in your writing, I believe, there is no better place to do so than in a flower-filled garden on the shores of Lake Atitlan, with birds singing overhead and butterflies in the trees and great coffee and great swimming and healthy delicious snacks with a terrific \$35 massage available any day of the week, and platters of fresh fruits and avocados and great dinners by the fire at night, and most importantly, in the company of a group of similarly courageous individuals, making their own large discoveries as writers alongside you.

Schedule of the Workshop Week

The first day you arrive in San Marcos (March 15th), you'll have a short time to settle into your room or bungalow first, and take a shower, before joining the group. We'll have appetizers and wine waiting for you, along with your introductory packet, name tags, a map of town, the schedule for the week, and a great dinner. There will also be a file folder for each writer to use and to hold extra copies of his or her work for those who need a copy.

The group will hear from me, the staff, and from each other. We will also give you tips about staying healthy, drinking water, money, security, swimming, as well as a rundown of the many optional activities you can sign up for over the course of the week—hikes, kayaking, massages, and the alternative therapies offered in town, including Reiki, head massage, reflexology and something called Chocolate Therapy, believe it or not.

Generally, the workshop runs on a similar schedule each day (listed below), except for Wednesday, when you have the morning and afternoon

free to explore the area, rest or write. There are always 15 minute breaks between each section of the days, so if you want to wander off to go write, you don't have to feel the need to excuse yourself. If we don't see you at the workshop session, that's ok. Nobody's taking attendance here. The idea is for you to use this time in the way that best suits your needs as a writer.

On March 17th, the day will begin with breakfast at 7:30 at the hotel. The morning circle will start at 9 am at my house with an all-group introductory session, followed by in-depth workshopping of the first writers' manuscripts. Lunch is at the workshop site around noon. A few more session in the afternoon, and then you have free time from roughly 5 - 8 p.m. We will meet back at your hotel for a craft talk three times in the week at 7 p.m., and always have readings at the hotel at 8 p.m.

After you go out to dinner each night, we hold readings of your writing back at the hotel, under the stars, in a circle right on the water. I ask writers to sign up in advance for this, and to bring down work other than their manuscript to be workshopped to read on these evenings, though best of all is when you write something new over the course of the week and decide to share it with the group. This is a time to try out new work without criticism or analysis. Evening readings are about having a great time, and we always do.

There is the potential to write, attend workshops, receive advice and instruction and read your work from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m. However, we do strongly encourage you to take breaks as you need, choose the workshop sessions you want to attend, or sit out for an entire day if you feel the urge to write by the lake.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

I describe this group as a master class. This term should not intimidate those who might wish to join us, who do not necessarily consider themselves seasoned writers. Experience has taught me that all of us can learn from the issues that come up in the process of workshopping of others' writing. However, to make sure that the group fits together in a way that works for all, I do ask that those who wish to attend the workshop submit a short sample of their writing, along with a short letter about yourself and hopes for the workshop.

In the seventeen years or so that I've been a teacher of writing (always pursuing my own work at the same time), I've worked with writers of all levels from M.F.A. candidates to those who tell me they haven't written a word since high school. I feel equally comfortable, and able to offer direction and guidance, to those at many stages in their development as writers.

Those who have joined me at the lake in the past have ranged in age from 20 to 84, from all over the U.S. and Canada (and occasionally from other countries as well, including English speakers living in Guatemala). Some have books in the works or nearing completion. (And a few have completed and sold books when they attend. Others have published work since they first joined us.)

But please don't be intimidated if you're not at that stage in your writing life. Some of the most exciting work to emerge from participants in this workshop has come from those who had written nothing since high school. What everyone shares is the desire to write and a sense of openness and adventure to pursuing that goal in a place like Lake Atitlan. This makes for an extraordinarily lively and stimulating group.

For some, the workshop represents an opportunity to improve and develop existing work. Others will find themselves understanding, over the course of the week, what it is they want to write – a time to take in new ideas, direction and inspiration for work they’ll embark on or continue after the workshop is over. To me, both approaches to the workshop – using the week as a time to work, or a time to prepare for future work – seem equally worthwhile. In my own writing life, I know, the quality of the writing I produce bears a direct relationship to the time I spend not writing, but thinking and – consciously or not – allowing my story to take shape.

YOUR FACULTY

For thirty-nine years now, since age 18, I’ve worked as a full-time writer of fiction, memoir, personal essays, newspaper columns, performance stories, and magazine journalism. I’ve published eight novels and five books of non-fiction, two children’s books and hundreds of columns and essays. Writing – and the teaching of writing – is the only job I’ve done throughout my adult life. I feel extraordinarily lucky that this is so.

I’ve been a guest faculty member and guest lecturer at the graduate and undergraduate programs of Antioch, Bennington, Florida State, University of Tennessee, Northern Virginia Community College, among other programs. I teach regularly at the Sarah Lawrence Summer Writing Program and have been on the faculty of the Stone Coast low Residency M.F.A. program affiliated with the University of Southern Maine.

I hold no degrees, though I am returning to Yale this fall for my sophomore year of college. This workshop will be during my spring break. My first and best teachers were my parents – both lovers of

language, passionate readers and writers , and extraordinary teachers whose voices I still hear (years after their deaths) whenever I work with other writers.

I've also had the great good fortune to work with countless great editors in the world of newspapers, book and magazine publishing, radio and performance. While I may have possessed the tools to function as a publishing writer as early as my teens, I needed all of those years of writing and publishing and being edited, myself, to understand as I believe I do now, how to help other writers bring their own best work into being. That's what I will be doing at Lake Atitlan this coming winter.

In the past, other writers who have also joined me at the Lake Atitlan Workshop include Robert Bausch (fiction), Laura Lippman (crime fiction), Jane Hirshfield (poetry), Ann Hood (fiction), Francesco Sedita (young adult and children's books), Adam Stumacher (fiction), Jennifer DeLeon (prose), and Craig Holden (fiction).

FOOD

My workshop team and I all agree that it's important that while you're doing the hard work of writing, you should be treated to the most healthy and delicious meals we can provide. And though this week is about hard work, we also want it to feel like a great vacation – one aspect of which, for me, has to do with terrific meals.

So that's what you can expect:

Breakfasts (at the hotel) will include a selection from fresh fruit, great yogurt, granola, tortillas, home baked breads, and eggs, as well as fresh

juice, tea, and great locally-grown coffee. Partway through the morning, we'll be serving a cool drink, more coffee or tea, and a light snack (usually fruit).

Lunches will be served in my garden between workshop sessions by our incredible guest chef, Henry Lehr, from NYC. For some, Henry has changed their worldview on food. One student claimed he cured her digestion issues within 8 days because of his vegan-friendly options! For others, he has introduced them to cooking healthy, ingredient-driven, AND delicious meals. For all, his food makes a lasting impression both for its tastiness, as well as the beautiful preparation.

Dinners (your choice in town) range from 4 - 15 USD each in over 12 restaurants, and feature tacos, soups, salad, pasta, sushi, and sandwiches from local owners hailing from Israel, France, Japan, the States, Brazil, Canada, New Zealand, Italy, and, of course, Guatemala. Another option is to buy your own ingredients and make a simple meal in your room (you can request a propane stove from the hotel for a small fee).

At night on the last full day of the workshop (March 23rd), we'll gather at my house on the lake for wood-fired pizza appetizers and a great blowout dinner. I like to end the week with a dive into the lake under the stars. But if you'd rather sit by the fire and talk, that's fine too. If you play an instrument, this is the night to take it out. It's a safe bet some of us will be dancing before the night is over, too.

Our goal for the week is to provide food that is both delicious and healthy. When you sign up for the workshop, we send you a questionnaire in which we'll ask you to let us know if you have any food allergies or special dietary issues we should know about. If so, we'll do our best to make sure to provide what you need.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

These include a hike to nearby villages, a visit to a women's weaving cooperative, a chocolate workshop hosted by an American here who has been researching the beneficial properties of a certain variety of natural, untreated Guatemalan chocolate, kayaking at my house, and shopping in area markets. You may want to sign up for a massage or healing treatment at one of several centers in the village.

And while I understand and support the idea of keeping your mind totally focused on your writing, those who are interested will have numerous opportunities to visit a local school, hear about social and environmental projects helping the community here, or learn more about Mayan culture. You'll also have an opportunity to purchase locally-made weavings and textiles, coffee, and other crafts made by the men and women of the village.

I believe there is no better way to start a day at the lake than with a swim (watching the sun come up over the volcanoes while you do, which is why I favor breast stroke over crawl). I always invite any of the group who choose to join me for a daybreak swim, followed by pre-breakfast coffee and my homemade poppy seed cake on my patio.

LEAVING THE LAKE

On March 24th, you may choose to leave with the group back to Guatemala City (we provide a boat at 6:30 a.m. with a transfer to a private shuttle that arrives at the airport by 11 a.m.). This is always a poignant moment for me, and will be for many I expect.

I will add here that many people who have attended the Lake Atitlan Writers' Workshop in the past – when asked to provide suggestions for the next group – have offered the same piece of advice, which I will pass on now: If there is a way you can extend your stay in San Marcos by even a few days, I highly recommend it. Many people find that they are filled with inspiration and new energy for work in the days following the end of the workshop. If you'd like to stay on past the workshop, extending your housing should not be a problem.

Of course, what I always hope is that you'll have such a good and valuable time with us that you'll want to return. And I'm proud to tell you that many of the students who have worked with me over the ten years since I started the workshop have come back. To me, that's the best indication I could receive, that we're giving you what you were looking for.

COSTS, CANCELLATION POLICY & WHO TO PAY

TUITION

The cost to attend is \$2795. This price includes:

- * A welcome dinner with the group in Antigua, private room in Antigua, and typical Guatemala breakfast the next morning in the hotel's garden
- * Transportation from Antigua to Lake Atitlan, a private boat ride to San Marcos La Laguna (site of the workshop), and transportation back to the airport on the Sunday for departure

- * Workshop admission to as many sessions as you please (manuscript workshops, directed free-writes, craft talks, fire-side readings, special topics from Joyce and guest faculty members as much as you can fit in from 9 a.m. until 9 p.m.)
- * Breakfasts and Lunches along with coffee/tea, snacks, and desserts
- * Final night's party at Joyce's house with stone-oven pizza, margaritas and lots of readings, music and dancing
- * The most beautiful views in the world

HOUSING

Housing costs vary from \$250 (shared) to \$800 (single), depending on your own choices, and are **in addition** to tuition. Once you have been accepted, we will work with you to book your room, but please keep in mind that all housing is first-come, first-served. Rooms are reserved when you send your deposit in, so please keep in mind that you will also need to send the housing amount in with that initial deposit, as well. Again, WE BOOK THE ROOMS for you in San Marcos la Laguna.

CANCELLATION, PAYMENT SCHEDULE & WHO TO PAY

All payments (including housing) due by Jan. 15, 2019. Payment is through PayPal. Once you are accepted, Melissa will send you the information on where to send payment.

- * 50% deposit of tuition + total housing amount due by Nov. 30, 2018.
- * **Total payment is due** and refundable, less a fee of \$550, by Jan. 15, 2019.
- * Payment is non-refundable from Jan. 16, 2019 onward. In emergencies, Joyce works with students to either give a rain-check for a future WBTL workshop or towards a different workshop.

FINALLY...

Over the months and weeks leading up to the workshop, I'll be sending updates about the workshop with special instructions on What to Pack, more detailed thoughts about your workshop manuscript, and more. If you have questions about the workshop, concerning issues not discussed here, by all means email us at: info@joycemaynard.com

Also, please feel free to download the document "COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS" listed on the Apply page of the website.

I know I am speaking not only for myself but for my entire workshop team when I say how much I hope you are able to be part of this week. As much as I believe our students gain from our time together, so do I.

(Three times now, after leaving one of my workshops, I've embarked on a new novel of my own, and found myself writing each time with new excitement and energy. I know it's the time I spend with writers like you that inspires me.)

I hold that goal for each of our students in the Lake Atitlan workshop. I look forward helping you achieve a new level of clarity, emotional power and authenticity in your writing, and to locate your own best voice. I'll hope to meet you soon.