



Moving Heaven and Earth

Helen Tomei

by Adrian Mack

Should you ever feel the need to contemplate the meaning of the Mayan calendar while you're on Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula—in the company of a local shaman, no less—then Helen Tomei can help you.

A passionate world traveller who's questing nature is directed inward as much as it is out, Tomei started Sacred Earth Journeys in 2003 to combine what she sees as our rapidly growing hunger to explore worlds both material and spiritual.

She's clearly on to something because business is booming. "Thirty years ago, any of this stuff would have been considered totally woo-woo," she says. "But now I'm getting very mainstream, professional people who are interested in a deeper meaning to the travel experience."

Given the hallowed nature of the ground she covers—packages include walking tours of Ancient Japan, trekking in Nepal, even a three-city Da Vinci Code tour accompanied by a real-life Templar Knight—Tomei says her clients are always respectful. No beer bottles and Kit Kat wrappers left behind at Stonehenge, then? "You know," she says, "That's one thing I really like about my business. The people we attract are very conscientious. We're coming in, really, as witnesses."

Photo by Jaime Kowal