

2015
GROVE GOES GUATEMALA
***Celebrating 15 Glorious Years of Sisterhood (and 15 Reasons 2015's
Grove Won't Be Forgotten)***

Celebrating 15...The Most Glorious Grove Ever

Have you ever had a moment of such magical perfection that you couldn't find the words to try to
share it

An event (perhaps your wedding?) when whole world seemed so right, that your
Joy kept growing 'til you could not bear it?

Well our Grove this year was such a time, so perfect a retreat, a gathering so far beyond compare
That mere rhyme can't do it justice, a great novel would fall short – to “get” this Grove...you just
had to be there

Now I do not say this lightly, as I've never missed a Grove, and each has seemed much better than
the last

But while every one is quite unique, Antigua raised the bar, by celebrating each Grove of the past
This Grove, as we marked fifteen years, we looked at where we've been, and reveled in who
we've become today,

As we focused and tomorrow, and the world we've got to fix, how together we can keep the
worst at bay

Antigua...Where Grovers Were Meant to Be

Antigua was the perfect place, for Grovers to convene, the best of everything we Grovers love to
do

The most welcoming kind people, the tastiest cuisine, and the Guatemalan culture old and new
Local artisans were everywhere, a shoppers" paradise, we went shopping in the street and the
town square

(And in the hotel lobby, or right across the road, there were treasures to procure most every-
where)

There were visits to plantations, special feasts in lovely homes, and samplings of amazing local
rum

And Guatemalan coffee, local chocolate treats galore, it seemed that all we ever said was “Yum!”
True a few of us were challenged when we tried to book our flights, and bought tickets to Antigua
-- the isle

And others ignored warnings and brought their Jimmy Choos...old cobblestones just don't mix
with chic style.

3. Casa Domingo...Sleeping with the Saints

We met in sacred splendor, in a monastery of old, cloistered behind the walls like nuns of yore
Although some of us weren't “nun-like” hanging at the bar 'til dawn, we were all blessed by the
saints outside our door

We strolled through flowered gardens, we conferred amidst the ruins, and we lazed in rooms
with antique Spanish flair

“Let's meet up at the Last Supper” was the lingo of the week, as sacred icons popped up every-
where

4. Opening Night... "Grovers are a Girls Best Friend"

Opening night we laughed too much, we snorted with delight, as we recounted silly stories from
our past

"First Grove" memories were such a hoot, outrageous Belize tales, (our founding members sure
did have a blast)

We saluted them with tiaras, and toasted them with booze, there wouldn't be a Grove without this
crew

And to Susan and Edie, a rousing cheer, we are all forever grateful to you two

We shared stories of great Grove talent nights, of famed acts from the past, like the swim team and
Madonna and wild Tina

And the "introverts" who've each become Grove legends to us all, like Mary, Erin, Theo and Ms.
"Weina"

But some brand new Grove stars shone this year, when the "Marilyns" took the stage (in platinum
wigs and diamond jewels galore)

"Grovers Are a Girls Best Friend," knocked us all off our feet, it's forever now part of Grover music
lore

5. And the Survey Says....

The Ambassador from Bhutan dropped by, seems she was in the 'hood, and reportedly knows ALL
Grove survey data

While she quite resembled Betty in rose-colored glasses and a robe, she quickly focused in on stats
that "matta"

As many of us say we like to read, as have a drink or two (confirmation that our group is far from
dumb)

And while some report our sex lives are still sizzling hot, just as many said "what sex life?" or "ho
hum"

Our passports all bear many stamps, but our language skills are lacking, the more we've travelled
the fewer foreign tongues we speak

Yet we can order food and wine, we say, in Italian, French and Dutch, and Mandarin and Spanish
and in Greek

Most of us report we dye our hair, and exercise to keep fit, in fact we all claim that we're looking
great

But we're all usually on a diet, or contemplating one, or regretting whatever it was that we just ate.

6. Going Deep Fast -- After Fifteen Years We Sure Know a Lot

The heart of every meeting is our "go deep fast" Grove panels, and this year speed thinking had all
heads a-spinning

We spoke about disruption, and the vulnerable grid, and how tomorrow's redefining winning
From medical risk to cyber crime, to the future of the brain, we probed tough problems and shared
our expert voices

Can we create pre-mortum hindsight? Can we keep our passwords safe? And, can women stuck in
poverty still have choices?

Did you know that the tomato is the food chain's secret "hummer," using water like sponge (not
eco cool)
And that most clawed frogs are "unemployed", since pregnancy tests came out, and that a vulnera-
ble grid's become the rule
And that Guatemala's poorest have to choose which child to feed, and that we must help if they're
to have a chance
And that Puntin and Xi are like pop stars at home, with personalities to match, one a family guy,
one egotist chasing romance

7. Three Ambassadors— (Three Tenors Got Nothing on Us)

Mari Carman, Mary Ann and Deb ("Ambassadors" all), shed some light "global hot spots" they've
all known

(Look out Pavoratti, Placido and Jose, the Grove has got a fab three of it's own)
In Libia, where disruption reigns, it's rebuild tribe and trust. Killing people won't kill movements
in the end
Armed conflict gets us nowhere, understanding is a must, and it takes patience and real tact to
make a friend

In El Slavador, human trafficking 's become a retail game, selling border crossings is like selling
fries
There's a discount sale online right now, half-price offer on the web, for poor kids to make the
crossing (just three tries)
And if peace in violent regions is to ever come to pass, we need not just men's might but also voices
female
'Cause when women aren't at the table when a peace accord is made, those peace agreements al-
ways tend to fail

8. Looking Ahead -- Whatever it is Our Tomorrow Will Always Be Edie's Yesterday

For fifteen years our Edie, has been tickling our brains, with visions of tomorrows we will see
She is thinking round the corner while we barely see today today, Edie always tells us all what is
about to be

You'd think she'd run out of ideas, of futures to foretell, but Edie's got an "energizer" brain
She's light years ahead of all of us, but because she is our friend, she slows down every Grove just
to explain

Physics she says, is proving God... and truth is disappearing (do you know a kid who doesn't thin
Twitter is "proof")
Our crisis today's not leadership, but fellowship she says (and it's not because our leaders are too
aloof)

We are moving from “mankind to mindkind”, and reality’s what we make it, we each have the power to shape things, if we choose it

We humans can change the future, says Edie, we’ve each got the talent it takes, but we’ve got to make up our minds that we’re going to use it

9. Bright Ideas Dinner – Is That a Light Bulb on Your Head?

There were the rumors a foot for much of the year, of a covert cabal in DC, who were planning something ultra new and daring

A secret Grover underground, cooking up a magic plot, a festive gala just for idea sharing
Led by Sandy and her vision bold of bettering world, they sought bright ideas -- to be fleshed out at dinner

And fab prizes were presented to the best ideas of all, like the Binky Breather, our brilliant first-prize winner

Sadly Sandy couldn’t be there, but Mimi filled with style, challenging each of us to share best idea thinking

And table captains timed us, although without much success, as we were much too busy laughing hard and drinking

While the ideas team (brave women wearing light bulbs on the heads), tried hard to keep some order in the through the meal,

Our ideas were just to many, and pure silliness won out, as bright ideas morphed into Grover party zeal

10. All the World’s a Stage – Ideas Beget Entertainment

While we each brought some great brainchild, to help improve the world, too much thinking seems to stir our inner ham

Amy Poehler & Tina Fey somewhat magically appeared (though they looked a lot like Erin and Diane)

Then we all went to “detention” where teen Edie and her crew, were doing time for their ever wayward ways

Edie’s alter ego Faith, and Penny’s double Lynn, had us all in stitches for the next few days

And a Susan, played by Erin, wearing lime green and hot pink, led all us in a most rousing song and dance

“II Want to Be in Belezia” could be heard throughout the land, (decorum didn’t seem to have a chance)

There was dancing on the tables, there was dancing on the stage, there was wild behavior well into the night

While our brightest Ideas dinner may have helped us change the world, the after party was equally out of sight

11. Thanks for the Memories

After fifteen years we figured, we’d great memories to share, (although but most of us can’t remember our yesterdays)

So we gathered up old photos, and the poems from Groves gone by, and spent a lunchtime sharing stories of our first days

We sat around by “classes,” (Did you join same years as me?) and remembered stories from our first retreat

And made fabulous class posters for our “memories museum”, who knew gluing glitter could be such a treat?

We had tales from Puerto Rico, and memories from Peru, and of balancing an egg at the equator
Of “limbo-ing” in our bras, and sailing the canal, and of who joined first and who joined two years
later

We remembered all the rooms we shared, and air connections missed, and rums and pisco sours by
the score

And seeing manatees, and monkeys, endless massages by the pool...and shopping on the beach...
and EVERY store

12 Costume Night – We All Love to Be Someone Else

After fall these years of dressing up (we Grovers like to play) we figured costume night this year
would be a breeze

If we just dragged out our costumes past, or friends’ costumes we loved, and had a gala costume
night reprise.

Well, it wasn’t quite that simple, as Santa Domingo’s saints, seemed to beckon us with spiritual
light

Antique monks’ robes became fashion, “borrowed” from the hotel lobby, and “Grove Sis-
ters” (nuns) kept blessing us all night

We viewed our first ever Grover film (commonality was the theme), where we revealed secrets that
made some of us blush

And Rita filmed a message, since she couldn’t join herself, sharing first Grove memories (that made
the whole room hush)

The “China Chicks” and Erin put Brittany Spears to shame, dancing in mini-skirts not quite 12 inch-
es long

And Susan, wearing pink tights, donned Theo’s famed flamingo suit, pink flamingo glam just can’t
ever go wrong.

We passed along the hot pants from our old San Pedro days, and Madonna’s tutu (the Belize
edition)

Was handed off to Karen, by Ambassador Deb, Grovers value and preserve such Grove tradition
And the Dead Bhutanese Swim Team were resurrected for the night, along with other “ghosts from
costumes past”

You may think you’ll never see another Mardi Bra again, but Grove spirit and Grove costumes last,
and last

13. It Takes a Village – Many Hands Make the Gove Magic Happen

Grove 15 was such a hit, thanks to so many hands, way too many names to ever to list in rhyme
There were co-chairs, day chairs, panelists, a memories committee, and behind the scenes crews
working the whole time

Marisbel and our local hosts, out did themselves big time, especially with that lovely gala dinner
And this year’s table topics rocked, we’re still discussing some, every conversation was a total

Winner

It’s the working together that makes this the Grove, the way we all pitch in, Grove sisters each are
“make it work” helpful sharers

And we also give back (as our auction bids proved), we Grovers are generous “carers”

Our community or trust, isn’t just a catch phrase, it’s a treasure that’s one of a kind

The Grove is the Grove thanks to each one of us, an adventure of shared heart and mind

14 Sailing into the Next 15

"Ahoy there all you Grovers," Captain Susan and her crew, closed our session with a preview of
next year

For the first time ever we're setting sail, the whole Grove is going to sea, and it will be a luxury
cruise, so have no fear

And unlike Guatemala, there will be no cobble stones, yes, our feet will be as pampered as our spirit
We can be "zen" (be one with water), or we can party all night long (as the seagulls will be the only
ones to hear it)

After fifteen years of "Groving," we need no "place" to be the lure, we're well travelled, we can ven-
ture where we please

Our cruise will be a bonding time, where all drop out together (much like our very first beginnings
in Belize)

So get your sunscreen and your cruise wear, and your "Grover state of mind", and sign up for the
S.S. Grove-at-Sea

'Cause when Grovers get together, magic happens every time, and together is where we ALL want
to be

15. Hooray for Captain Susan!

Fifteen groves have come and gone, and each of us will treasure, the memories and the friendships
built each time

And there aren't enough praises, or kind words that we can craft, to say "Thank you Susan" in a
humble rhyme

You have networked and connected us to new ideas and sisters, and showered us with your insight
and connection

You've given us your heart and soul, and boundless energy, to make sure that every Grove's beyond
perfection

When we saw you in your captain's hat, to us it seemed a crown, one most deserved because you
are our leader royal

And no matter what lies in our paths, the future of the Grove, will shine bright, 'cause to the Grove
we're ever loyal

We'll be quiet when you ring your bell, and when you shout out "ladies," we will pay attention and
follow your cue

For you're our "Captain Susan" and we're your trusted crew, "Ahoy there Captain Susan...WE LOVE
YOU!"

*Forgive the broken meter and the very fractured rhyme, and the many people not mentioned by name
You each deserve poem of your own, or maybe even an epic, or ode to sing your praises and acclaim
For you each have so enriched the Grove, with your special gift of self, it 's the sum of us all by which the Grove is
measured
Thanks to one and all for the part that you play, and friendship that you share... every one of you is a Grove sister
most treasured!*