

## **Concentration/Samatha Retreat with Sayalay Dipankara September 4-17, 2020 Columbine Inn, Taos Ski Valley, NM**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This two week Samatha/Concentration retreat is for experienced Dhamma students (see prerequisites below). Guidance will be offered for the development and nurturing of deep concentration leading towards Jhana in the lineage of Burmese meditation master Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw.

All meditators are encouraged to observe the 'Eight Training Precepts' but observing the 'Five Training Precepts' is also acceptable especially for people with medical issues. Please indicate on your application form which you would like observe. The retreat will be held in Noble Silence, and will consist of alternate periods of sitting and walking, instructions, Dhamma talks and individual practice interviews. The small group size at Hermitage retreats (a maximum of 15 students for this one) helps to create a more intimate experience and easier access to the teacher.

A scholarship fund has been established to offer financial aid to those who would otherwise not be able to attend. There is no fee for monastics.

Applications and deposits are requested by July 15, 2020. Late applications will be considered on a space available basis. All yogis will have a single room with private bath. Space is limited to 15 yogis - applications are necessary.

### **PREREQUISITES FOR THIS RETREAT**

Practitioners must have sat a minimum of three week-long or ten-day retreats with a recognized Buddhist teacher and/or a longer period of intensive practice with a recognized teacher.

Details of the qualifying retreats, including teachers' names, dates, location and length of the retreat, must be documented on the application form.

### **TEACHER**

**Sayalay Daw Dipankara Theri** was born in 1964 in Myanmar.

At a young age, Sayalay started the meditation practice without external instruction. As she matured, she continued her practice but with guidance from various great meditation masters. She accomplished the practice within a very short period, under the guidance of her skilful teacher, Ven. Pak-Auk Sayadaw.

In 1990, she was ordained as a Buddhist nun at Pak-Auk Tawya Monastery, Myanmar. Since then, she was trained to be a meditation teacher. Sayalay Dipankara is experienced in teaching any of the 40 Kamatthana as mentioned in the Visuddhi Magga (e.g. Anapanasati, Four Elements Meditation, Metta, Buddhanussati, Asubha, Marananussati and 8 Samapatti (1st to 8th Jhana), Kasina meditation, etc) and Vipassana Meditation.

In 1996, she was invited to Sri Lanka by the highly respected Mahathera, Venerable U Ariya Dhamma to assist her teacher, Ven. Pak-Auk Sayadaw in guiding the yogis. Since then for 25 years till present, she has been invited by various Buddhist Centres to conduct talks and intensive meditation retreats in different countries such as USA, Germany, Italy, Canada, Japan, England, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Korea, China, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Australia, Vietnam etc.

In 2000, Sayalay founded Cakkavala Meditation Centre in Singapore and is the spiritual advisor of the centre till the present.

In 2006, Sayalay founded Brahma Vihari Meditation Centre (Myanmar) to conduct longer meditation retreats for local and international meditators. Sayalay is also the founder and abbess of three other international Brahma Vihari Meditation Centres in Muar (Malaysia), Penang (Malaysia) and Subang (Indonesia).

On 20th March 2019, the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture (Myanmar) and the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar conferred upon Sayalay Daw Dipankara Theri the honorary title of “Great International Meditation Master” in recognition of her extensive Dhamma teachings worldwide for the benefit of all.

Besides the teachers, the staff of this one-week Hermitage retreat will consist of a resident retreat manager (the point of contact in case of any difficulties) and a retreat cook. There will be three nutritious vegetarian meals per day and options available for those who will observe the 'Eight Training Precepts.'

## **POSSIBLE DAILY SCHEDULE**

The general retreat schedule will consist of group events such as meals, Dhamma talks, and guided sits plus a suggested schedule of sitting and walking practice.

5:30 a.m. – Group sit and Metta chant  
6:30 a.m. – Breakfast  
7:15 a.m. – Work period  
8:15 a.m. -Refuges & Precepts – Group sit – Instructions or Dhamma reflection  
9:15 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Walk & sit alternate hours- Practice interviews as scheduled  
12:00 Noon – Lunch  
1:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Walk & sit alternate hours  
5:30 p.m. – Tea  
6:30 p.m. – 7:15 p.m. Sit & walk  
7:15 p.m. – Dhamma talk, guided meditation, or Q & A as scheduled  
8:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. Walk or sit

## **THE RETREAT FACILITY**

The Columbine Inn, in Taos Ski Valley, is a comfortable timber-frame lodge situated among tall pines at 9200 feet elevation in northern New Mexico’s beautiful Sangre de Cristo Mountains. *The Mountain Hermitage* will have exclusive use of the Columbine Inn during the period of this two-week retreat, enabling us to provide the privacy, quiet, and sense of harmony most conducive to intensive practice.

There is a lovely meditation hall, indoor and outdoor walking areas, and a large dining hall. All of the rooms at the Columbine Inn include 2 queen beds, private toilet, shower/tub, mini-fridge, microwave, and hair dryer. Many of the rooms are spacious enough to allow for sitting and walking meditation for those wishing to practice in a more secluded setting. Linens and towels are provided.

Information about transportation and what to bring will be sent to those accepted into the retreat in time for making travel arrangements and packing.

## **FEES**

Fees are on a sliding scale to allow you to pay according to your means. Our actual cost for this 2 week long retreat per person is **\$1778**. A portion of our scholarship fund is being allocated for this retreat to allow us to offer the low range on the sliding scale. Please pay as much as you are able, in order to allow others to attend who need to pay less. Any amount above the actual cost will be gratefully received and treated as a tax-deductible donation.

**Sliding Scale Fees**  
**\$1578 (low)   \$1778 (actual cost)   \$1978 (benefactor)**

If you need more scholarship support, some additional funds are available. Please fill out a scholarship application form and send it with your application form, specifying how much you feel you are able to pay. There is no fee for monastics.

The Mountain Hermitage will gratefully receive donations to our scholarship fund to enable those in financial need to attend this retreat. Donations are tax-deductible and should be marked 'Scholarship Fund'.

## **DANA**

The retreat fees only cover basic expenses and operating costs. The teachers offer the Buddha Dhamma without any set fee, and totally depends on DANA – on the generosity of their students and benefactors – for the support of their daily life needs.

DANA, an ancient Pali word meaning generosity, giving, or gift, is central to the 2,600-year-old tradition of Buddhism. The teachings of the Buddha have been offered freely since the time of the Buddha. There was and is no way to put a price on the teachings of the truth – they are valuable beyond any fee one could set.

At the end of the retreat, envelopes will be provided for you to offer Dana to the teachers. Giving to the teacher from the heart, whatever feels appropriate, is the practice of Dana. You may also wish to offer Dana to the staff or to the Hermitage itself to support operating expenses or future scholarships.

Another way to support the Hermitage is to donate all or part of the cost of a meal during the retreat.

## **USE OF FEES**

Your fees for the retreat will be used to pay for: rental of the Columbine Inn and attached expenses; other general retreat expenses; a retreat cook; a small stipend for the retreat manager; a small parsonage to the teachers to help cover ongoing home expenses for the duration of the retreat; teacher transportation.

## **DEPOSIT**

Please send your deposit with your application. The deposit is \$400.

The deposit will not be banked until your registration is confirmed and will be applied to the total fee for those accepted to attend. The deposit will be returned in full to those not accepted, or to those who are on a waiting list at the time that the retreat begins.

## **PAYMENTS**

The full deposit must accompany your application, even if you are requesting scholarship funds. No monies will be banked until you are accepted on the retreat. The balance of the retreat fee is due when you arrive for the retreat, or you can mail the balance to us in advance. If possible, we appreciate you paying the full fee (deposit plus balance) at the time of application or on acceptance, as this improves our efficiency. However this is not necessary.

Please pay by check or money order in US funds, drawn on a US bank. We cannot accept foreign cash or bank drafts, but we can accept international money orders in US dollars. Sorry, but at this time we are unable to accept credit cards.

Checks/money orders should be made payable to THE MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE.

## **CANCELLATION POLICY**

Cancellation fees apply to all confirmed registrations.

Cancellations received on or before July 28, 2020: your deposit will be returned minus a \$50 cancellation fee.

Cancellations received on or after July 29, 2020, including non-attendance at the retreat: your deposit cannot be refunded. If you have already paid the balance, then that balance will be refunded minus the \$400 deposit/cancellation fee.

CANCELLATION FEES WILL BE APPLIED TO THE MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE SCHOLARSHIP FUND (after the cost of the retreat is covered).

In the event of specific, unusual emergency circumstances, the cancellation policy can be discussed with The Mountain Hermitage Office Manager after the retreat is concluded. If you attend the retreat but for some reason decide on your own to leave early, the deposit and balance you have paid cannot be refunded to you.

## **APPLICATION**

Anyone interested in attending the retreat must have read this document. Then, complete the Application Form and Waiver of Liability, attach your deposit, and mail to: The Mountain Hermitage, PO Box 807, Ranchos de Taos, NM 87557.

Applications and deposits are requested by **July 21, 2020**. Late applications will be considered on a space available basis. Applications will be accepted only by mail, not by phone, fax, or e-mail, because they must be accompanied by the appropriate deposit.

Incomplete registrations, including those without sufficient deposit, will be returned for completion.

Each application will be carefully reviewed. In some cases, a personal or phone interview will be conducted with the teacher prior to determination of suitability for this type of practice. All applications are processed by date received. We will respond within two weeks from receipt of your application.

If your application is not accepted for this retreat, your deposit will be returned.

## **WAIT LIST**

Places are limited to 15 practitioners, so early application is advised. Once the retreat is full, you will be notified and placed on a wait list, and we will contact you if a place opens up. If it does not, then your deposit will be returned.

If you are placed on the wait list and you then cancel your registration before a space has become available, your deposit will be returned.

If you are placed on a wait list and are unable to attend the retreat, please let us know immediately. As long as your name remains on a list, we assume you wish to attend. If a space becomes available, we will automatically confirm your registration. Once you are confirmed for a retreat, you are liable for applicable cancellation fees if you subsequently cancel.

## **Printable Documents and Forms**

- **Introduction (print-friendly version of this page)**
- **Practice Guidelines**
- **Application**
- **Waiver of Liability**
- **Scholarship Application & Information Sheet**
- **Special Flyer**