

THE MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE
Samatha Concentration Retreat
Teacher: Venerable Dhammadippa
December 5 - 12, 2021
Blue Sky Retreat Center, Taos, NM

INTRODUCTION

This *Mountain Hermitage* Week-long Samatha Concentration Retreat offers a unique and supportive space of solitude and silence for anyone who is interested in the Buddhist teachings and meditation practice...this process of purifying the mind and body. This retreat will offer an introduction into the process of learning and acquiring mastery in Samatha Concentration meditation via training in *Anapanasati*-Mindfulness of Breathing, which promotes one-pointed concentration and is the basis for wisdom in all the great schools of northern and southern Buddhist traditions.

Venerable Tomas Dhammadipa will also introduce the *yogacara* perspective, giving students a better understanding of how the coupling of *Samatha* and *Vipassana* practice can complete the mastery of the method. He will be open to also teaching other methods of training in one-pointed concentration to help students towards a better understanding of ways to purify the mind. He will draw from various Buddhist texts as well as a particular Chinese *Mahayana* practice to show how the process of the practice of purification of mind through experiencing a more subtle breath with a more subtle sensation can be explained in different ways. The root source of all of these teachings and commentaries is the Buddha's *Anapanasati Sutta*.

There will be two Dhamma talks each day. The morning talk will focus on the practicalities of the meditation practice. The evening talk will focus on theoretical aspects of the practice from both the *Theravada* and *Mahayana* perspectives.

The retreat will be held in Noble Silence, and will consist of alternate periods of sitting and walking, instructions, guided sits, *Dhamma* talks, Q & A opportunities, individual practice meetings and a daily 30 minute *Qigong* practice session. The small group size at this *Hermitage* retreat helps to create a more intimate experience and easier access to the teacher.

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

Applications and deposits are requested by **November 1, 2021**. Late applications will be considered on a space available basis. *Space is limited so apply soon!* **Printable forms are at the bottom of this page.**

PREREQUISITES FOR THIS RETREAT

This retreat is open to anyone who is interested in the Buddhist teachings and meditation practice...this process of purifying the mind and body.

Please let us know details of any previous retreats, including teachers' names, dates, location and length of the retreat, on the application form.

ABOUT THE MOUNTAIN HERMITAGE

Yogis are encouraged to maintain sustained and continuous practice during their participation in this Mountain Hermitage retreat. Teaching support for this retreat will consist of daily morning practice

instruction or reflection or guided sit, small group and one-on-one practice meetings as scheduled by the teacher and group chanting of the Refuges and Precepts, a Dhamma Talk or Q&A each evening.

This Mountain Hermitage retreat offers a unique practice opportunity. In order to benefit from this environment, applicants need to be largely self-sustaining in their practice and be comfortable in unbroken silence and solitude. All participants must be mentally stable and physically able to care for themselves. Everyone must have health insurance or be able to cover their expenses in case of illness or medical emergencies. Any special needs must be discussed and agreed to in advance, as the staff is very small and cannot accommodate high levels of support for any individual.

It is asked that retreatants commit themselves fully to their retreat. All business and family obligations should be taken care of prior to the beginning of the retreat so that practice can be uninterrupted.

TEACHER Venerable Dhammadipa (lay name Tomas Peter Gutman) was born in Czechoslovakia in 1949. Since his graduation from Prague Karl University in 1969, where he studied Chinese Literature and Philosophy, he received various degrees from universities in Jerusalem, Berlin, Paris, and India. In 1986, he went to Japan and studied under Zen Master Harada Serrei Roshi of the Caodong school. He was given a Dharma name Xing-Kong (meaning Nature of Emptiness).

In 1987, with the encouragement of Venerable Athurugiriye Nyanavimala Mahathera, Venerable Wijayasoma Mahathera, and Venerable Dikwelle Mahinda, he ordained as a monk in Meetirigala and was given a Dharma name as Dhammadipa (island of Buddhism or Dharma). He received the full Theravada Bhiksu ordination in Sri Lanka where he practiced meditation under the guidance of his preceptor, Venerable Nanarama Mahathera. In 1989, he received the Three Fold ordination as a Mahayana Monk in Hsi Lai Temple, Los Angeles and began Dharma teaching in US, Germany and Taiwan.

In 1996, Venerable went to Myanmar to practice meditation with the contemporary master Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw, and was recognized by the Sayadaw to be first of the Sayadaw's Western disciples qualified to teach meditation. He has since been teaching Samatha (tranquil mental states) and Vipassana (direct seeing of the Dharma) meditation at monasteries and universities worldwide.

Venerable Dhammadipa speaks Czech, French, German, English, Russian, and fluent Chinese. He reads and translates Buddhist texts from Pali and Sanskrit. Over the years Venerable has presented dharma teachings and led meditation retreats around Europe, North America, Taiwan and mainland China, India and Southeast Asia.

Venerable teaches that knowledge of the Buddhist way should be applied in practice and verified first hand through direct experience. One should make a great vow to tread the way and realize the dharma for the benefit of all sentient beings. For more information about Venerable Dhammadipa, please click this link to his website: <https://www.dhammadipa.cz/en/recordings-texts/>

The staff of this week-long retreat will consist of the teacher, a retreat manager (the point of contact in case of any difficulties), a cook, and an administrative person.

POSSIBLE DAILY SCHEDULE

The general retreat schedule will consist of alternate periods of sitting and walking, instructions, Dhamma talks, Q & A opportunities, individual practice meetings and a daily 30 minute Qigong practice session

6:00 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, 30 minute Qigong practice session

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

Blue Sky Retreat Center @ San Geronimo Lodge, Taos, NM is situated among fruit trees along the banks of the *Acequia Madre*, and provides the privacy, quiet, and sense of harmony that is most conducive to intensive practice. There is a beautiful meditation hall and indoor and outdoor walking areas.

The Mountain Hermitage will have exclusive use of Blue Sky Retreat Center during the one week period of this *Samatha* Concentration Retreat. All yogis will have their own single room and bathroom. Each room is spacious enough to allow for both sitting and walking meditation for those who wish to practice in a more secluded setting.

The meditation hall, walking spaces, dining room, kitchen and bedrooms are all within one building. There are two wheelchair accessible double bedrooms, to allow for an attendant, if needed.

FEES

Fees are on a sliding scale to allow you to pay according to your means. Our actual cost for this week-long retreat per person is **\$945**. 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:

\$745 (*low*) \$945 (*actual cost*) \$1181 (*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 offers 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 in the form of Meal Dana.

USE OF FEES

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

DEPOSIT

Please send your deposit with your application. The deposit is: \$275.

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 into 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.

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 October 31, 2021: your deposit will be returned minus a \$25 cancellation fee.

Cancellations received on or after November 1, 2021, 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 \$275 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 November 1, 2021. 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 one of the teachers prior to determination of suitability for this type of practice. All applications are processed by date received. We will respond within four 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 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

Introduction (print-friendly version of this page)

Practice Guidelines

Application

Waiver of Liability

Scholarship Application & Information Sheet

Special Flyer