

AMARAVATI RETREAT CENTRE GENERAL INFORMATION

Retreats are held in a facility separate from the main monastery. Accommodation is mostly in dormitories, but there are a few rooms available for those with special needs. Retreatants are asked to participate fully in the daily schedule of sitting and walking meditation.

NOBLE SILENCE: Meditation instruction is given by the monk or nun leading the retreat and there is usually an opportunity to ask questions about meditation practice. Otherwise retreatants are asked to maintain 'noble silence', that is not engaging in *any* talk with each other, or anyone else, unless it is really necessary.

On the first day, retreatants are asked to arrive between 4.00 and 7.00pm. On arrival, please come to the Retreat Centre Reception to register and find out where you are sleeping.

The schedule for the first evening is as follows:

Registration: Retreat Centre Office from 4- 7 p.m.

Supper: Retreat Centre Kitchen from 6 - 7.30 p.m.

Orientation talk: Retreat Centre Kitchen at 7.30pm

Opening Meditation: In the Shrine Room at 8.15pm

Weekend retreats finish at 4.00pm; Five and ten day retreats finish after lunch on the last day.

A TYPICAL RETREAT DAY

5:00	Wake-up bell
5:30	Chanting and meditation
7:00	Breakfast
7:45	Working meditation
8:30	Meditation (sitting & walking)
11:00	Lunch
1:30	Meditation (sitting & walking)
5:00	Hot drinks
7:30	Chanting, meditation and talk
9:30	Sleep

THINGS TO BRING

Please bring the following items:

- Sheets and pillowcase (Blankets and sleeping bags are available).
- Towels and toiletries.
- Waterproof outdoor clothing and footwear; slip on shoes are useful.
- Thick socks - no shoes are worn indoors.
- Comfortable and loose-fitting clothes.
- (*Retreatants are asked to dress modestly and not to wear short or tight fitting clothing*).
- Small torch, hot-water bottle and ear-plugs may also be useful.
- Any *small* gifts you would like to offer to the teacher and other Sangha members (at the end of five and ten-day retreats).

Please note: retreatants are asked not to bring mobile phones to the Retreat Centre. A pay phone is available at the Monastery.

THE EIGHT PRECEPTS

The residents of Amaravati follow a monastic code of conduct, based on the eight precepts:

1. **Harmlessness:** not intentionally taking the life of any living creature.
2. **Trustworthiness:** not taking anything which is not given.
3. **Chastity:** refraining from any sexual activity.
4. **Right Speech:** avoiding false, abusive or malicious speech.
5. **Sobriety:** not taking any intoxicating drink or drugs.
6. **Renunciation:** not eating after mid-day.
7. **Restraint:** not wearing make-up, jewellery or immodest clothing; not playing radios, music tapes or musical instruments.
8. **Alertness:** to refrain from over indulgence in sleep.

COST OF RETREAT

The Retreat Centre at Amaravati aims to be financially self-sufficient, and to meet its costs without depending on the monastic community for financial support.

Total Costs

It has been calculated that the cost of running the Retreat Centre (including food, heating, maintenance, administration, insurance, etc.) averages out at about £12 per person per day.

Booking Fee

In order to book a place on a retreat, retreatants are asked to pay an initial contribution of £5 per person per day. This acts as a booking fee, reserving their place on the retreat. A few subsidised places are available for those who cannot afford this initial contribution.

Donations

At the end of the retreat, there is an opportunity for participants to make a donation in order to help us cover the remainder of the running costs, which average out at about £7 per person per day. However, it is understood that some people may not be able to afford this amount, whilst others may be able to give more. Donations are voluntary and anonymous, and it is hoped that the spirit of generosity, with each person giving whatever they are able to offer, will enable the Retreat Centre to continue to provide facilities for teaching and practice in the future.

Gift Aid scheme

As a charity, the Retreat Centre can benefit considerably from the Gift Aid scheme: 28p for every £1 donated by United Kingdom taxpayers. For the donor it takes very little effort and costs absolutely nothing. Please ask for further details.

BOOKING PROCEDURE

Bookings can only be accepted on receipt *by post* of a completed booking form and the initial contribution which acts as a booking fee.

Subsidised places

If you cannot afford the initial contribution and would like to be considered for a subsidised place, please let us know.

Confirmation

If you would like confirmation of your booking, please supply either an e-mail address or a stamped addressed envelope.

Cancellations

In case of cancellation: please let us know as soon as possible so that your place can be offered to someone on the waiting list. A refund can be given, on request, if the cancellation is at least one month before the start of the retreat.

Staying for extra days

It is not usually possible to stay on at the Retreat Centre outside organised retreat times but, if you wish to come early or stay on after the retreat, it may be possible to stay as a 'guest' at the main monastery. If you are interested in doing this, please write to the 'guest monk' or 'guest nun'.

Any Questions

If you have any problems or queries concerning the booking procedure or the retreat itself, please don't hesitate to contact us:

Amaravati Retreat Centre
Great Gaddesden, Hemel Hempstead,
Hertfordshire HP1 3BZ, England
Tel & Fax: 01442 - 843239
e-mail: retreats@amaravati.org
www.amaravati.org

BOOKING FORM

In order to book your place on the retreat, please complete in **BLOCK CAPITALS**, and return it to the Retreat Centre together with your booking fee of £5 per day [cheques made payable to 'The English Sangha Trust']

Amount enclosed: £ _____

Dates of Retreat : _____

Teacher : _____

Surname : _____

Forename : _____

Address : _____

Phone N^o : _____

E-mail N^o : _____

MALE FEMALE

AGE : ____ (Helpful in allocating rooms)

• Have you practised meditation before ?

YES NO

• If yes, how many years ? _____

• Have you done any retreats at Amaravati ?

YES NO

• If yes, how many ? _____

• Have you done any retreats elsewhere ?

YES NO

If yes, how many ? _____

Where ? _____

• Do you have any food allergies, special dietary needs, or need for food in the evening for medical reasons?

YES NO

Details _____

• Do you need a single room for reasons of ill health, disability or age ? (Note: There are very few rooms available so please only ask for a single room if you really need one.)

YES NO

Reason _____

• Do you have any serious medical condition or suffer from any kind of mental illness?

YES NO

Brief details _____

Please detach the booking form and keep the rest of this leaflet.

Note : All retreatants are asked to fill in this booking form, as the information it provides is helpful for the Sangha member leading the retreat and for the Retreat Managers in planning food and accommodation. Thank you for your co-operation in this.

For **confirmation** please supply an e-mail address or a stamped addressed envelope.

ALL INFORMATION IS CONFIDENTIAL

