

The general framework of our meditation retreats:

The meditation retreats mentioned in our program have some common essential points. These are relatively intensive retreats of systematic meditation as recommended by the Buddha himself.

The meditation of concentration and mental purity called *samatha* cultivates peace, unity and harmony of the mind. The *metta* meditation belongs to this category; it develops the attitude of universal loving kindness towards all beings in our heart.

The insight meditation called *vipassana* or *satipatthana-vipassana* is the path of truth, path of seeing and understanding, it develops insight into our life, into the mind, into what we usually call “me”. *Vipassana* opens a new horizon of life which is not blinded and deformed by egoistic self-centeredness; in the ideal case insight meditation leads to eradication of greed, hatred and delusion. Our retreats, if not mentioned otherwise, take place in the open atmosphere of “noble silence” – the communication is limited to interviews with the teacher. Males and females live in separate rooms. We observe 5 precepts (which mean to abstain from killing any living being; to abstain from stealing; to abstain from any sexual activity; to abstain from telling lies; to abstain from all intoxicants).

Bring along all personal belongings that you will need during the full time of the retreat (including indoors slippers) and all necessities for your sitting and walking practice – a meditation cushion or a stool, a shawl or something to put over your shoulders. Don't forget to bring all the medicines that you take on doctor's prescription.

The food is vegetarian, breakfast, lunch and in the late afternoon there are fruit and tea. There is no evening meal.

The schedule of meditation covers the whole day, starting in the morning 6:00 or 5:00 am till the last meditation, usually from 21:30 to 22:00. At 7:00 am there is breakfast and then some free time; lunch at noon and enough time to rest after the lunch and also an afternoon tea and some time for an individual walk – but everyone is expected – within his abilities - to keep up with the daily program where sitting meditation is followed by walking meditation.

Instructions for meditation are usually given in the morning; during the day some individual or group interviews may take place to “tune” the instruction for the meditators individually. After breakfast there is about 45 minute active meditation, it is meditative work for others. Everybody is assigned some simple work which he does daily for the whole week. At 7:30 pm there is a Dhamma talk. The day usually closes with 30 minutes of *metta* meditation. All the distracting activities such as reading, writing letters and postcards, mobile telephone, smoking cigarettes, listening to radio, going to the restaurant are not possible during the retreats. On the other hand, mindful walks in the nature, stretching, Hatha Yoga, Kum Nye or Tai Ji are possible.

However, a relatively high degree of discipline on the retreats should in no way lead to some kind of inner stiffness – exactly the opposite is the aim: in the self-discipline to find a higher level of one's freedom.

For all meditation retreats an advanced registration is necessary.

Disclaimer: Meditation is a continuous process, and in general has highly wholesome, positive effects on the practitioners. The retreats organized by Buddha Mangala are guided by qualified teachers with many years of individual practice and with good knowledge of the Buddha's teachings. The instructions on the retreats are meant and given as good advises. Still, Buddha Mangala does not take any responsibility for any eventual physical or mental damages caused to you by practice of meditation, or for damages or loss of your properties during the retreats. By practicing meditation you do so at your own risk and you acknowledge you have read and agree to the terms of this disclaimer.

Specifics for the summer retreats

- In any case take with you beddings or a sleeping bag together with a sheet and a pillow case.
- Daily program includes for all meditators 45 minutes of active (working) meditation without talking. This a very important part of the retreat, which should teach a meditator to apply

mindfulness into the activities of our daily life.

- To enable to meditators to get to know each other at least a little and to experience the Dhamma on the usual, social level (and this is also very important) on Saturdays at the beginning and at the end of retreats for this purpose the dinning room is used, where leaving and coming people can communicate.
- Supper is not served – only some teas, sometimes some fruit.
- During the day individual interviews with the teacher are held, when they talk about meditation and the teacher finds out if everything is going right way.