

Questions and Answers about a Residential Retreat Heartwood Refuge and Retreat Center

The fall retreat for Insight Meditation Community of Charlotte will be at Heartwood Refuge and Retreat Center in Hendersonville, NC. The following are commonly asked questions about the retreat. We invite you to join us for this unique practice opportunity.

- **What Can I Expect on Retreat?** A typical day consists primarily of alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation. The schedule will begin at about 7:00 in the morning and conclude at about 9:00 in the evening. There is a morning instruction period and an evening Dharma talk. On the first evening, participants will be invited to undertake the five precepts, a collective commitment to ethical behavior during the retreat period.
- **How Much Silence is Involved?** The retreat is conducted in Noble Silence, a practice that reduces interaction among participants, so that one can attend more closely to one's own experience. Other than the teachers' daily instructions, evening Dharma talks, and practice discussion meetings, the remainder of the retreat will be in silence. Reading and journaling are also discouraged. Pressing matters that arise can be addressed with the manager or teachers via written notes on the message board. No speaking or note writing between retreatants is permitted. Participants are encouraged to free themselves from the distractions of checking email, texting, or Internet.
- **What about Meals?** Healthy, delicious vegetarian meals with options are served daily. Lunch is the main meal of the day, and supper is lighter. Meals are served buffet style and eaten in silence. When you complete your registration, please communicate any special dietary needs (gluten-free, vegan) & every effort will be made to accommodate these needs.
- **What are the Accommodations?** The retreat center has a combination of single (limited number & higher cost) & double rooms. Each room has a private bath. Heartwood provides linens, blankets, & towels. Retreatants need to bring their own toiletries (soap, shampoo).
- **What about Costs?** The registration fee covers the direct cost of meals, lodging, and the facilities used by the group.
- **What is Teacher Dana?** The teachers do not receive any funds from the registration fees and pay to attend the retreat. At the end of the retreat, participants are invited to consider the practice of "dana;" usually translated as "generosity." This is an ancient practice from the time of the Buddha, whereby practitioners support the work of teachers by providing financial support. Everyone's financial situation is different, and changes over time. No one can say what amount of dana is correct for another.
- **What is a yogi job?** While at Heartwood, all retreatants will have a daily task that supports the retreat center and benefits the community. You will sign-up for a yogi job upon arrival.
- **What is a Practice Discussion Meeting (or Interview)?** This is a time to check in with one of the teachers. You may discuss your practice, how the retreat is going for you, and ask any question you may have. They last about 15 minutes.
- **Will there be yoga?** Yes, an optional, gentle, guided yoga session will be offered on Saturday.