

Information for Program Participants

Program Participants

Our programs are open to the public unless prerequisites are required and these will be noted on the individual program pages. Anyone with an interest is welcome to attend. Most of the people attending will be practitioners, but there will also be some who are investigating Buddhist ideas for the first time, and others who are non-practitioners but pleased to have the unique opportunity to enjoy Rinpoche's presentation of the truths of the Dharma.

Registration/Check-in

Pre-registration is highly encouraged. You can register and pay for the program on-line on our website. Our website security utilizes current encryption technology for commercial website transactions, and provides the most efficient means of payment. If you are more comfortable sending a check or credit card information by mail, please note the instructions and mailing address on the individual program page. Registration is considered complete when we receive your payment for the program.

Each program begins with check-in at the registration desk. Please make every effort to arrive before the time listed on the individual program page, so that you can check-in, register if you have not already done so, pick up your registration badge and any material (if needed) for the program and get settled before the program begins.

Schedule

The daily schedule will be posted at various locations at the center. It is subject to change, so please check regularly.

Travel/Directions

If you arrive at Denver International Airport (DIA), you have several alternatives to get to Boulder.

There are private shuttle services (e.g., Super Shuttle, www.bouldersupershuttle.com, 303-227-0000 or Boulder Express, www.boulderexpress.com, 888-457-4646). Please check their websites or call for current rates and schedules. These services can deliver you door-to-door or to certain hotels in Boulder.

Public transportation from DIA is via the SkyRide bus (www.rtd-denver.com/skyride). The cost is \$10/one way; \$18/round trip. SkyRide will deliver you to the bus station in downtown Boulder.

The DIA website (www.flydenver.com) has more information on ground transportation, as well as maps of the airport.

If you don't have a car, you will need to find a ride to Phüntso Chöling, as there is no public transportation to Ward. Please contact the Events Coordinator (events@mangalashribhuti.org) who can put you in touch with someone with whom you can carpool.

If you are driving, please email the Events Coordinator (events@mangalashribhuti.org) for directions to the center.

Accommodations

You will need to arrange your own lodging. Phüntsook Chöling has a few retreat rooms, which are generally booked well in advance of the teaching programs, and are normally reserved for guests from abroad. Boulder is about 45 minutes away and many participants commute from there.

Boulder lodging information can be found at www.boulderlodging.com and www.bouldercoloradousa.com. Both websites contain information about a wide variety of accommodations/price ranges.

Nederland is a small community about 20 minutes from Phüntsook Chöling. Lodging information can be found at www.nederlandchamber.org.

Camping is not available at Phüntsook Chöling. However, we are located near the Roosevelt National Forest which offers campgrounds. Campsites may be reserved from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Reservations can be made by calling toll-free 1-877-444-6777, or at <http://reserveusa.com>. Some campsites are available on a first-come, first served basis. Information on the following campgrounds can be found at www.fs.fed.us/arnf.

- Peaceful Valley Campground (off Colorado Highway 72 at mile-marker 50, approximately 19 miles north of Nederland)
- Pawnee Campground (off of Colorado Highway 72 at Brainard Lake Road (aka Country Road 102, Forest Service Road 112), just north of Ward)
- Kelly Dahl Campground (Colorado Highway 119 at mile-marker 22, about 4 miles south of Nederland and 2 miles north of Rollinsville)
- Camp Dick Campground (one mile west of Colorado Highway 72, at mile-marker 50, approximately 19 miles north of Nederland and 20 miles south of Estes Park)

Food

Program participants make their own arrangements for food. Participants bring prepared lunches, or go out for lunch at one of the restaurants in Nederland or near Ward. There is a common kitchen area at Phüntsook Chöling, with a microwave and dishes, but it's helpful to provide your own utensils and cooler, as storage/refrigeration space is limited, and the kitchen is often crowded during programs. Hot water for tea/coffee is available.

Environment/Weather

The fair weather in the Boulder area is one of its attractions—often mild, sunny and dry throughout the year. Though we're only forty-five minutes from Boulder, the mountain weather at Phüntsook Chöling is much less predictable, because of the dramatic elevation change. This is likely to produce a much greater variability in temperature (especially at night), and in precipitation. Although the last few years have been technically a drought period, rain or an

afternoon thunderstorm are frequent possibilities during the summer, and snow is likely anywhere from September through April. Nights and early mornings can be chilly at any time of year at Phüntsook Chöling, so it's always useful to have something warm for layering. The sun can be intense at all times of the year, and, at higher elevations, because the atmosphere is thinned, sunscreen protection is especially important.

The altitude at Phüntsook Chöling is roughly 9,000 feet. For comparison, Boulder is 5,430 feet and Denver is 5,280 feet. If you live at a location near sea level (e.g. Los Angeles, New York, Atlanta, St. Louis), you are likely to experience some noticeable physical effects from the higher elevation. Please expect these, so you won't be overly concerned. Most people will have some shortness of breath, especially with any exertion (climbing stairs; carrying luggage); and some people report feeling headaches or upset stomach for the first day or two after arriving. Sleeping may also be fitful or interrupted. The acclimation period varies from one person to the next, but for most people, their discomfort is limited to the first 36 hours, though you still may get winded easily for much longer. Some travelers may prefer to spend an extra day or two in Denver or Boulder in order to make the transition more smoothly. Many of the effects of altitude change are due to relative dehydration because of the drier climate and the body's adjustment mechanisms. *Please keep in mind that much of the acclimation process can be accelerated by drinking plenty of water—more than you may be accustomed to drinking.* In fact, some travelers avert much of the initial discomfort by drinking plenty of water prior to and during the day of travel, and arrive very well-hydrated.

What to Bring

- Notebook, pens
- Personal water bottle
- Food for lunch, snacks
- Sunglasses, sunhat, sunscreen, insect repellent
- Clothing that you can layer (average summer temperatures are between 43-86° F, average winter temperatures 11-37° F)
- Shawl/blanket (cool in mornings/evenings)
- Rain poncho/small folding umbrella
- Katag (prayer scarf) and envelope for final day's teacher offering
- Walking shoes or sandals that can easily be taken on and off (shoes are not permitted in the shrine room)
- Meditation cushions are provided, but if you would like to bring your own, please do.

What Not to Bring

- Pets
- Firearms or other weapons
- Illegal drugs/alcohol

Child Care

Limited child care, for a nominal cost, is available for the Nyingma Summer Seminar and Shedra. Please contact the Events Coordinator (events@mangalashribhuti.org) for further information.

Teaching Offering

At the end of the program, participants have an opportunity to make a teaching offering to Rinpoche as an expression of gratitude for receiving the teachings. Such monetary offerings made to the Teacher are reflections of the students' generosity and appreciation, and are made according to each one's capacity and inspiration. Rinpoche uses these offerings to contribute to a number of worthy Dharma projects for which he provides material support. Offerings are used expressly for this purpose and are not used for personal expenses or for the ongoing support of MSB. If you wish to designate a contribution that will fund Rinpoche's living expenses please specify "Parsonage Fund" on the memo portion of your check. (For more information about the parsonage fund, visit our website and the Supporting MSB page.)

Shrine Room Etiquette

In the summer, teachings are held outdoors in our large shrine tent. During other programs, teaching and practice are held indoors in the center's shrine room. A shrine room is a sacred space in which we connect with the Three Jewels (the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha), hear the teachings and ultimately connect with our own enlightened nature. The following are guidelines that help us remain mindful and respectful of the precious opportunity we have to hear the teachings and study and practice the Dharma.

- Please remove your shoes before entering the shrine room and place them on the designated shoe racks. Personal belongings (lunches, backpacks, coats, etc.) also should be left in the designated area.
- When entering and leaving the shrine room it is customary to offer a gesture of respect. This can be done by placing your palms together at your heart and bowing slightly.
- Conversation should be kept to a minimum in and around the shrine room. During breaks and lunch, people often practice or study in the shrine room.
- Turn off all cell phones and watch alarms.
- Dress appropriately. Revealing clothing such as halter tops and shorts are not appropriate attire. Hats should be removed before entering the shrine room.
- Chant books, texts, liturgies, sacred images should be treated with respect. Do not place them directly on the floor or step over them.
- It is considered disrespectful to point one's feet at the shrine, a sacred image, or towards the teacher. Likewise, one never lies down in the shrine room. During long teachings, one can become uncomfortable. It is okay to adjust your posture, but not go into a complete slouch, recline or point your legs at the shrine or Rinpoche.
- When Rinpoche enters or leaves the shrine room, one should stand with one's palms together at one's heart and with head bent respectively.
- After Rinpoche is seated, it is customary to offer three prostrations to show respect. *The teacher embodies the essence of all Buddhas throughout the three times. He is the union of the Three Jewels: his body is the Sangha, his speech the Dharma, his mind the Buddha*—from Patrul Rinpoche's Words of My Perfect Teacher.
- Please remain in the shrine room during meditation/practice sessions and talks. Please do not enter the shrine room once meditation has begun. You may sit quietly in the post-meditation area until the session has ended. Should you need to leave during a session, please do so quietly so as not to disturb others.

- Please hold questions until the teaching is completed. Rinpoche usually allows ample time for questions and answers and will invite questions.
- When the teaching/practice session is over, please let Rinpoche leave the shrine room first. After Rinpoche leaves, please wait until the person making announcements finishes before leaving.

Recordings

All our programs are recorded. We offer a special, program-only, highly discounted set of MP3 CDs at each teaching, in order to encourage study and contemplation of the teachings in one's daily life. You may order these during registration as part of your program cost, or during the program when an announcement is made about this offer.

If you have specific needs or questions that have not been answered in these information pages, please contact the Events Coordinator (events@mangalashribhuti.org).