

Shasta Abbey Retreats and Information 2019

Introductory Retreats

An Introductory Retreat orients new people to the practice of Serene Reflection Meditation (Soto Zen) in a monastic setting. It offers down-to-earth help in establishing a meditation practice that can be integrated into one's daily life. In addition to sitting meditation, the schedule includes Dharma talks and informal discussions on meditation, mindfulness, and basic Buddhist teachings.

INTRODUCTORY RETREAT DATES

- February 8–10
- April 12–14
- May 31–June 2
- July 12–14
- August 9–11
- September 6–8
- November 8–10

Summer Meditation and Training Retreat July 12-Aug. 4

This 3-week program offers an opportunity to explore Buddhist teachings and establish a regular meditation practice, all within a monastic setting. It begins with a weekend introduction to Soto Zen Buddhism. (See Introductory Retreats.) The focus of these three weeks is on seated meditation and meditation in daily life, and includes regular Dharma Talks and discussions, ceremonies, Dharma study and opportunities to meet with a Senior monk for spiritual guidance on a regular basis. Those applying for this retreat are asked to commit to the entire 3 weeks. We don't charge fees for spending time at Shasta Abbey. The monastery functions entirely on donations. We welcome both newcomers and those with some experience of our practice.



Celebratory Retreats: *Celebratory Retreats offer a more relaxed schedule and provide an opportunity for monks and lay trainees to practice and celebrate together. They are open to anyone who has been to an Introductory Retreat.*

Wesak Celebratory Retreat May 17–19, B.E. 2562

“On this Glorious Wesak Day...” we commemorate with gratitude the birth, life and teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha. Wesak marks the beginning of the New Buddhist Year and is the most significant and joyous event in our festive calendar. Retreat Dharma talks and discussions will explore aspects of the Buddha's life and how to apply His timeless Teaching to our lives in this day and age. In addition to daily meditations, we'll celebrate the special Wesak Vigil and Festival ceremonies. The retreat ends with the traditional ringing of the temple's great bell and a picnic.

New Year Celebratory Retreat Dec. 29–Jan. 1

This three-day year-end retreat offers the opportunity for reflection and celebration together as members of the Buddha's family. Dharma talks will explore ways to deepen our resolve and Buddhist training in the coming year. New Year's Eve celebrations will include a festive meal, meditation, Maitreya Vigil and our midnight New Year Ceremony, followed by welcoming the New Year with the ringing of the monastery's great bell.

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Retreat applications available
at www.shastaabbey.org

Shasta Abbey *A Temple in the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives (O.B.C.)*

Shasta Abbey, located on sixteen forested acres near Mount Shasta in northern California, is a training monastery for Buddhist monastics and a place of peace and practice for lay Buddhists and interested visitors. It was established in 1970 by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, who was Abbess until her death in 1996. Our current Abbess is Rev. Master Meian Elbert, a senior disciple of Rev. Master Jiyu. Buddhist training at Shasta Abbey is based on the practice of Serene Reflection (Soto Zen) Meditation and the keeping of the Buddhist Precepts. The monastery is home to 25 ordained male and female monks. The monastery schedule provides a balance of seated meditation, working meditation, and ceremonial, which allows the mind of meditation to be cultivated in all aspects of daily life.

Please see our website www.shastaabbey.org for more information on events, services and offerings listed on our calendar and for downloadable audio Dharma talks and texts.

Residential Training

Lay trainees who have participated in an Introductory Retreat and would like to spend more time at the Abbey are welcome to apply to join our resident lay training program for periods from a few days to several months. Lay residents meet with monastic teachers regularly as a group for Dharma discussions and also have the opportunity to meet individually with a senior monk for private spiritual guidance to reflect on their meditation and training experience. Residential training within the refuge of the monastery offers the opportunity for establishing and deepening meditation practice.

Three-day Silent Meditation Retreats for the monastic community take place several times each year. Monks put aside other responsibilities in order to focus on meditation and spend six hours daily in formal seated and walking meditation practice. The monks are in retreat, and therefore attendance at these retreats is reserved for lay trainees with substantial experience in our practice. Experienced lay trainees may get in touch with the Guestmaster for further information.

Continuing Practice Retreats: *These retreats are offered for anyone who has attended at least one Introductory Retreat at Shasta Abbey or has experience with Soto Zen meditation and training.*

Training with Integrity March 1–3

Many of us these days may be struggling with the question of ethics and how to maintain our integrity when faced with myriad divisive views on many matters. We can easily become confused about what is true and good to do in our daily lives. How did the Buddha define integrity and what are His teachings on ethical behavior? He certainly encountered similar controversies and conflict in His time. The Middle Path that He uncovered is a path available to all of us — that of training ourselves in kindness, compassionate mindfulness and faith in the pure wisdom of our Buddha Nature. During this retreat, we'll explore the meaning of integrity through the lens of the Buddhist Precepts.

The Merit of Lay Training in Troubled Times July 25–28

“Sentient beings whose minds are intent on the Way do not see conditions as separate from the Way—*The Scripture of Brahma's Net*.”

Lay trainees come face to face with turbulent and chaotic conditions in political, environmental, community and personal needs. And within these very conditions are the means by which we can find the truth of the Buddha's teaching for ourselves and all those around us. Our deep interconnection with all life and the profound ripple effect of these timeless teachings has kept Buddhism alive and vibrant down the centuries. We will focus on finding common ground amidst diverse groups and points of view, seeing the great potential within all circumstances and cultivating the attitudes of mind that bring us peace and harmony.



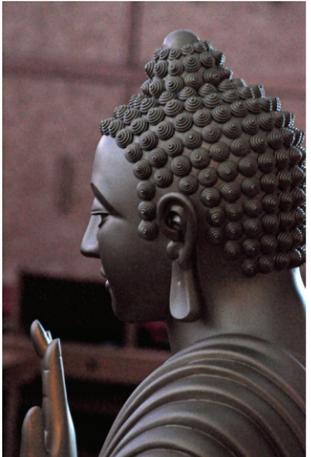
Week-Long Retreats

Jukai: The Ten Precepts Retreat March 24–31

The Ten Precepts are at the heart of the tradition of Serene Reflection Meditation. The Ten Precepts Retreat is the doorway through which those who wish to become lay Buddhists make their commitment to the Precepts. It is also a time for those who have previously made this commitment to reaffirm it. Through the five traditional ceremonies, as well as in Dharma talks and daily practice, this retreat explores the fundamental aspects of living the Precepts. Those who have attended an Introductory Retreat, and those who have participated in training at a Priory of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives, are welcome to apply. We invite people who wish to take the Precepts for the first time and those who wish to deepen their understanding of, and resolve to keep, the Precepts to share this joyous week with us.

Teachings from the Lotus Sutra June 16–23

This retreat, offered by our abbess, Rev. Master Meian, will focus on teachings from the *Lotus Sutra*, which is one of the most revered of all Mahayana Scriptures in East Asia, as well as being one of the earliest. The *Lotus Sutra* was Great Master Dogen's favorite sutra. He called it the “King of Scriptures” and frequently quoted from it in his writings. Many of the Scriptures we use today in our tradition are taken from this ancient sutra. Its teachings are fundamental to our practice and are made very accessible through the relating of parables and stories. Rev. Master Meian will offer Dharma talks and discussions as well as private spiritual counseling for each participant. This retreat is open to those with some experience of Soto Zen meditation and practice.



The Mind that Seeks the Way Aug. 18–25

“Forget the selfish self for a little and allow the mind to remain natural for this is very close to the Mind that seeks the Way.”—Great Master Dogen

This retreat, led by Rev. Master Serena and Rev. Master Oriana, will explore the teachings of our tradition on arousing, nourishing and sustaining our aspiration for enlightenment. We will explore the words of the Buddha as well as selections from the works of other great masters. The week-long retreat will include Dharma discussions and the opportunity for private spiritual counseling and is open to anyone with some experience of Soto Zen meditation and practice.

Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts Retreat Oct. 24–27

At the heart of this retreat is transferring the merit of our Dharma practice to those who have died in tragic and distressing circumstances, as well as the conversion of “hungry ghost” states of suffering which are the result of greed and craving. In addition to Dharma talks and discussions we celebrate the Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts ceremony (Segaki), a memorial in which we offer the food of the Dharma to help bring peace to all those in need.