



Yasodhara Ashram  
yoga retreat & study centre

# Yoga Development Course

## Preparing For Your YDC Stay at Yasodhara Ashram

### ***The Yoga Development Course***

The YDC consists of a series of workshops from two to five days in length. In these workshops you will study Swami Radha's teachings in Hidden Language Hatha Yoga®, Kundalini, Mantra and Dream Yoga, Life Seals®, sacred dance, the Bhagavad Gita and the Straight Walk. Some of the workshops will include Karma Yoga (work as selfless service) to help you integrate spiritual principles into daily life.

### ***A typical day includes:***

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 7:00 am  | Hidden Language Hatha Yoga® (except on Sundays) |
| 9:00 am  | Breakfast                                       |
| 10:00 am | YDC Workshop on Practices                       |
| 12:30 pm | Lunch   |
| 2:30 pm  | YDC Workshop on Practices                       |
| 6:00 pm  | Supper  |
| 8:00 pm  | Satsang in the Temple                           |

Upon completion of the YDC, most students choose to take the 10-Day Hatha Teacher's Certification in April.

To help you integrate the YDC experience into daily life, we offer the opportunity for course participants to stay on at the Ashram for an additional 5 months at no charge. During this period you will become part of the karma yoga program of the community.

### ***Community Guidelines***

Yasodhara Ashram has guidelines that help us live cooperatively in community:

We ask that you follow the daily schedule, including attendance at morning hatha class and evening satsang. This gathering each evening in the Temple allows everyone in the community to chant mantra together for a prayer list and to give thanks for the day.

Please consider your YDC stay a closed retreat. To get the most benefit from this intensive course we urge all participants to remain at the Ashram for the full three months. It is wise to arrange your personal and business affairs so that you can be here full time without interruptions.

Please take care of any dental, medical or therapeutic treatments before coming. The Ashram is in a rural area and access to these kinds of services is limited.

We ask that you take full responsibility for yourself during your stay. The YDC is not a substitute for professional, medical or psychological treatment. Please come with valid insurance for your personal belongings and for medical care. If you have any physical limitations that would make it difficult to go up and down stairs or for winter walking generally, please let us know several weeks before you arrive.

Our guest lodges are designed for comfortable shared accommodations.

We provide nourishing vegetarian or vegan meals, eaten in silence in our dining room. Fish and poultry are added occasionally. Organic fruits and vegetables from our garden and orchard are used throughout the year. We provide diet alerts for those with serious medical conditions but you will need to provide your own alternatives for food sensitivities and allergies. Several cupboards are available in the dining room for your personal food supplies. There is also a small refrigerator for storing medications and food for those with serious allergies or medical conditions.

We are a celibate community - our focus is on inner spiritual development, not on socializing or forming romantic relationships. We ask that both men and women wear modest clothing.

The use of illegal drugs and alcohol is not permitted. There is one designated outdoor smoking area.

If during the course you become ill, please ask your roommate or another classmate to bring you your meals.

### ***What to bring:***

Mountain weather requires a variety of clothing. Winters can be cold and snowy. Summer days can be hot and the evenings cool. Dress is casual except on special occasions.

You will need:

Outdoor work clothes and raingear

Waterproof warm footwear with good traction for snow and ice

Loose fitting, modest clothing for hatha yoga

Indoor footwear

Flashlight

Alarm clock

A journal for your reflections

Books for the course (can be purchased at the Ashram Bookstore or brought with you)

*Kundalini Yoga for the West*, by Swami Radha

*Hatha Yoga the Hidden Language*, by Swami Radha

*Radha, Diary of a Woman's Search*, by Swami Radha

*The Divine Light Invocation*, by Swami Radha

*Mantras, Words of Power*, by Swami Radha

*Realities of the Dreaming Mind*, by Swami Radha

*The Bhagavad Gita* by Swami Sivananda

If you are on a limited budget, a limited number of these books are available in our library.

**Useful additions include:**

Clothing for special occasions

If you have a laptop computer, we encourage you to bring it and submit your papers online. If you want to print copies of your papers, you will need to bring your own printer.

A small, portable recording device (either digital or tape). You can also purchase a digital recorder or rent one for the duration of the YDC from the Ashram bookstore.

Another Timeless book that is used during the course that we encourage you to bring if you own it is *The Rose Ceremony*.

**And for your information:**

Personal supplies including phone cards, journals, books, toiletries and laundry soap can be purchased at our bookstore or ordered from town and picked up on our weekly town run to Creston or Nelson.

There are pay phones for public use that also receive in-coming calls. We provide limited email access for \$1.00/use or \$15.00/month for wireless use.

Coin operated laundry machines are available in the main buildings.

***Course Payments and other Financial Considerations***

The YDC fee covers your accommodation, meals and tuition for the duration of the course.

We ask that you pay the balance (minus your deposit) either upon your arrival or in three installments: on arrival, on February 1 and on March 1.

You can pay using Canadian or US cheques, money orders, travelers' cheques, cash, Visa or MasterCard and bankcards. Of your course fees, 50% is tuition, which is tax deductible in Canada.

We do not provide cash advances on bankcards or credit cards, so please bring some cash with you. International guests, including those from the United States, are advised to let their credit card companies know about your planned spending before leaving your country because credit card companies are becoming more careful about approving international spending.

***How to Get Here***

The Ashram is situated on the eastern shore of Kootenay Lake, about mid-way between Creston and Nelson. We are on Mountain Standard Time (Creston/Calgary) in winter, an hour ahead of Nelson/Vancouver, which is on Pacific Standard Time.

**Air**

You can fly to Castlegar Airport from Vancouver or Calgary. A shuttle bus will take you from Castlegar into Nelson, then a city bus from Nelson to Balfour, and then a free ferry across Kootenay Lake to Kootenay Bay, where we will pick you up.

The Queen City airport shuttle stops at the Hume Hotel in Nelson at the corner of Vernon and Ward streets. Arrangements can be made for an additional fee to take the shuttle on to Balfour. The city bus to Balfour is called #10 North Shore and stops at the corner of Baker and Ward Streets. See the information at the end of this letter.

## **Bus**

There is Greyhound Bus service to Nelson from Vancouver or Calgary. The city bus stops outside the Save-On Foods grocery store, which is in the same mall as the Greyhound stop.

The ferry to Kootenay Bay is about 40 minutes across the lake. Please phone ahead to be picked up from the ferry landing. The Ashram is about 5 minutes from Kootenay Bay.

Altogether, with the bus trip from Calgary or Vancouver, it's a long journey. Also, you need to time your arrival in Nelson to connect to the city bus schedule. City buses to Balfour run daily from Monday to Friday from 6:30 am to 6:15 pm. and Saturday from 8:45 am to 3:10 pm. The bus does not run on Sundays. Please see our website for more details.

## **Car**

If you come by car from the east (e.g. Calgary), the quickest route is north on Hwy 3A from Creston to Kootenay Bay. After Crawford Bay, simply follow the blue highway signs that point to Yasodhara Ashram. The trip from Calgary to the Ashram is 7-8 hours.

Coming by car from Vancouver to the Ashram, the trip is 10-11 hours including the ferry crossing. The route out of Vancouver is east on highway 3 from Hope to Nelson then north to the Balfour ferry.

For those coming from the U.S. there is sometimes a shuttle from Spokane, WA, provided by Queen City Shuttle. Check their web site to see if they are making a trip near to or on the day you want to come to the Ashram: **[www.kootenayshuttle.com](http://www.kootenayshuttle.com)**.

Driving from Spokane, count on 4.5 hours travel time. The border crossing most used by Ashram travelers is at Porthill, ID. You will need a valid passport to cross the border.

Queen City Shuttle & Charters out of Nelson operates both the Castlegar Airport and sometimes the Spokane shuttles: **phone: 250 352-9829; [info@kootenayshuttle.com](mailto:info@kootenayshuttle.com); [www.kootenayshuttle.com](http://www.kootenayshuttle.com)**.

Nelson Rideshare can be reached at **[www.nelsoncar.com](http://www.nelsoncar.com)** to find possible rides to and from a variety of locations, usually with shared costs.