

# Four Directions School of Yoga

**200-Hour Teacher's Training**  
**Parmarth Niketan Ashram**  
**Sept. 14-Oct. 10, 2008**

Namaste,

Four Directions School of Yoga is honored and delighted to welcome you to our annual 200-hour Teacher Training course, held at Parmarth Niketan ashram in Rishikesh, India. We know what a transformative and heart-opening opportunity it is to be studying Yoga at the source at the sacred Ganga river in India, and also that there are many preparations you will need to make before traveling there to join in the program.

Below you will find details on how to get to India, as well as what to expect upon arrival. Please read the following information for travelers on page 3 carefully as it contains a lot of great and learned advice compiled from previous programs.

Well in advance (we recommend at least 2 months ahead), you will need to consider getting shots (see page 2) and you will need to obtain an Indian visa on your passport (details on page 3). We have included a packing "essentials" list (page 9) for you to consider.

Please book your ticket to arrive in Delhi, India on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September.

There are many good flight options to Delhi which can be sought out on online search engines like kayak.com, or you may prefer to book directly with a major airline online. Tickets run between \$1300-\$1500 for economy class and it is wise to reserve your plane tickets at least 2 months in advance of your trip for the best availability and price. From the west coast of the United States it takes two full calendar days to get to Delhi, so if you are departing from California you will probably need to depart on Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> in order to arrive on the 12<sup>th</sup>. If you are leaving from a location other than the US please email the school if you have questions about booking your flight at appropriate times to match arrival for the 12<sup>th</sup>.

Most international flights arrive in late evening or very early morning and you will need to make hotel arrangements for the nights of the 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>, leaving by train early in the morning at 6:55AM on the 14<sup>th</sup> for Rishikesh via Haridwar. Four Directions Yoga School offers a travel arrangement service for students at an extra cost that can ensure a smooth, safe and easy transition to Parmarth Niketan ashram in Rishikesh. If you choose to utilize this option we'll arrange airport pick-up and accommodations for you at a 3-star hotel for the nights of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of September, round-trip train tickets for you to Haridwar on the 14<sup>th</sup> and returning on the 11<sup>th</sup>, taxi transfer between Haridwar and Rishikesh, and hotel accommodations for your trip back to Delhi before departing home if you like (please see this option on registration form).

If you choose to make your own travel arrangements, some wonderful mid-range (\$40-75) hotel options can be found booking at the clean, friendly and modernly appointed Hotel Sri Nanak or many other hotels in the centrally located Connaught Place area of Delhi. There is a great option available in the range of \$100 a night at La Sagrta Tourist Home in Sunder Nagar, a quiet tree-lined neighborhood within walking distance of archaeological sites. Most hotels will have free airport pick-up or offer pick-up at a nominal charge of \$10-20.

The base cost for the Teacher Training includes:

Monthlong program- 183 contact hours of classes with faculty, which upon satisfactory completion culminates in the opportunity to apply for Yoga Alliance registry at the 200-hr. RYT level

Room and board, all meals at Parmarth Niketan in a Himalaya view room from September 14- October 10.

Excursion to sage Vasistha's cave on our second weekend by hired car

### Course Requirements for Graduation

The course is charted with respect to the standards set by Yoga Alliance for the 200-hour level of certification and exceeds minimum requirements for this level of registry. For more information about the subject matter we will cover, please see the Teacher's Training homepage and click on the syllabus link on the website.

184 contact hours (hours under direct guidance and supervision of teachers) are spread out in the following areas:

Techniques

Teaching Methodology

Anatomy & Physiology

Philosophy, Ethics, and Lifestyle-

Practicum- this includes observing and assisting a class taught by an instructor, student teaching and feedback from instructors.

17+ non-contact hours are assigned over the course of reading the phenomenal Buddhist Yogic treatise "Shambhala: the Sacred Path of the Warrior". 4 written assignments are required, sharing your reflections and personal response to the inspiring and liberating philosophy of radical non-dualism set forth by Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, a Tibetan Lama. Please see our required reading list for more information on this selection.

Aside from written assignments, an oral mid-term in the form of a second-week interview with the Director of Teacher Training and a final exam at the end of the course will be given to help the student retain and apply the knowledge that they are receiving.

Upon completion of these requirements, the student is given a certificate of completion and all necessary materials to register to become an RYT (Registered Yoga Teacher) at the 200-hour level through Yoga Alliance.

FAQ's about India from previous students of Yoga programs we have led:

### Shots

I am afraid of needles/ don't want vaccines...do I really have to have shots to go for just two weeks?

I strongly recommend it, especially hepatitis, typhoid and rabies inoculations. Please consider taking oral typhoid medication at least. Also make sure that you get Ciprofloxacin from your travel doctor. Since your body will be adjusting to a lot of new variables in India do whatever is necessary to prevent illness (some of which can be quite serious). This will help you to enjoy yourself while you are there to take advantage of the intensive course of study, which is quite a full schedule. Shots can also be given with a local anesthetic sprayed onto your skin, I have had it this way and you don't feel a thing!

1. What exactly is travel insurance? Is it medical coverage or does it apply to the retreat fee if I cannot go for some unforeseen reason? And where do I get it?

2. Mosquito Nets- do I need to bring one for my bed?

Travel insurance can be obtained for lost items due to theft or misplacement, but doesn't cover your retreat tuition as far as I know should you have to cancel. This may vary per carrier so you should ask the policy carrier. Travel *medical* insurance is covered in your regular medical insurance policy from what I know. My own carrier, Blue Cross, covers me in India. You have to contact them to let them know the dates you will be travelling—Sept. 12-Oct. 10.

You should bring a mosquito net, I do---but I have never had to use it.

Depending on when monsoon rains have come, the mosquito issue can come up, especially in Delhi. Travel doctors will advise you to definitely bring one, and they are minimal to carry in your luggage even if you don't use it. I actually never have experienced bad mosquito problems in India . You are not as likely to have mosquito problems due to the fact that we are travelling in a higher elevation with milder weather for most of our time in Rishikesh and Haridwar which are in the Himalayan foothills.

### Indian Visa

You will need to apply for an Indian visa at the nearest Indian consulate. Their office is found usually wherever there is an international airport. Instructions for this process can be accessed online. The national website for the Indian Consulate General is [www.indiacgny.org](http://www.indiacgny.org)

I recommend that you go to the nearest office on a business day, turn in your application and pay the \$75 fee for a six month visa that morning and have it done that same day for you to pick up in the afternoon, that way you will not have to mail your passport in the mail.

**Questions from a previous student:**

I downloaded the paperwork for the Visa last week and was filling it out last night. I have two questions.

One: It asks for a reference in India so I assume I would put down your name. It also asks for the person's address in India so should I put the name of the ashram or do you have an address I should write down?

Two: It also asks for the specific date we arrive in India as well as the port of arrival. So, we leave on October 5, which gets us there on October 7? With the major flight time and time difference I'm not too sure. And the port of arrival is New Delhi?

Don't worry about a reference, you could just put that it is your first time and you don't have one. You'll be departing on the 10<sup>th</sup> and arriving on the 12<sup>th</sup>. It's 20 hours of flight time with a layover in between, plus the twelve hour time difference which makes it technically 2 days travelling to India from the U.S. Yes, the port of arrival is New Delhi.

My question is regarding money. Should I take money with me and exchange it over there? Travelers checks? How about just using a credit card? Is that easier?

I take a moderate amount of money, around \$150 in cash when I arrive in Delhi to exchange at the airport. ATM's are the best and most convenient but though. You can also exchange traveler's cheques pretty universally and India has abundant places where you can do so, but many of the exchange merchants require a xerox copy of your passport to cash them for you as of 2007. At the airport there are 24-hour foreign exchange counters that you can change money at immediately on your arrival. Debit and Credit cards work most places too and there are lots of ATM's. In Rishikesh there are several ATMs within walking distance and many places to exchange travelers cheques right outside of the ashram.

You will want to make multiple photocopies of the first page ID section of your passport because foreign exchange offices outside of the airport will require a photocopy.

Money: Consider the exchange rate to be about 1/8 of what you would spend here for anything. 1 US dollar= 45 Indian rupees. So if you are thinking about buying dinner for example, it's like 50-70 rupees which is equivalent in their economy to going to a restaurant here and spending 10 bucks, only you will actually spend \$1.25-\$1.50.

A beautiful shirt, skirt or dress or pants costs between \$3-\$5 U.S.

Things are picking up a bit economically in India and they really appreciate you spending money there, so it will be easy for you to exchange \$\$.

If you take traveller's cheques, make sure you follow directions on how to use them so they will be valid! The most common mistake people make is signing the wrong part before spending them. Keep copies of your receipts for them as you can recuperate your money if you lose them by calling a 1-800 number on these receipts and giving the serial number for the checks. You can also use ATM's in major cities like Delhi but in the pilgrim towns traveler's cheques are abundantly easy to exchange for rupees.

#### More about money in India:

*Some credit card, debit card companies etc. will not let you use your card in another country unless you tell them you are travelling there.* This makes sense as if they see some charges suddenly from a foreign country they are likely to suspect identity theft unless they know it's you using it. Indian businesses accept all major creditcards and debit cards with credit symbols on them, so please, unless you are only using traveler's cheques, *call your card companies and banks and let them know the dates you'll be travelling in Delhi, Rishikesh, Haridwar, from September 12-October 11.* This is north India, and if they ask the states are Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal.

#### Laundry service at the ashram

You'll be able to have your laundry done at Parmarth Niketan Ashram for a very small fee. You send it in in the early morning and it comes back the same day. On an odd note, it is customary not to include undergarments when sending off your clothes, these can be hand-washed by you. A note about the dhobis (launderers) in India: they do a VERY good job getting your clothes starchy clean! On this note, delicate things should be hand-washed.

#### Personal hygiene/ health products

You can buy wonderful and inexpensive Ayurvedic herbal shampoos, conditioners, lotions, facial and body products, as well as herbal supplements in Rishikesh and Haridwar (where we will be spending 10 of the 14 days) at shops within walking distance of where we are staying. Therefore, I recommend not bringing large bottles of products that are likely to cause a mess being hauled around from place to place.

#### Shopping/ Shipping Question

You can easily and much more cheaply buy extra luggage in India rather than hauling around your own luggage in the beginning.

Most airlines allow two checked pieces of luggage and one carry-on. It is best to pack light for the trip. You can buy almost anything in India! It is better to wait until you're in India to buy and fill up a cheap piece of luggage to check in when you fly home, otherwise the cost of shipping is significant, at least for us in the States and countries a similar distance away... Last year I sent home a box of books from Dharamsala and another big box of clothes that cost \$150, probably as much as the value of the goods inside.

It is good to look for clothes, small statues and jewelry in Rishikesh. There are various rates for shipping things back but you can pack quite a bit in an extra piece of luggage bought at the end of your trip, or some airlines will let you pay \$100 per extra piece of luggage which is thriftier than the mail cost.

### Domestic and other animals in India

In India there really are not many "domestic" animals as this is a poorer country where people do not take on the expense of caring for pets. There are occasionally stray dogs, many of them who appear to be and usually are very sweet if mangy-looking. **DO NOT PET OR APPROACH ANY OF THE DOGS UNLESS YOU KNOW THEY ARE TAME FROM MULTIPLE CONTACTS WITH THEM. Even then, use caution. AND ESPECIALLY DO NOT APPROACH MONKEYS** that you see, even if you are an animal empath or "Horse Whisperer" type! Please be aware also that monkeys hate cameras. They can only be photographed from a distance and they especially disdain eye contact. It seems to indicate aggression to them from you.

### Etiquette

In India it is considered rude to point the soles of your feet at anyone. Please refrain from sitting with your feet pointed at Mataji while we are benefitting from her teaching, or any other Indian person at the ashram. She really won't be upset if you forget since it is a cultural taboo specific to India and maybe not a habit you are familiar with avoiding, but it is a nice thing to know in advance!

Please make sure that you come to classes a bit early to be on time. Due to the elevated nature of the material we are taking in from this course your sensitivity to the space we will mutually create together is appreciated.

### Traveller's Information for North India

#### Weather and Clothing/ Supplies to bring

The time of year that we will be in the northern region of India is rumoured to be the best weatherwise for a number of reasons. The intense heat of the summer is broken by the monsoon rains in July-August, but a kiss of tropical heat still reigns by day as late as the first week of October, and the nights are breezy and perfect for layers.

Respecting Indian cultural mores on dress means for men, wearing shirts while you practice Yoga at the ashram, and for women, keeping your shoulders covered with a scarf for light weather or shawl and not wearing any tight clothing that reveals cleavage or legs. I guarantee that you will have a more mellow time overall and the Indian people, who are delightfully worth your extra effort in respecting and getting to know, will regard you with much higher interest if you dress modestly. Otherwise, you will just be another force of worldly distraction in a pilgrimage town and you may not be comfortable with the way you will stand out to men and women alike!

You can buy any kind of beautiful, beautiful clothing in India except Yoga pants (the stretchy kind), so don't forget to bring a few pairs of these! Take as few things as possible from home so you don't have to ship a ton back, you will want to buy some great things here, or have some clothing custom-made by one of India's many talented tailors...

Things that are quite valuable to your quality of life in a trip to India can include:

Alarm clock (these are not provided at the ashram)

Your own Yoga mat (easy to strap onto the side of your carry-on or luggage)

A CD walkman or Ipod, there are many great and rare music recordings you might want to take with you and enjoy for walks, train rides or times on your own...

A flashlight

GSE Grapefruit Seed Extract for prevention of viral infections/ daily supplement

Probiotics, probiotics, probiotics!

Number One for Wellness: **PROBIOTICS!** These are nutritional supplements that you can get at Whole Foods Market which contain microbial enzymes like acidophilus (which is found in yogurt) that build the "warrior bacteria" known as intestinal flora (I guess "flora" is supposed to beautify this concept for us).

I was extremely lucky and did not get sick with famous "Delhi Belly" even once, throughout various regions and months! For every person's constitution and diverse experience of the law of Karma, India has a different effect however. So I don't know if it was the fortification from the probiotics that kept me completely in the clear, but I surmised that it helped a lot overall!

You can get traveller's probiotics (that don't need refrigeration) from Jarrow brand, it's a yellow box of 90 supplements. These cost only around \$14. Start taking 2-4 a day at least 1 month before the retreat!

I would like to preface the remainder of my advice with the following statement: it is always important to see a travel doctor and find out for yourself what shots are needed. Tell your doctor that we will be in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand Pradesh, both are neighboring states of Northwestern India. We will be in Delhi briefly, which is the most highly populated area in our journey, but mainly will spend our time in Rishikesh and Haridwar, which are at higher elevation and are less populated areas against the Himalayan foothills.

I consider myself a very purist organic-lifestyle kind of woman—but before I made my first trip to India, I did not hesitate to get inoculated and have updated shots against several types of illnesses (some fatal) known to be on the lam there:

You will need inoculations for (definitely):

Hepatitis A/B booster

Typhoid (oral capsules, not so bad but do not exercise or do a vigorous asana practice within 6 hours of taking them [I found this out the hard way]. For me, some minor side effects of flushed skin and dizziness along with a little nausea were present after the first pills, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> doses were not so bad. Typhoid can be present in water in India! You need to be sure to drink only bottled water, NEVER drink the table water at restaurants in India and do not drink bottled water that isn't sealed properly

Meningitis

These shots can cost up to \$300 for Hep A/B if you don't have them up to date (3 shots), \$100 for Meningitis and \$75 for typhoid. These three diseases represent the most virulent and prevalent that can be found in the areas we will be traveling in. Shots have to be taken at least a month in advance to be effective, so plan ahead!

For comprehensive info on shots recommended for this area, please visit

[www.arthurdovermd.com](http://www.arthurdovermd.com)

I recommend Dr. Arthur Dover of Watsonville for those of you who are in the Santa Cruz area for fantastic and compassionate care. His prices are the best I've found too!

Shots are probably the most expensive part of your trip to India, outside of the cost of airfare—although you can pat yourself on the (soon-to-be-inoculated) shoulder here in security that your airfare is already included in the cost of this trip! ;)

Northern India is a highly populated region subject to extremes in weather. In the summer season, temperatures climb well past 110 with high humidity. India receives monsoon rains during the period of July to August, and this in conjunction with heat gives mosquitoes an ideal breeding ground. Thus it is good to consider getting inoculated against Japanese encephalitis 'B', which is transmitted through mosquito bites. This is a 3-shot series that costs \$100 each or \$300 total.

When I went to Delhi last year, there was a sudden outbreak of encephalitis due to late monsoon rains and I had to get all three shots. The good news is, for most of these shots you won't have to get them again for a long time (or ever in some cases).

Renewing your passport/getting your Indian Visa:

Passport renewal can take some time so be sure to plot your course in advance to have your passport renewed if necessary. Expedited passport services are available for an extra charge which will ensure that your passport arrives within several weeks. Regular time to get your passport back with renewal is up to 60 days.

You will want to have photocopies of your passport and visa with you in India as a precaution on the offchance that you lose your passport, for easier replacement if needed.

Visa necessary to enter India: This process can be done in one day in person by visiting the Indian Consulate and costs around \$75 for a 6 months visa. It may take longer, up to several weeks, to apply by mail. You need to bring or send two extra passport photos with you to get your India visa. Applying in person takes a day but is worth it since you will get your passport back the same day, and I recommend doing this since otherwise you have to send your passport in the mail to the Indian consulate nearest you. Please contact your local travel agency for info on where to find the office of the Indian Embassy closest to you to obtain your visa. Wherever there is a major international airport, you are likely to find an extension of the Indian Embassy that can help you.

May pragmatism in combination with an open heart and mind ensure a magically fulfilling and healthy journey to India!

### Master Packing List for Yoga Journey to India

**Alarm clock** (these are not provided at the ashram)

**Wristwatch** will help you to be on time for all classes

**Yoga mat and a strap** There are plenty of blocks, blankets and bolsters at Parmarth

**Nalgene or sports water bottle** if you would like to cut down on plastic water bottle usage and take advantage of the reverse osmosis, boiled, purified water at the ashram for a week of our trip. This should be packed in your checked luggage, not carry-on, as some airports may make you dispose of it for security reasons.

**Flashlight**

**GSE Grapefruit Seed Extract** for prevention of viral infections, taken as a daily supplement in water for digestive health or as needed

**Probiotics** - Jarrow Travel probiotics don't need to be refrigerated.

**Ciprofloxacin emergency-only anti-diarrheal** available at travel doctor for a minimal cost, usually \$5 a pill ( you only need one).

**Multivitamins and aspirin** if you normally take them. Many kinds of herbal supplements are available in India but the basics from home are good to have.

**Sandals** Inside of the Yogashala in Rishikesh where we will be spending a great deal of time, no shoes are allowed. Also in the ashram cafeteria, they are not allowed. Please bring shoes that you don't mind getting wet or dirty. You may dabble in the Ganga, climb over river rocks at Vasistha cave area or roam in the Himalayan hills and need to have rugged sandal-type shoes that can withstand it. Bringing one pair of shoes like these would be enough for the whole trip. You might choose to buy some unique shoes there to bring back with you also!

**Batteries** Indian batteries are fairly weak and you may want to have a back-up set for any battery-operated equipment. (Plug adaptors are best purchased beforehand for India for your camera battery charger, hairdryer, etc.)

**Hairdryer** if you normally use one

**Sunglasses and hat or visor for sun protection on excursions...there are not too many hats available in India**

**Swimsuit or trunks** for swimming in the Ganga river (it is very clean in Rishikesh and Haridwar)

**-Extra touches you might consider-**

**A CD walkman or Ipod**, there are many great and rare music recordings you might want to take with you and enjoy for walks, train rides or times on your own...

\*Please ask Mataji or any other teachers or performers you may want to record for their permission before you do so with an Ipod or other device.

**Ways to share with Indian friends you will make** – anything representing your vision of our culture for them to remember you by. If you have any original art you might want to gift people with, make extra copies. It feels great to share something from another country with them! I have brought some small giveaway jewelry for the ladies I meet and have been often approached by kids wanting American coins....that kind of thing!

**Business or contact cards** for keeping in touch with interesting people you encounter.

Despite this comprehensive list of essentials, it is best to ***pack light*** for this trip as much as possible! Anything not listed here can be obtained in India with ease, and while we will have porters to help with luggage on all transports, it makes a big difference to have if possible only one large luggage and one carry-on backpack for this trip. The main issue is keeping track of your things while they are being hauled around or loaded up on train berths or onto rickshaws, etc.!