



MOUNT MADONNA

445 Summit Road, Watsonville, CA 95076 · (408) 847-0406 · www.mountmadonna.org

Thank you for your interest in our signature Going Deeper Retreat!

We at Mount Madonna have been offering this special retreat for more than 40 years. The program presents a unique experience in that Baba Hari Dass designed every aspect, including the practices of meditation and *āsana* (postures) – some of which, such as the morning meditation, the cave-like environment, and the special diet, were created specifically for Going Deeper.

We ask first-time participants, as well as those who have participated previously, to review the information outlined in this document to ensure that you understand the nature of the program, and that it is indeed the type of experience in which you wish to engage.

This retreat offers a rigorous schedule of practice! You may wish to immerse yourself in the full program as it was designed, with a conscious combination of elements intended to aid you in turning inward. *Alternatively, you may choose to participate in select sessions and practices.***

The Yoga *Sādhana* (practice)

- **Meditation & *prāṇāyāma*** (yogic breathing) consisting of several hours of sitting practice, twice-daily as follows:
 - The morning practice is 3 ½ hours and comprises five different segments: three periods of sitting practice, each 45-55 minutes long, with 5-10 minutes of walking meditation in between; a standing meditation; and a lying down meditation to conclude.
 - Late afternoon *sādhana* is less lengthy at ~ 1 ½ hours and includes other elements, such as *mantra* and ritual (see notes below).
 - These periods are an immersion into practice, not a “class” experience; although brief instruction will be given.
 - For those not familiar with yogic breathing practices, Friday night’s orientation will include instruction. The *sādhana* (spiritual practices) do not contain advanced-level practices.

- **Early rising:** For morning *sādhana*, wake-up is at 5:00 a.m. to begin practice at 6:00 a.m.
- **Daily āsana (postures):** *Āsana* are practiced twice daily, in addition to some simple warm-ups before morning *sādhana*.
- **Practice of silence:** We observe vocal silence, except for chanting and singing, and use writing to communicate if needed. (Paper pads & pens are provided.)
- **Devotional elements, such as:**
 - Evening *ārati* – a ritual offering of symbolic elements of nature, and of ourselves – to sacred images and to the Divine within us and all creation. This is part of afternoon/early evening practice in the Seminar House (you may have attended *ārati* at Sankat Mochan Hanumān Temple, yet *arati* in Going Deeper is held within the program).
 - Chanting of *mantras* and *kīrtan* (devotional chanting)
 - Forgiveness *āsana*, a series of yoga postures accompanied by *mantra* and prayer
 - Readings, poetry, and stories

Other factors to consider:

- **The “cave-like” setting:** Going Deeper takes place in the Seminar House, where we darken the windows and use only small lamps and candlelight to create a safe, cozy "cave-like" atmosphere of seclusion for our internally-focused practice. The discipline is to avoid going out into the sunlight between sunrise and sunset (further explanation provided in the opening orientation). *However, you may choose to go out for a walk in the forest or meadows, visit the Temple, or rest – whenever you choose, or during break times.*
- **A prescribed diet:** A yogic diet is followed, with meals served twice per day, consisting of vegetable soups, grains, dairy (yogurt, cottage cheese, *ghee*, and milk), *kheer* (rice porridge), fruits, and nuts (almonds and cashews, always served separately). Fruit, tea, and milks (dairy & non-dairy) are available at all times. The food is nourishing, as well as lighter and more easily digested. Many participants share that they love the food and find it to be more than enough to be satisfied!

Note: The diet will not be changed, as it was prescribed by Babaji, but it offers a variety of choices. However, please let us know in advance about any allergies or dietary restrictions.

- **Lodging:** Some participants prefer to be lodged in the Seminar Building, so that they can completely immerse themselves, be woken by the morning bell, etc. Others may prefer more privacy – but housing options can sometimes be limited, depending on the size of the other program(s) on campus at the same time.

Accommodations are arranged with Guest Services when registering for the retreat. The Registrar will answer in advance any questions you may have regarding housing (408) 846-4090, or email guestservices@mountmadonna.org.

Financial Accessibility: Work-study, consisting of simple duties to support this retreat, may be available to reduce the cost. Scholarships are also available. Please reach out to retreats@mountmadonna.org

Program capacity: The group size is intentionally limited. Therefore, this retreat traditionally fills to capacity and then a waitlist is started. Sometimes, individuals from the waiting list are able to register and attend the retreat.

****As mentioned,** each participant is entirely free to choose only those sessions that appeal to them. We request, however, that participants please observe the disciplines of the retreat *at all times when in the Seminar House*.

If you have any questions about any aspects of Going Deeper, we would be happy to address them via an email or a phone conversation. Please contact Bhavani at bhavanididi@gmail.com.