

OCTOBER 2010 MEDITATION IN THE DESERT

Welcome to Professor Valley Field Camp near Moab, Utah

Professor Valley Field Camp is located in the Colorado River basin about 40 minutes NE of Moab. It is located on BLM land below Castleton Tower, with other spires and mesas all around. It is surrounded by BLM land and the occasional ranch. There is a spectacular canyon day hike up the creek and shorter walks in any direction. October is usually a very moderate and pleasant climate in this high desert country.

Professor Valley Field Camp Facilities

PVFC has two yurts that will be used for cooking, eating meals, and inside practice if the weather is wet. Tipis with cots provide housing for 4-5 people each. Camping is also available if you prefer. There are a multitude of spaces for outdoor eating, sitting, and walking. There are propane heated showers – one shower/person during our stay as water is trucked in; though the local creek is available anytime. There are vault toilets (latrines). There is no heating except in the meditation yurt, so retreatants will need to be prepared for the possibility of cool nights as well as cool mornings and evenings.

You will need to provide sleeping bag, sleeping pad, camping equipment if you prefer to camp, towel, and personal items.

Weather

The temperature in October ranges from the 40's at night to the 60's to 70's during the day. There a chance of afternoon thundershowers, please bring raingear.

Food

Food will be vegetarian, organic where possible, wholesome and plentiful. There will be some protein, in the form of nuts, beans, eggs, seeds, nut butters, and cheese, available at all meals. There will be non-dairy and wheat free options available for those who are lactose or wheat intolerant. There will be tea, fruit, and snacks (rice cakes and nut butter, etc.) available at all times.

Accommodations

Please let us know if you plan to camp. Tipis will be same sex, and you may make a roommate request. When coming with a partner, in order to give yourself to the practice and give space and time to your loved one, you will need to use separate tents if you choose to camp.

Emergency Contact

There is no cell phone coverage at the site. If there is an emergency at home, family members can call 435-259-7750. This is for true emergencies, as it will require a 1½ hour round-trip drive for the message to be delivered.

Creating the Retreat Container

Precepts

We will undertake to follow the five traditional lay precepts of non-harming during our time together, forming a reliable basis for mutual trust in our little community:

1. To refrain from killing and from other actions that harm oneself or others.
2. To refrain from stealing, from taking anything that is not freely given.
3. To refrain from sexual activity during the retreat.
4. To refrain from lying and from harsh, abusive or damaging speech.
5. To refrain from consuming alcohol, illegal drugs, or other intoxicants.

Noble Silence

Meditation retreats are traditionally silent. We will emphasize silence, both to deepen our practice and as a refuge. All yogis will have the opportunity for interviews both individually or as a group with the teachers. There will be a message board if you need to communicate to retreat staff or teachers at any time. To help maintain silence, please be sure all buzzers, cell-phones, watch alarms, etc. have been turned off when you arrive. If there are issues concerning a yogi job, or personal needs, these questions should be directed to Susie.

Retreat Cost and Teacher Offering

The Buddha asked that the teaching of the dharma be offered freely, without charge, since it is of infinite value, and beyond any price that could be put on it. The tradition of 'Dana', or mutual giving, has supported Buddhist cultures for 2500 years. In Asia, the monks and nuns offer the teaching, and the lay people support the monastery and fill the monks' begging bowls each morning as they walk through the village on alms rounds. It is a beautiful exchange, in which the hearts of both giver and receiver are opened in joy and gratitude, and love flows between them.

In accordance with that tradition, Susie is, in the spirit of generosity, offering her teachings, time, and service. Our excellent cook, Jen, also offers her time and service in accordance with the tradition of dana. The fee just covers the retreat costs: food, retreat center rental, and other incidental expenses. After the retreat, there is the opportunity for participants to practice generosity in offering financial support to Susie and Jen in appreciation. By offering financial support to Susie, you will support her continuing to teach the dharma. It will be warmly and gratefully received, and is in no way required. There is no 'suggested donation', please participate however will best serve your practice.

Retreat Logistics

Arrival – Tuesday, Oct 12th

Please arrive between 10am and 11am, for registration, camp set-up, and yogi job sign-up. Please be settled and ready to begin the retreat with an orientation at 12pm, followed by lunch and then a practice session. We will enter silence during the session.

Departure – Thursday, October 14th

We will be done by 2:00 PM.

Work Meditation

This is our opportunity to both integrate our practice and to serve the community – our sangha. Each person will be asked to participate in a daily ritual of either meal prep, clean-up, bell ringing or other shared need. Participants will sign up for these work meditations or 'yogi job' at registration.

Directions to the Retreat

From the North or West:

Take the Moab exit off I-70. After crossing the Colorado River Bridge (almost to Moab), turn east onto Highway 128. Follow Hwy. 128 until you pass mile marker 18. (This is less than two miles after the Castle Valley turnoff.) The 'Ranch Road' is the next road on the right immediately at the top of a small hill (before you reach mile marker 19). The dirt road heads toward the La Sal Mountains. The road is marked by a small "Ranch Road" sign. Follow this road till it forks (aprx. 1 mile). At the fork, bear right. The PVFC long term parking is 200 ft. further, on the left. Cars are parked here, 100 yards from the camp. Carts and a shuttle for belongings will be provided.

From the East:

Take the Cisco exit off I-70. Travel 7 miles southwest to the Highway 128 turnoff to Moab. Turn south (left) and continue 25 miles the "Ranch Road" turnoff. There is a green highway sign that reads "Moab 21 miles" (between mile markers 19 and 18). The road on the left is unmarked except by a small "Ranch Road" sign. The turn is a few miles past the marked roads for Fisher Towers. Follow this road till it forks (aprx. 1 mile). At the fork, bear right. The PVFC long term parking is 200 ft. further, on the left. Cars are parked here, 100 yards from the camp. Carts and a shuttle for belongings will be provided.

What to Bring

- sleeping bag or sheets and blankets, pad, pillow
- ground cloth for putting personal items on the tipi ground (bare earth)
- sitting set-up, include usual inside set-up plus additional protection from sand and prickles
- pad and ground cloth to allow you to lie down for meditation
- camp chair, therma-rest chair, or floor chair
- warm shawls or blanket for morning and evening outdoor sitting
- comfortable shoes for walking meditation
- head net for insects
- yoga mat (optional)
- layered clothing for sitting in very mixed temperatures (from low 40's to low 80's)
parka, hat, gloves, long underwear, ball cap, shorts, etc for walking and practicing outside
- raingear
- Towel
- sunglasses
- sunscreen
- two quart water bottles
- shoes for walking in water (or a pair that can get wet)
- journal (optional)
- flashlight or headlamp
- insect repellent
- (Optional)Camping equipment - tent(if you don't want to be in a tipi), sleeping bag or sheets and blankets, pad, pillow

Please bring only those products that are scent free. Some individuals are sensitive and allergic to any scents.