

# SKY MIND RETREATS

## ESCALANTE MEDITATION RETREAT WHAT TO BRING

The most important thing you can bring to any wilderness trip is a flexible attitude, ready to cheerfully accept the surprises that nature and circumstances may present. In addition, it helps if clothing, equipment and physical conditioning are adequate. The list is only a guide; you are free to make adjustments based on the equipment you actually have. If you are unsure of what to take, or have concerns about your equipment or personal conditioning, send an email to [retreats@deserthdharma.org](mailto:retreats@deserthdharma.org). **Do not bring: guns, other weapons, alcohol or illegal drugs, cell phones (including as your clock &/or camera—bring a watch and a camera in their original forms), iPods, music players, or books.** These last items are discouraged because they add weight and remove us from the present moment and detract from deepening practice.

Please keep your total personal gear weight to about 25 pounds. You will also be carrying about 10-12 pounds of group food and equipment, plus two liters of water - another 4 lbs. Total pack weight will thus be somewhere between 30 and 40 pounds. The leaders will be happy to inspect your pack at the trailhead, to help you eliminate unneeded items. Every pound is felt with every step!

Remember that packing well for a wilderness trip takes time and careful assessment. Give yourself several days, preferably weeks, to acquire and familiarize yourself with your equipment. It is a necessity that your boots be broken in, so if your preparation for this trip includes the purchase of a new pair of boots then get outside and put several miles on those boots before the trip!

Make sure to prepare for bad weather! Do not let dry canyon country fool you. Most days will be very sunny but in April a spring storm bringing rain or snow and strong wind is quite likely. Average daytime high temperatures for this period are 65 degrees F, nighttime lows 40 degrees. Historical extremes are: high 90, low 28 degrees F. Average April rainfall is 0.42 inch. Sitting may be cold at times: Please be sure you have sufficiently warm clothes to sit in the early and late hours of the day. You can also use your sleeping bag for extra warmth while sitting.

- CLOTHING**
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sturdy lightweight boots, comfortable and broken-in, with Vibram or other good soles or hiking shoes you are familiar and comfortable with for backpacking.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Socks: 2 or 3 pair, wool or polypro, plus liners. One pair is to stay dry and clean for camp.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Rainsuit - both jacket and pants, lightweight but tough (forget the K-Mart cheapies).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Insulated parka (down or other lightweight material) or fleece jacket.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Lightweight windbreaker - serves as a warm but light layer.  
OR down vest, or other light insulating layer to add a bit extra in case of cold.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Warm pullover cap and gloves. Very necessary!
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Long loose-fitting pants
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Long sleeve cotton or nylon supplex shirt (for protection against sun and possible insects).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ T-shirts or similar(2).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Long underwear top and bottom – wool, capilene or other non-cotton material.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Underwear (2-3). (Can be washed during the retreat)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Hat for sun protection for face and neck.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Bandanna.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Clean clothes to be left in car, to change into after the retreat.

Every extra item adds weight. You'll be lifting it with every step, every day.

- Optional** \_\_\_\_\_ Hiking shorts.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Crocs, flipflops, or other lightweight footgear to wear around camp.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Swimsuit (Probably not needed - men and women swim separately).

- FOOD** \_\_\_\_\_ **Your choice of hot and cold drink mixes.** (herb tea, cider, cocoa, coffee, etc.)  
 Hot water for drinks will be available before breakfast and after dinner.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **Your choice of trail snacks.** (trail mix, candy, dried fruit, power bars, etc.) small amount is usually sufficient – up to 1 lb total.

- EQUIPMENT** \_\_\_\_\_ Large internal frame backpack--large enough to carry 10-12 pounds of shared food and group equipment, in addition to your personal gear.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Rain cover for backpack (coated nylon) OR large plastic bag that fits over your whole pack—check that it fits!  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Lightweight sleeping bag, good to freezing (30 F).  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Sleeping pad—lightweight, i.e., Ensolite foam and/or Thermarest air mattress.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Lightweight tent or bivouac bag, each person needs their own. (be prepared to pitch your tent on slickrock, this may require extra chord for tie downs to rocks.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Plastic ground cloth.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Sunglasses.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Plastic one-liter water bottles (two), if bringing a hydration bottle, it can be helpful to have another plastic bottle to use when purifying water.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Personal water purification system (choose one): chlorine dioxide drops (Aquamira is an excellent option), Iodine pills (Potable Aqua), UV purifier, or filter pump.  
 Please have your own personal system, rather than planning to share.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Hand sanitizer (very small personal bottle, additional will be available)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Personal toilet paper supply, in a plastic bag to keep dry and an extra bag for used toilet paper—it all has to be carried out!  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Whistle (for emergency signaling only.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Personal first aid kit including second skin, moleskin or athletic tape for blisters. (We will have a more substantial first-aid kit for the group.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Personal medications.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Personal and medical I.D.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Sunblock or sunscreen.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Mosquito head net--for sitting meditation.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Toothbrush and toothpaste.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Small flashlight or headlamp, with extra batteries.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Lightweight cup, bowl, and spoon (fork optional). Having both a bowl and a cup is nice so that you can have tea with your food.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Sanitary supplies for all pre-menopausal women.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Extra set of car keys - all drivers (Can be safety-pinned to inside of pack pocket).  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Crazy Creek or Thermarest chair, small inflatable cushion, etc., for comfort in sitting practice. (Omitting this can lead to lots of envy meditation.)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Watch (for occasional use during free periods, not on a phone)

- Optional** \_\_\_\_\_ Hiking Pole(s), for extra stability and support. Highly recommended for those with weak ankles or knees.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Insect Repellent—it will not be bug season, but there may be some mosquitoes.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Very lightweight day pack or fanny pack for afternoon walks.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Toiletries – bandana or small pack towel, biodegradable soap (**not** to be used in or near streams), comb, hand lotion  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Small note pad and pen.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Small pocket knife

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## **ITEMS PROVIDED BY TRIP ORGANIZERS**

1. All group meals.
2. Salt, pepper, and some spices.
3. Stoves, fuel, fuel bottles, funnel/pouring spout.
4. Cooking pans, lids, and cooking utensils.
5. Rope and cord for commissary use.
6. Trash bags for group trash.
7. Dish soap and other clean-up items.
8. Hand sanitizer (alcohol based gel).
9. Jug or pot for occasional bath/laundry.
10. First-aid kit for emergencies.
11. Basic repair kit.
12. Group trowel for toilet use.
13. Kitchen rain fly (shelter for cooks).
14. Backcountry permits.