

# Grand Canyon North Rim Retreat

June 20-26

Teacher: Susie Harrington

Cook: Jenn Knochel

Sliding Scale Cost: \$250 - \$350

Plus teacher and cook support (dana)

## Welcome to the Grand Canyon's North Rim

For this retreat, we will be camping on National Forest Service land directly adjacent to the Grand Canyon. The area is a beautiful open ponderosa forest. Majestic trees with the adjacent spectacular and expansive views create a wonderful container for a wilderness retreat. You can drive to the campsite, and the camping area is a few hundred feet into the forest and away from the road. We will be in a public but lightly used primitive campsite that has plenty of space for us to spread out. There is no trail access down into the canyon but there are lovely trails in both directions that thread their way along the canyon rim. The forest is open and is inviting for wandering and exploring.

### COVID-19

This camping retreat is well suited to allow for social distancing while still providing a wonderful retreat container. We will send you detailed procedures and systems to allow for a smooth, flowing and safe retreat container. We will continue to revise and modify for conditions as they unfold. We have managed in previous retreats to offer safety, while cultivating ease and connection, allowing our nervous systems to settle and relax.

### Weather

The weather on the North Rim during June will most likely have highs in the 70's and low 80's and lows in the 50's. The weather can change quickly, and there may be strong winds and seasonal monsoonal storms in the afternoon, though they usually come a little later in the summer. Please come prepared with raingear and the ability to stake your tent.

### Food

Food will be vegetarian, organic where possible, wholesome and plentiful with three meals a day. 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 gluten-free options available for those who are lactose or gluten intolerant. Tea, fruit, and other snacks will also be provided.

## **Facilities**

This is a primitive campsite with no water or toilets. Jenn will be bringing her purpose-built cook trailer that will allow her to make all our meals. We will bring water for group cooking, hot drinks, dish washing, and hand washing. You will need to bring your own drinking water (suggested amount 5 gallons), personal shower water, and if you are able to bring extra water to accommodate enhanced hand washing protocols or for group use, it would be greatly appreciated. There will be a designated private place for outdoor showers; two solar showers will be provided for group use and you are welcome to bring your own as well. We will be setting up a group toilet (a “groover” river toilet) in an appropriately private location. A group tarp will be available for shade and cover in the unlikely event of rain, but due to physical distancing everyone might not be able to fit. You are welcome to bring your own as a supplement, as well as the possibility of using your tent.

## **Retreat Cost**

The sliding fee reflects a minimum cost where the donations of contributors to Sky Mind allow for a lower fee, while the higher cost represents full cost of the trip. This allows us to be as inclusive as possible while still clearly indicated the cost of putting on a retreat. Those who can pay at the higher end can know they are generously offering support for the whole. Those who pay low on the scale can feel the generosity of the dharma as expressed in this simple and direct support. In addition, scholarships are always available, please don't hesitate to ask. The retreat fee covers the retreat costs: food, rental fee for the cook trailer, travel for teacher and cook, Sky Mind Retreat costs, registrar costs, and other incidental expenses. It does not include any pay for the teacher or the cook.

## **Teacher and Cook support (dana)**

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.

Susie offers her teachings in accordance with that tradition, and in the spirit of generosity. Jenn is offering her cooking support in this way as well. After the retreat, there is the opportunity for participants to offer financial support to Susie and Jennifer. This is their full time work and commitment and by offering your financial support, you will help them continue to offer these retreats. Your support will be warmly and gratefully received. If you are planning to use checks, it is helpful to bring two checks.

## **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. These precepts are to remind us of our natural behavior when we are resting in our true nature.

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, or from unnecessarily breaking silence.
5. To refrain from consuming alcohol, illegal drugs, or other intoxicants that will unnecessarily cloud our awareness during the retreat (prescription medication that you need to regularly take is expected; retreat is not a good time to alter these medications).

## **Noble Silence**

Meditation retreats are traditionally silent. The teacher and cook will emphasize silence, both to deepen our practice and as a refuge. To help maintain silence and to support your own and others' practice, please leave all buzzers, cell-phones, alarms, ipods, etc. in the car or at home. If during the retreat there are questions concerning a yogi job or personal needs, these questions should be directed to Jenn or Susie.

## **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, or other shared needs. Participants will sign up for these work meditations (aka yogi jobs) when we arrive at the retreat location. Noble silence will be expected during work meditations as well, except for absolutely necessary instructions.

## **Retreat Details**

*Please note, because of COVID we will take travel and safety precautions, conditions are evolving, so as we get closer to the retreat, we will offer more specifics that have been updated. We also will not be offering carpooling connections until we better understand conditions. It may be that those who have received a vaccine would be able to carpool together!*

## **Directions to the North Rim Camping site will be sent after registration.**

To calculate driving time, the site is about one-hour past the Kaibab Plateau Visitor Center. The Visitor Center is also the last place to get water before our camp.

## **Arrival- Meet Sunday June 20<sup>th</sup>, 3:30 PM**

You are welcome to arrive early – We will be occupying the camp site beginning on Friday. You do not need to be set up prior to the start time as we will make time during the dinner break to set up camp. However, if you can arrive earlier, you will have more ease throughout the evening and more time to connect with others during the talking dinner before we go into silence.

## Departure— Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup> 10:00 AM.

You are welcome to stay longer.

### **What to Bring.**

Please use this list if it might help you. It is not meant to replace your common sense or particular needs. The specifics for this retreat are listed first – the rest is a general camping list.

- WATER:** bring all personal drinking water, as well as water for personal showers. We recommend 5 gallons.
- Whatever you will need to sit and meditate comfortably--a cushion of some type, and a mat, pad or blanket to sit on. Please also bring any chair you might want for sitting or for doing inquiry with others.
- A camp chair that is comfortable for you for eating and hanging out.
- Set up for movement that will allow you to both be on the ground and move around. Options could include: a 6 x 8 tarp or slightly bigger, with a blanket spread over it that makes the surface more inviting and comfortable; a piece of carpet; a plastic or other picnic mat or woven rug; anything else will allow you to both lay on it and move around some standing up.
- Face mask and personal sized hand sanitizer.
- Optional: personal tarp to create shade, or rain protection over or near your tent.
- Sun hat.
- Good raingear - tops and bottoms
- Sunglasses.
- Sunscreen.
- Walking shoes for the trails.
- Watch—not your cell phone, which is best left in the car—for use on longer free periods
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Insulated mug for hot drinks (all other dishes will be provided)
- Personal trash bag
- Optional: Bug net and bug spray (there aren't usually bugs in this area at this time of year, but it would be wise to be prepared in the off chance that there are)

#### The Camping Basics:

- Tent - it should be good in wind.
- Sleeping pad
- Sleeping bag
- Journal (optional)
- Lightweight, comfortable shoes for around camp
- Clothing (layers, layers, layers) for walking and practicing outside (including long underwear, shorts, lightweight pants, shirt for sun protection)
- Towel
- Fleece jacket and/or down jacket

- Wool hat

## Emergency Contact

Since we will be in silence and in the backcountry, we will not be in phone contact with the outside world during the retreat. We will check Susie's phone once during the retreat for emergency messages: 435-260-0222.

## Registration

Please register online at [www.deserthharma.org](http://www.deserthharma.org). Be sure to complete the Registration Form. This form includes, medical and practice questions, and a release form. A \$150 non-refundable deposit is required to reserve your place until April 20<sup>th</sup> (90 days before the trip). You can pay the deposit online or mail a check. If you are paying more than the deposit (or when you are paying your balance) we ask that you please send a check. Make checks payable to **Sky Mind Retreats** and send to Shiree Duncan 2411 Old City Park, Moab UT 84532

(Using the online system to pay more than the \$150 deposit is an option, but we ask that you add 3% to cover the fees.)

Reservations are confirmed on a first-come, first-served basis. Please fill out a separate series of forms for each person. If the retreat is full, you'll be placed on a wait list. If that happens, don't be disheartened, as there will probably be cancellations. No payment (other than the required deposit) is necessary for those on the wait list.

Shiree Duncan ([shiree@deserthharma.org](mailto:shiree@deserthharma.org)) is your point of contact for all retreat and registration questions. Please check the website and this document to look for your answer first.

## Payment Information

**The deposit is non-refundable.** The full payment is due by April 20<sup>th</sup> (or at the time of registration if registering after April 20<sup>th</sup>). The reimbursement terms are listed in the Refund and Cancellation Policy detailed below.

If you apply after April 6<sup>th</sup>, please include full payment with your registration.

This is a private trip, with no commercial outfit running the trip or profiting from it. Any surplus from the trip balance will go to Sky Mind Retreats, a non-profit 501(c)3, in support of the Dharma. Shortfall will be covered by SMR.

**Scholarships are available.** We would like you to apply if you need support. Please write a short letter describing your situation and how much assistance you need. Please address your letter to Sky Mind Retreats. Please include this with your registration and a \$100 deposit. If we cannot meet your needs, the deposit is refundable. Scholarship money is for direct retreat costs; if you would like to offer Dana to the teacher and cook, please consider it in your budget.

## **Refund and Cancellation Policy**

If SMR finds it necessary to cancel a trip due to under-enrollment or other unexpected conditions, your deposit and any payments on the balance of the fee will be returned.

We often have a waitlist; in order to respect those on the waitlist and to encourage timely cancellations, we have the following cancellation policy:

1. Cancellations received 45 days or more before the retreat: full refund less \$150 deposit.
2. Cancellations 45 – 28 days before the retreat we will retrain 80% of the base fee (\$200) and refund any payment above this amount
3. 28 days or less before retreat start, we will offer a refund of any payment above the base of the sliding scale (\$250).
4. **A full refund** (minus credit card fees if you choose to pay by cc.) will be made if you cancel from the wait list.