

# Shasta Abbey Retreats and Information 2015

## Introductory Retreats

An Introductory Retreat introduces guests new to Shasta Abbey to the Serene Reflection (Soto Zen) practice in a monastic setting. It provides down-to-earth help for taking this practice back into daily life outside the monastery gates. Introductory Retreats offer meditation instruction, periods of seated meditation, Dharma talks and informal discussions about meditation, mindfulness and the basic teachings of Serene Reflection. The retreat concludes with an informal tea for retreat guests, monks and our local congregation.

### INTRODUCTORY RETREAT DATES

- February 6-8
- April 10-12
- June 26-28
- July 31-Aug. 2
- September 4-6
- October 23-25
- November 20-22

## Continuing Practice Retreat

Feb. 27–March 1

This retreat is offered for anyone who has been to at least one Introductory Retreat at Shasta Abbey. Dharma talks and discussions will focus on strengthening our meditation practice and deepening our understanding of how to bring the Buddha's teaching into our daily lives at home, at work, in our relationships and in our communities. Private spiritual counseling will also be offered.

## The Offering of Lay Training Retreat

July 16-19

*To live by Zen is to live an ordinary life* – Great Master Eihei Dogen

Our work, family, relationships and community become our field of training and the ordinary activities of daily life come alive with clarity, joy and purpose when we see them as the very means we have of realizing the Buddha's Truth for ourselves and others. This retreat will be led by Rev. Master Kodo Kay, who was a lay trainee for some years before she was ordained as a monk. The retreat will include Dharma talks, discussions and spiritual counseling, and is open to those who have some experience with Buddhist practice and meditation.



## Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts Retreat

Oct. 29 – Nov. 1

The importance of offering merit, particularly for those who have died in distressing circumstances or unsettled states of mind, is at the heart of this retreat. Dharma talks examine what it means to offer merit, how we can truly help those who are suffering, and how we can convert our own craving and greed through the practice of the Dharma. In the Feeding of the Hungry Ghosts Ceremony, we offer the food of the Dharma to all beings who have died under painful, difficult or despairing circumstances. This retreat is open to anyone who has attended an Introductory Retreat.

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Retreat applications available at  
www.shastaabbey.org

## Shasta Abbey *A Temple in the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives (O.B.C.)*

Shasta Abbey, located on sixteen forested acres near Mount Shasta in northern California, is a training monastery for Buddhist monastics and a place of peace and practice for lay Buddhists and interested visitors. It was established in 1970 by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, who was Abbess until her death in 1996. Our current Abbess is Rev. Master Meian Elbert, a senior disciple of Rev. Master Jiyu. Buddhist training at Shasta Abbey is based on the practice of Serene Reflection (Soto Zen) Meditation and the keeping of the Buddhist Precepts. The monastery is home to 25 ordained male and female monks. The monastery schedule provides a balance of seated meditation, working meditation, and ceremonial, which allows the mind of meditation to be cultivated in all aspects of daily life.

Please see our website at [www.shastaabbey.org](http://www.shastaabbey.org) for more information on any of the events, services and offerings listed on our calendar, for downloadable audio Dharma talks and texts, and for Morning Service and other liturgical music.



## Residential Training

Lay trainees who have attended an Introductory Retreat and would like to spend more time at the Abbey sharing in our meditation and training are welcome to come for anything from a few days to several months. Lay trainees join in the daily activities of meditation, working meditation, ceremonies and Dharma talks.

Residential training provides the opportunity for an individual to deepen his or her practice by coming for an extended stay at the Abbey: to step back from the usual engagements of life in the world in order to train within the refuge of the monastery and the monastic schedule. As well as the usual daily activities, lay residents participate in focused Dharma discussions and have the opportunity to meet regularly with a senior monk to reflect on their experience and ask questions about their meditation and training.

### Silent Meditation Retreats

Throughout the year (see calendar for dates), the monastic community holds three-day meditation retreats. The focus is very much on meditation: there are six or seven periods of seated meditation each day. Meals are eaten in silence. There are no Dharma talks or spiritual counseling. Those who have spent time at the Abbey may consult the Guestmaster about attending one of these retreats.

## Celebratory Retreats: *Celebratory Retreats offer a more relaxed schedule and provide an opportunity for monks and laity to spend informal time together.*

### Wesak Celebratory Retreat

May 15 – 17, B.E. 2559

“On this Glorious Wesak Day...” we commemorate the birth, life and teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha. In the Buddhist world, Wesak marks the beginning of the New Year and is the most significant and joyous event of the Buddhist calendar. Wesak reminds us of the Buddha's historical origins in the person of Shakyamuni, the Wise One of the Shakya Clan, and celebrates with joyful ceremonies the profound gratitude we feel for His timeless teachings. Dharma talks point us to ways we can deepen our practice. We end the retreat with the traditional ringing of the Temple's great bell and a picnic for all.

### New Year Celebratory Retreat

Dec. 28 – Jan. 1

Year-end is traditionally a time for both reflection and celebration. This 3-day retreat offers opportunities to both reflect and celebrate together as members of the Buddha's family. Dharma talks explore ways to deepen both our resolve and our practice in the coming year. Meditation, ceremonies, and celebration offer opportunities to bid farewell to the old and welcome the new. On New Year's Eve we hold a Vigil for Ma-treya, as well as the midnight New Year's Ceremony, followed by ringing in the New Year with the great bell. The retreat ends on January 1st, and guests are welcome to stay overnight and leave on January 2nd.

## Week Long Retreats:

### Keeping of the Ten Precepts Retreat

March 22-29

The Ten Precepts are at the heart of the tradition of Serene Reflection Meditation. The Keeping of the Ten Precepts Retreat is the doorway through which those who wish to become lay Buddhists make their commitment to the Precepts. It is also a time for those who have previously made this commitment to reaffirm it. Through traditional ceremonies, as well as in Dharma talks and daily practice, this retreat explores the fundamental aspects of receiving and living the Precepts. Those who have attended an Introductory Retreat and those who have participated in training at a Priory of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives, are welcome to apply. We invite not only people who wish to take the Precepts for the first time, but also those who wish to deepen their understanding of, and resolve to keep, the Precepts to share this joyous week with us.



*Ketchimyaku Ceremony: Following where the Precepts Lead*

### Jewels from the "Shobogenzo" Retreat

June 7-14

*If you do these things for some time...the Treasure House will open naturally and you will enjoy it fully.*

This retreat offers an in-depth look at two short discourses, “Shoji,” and “Doshin,” from Great Master Dogen's *Shobogenzo: The Treasure House of the Eye of the True Dharma*, and will end with a recitation of the “Shushogi.” During this retreat, led by Rev. Master Oswin Hollenbeck, he will explore and discuss with you themes such as taking refuge in the Three Treasures, awakening the Buddha-seeking mind, practicing the Three Pure Precepts, training in daily life, and living Buddha Nature. Rev. Oswin will also offer private spiritual counseling upon request. This retreat is open to those with some experience of training within our Order.

### “Denkoroku” Retreat

Aug. 16-23

*When the vines have withered, the trees have fallen  
and the mountains have crumbled away,  
The valley stream in cascades, will gush beyond its banks  
and the very rock will pour forth fire.*

This retreat, offered by our abbess, Rev. Master Meian, will focus on Great Master Keizan's *Denkoroku*, one of the two greatest writings of Soto Zen, the other being Great Master Dogen's *Shobogenzo*. Within the *Denkoroku: The Record of the Transmission of the Light*, are the stories of the passing on of the Dharma from ancestor to ancestor from the time of Shakyamuni Buddha through Dogen's disciple, Koun Ejo. “The exquisite underlying Truth runs, like a jade thread through a golden needle, throughout the book.” Rev. Master Meian will offer Dharma talks, Dharma discussions, and private spiritual counseling for each participant. This retreat is open to those with some experience of training within our Order.