

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a string of prayer beads. The person is wearing a vibrant red garment. The beads are dark and textured, with a small tassel at the top. The background is softly blurred, showing a warm, golden light.

The Dharma Path

Pilgrimage to Spiritual India

December 28, 2011 - January 13, 2012

Hello and thanks for your interest in our **Pilgrimage to Spiritual India**.

Please have a read of our itinerary and if you have any questions at all then please do call or email.

India has long been the destination for spiritual seekers from all over the world and on this tour we will explore the heart of what makes India such a special destination. Part tour, part retreat, this unique time will combine inner and outer pilgrimage.

We will practice yoga and meditation daily in some of the most visited pilgrimage destinations of northern India. We will meditate under the Bodhi tree where the Buddha sat and awakened in Bodhgaya and also in the Deer Park in Sarnath where he gave his first teaching 2,600 years ago. We will practice yoga in Rishikesh, often referred to as the home of yoga where the Ganges River flows out of the Himalayas and meets the plains of Northern India. And in Varanasi, on the Ganges many miles downstream, a place where pilgrims have visited for thousands of years we will take a boat ride in the stillness of dawn and witness the devotion of thousands of pilgrims. We'll meet with teachers from various spiritual traditions and explore the common aspects of all the spiritual traditions of India.

Travelling will be kept to a minimum to keep the experience as relaxed and deep as possible. We plan to relax into each place fully so that we can experience and learn from the atmosphere each is famous for before moving on. Each day will have yoga and meditation and there will be some days with extended meditation practice to deepen into our own experience.

You are very welcome to join us on this special Indian pilgrimage and journey into the heart of spiritual life.

Itinerary for North India Pilgrimage - December 2011 - 17 days*

Date	City and Activities
December 28, 2011	Arrive in Delhi and transfer to Hotel. We will have an evening tour meeting to get to know everyone and cover some of the practical and cultural aspects of travelling in India.
December 29, 2011	Delhi – Delhi is the capital of India and contains a vast number of monuments and historical sites dating back thousands of years. In the evening at 5pm we board the overnight train to Gaya, the closest city to Bodhgaya. Overnight on Train to Bodhgaya
December 30, 2011 – January 3, 2012	<p>Bodhgaya – Bodhgaya is the home of Buddhism, the home of the Bodhi Tree, the place where the Buddha was realised. Before awakening, it was here that the Buddha made the famous vow to sit in meditation and not move until he had realised the nature of his own being. That vow and the trials the Buddha went through as a result are represented in story, statues and pictures in many places in Bodhgaya.</p> <p>While here we will study those symbols and teaching stories (Suttas) to get insight into our own path and the challenges we each face to awaken to our true selves. These Suttas are remarkably similar between different traditions so can be relied upon as a true source of the Buddha’s teachings. Bodhgaya is a remarkably powerful place to do this inquiry.</p> <p>While here we will meditate under the Bodhi tree and visit monasteries and other special places in Buddhist mythology. We also plan to visit some of the remarkable non profit educational organisations in this area.</p> <p>Sister Mary Lobo from Nari Jagran Manch will give us insight into how and what makes her women’s empowerment program work. Her Christian perspective on spiritual life inspires and never fails to warm and lighten the heart. This is one of the highlights of the tour.</p>
January 3-7, 2012	<p>Varanasi & Sarnath – Varanasi is one of the oldest cities in India. Pilgrims have been coming here for thousands of years to bathe in the Holy Ganges river, to fulfil religious obligations, for spiritual realisation and to die. The energy of Varanasi is highly devotional making it the perfect place for us to explore the core of our hearts desire. Here we will explore the devotional practices of spiritual life, what the more subtle energies of the Hindu deities point to in ourselves and how this path to freedom works.</p>



Itinerary for North India Pilgrimage - December 2011 - 17 days*

Date	City and Activities
<p>January 3-7, 2012 (continued)</p>	<p>Varanasi & Sarnath – To assist our inner pilgrimage we will visit a range of temples, in particular the Monkey temple and The Nepali Temple famous for its erotic Tantric carvings. Each temple points to certain aspects of life and our inner being. Here in Varanasi the end of life is clearly apparent and the burning Ghats on the Ganges, where cremations happen daily call us to live fully in the present. Varanasi also has a healthy share of eclectic and sometimes eccentric characters seeking moksha (spiritual release) and their presence invites us to explore and widen our concepts about spiritual life.</p> <p>Sarnath, situated on the edge of Varanasi is the place where the Buddha gave his first teachings on The Middle Way. This teaching on The Four Noble Truths happened in what is now known as Deer Park. A reprieve from the bustle of Varanasi, this oasis of relative calm is perfect for contemplating the significance of The Four Noble Truths in our lives. This Buddhist pilgrimage centre is the home of several monasteries, a museum, historical temples and a 25 metre tall standing Buddha statue.</p>
<p>January 8, 2012</p>	<p>Rishikesh, Haridwar and surrounds – Rishikesh & Haridwar are the home of many Ashrams devoted to yoga and meditation. We'll visit the Sivanda Ashram in Rishikesh, The Ananda Mayi Ma ashram in Haridwar, the abandoned 60s ashram Maharishi Mahesh Yogi ran as well as other lesser known ashrams in these pilgrimage centres.</p> <p>This area is well known for spiritual practice and people flock here from all over the world to learn and practice yoga and meditation. Many ashrams teach yoga & meditation and we will get a chance to sample some of these classes. Daily chanting and pujas will enrich our experience and open our hearts.</p> <p>Being a gateway to the Himalayas, Rishikesh is often a resting place on the way to destinations higher in the Ganges valley. We too will get a taste of the spiritual lure of the Himalayas and the awe they have naturally inspired in truth seekers for millennia. No trip here would be complete without a journey up to see the high peaks.</p>
<p>January 13, 2012</p>	<p>Rishikesh to Delhi – After catching an early morning train, we arrive in Delhi at 1.30 PM where we say our goodbyes for now..... Until we meet for the December 2012 pilgrimage to the South of India! ☺</p>

*We reserve the right to change this itinerary at any time if we feel the participants may be harmed or if other circumstances warrant that change.





Tour and Booking Information

Tour price

- \$1980 per person. Please note this must be paid in full on or before 20th November so as to confirm hotels and train bookings.
- Please note there is a booking surcharge of \$200 per person if paid after 20th November.

The price includes:

- accommodation based on twin sharing basis (Single room supplement is \$680 extra on top of the tour cost)
- Breakfast at all hotels
- All Train tickets – which are two tier a/c sleeper class except the Gaya – Varanasi journey which is 3 tier a/c.
- All transfers to and from trains
- Travel costs for sightseeing and excursions at each city
- Airport transfer from New Delhi Airport on December 28th
- Airport transfer to New Delhi Airport on January 13th

The price does not include

- Airfares
- Bottled water, table drinks at meals, telephone calls
- Room service bills accrued
- Lunch and Dinner
- Entrance fees to any museums, monuments, temples etc
- Tips to our drivers or local guides
- Anything not mentioned in the section above

Booking

Your pilgrimage starts the moment you book. To secure your place on the tour, simply fill out the registration form and send back to Anton, along with the deposit which is AUD\$500. The balance is payable by November 20th.

Refund Policy

In the event of withdrawal from the Tour after registration, but before the tour commences:

- Withdrawal in writing, 31 days or more prior to tour commencement date, we will give a full refund minus \$200 tour costs.
- Withdrawal in writing, between 30 to 14 days prior to tour commencement date, we will give a full refund minus \$500 for tour costs.
- Withdrawal in writing 7 days or less prior to course commencement – Refund of payment less \$1000 for tour costs.
- In the event of withdrawal from the Tour, after Tour commencement, for whatever reason, there will be no refund.

First Time Visitors to India

If you have never been to India before, there are many questions that come up when planning your first visit. Guide books obviously offer the most complete information on travel and we won't attempt to replicate that info here. What we can do though is be a sounding board for your enquiries and give specific info where needed. Please call to discuss.

Insurance

Insurance is a personal consideration and up to you to decide what feels right. It is highly recommended.

Health

For vaccinations and other health considerations, please speak to the relevant professionals for all help in this area.

Visas

You will need to organise your Tourist Visa for India prior to departure via your nearest Indian Embassy. This can take some time so best to apply for your visa at least 3 weeks in advance. Put the purpose of your journey as Tourist.

Money

ATM's are now common around India as are places to change money.

Your Tour Guide



Your tour guide is Anton Eastick. Anton has visited and lived in India for many years and has a deep love for the culture and diversity of this great country. He teaches yoga and Insight Meditation in Melbourne, Australia and internationally and also works as a Life Coach, supporting the change and freedom of being that comes naturally through awareness. He is currently studying Hakomi Psychotherapy (www.hakomi.com) and is an ongoing student of The Diamond Approach.

Anton has visited India many times over a number of years so can speak from direct experience about the diversity of Indian life.

If this trip interests you at all and you would like to learn more about this pilgrimage and what travelling in India can be like, please call anytime.

Contact Anton: In Australia 0412 018 962 and Internationally +61 412 018 962

Email: insightyoga@bigblue.net.au

Website: www.thedharmapath.com.au (online in August 2011)

Booking Form

First Name: _____ Middle Name: _____ Family Name: _____

Street / PO Box _____

Suburb / Town / City State _____ Postcode _____

Country _____ Phone (H) _____ (M) _____

Email _____

For Train Bookings please provide:

Passport Number: _____ Expiry Date: ____/____/____ Country of Issue: _____

How did you find out about our retreat? _____

Payments

(\$1980 if paid in full by 20 November; please add a \$200 surcharge if paid after this date)

Direct Debit: Please contact Anton for banking details

Cheques: Please make payable to Anthony Eastick and mail to 18 Albion St, Kilda East, 3183, Victoria

A confirmation of booking and receipt will be sent to you upon receiving your booking.