

Guidelines for male Guests staying at Dhammagiri Forest Hermitage on Retreat

1) **Guests observe the 8 Precepts throughout their stay without exception:**

1. Not to intentionally kill any living beings (including ants, mozzies and so on)
2. Not to steal
3. Complete celibacy
 - Abstinence from any sexual activity in action or words
4. Not to lie
5. Not to consume alcohol or any drugs causing intoxication
6. Not to take any food from noon till next dawn
 - Eating restricted to light breakfast at 6.00 am & meal at 10.30 am
 - Juice, tea/coffee, honey/sugar, some dark chocolate can be consumed in afternoon, if available
7. No dancing, singing, music, shows, entertainment, garlands, perfumes, cosmetics, make-up, jewellery, ornaments
 - No smartphone/internet use (occasional access if really required for important email communication or similar is possible)
8. Not to use high or luxurious beds/furniture
 - Sleeping on 'ThermoRest' inflatable camping mattress on the floor

2) **Dhammagiri Forest Hermitage is primarily a residence for Bhikkhus (Buddhist monks) in the lineage of Ajahn Chah and comparable lineages in the wider Theravada Forest Tradition. We are not a business or an institution commercially catering for customers, like a hotel or hostel or a 'Retreat Center'**

- The monks, supported by the lay community, make the opportunity available for retreatants to stay as their guests in the monastery
- Thus a retreat could be compared to visiting someone at their house, and staying at their private home as a guest - except that the 'home' extends over 85 acres, and one does not live in rooms, but in solitary, simple huts ('Kuti')
- No payment is required (voluntary donations are, of course, always possible), and guests accept facilities as available

3) **Dhammagiri is part of the 'Forest Tradition', with emphasis on simplicity and renunciation of sensuality**

- Facilities are generally simple and plain
- Accommodation is in simple 'kutis' (demountable huts) with no ensuite (toilet/bathroom available only in central area)
- We depend on the daily food offerings of the laity, and train to be content with whatever food is offered
 - No special food requirements/diets can be accommodated for

4) **Daily Schedule:**

- 04.30 am: Wake up (voluntary - one may get up earlier :-)
- 04.45 am: Private Morning Chanting / Meditation in Kuti
- 05.30 am: Sweeping & preparing/offering breakfast
- 06.00 am: Breakfast
- 06.45 am: Questions to senior monk, if required
 - Some work/chores in the morning, if and as required
- 09.50 am: Help set up Dhammahall for daily meal offering
- 10.30 am: Alms offering & Meal
- 11.20 am: Help with Bowlwashing/Clean Up

11.45 am: If you wish, you can join the Dhammadiscussion with Supporters

- Unless they have some private issues to discuss
- Sometimes chaperoning required if no male present

12.45 pm till next morning: Solitary meditation/study/chanting in Kuti

- Dhammahall can be used if no female meditators are staying

- Sundays 03.00 - 05.00 pm: Join Meditation Session & Dhammadiscussion
- Saturdays 07.00 - 07.30 am: Join small group taking Triple Refuge & 8 Precepts
- There can be additional programs/working bees for major Buddhist occasions like Vesak, or Western holidays like Xmas & New Year, or for visiting senior monks

5) We live in the Australian bush, which means:

- One can potentially encounter Australian creepy-crawlies like poisonous snakes & spiders, stinging plants, or our cute (but rather big) 'Carpet-Python'
 - Keep eyes open and be always mindful where you step or what you touch, and always use a torch/flashlight at night, and keep screendoors closed
- It is humid-hot in summer (December to March), with strong sunlight/UV
 - Use sunprotection as required
- Winter (June to August) can be a bit cold, with temperatures dropping to light frost at the bottom of the hill on the coldest days
 - However, even in winter most days reach around 20°C in the afternoon
- There can be fire danger, especially in spring or anytime if there is drought
 - However, we have a very safe, state-of-the-art firebunker for worst case scenarios (which are unlikely anyhow)

6) Before booking a retreat, prior attendance at our Sunday afternoon meditation sessions, and participation in the 'Full Moon Meditation Program' on Sundays closest to the full moon is usually required

- Exceptions are possible for those from overseas or interstate, or those who have experience in monasteries in the same tradition (lineage of Ajahn Chah) or similar tradition (Theravada Forest Tradition)
- Due to the mostly solitary practice at Dhammagiri, an established regular meditation practice is strongly recommended, to be able to use the stay as guest beneficially

7) Good mental and decent physical health are required. There is a steep hill to climb every day

- Due to the solitary nature of our retreats, and intensive personal meditation practice, our retreats are not usually suitable for those presently undergoing treatment for any mental disorder
- In case of previous treatments in the past, or any doubts regarding mental health, it is recommended to consult a mental health specialist prior to considering a retreat, and follow his recommendations

8) This list is not to be understood as exhaustive or definitive in all details (except for 8 Precepts), but may receive adjustments or additions/exceptions by the senior monk at his discretion

- Schedule, training and routines at the monastery are laid down by the abbot, and guests follow his instructions in this regard

9) By booking, you declare that you are aware of the above, and any other risks associated with living in Australian bush, and that you're happy to stay at Dhammagiri at your own risk

*Wishing you a peaceful, blissful, and insightful retreat
May all beings be happy and at ease*



Dhammagiri Forest Hermitage - Guest Application Form

- Full Name as in Passport

- Date of Birth

- Address & Telephone Number & email

- Next of Kin Contact Details (for us to contact in case of emergencies)

- Are you a Buddhist? If so, which tradition/teacher?

- Have you ever stayed in Buddhist Monasteries, or participated in meditation retreats? If so, please provide details (teacher, tradition, length of stay etc.)

- Why did you feel inspired to choose Dhammagiri as a place to do a retreat?

● Are you in good physical health, able to live in the Australian bush in simple physical conditions, including a very steep hill to be climbed every day?

Yes

No

▪ If "No", please provide details on separate sheet

● Have you ever had, or are you currently receiving treatment, or used medication, for any psychological or psychiatric condition?

Yes

No

▪ If "Yes", please provide details on separate sheet, or discuss personally with senior monk.

● What dates would you like to book for your stay at Dhammagiri?

- Length of stay can not be determined definitely beforehand, but will depend on mutual agreement how well guest is settling in.
- Please consider if you really can commit to the requested dates, as it may be difficult for Dhammagiri to accommodate short term changes or cancellations of bookings. Short term cancellations may negatively effect opportunities for future bookings.
- Check In/Check Out is 07.00 am to 12.00 pm

Arrival: _____

Departure: _____

● I have read the attached 'Guidelines for Male Guests', and agree to observe them during my stay at Dhammagiri.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

*Looking forward to seeing you soon at Dhammagiri
May all beings be happy and at ease!*

