

Together We Are One

*- on tour with the monastic community of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh -
a 5-Day Mindfulness Retreat at Blue Cliff Monastery
Wed - Sun, Aug 23 - 27, 2017*

A Sangha of 60 monastics from Plum Village, Blue Cliff, Magnolia Grove, and Deer Park Monasteries will come together to host this retreat and other events during this US Tour. As in the previous US tour, Thay will not be present due to health limitations. However, even without his physical presence, his spiritual presence is still very much with us. We learned this at the 2009 retreat “One Buddha is Not Enough,” which Thay could not attend for health reasons:

“By staying together as a Sangha, we broke through our habitual patterns of avoiding and running away from pain. Transformation and healing took place in every person, monastic and lay, beginning and long-term practitioner. We experienced directly the immense value and strength of our spiritual community, our Sangha. We realized that Thay and his teachings will continue well into the future, because we are a Sangha. Wherever we are, when we come together as a community of practice, we can generate this powerful energy of peace and healing.”

Given the current challenges we face as a society, we know how important it is to stay solid and connected to each other. Cultivating mindfulness in all of our daily activities, we concretely contribute to wellbeing and transformation in ourselves and in the world. We grow in our capacity to respond to life in ways that bring peace and healing.

Please join the monastics and lay practitioners at Blue Cliff Monastery to manifest healing, nourishment, and peace together as a spiritual family, a Sangha. We will practice coming back to the present moment through awareness of our breath and our steps. As we train ourselves to be more deeply in touch with our breath, body, feelings, and thoughts, we will quite naturally experience for ourselves the wonderful refreshing and healing elements that come from mindful living.

Whether you are young or old, new or more experienced in the practice of mindfulness, we welcome you to join us for this retreat. Families with children and teens are also warmly welcomed.

Mindful Living:

Mindfulness is woven into all of our daily activities--speaking, eating, walking, sitting, or enjoying a cup of tea. Although Blue Cliff is not a silent retreat center, stillness and quiet are at the heart of the practice. Everyone is encouraged to generate this peaceful and healing energy by taking time to stop, slow down, be present for ourselves and others, and to be aware of each of our actions throughout the day. You may read more about the many ways we practice mindfulness at the monastery on our [Be Mindful in Daily Life](#) page.

Practicing Together:

We emphasize community practice so that we can support each other and benefit from each other's presence. We ask all who join us to help create the energy of community and togetherness by participating in all scheduled activities and by sharing their living space with others. This includes the wonderful practice of *Noble Silence* from the end of the evening activity through breakfast.

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The Five Mindfulness Trainings:

The Five Mindfulness Trainings are a Buddhist contribution to a global spirituality and ethic: Everyone who comes to the retreat is requested to observe the Five Mindfulness Trainings, the foundation for living in harmony together as a Sangha, or community of practice. The Trainings are guidelines that help us move in the direction of goodness and beauty. We thank you in advance for abstaining from any smoking, drinking, eating meat, and sexual activity during your time with us at the monastery. A full text of the Trainings can be found [here](#). A copy of the 5 Mindfulness Trainings will also be sent along with the retreat confirmation package after you have registered. For those interested, there will be an opportunity to formally receive the Trainings on the last day of the retreat.

Retreat Schedule:

We usually start the day around 5:30 am and end the day at 9:00 pm, with some personal time between activities. The retreat will allow us to practice mindfulness together through the day, including the following activities:

- Daily Dharma Talks or Q & A sessions with monastic Dharma Teachers
- Silent and guided sitting meditation
- Outdoor walking meditation as a community
- Mindful meals in silence – taking the time to eat as a family, to truly enjoy and look deeply into the food
- Dharma-Sharing – practicing loving speech and deep listening, sharing our experiences in small circle groups
- Deep Relaxation – meditation in the reclining position: learning how to rest and relax our body and mind
- Service Meditation – working together in harmony and with ease, in the spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood
- Presentations on the Five Mindfulness Trainings and the practice of Beginning Anew by monastics and lay-practitioners
- Noble Silence – a silent period from after the evening activity until after washing up for breakfast

Dharma Sharing:

Dharma Sharing is an opportunity to share our experience of the practice at the retreat and in our lives, and to listen deeply to each other. You have the option of choosing an Affinity Group for Dharma Sharing (for example Environmental, Veterans, Family Practice, Geographical Location). If the Affinity Group you select has too few participants, you may be assigned to a group according to geographical location. We will let you know your Dharma Sharing group on Arrival Day.

Meals:

All meals are vegan. There is generally a variety of options available at mealtime, but please bring supplementary food for yourself if you have a particular dietary need. We ask for your understanding, that due to the large number of people on retreat, the kitchen and refrigeration facilities will not be accessible to retreatants. Due to safety regulations, please do not cook in your room.

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Offering Service:

To support the monastery, everyone is encouraged to participate in short community service periods that we call "working meditation." Work is done in a light and mindful way, with the support of others. Tasks may include arranging the meditation halls, cleaning bathrooms, chopping vegetables, washing pots, and other simple responsibilities. Each person's ability and inclinations are respected when it comes to delegating work for a given work period.

Internet, Phones, and Electronics:

To maximize the benefit of your mindfulness practice with us, we ask that you use electronic devices only when absolutely necessary. Ideally, we invite all to help create an electronics free retreat, by switching off our devices at the start of the retreat. If it is necessary to use a device, please do so in a mindful way and discreet way, respecting the calm and quiet of our common areas: living spaces, meditation halls, and dining halls. This practice will help all of us to release our busyness and to really rest. Please let your loved ones know that you will be on retreat. In an emergency, they can reach you by contacting our [registration office](#). Internet access, including wifi service, is not available to guests, and cell-phone service is not always reliable in our area. Please make all travel arrangements in advance.

Children & Teens:

A [Children's Program](#) is offered for children ages 6-12, and a [Teen's Program](#) for youths ages 13-17. The programs include age-appropriate learning games, sharing, and playful practice in a joyful spirit. The programs are led by monastic and lay practitioners. Parents are welcome and invited to participate and support the Children's Program. *(These programs will only be available if five or more children, or teens, are registered for the retreat.)* Parents are required to be responsible for their children attending the Children's Program during all non-activity times. Children under age six are welcome at the retreat, but must be attended by a parent or guardian at all times during the retreat. We ask that you offer your child and teen the opportunity for a screen free experience at the retreat, and suggest that their phones be left at home.

Individual Needs:

Blue Cliff is committed to inclusiveness. If you have any particular need for assistance or special accommodation please [contact us](#) so we can offer you as much support as possible. We now have two new wheelchair-accessible rooms, and our meditation hall and dining halls are wheelchair-accessible as well.

Ticks:

In the spring, summer, and fall, Blue Cliff is home to deer ticks which do carry Lyme Disease. It is easy to protect yourself if you take a few simple precautions--most importantly, thoroughly checking yourself and your children for ticks each day. Please follow this [link](#) to learn more.

What to Bring:

Please bring casual and modest clothing that is comfortable for sitting. You will need enough clothing for the duration of your stay, as there are no washing machines available to guests. If you are staying in a dorm, a bottom sheet and pillow with pillow case are provided on each bed; *please bring any additional bedding that will support your comfort (blanket, sleeping bag, etc.)*. Please bring shoes suitable for walking on nature trails. Please bring your own toiletries that are fragrance-free, in consideration of those who are sensitive or allergic to scents. Other items that may be helpful to bring are: a flashlight, an alarm clock, an umbrella, and shoes that are easy to slip on and off. We encourage our guests to spend their whole stay at the monastery, so please bring everything you might need. Please do not bring non-vegan foods, alcohol, or other intoxicants. Please do not bring pets; only service animals are allowed.

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Arrival & Departure Days:

Arrival Day for the retreat is Wed, Aug 27th with check-in starting from 2-5 pm. Dinner will be served starting at approximately 5:30pm. An orientation talk for everyone will be offered by monastic Dharma Teachers starting at approximately 7:00pm. The retreat will end after lunch on Sun, Aug. 27th.

Accommodations & Costs:

Registration is for the whole retreat; no partial-stay registrations are possible.

	BCM DORMS and Trailers (5-8 beds, mostly bunks; Private bathroom for some rooms)	BCM CAMPING (areas for Families, Couples, Single Men, Single Women; public bathroom/shower blocks) Please bring your own camping equipment - no rentals available. No RVs, vans, or campers due to space limitations.	COMMUTING Staying off-site and commuting each morning and evening to and from the monastery.
ADULT	\$600	\$400	\$400
STUDENT (age 18-27)	\$325	\$325	\$325
TEEN (age 13-17)	\$275	\$275	\$275
CHILD (age 6-12)	\$250	\$250	\$250
UNDER 6	FREE	FREE	FREE

Scholarships:

Scholarships for up to 50% of the retreat cost are available. Anyone may apply (including retired seniors). To apply for scholarship, or to learn more, please select the scholarship option when registering online, and follow the guidelines listed. **Scholarship applications must be received by June 1st.**

Cancellation Policy (Per Person):

- For cancellations received on or before Aug 1, 2017, a refund is offered minus a cancellation fee of \$75 (adults) and \$25 (teens, children). **Notice of cancellation must be emailed to office@bluecliffmonastery.org, attn: “BCM Tour Retreat Cancellation - [your last name, first name].” Please do not phone in your cancellation.**
- No refund is available for cancellations received after Aug 1, 2017.

Blue Cliff Monastery:

More information about our monastery can be found [here](#).

Transportation:

Please visit this link for more information on [Train, Plane, Bus, and Taxi transportation](#) to and from Blue Cliff Monastery.

Further Information:

If you have further questions, please email us at office@bluecliffmonastery.org, attn: “US TOUR” or call the monastery office at (845) 213-1782.