

Ngondro Gar Retreat 2017

Venue: 256 Martells Road, Bellingen, New South Wales. See last page for directions

The following is the retreat schedule and information. Please email Tsering Chodron, the retreat facilitator, for any inquiries at tsering@siddharthasintent.org

DAY 0

SATURDAY, 18 NOVEMBER 2017

14.00 – 16.00	Arrival
16.00 – 17.00	Welcome Afternoon Tea
17.00 – 19.00	Teaching by Jakob
19.00	Dinner, housekeeping talk with Tricia and Stephen. Rest

DAY 1-DAY 6

06.00 – 08.00	Own ngondro practice
08.00 – 09.30	Breakfast
09.30 – 10.30	Teachings/instruction on each of the five preliminaries
10.30 – 11.00	Morning tea and discussion
11.00 - 12.30	Teachings and Question/Answer
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 16.00	Instruction and practice
16.00 – 17.00	Free time
17.00 – 18.30	Own ngondro practice
18.30	Dinner and rest

DAY 7

SATURDAY, 25 NOVEMBER 2017

06.00 – 08.00	Own ngondro practice
08.00 – 09.00	Breakfast
09.00 – 10.30	Review of the ngondro path
10.30 – 11.00	Morning tea and discussion
11.00 - 12.30	Teachings and Question/Answer
12.30 – 14.00	Lunch
14.00 – 15.00	Webinar link up with Jakob in New Zealand Closing of retreat, dedication and aspiration prayers

ABOUT THE RETREAT

This Ngondro retreat will offer participants a solid basis of understanding in both theory and actual practice. To give an overview of the whole ngondro path, we will be learning about and practicing the outer preliminaries as well as the five inner preliminaries thus inspiring Ngondro Gar participants to continue with confidence in the Ngondro sections yet to come. There will be four sessions a day which will include group sessions, individual sessions and group discussions. The first and fourth sessions of the day, will be dedicated to continuing the practice of our current ngondro preliminary.

Rinpoche is encouraging Ngondro Gar practitioners to do at least part of our Ngondro practice in retreat and has generously given us the option to accumulate hours in retreat with 8 hours of daily practice for 7 days or more being counted as 24 hours per day.

Jakob Leschly will open the retreat 5pm Saturday 18 November, with a talk on why we practice Ngondro including the outer preliminaries or four thoughts that turn one's mind to the dharma.

Our daily program commences on Sunday with a session from 6 – 8am practicing the section of ngondro we are currently engaged with, either under the guidance of the instructors at the venue, or in our own rooms. Those persons just starting out will be guided in the contemplations of the outer preliminaries.

Each morning after breakfast we will be exploring one of the five inner preliminaries. Jakob will talk on the inner meaning of the Refuge verse on Sunday morning, Tsering and Gosha will cover the Refuge Tree and Prostrations on Monday morning, Bodhicitta meditations Tuesday, Outer and Inner Vajrasattva practice Wednesday, Mandala Offering and Kusali practice Thursday, Guru Yoga Friday culminating with revision of the whole ngondro path on the morning of Saturday 25th.

Generally, we will spend the session after lunch practicing the preliminary discussed in the morning session. With the exception of Sunday afternoon when Jakob will talk on the inner meaning of the Bodhicitta verse before departing to lead a Vipashyana retreat in New Zealand. We plan to link up with Jakob again by webinar from New Zealand for the last session of the retreat Saturday 25th.

We will close each day with practice of our current preliminary, followed by dinner and an early finish time to enable those who are staying off site to return to their accommodation and rest.

There is no need for apprehension about the retreat. As you can see, the schedule and format of the program is quite manageable and the instructors will be on hand to give practical advice according to each individual's capabilities.

It is said practice is the best way to repay the kindness of the teacher and deepen our understanding of the dharma. This is an amazing opportunity for practice; even our hosts Tricia and Stephen have completed three-year retreat and have dedicated the past thirty plus years to providing our blessed practice environment.

LOGISTICS

HEALTH: Tricia & Stephen Abell request they be aware if anyone has any significant medical condition. Please note on your registration form if you have any medical conditions e.g. Asthma, Epilepsy, Diabetes and allergies. Ticks and mosquitoes are prevalent in the area - if you know you have a significant allergy, bring an EpiPen and any required medication.

TRANSPORT If you require, or can provide car-pooling, please email Tricia triciaabell@gmail.com

Transport for those flying.

The closest airport is Coffs Harbour 60mins drive away. If you are flying please try to get a morning flight that arrives not later than 2.00pm on your arrival day Saturday 18 November.

For returning home after the video link-up with Jakob and the close of the retreat at 3.00pm, Saturday 25 November, and allowing reasonable time to get to the airport, the earliest flight for you would be 5pm. As Coffs Harbour is a regional airport there may not be a suitable flight available.

It is often recommended to leave slowly from retreat, in which case you may choose to fly out Sunday 26 November. In this case you will need to book an 8th night of accommodation and arrange for airport transfer on Sunday. If this option is difficult for you please contact Tsering tsering@siddharthasintent.org to discuss.

Ask Tricia to help you coordinate your flight to arrive or depart at the same time as other participants.

Transport for those travelling by train to Urunga station 45mins away.

To arrive at retreat, catch northbound XPT from Sydney arriving Urunga 15.33, or southbound XPT from Brisbane arriving 11.31.

Retreatants travelling by train may need to depart Sunday 26 November. If this option is difficult for you please contact Tsering tsering@siddharthasintent.org to discuss.

Once you have booked your flight or train ticket please email details to Tricia triciaabell@gmail.com

MEALS: 3 vegetarian meals will be provided. Vegan and gluten free options will be available (please indicate on registration form). If you have very specific requirements we encourage you to bring your own.

ACCOMMODATION:

Various options are available:

- **Camping at the retreat site \$10/night**
If you bring your own tent or have a campervan you can set up at the retreat site. It's basic: hot water shower, earth closet toilet, space, birds in the morning. Meditation room available for early morning practice. Please have correct money ready for payment on arrival.

Email Tricia Abell triciaabell@gmail.com for information or bookings.

- **Bellingen Farmstay, 1.5 km from retreat on Martells Road, 3 minute drive \$37-45+ /night, shared**
<http://bellingenfarmstay.com.au/> 02 6655 2786 Fiona & Brett
Three shared cabins at a spacious, beautiful rural setting.
Phone to book and tell them you are part of the Buddhist retreat.
- **Malibells Country Cottages, 9 km from retreat, 5 km of which is on windy, unpaved gravel, but well-maintained road, 20 min drive \$38-45+ /night, shared**
<http://malibells.com.au/> 02 6655 1109 Helen & Tony
Similar in style and natural beauty to Bellingen Farmstay (above). Three shared cabins.
Phone to book and tell them you are part of the Buddhist retreat.
- **Bellingen Youth Hostel (the Belfry Guesthouse), centre of Bellingen town, 20 minute drive to retreat \$30-50 /night, shared**
<http://www.bellingenyha.com.au/> 02 6655 1116
Very pleasant, very popular, award winner. Overlooks Bellinger River. Centre of town location means sounds and movement.
Make bookings *directly by phone* 02 6655 1116 with Renee or Sophie, and mention the Buddhist retreat.
- **Billets with local Dharma Friends**
No promises, but we'll try. Email Tricia triciaabell@gmail.com
- **Bed n Breakfast and Air BnB via Internet search**
Plentiful throughout Bellingen Shire, but not necessarily close to the retreat venue.
Check distances! Recommended: from venue at 256 Martells Road, maximum 15km north to Bellingen town or east to Urunga and environs.

WHAT TO BRING:

- Toiletries, a torch, sunscreen, hat, insect repellent, medications if required, natural soaps/shampoo as the grey water is used on the gardens.
- Any special foods you require beyond the retreat catering.
- Water bottle.
- The weather can be unpredictable at this time of year. It could be hot or cool, and possibly wet so bring appropriate clothing for all weather conditions. E.g.: umbrella/raincoat and rain shoes.
- It is recommended that you bring a **meditation shawl** and **blanket or mat for outdoor or verandah practice**.
- **Some** cushions are provided as well as chairs. It is recommended that **if you are driving please bring your own cushions**.
- Your **Ngondro Text** and reference books such as **Words of My Perfect Teacher** and/or **Not for Happiness**.
- If possible, **prostration mat and gloves, socks or pads for hands**. Jakob recommends a roll of lino as a prostration mat.
- **Mandala plate** – if you don't have one, please advise so we can lend you one. **A piece of new cloth** about 1 metre square for using with the mandala plate (if you don't already have this).
- If possible, a **small folding table** to sit your text on and use when doing mandala offerings. If you are travelling by air, let us know and we will try to provide one for you.

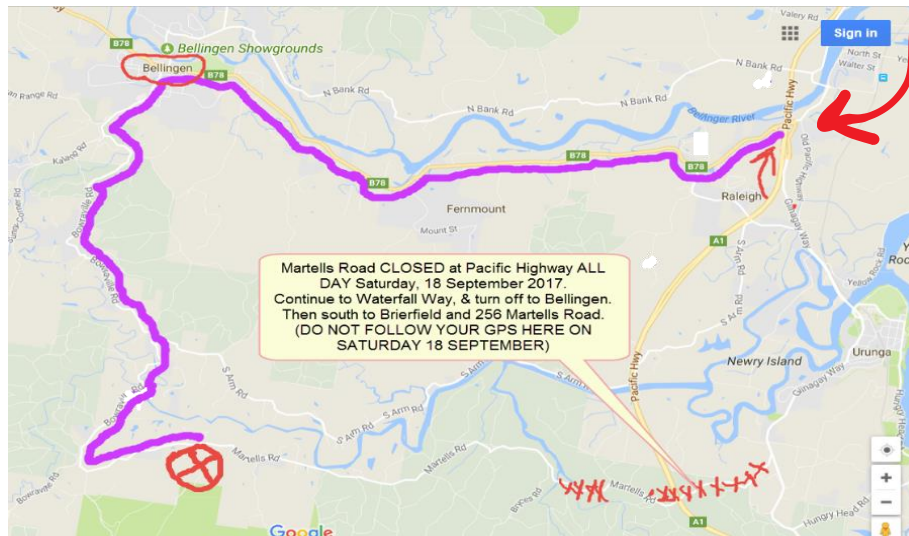
IMPORTANT:

It is policy at this retreat venue that during the retreat participants take care of cleaning the space they use (including meditation room, showers and toilets) and wash their dishes after meals. Participants will also be required assist the cook with vegetable chopping at least once during the retreat. Karma yoga duties can be chosen on arrival.

DIRECTION to venue 256 Martells Road, Bellingen, New South Wales:

ARRIVING BY CAR

1. Whether approaching along the Pacific Highway / A1 from the north (Coffs Harbour) or from the south (Kempsey), turn off onto Waterfall Way / B78, and go west towards Bellingen, Dorrigo and Armidale.
2. Drive about 12km into Bellingen town.
3. Turn left onto Church Street at the 4-way intersection.
4. Continue along Church Street up Hospital Hill.
5. At the top of Hospital Hill (about 1.5 km from town) take the left fork towards Brierfield and Bowraville.
6. After another 9km, take left fork onto Martells Road.
7. Drive 2.56km along Martells Road to number 256 on the right hand side. Signposts and letterbox at the bottom of the drive say 'Abell' and '256'.
8. Drive up the dirt drive about 250 meters. (Not the house you see from the road, but hidden up the back.)
9. X marks the spot on the map.



CAUTION: On Saturday, 18 September 2017 only, the eastern end of Martells Road will be closed to traffic because of a road rally car race (no joke). That is why these directions advise you to come the longer way around through Bellingen. At the same time, your GPS may be telling you to enter Martells Road at its eastern end. Ignore the GPS at this point on this day.