



Dear Divine Soul,

It is with great joy we announce that on March 12 through to March 26, 2016, the Amarakantak Kriya Yoga Ashram (Hariharananda Dhyana Kutir, established by Swami Brahmanandaji exclusively for meditation) will offer an exceptional, silent meditation retreat near the holy Narmada River. The ashram is nestled in the forests and mountains in Amarakantak and provides an unprecedented opportunity for kriyavans to deepen their spiritual practice in the pristine environment that yogis have cherished for ages. The retreat will be led by Swami Atmavidyanandaji and other monks in India.

Prior to this retreat, participants have the opportunity to join Guruji Paramahansa Prajnananandaji on his annual Prachi Walk from February 28 to March 5, 2016 in Odisha. Then on March 7 is the Shivratri celebration at Hariharananda Gurukulam. Participants who are at the Gurukulam before the retreat would then travel together on March 10 on the train from Bhubaneswar, Odisha, to the train station nearest the Amarakantak ashram. Those who cannot join the activities in Odisha before the Amarakantak Retreat would need to arrive at the Amarakantak ashram by March 11.

All participants must be committed to maintaining silence for the duration of the retreat at the Amarakantak ashram. This will allow participants to dive deeper and more richly into their practice than perhaps ever before.

Spaces for this retreat are limited and applications are now being accepted. Applicants will be provided with more information about the retreat and what to bring.

The fee for the retreat is \$1,250.00 USD per person. This amount does not include airfare or other transportation to and from the Amarakantak ashram. Train reservations need to be made by December 12, 2015. There may also be additional transportation costs to visit nearby holy sites. You must also arrange your own passport and Indian visa.

To apply for this retreat, please complete the application form and return it via email to institute@kriya.org by November 1, 2015.

In loving service,
The Mother Center

Tentative Schedule March 12-26, 2016

04:45 – 05:15am Yoga Asanas
05:30 – 07:30am Meditation
07:45 – 08:30am Breakfast
09:00 – 10:00am Seva
10:30 – 12:30pm Meditation
12:45 – 01:30pm Lunch
01:30 – 03:00pm Study and Contemplation
03:00 – 04:00pm Class
04:30 – 06:30pm Meditation
06:30 – 06:45pm Aarti
07:00 – 08:00pm Dinner
08:15 – 09:00pm Satsang/Prayer/Chanting
09:00pm Retire

Note: The schedule will be adjusted during the retreat to include Q&A classes and visiting holy places.

Retreat ends on March 26 and participants can depart on March 27.

Surrender to the Divine at the Source of the Holy Narmada River

The beauty of nature is displayed in all her glory in Amarakantak, which is often referred to as a gateway to heaven. The enchanting scenic beauty and the sacredness of this place where great saints and sages have meditated for years draws one into a deep spiritual state.

Amarakantak, situated in the mountainous region of the Maikal Hills and at the source of two holy rivers, Narmada River and Sone River, is a sacred place of pilgrimage with many ancient places of worship. Narmada is considered one of the most holy rivers of India. There are various stories about the Narmada River. Some say the river emanated from the body of Lord Shiva when he was meditating, and others say the river is his daughter, Goddess Narmada. The Narmada is believed to be the embodiment of purity. It is said that the Narmada water absolves a person from sins, and by merely glancing at the river one is purified. Narmada means “one who is endowed with bliss.” It is said that Lord Shiva was pleased with Goddess Narmada’s devotion and surrender, so he blessed her, “May you be a holy river, and may your waters always be full.” When one surrenders to the Source, full blessings of the Lord are given.

Amarakantak is located 124 km from Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh) and lies in an area on the Madhya Pradesh border. Amarakantak is where the Vindhya and Satpura mountain range meet. Amarakantak’s unique natural heritage comprises of a number of places of scenic beauty. This holy town is famous for its temples that are visited by devotees.

“Once you enter this town (Amarakantak) you feel your soul has been purified whether or not you take a dip in the holy Narmadakund.”

During the retreat we will visit and meditate at a number of holy places in the surrounding area of Amarakantak.



Shri Yantra Mahu Meru Mandir



Dudhara



Narmadakund



Jwaleshwar Mahadev



Kapil Dhara



Mai ki Bagiya



Durga Dhara



Kabir Chabutra

Narmadakund and Temples

Where the Narmada River originated is an open pool known as Narmadakund that is surrounded by many temples. Narmadeshwar Temple, which is dedicated to Narmada Devi, is an ancient temple. The mythological belief of Narmada Udgam, an open kund at the origin of river Narmada, claims Lord Shiva descended from heaven at Narmada Udgam. Pilgrims visit Narmada Udgam to perform rituals and

prayers. There are about twenty small temples around this 'kund, such as Shiva temple, Kartikeya temple, Shri Rama Janaki temple, Annapurna temple, Guru Gorakhnath temple, Shri Shuryanarayana temple, Vangeshwar Mahadev temple, Durga temple, Shiv Parivara, Siddheshwara Mahadev temple, Shri Radha Krishna temple, Eleven Rudra temple, and others. Evening Aarti at temples in Amarakantak is another attraction for devotees.

Kabir Chabutra

Kabir Chabutra is a holy place where Sant Kabir spent many years in meditation and achieved great spiritual powers. Sant Kabir and Guru Nanak met here and discussed spiritual matters and introduced a better way of living. It is also said that when Mother Narmada washed Sant Kabir's feet with milk, some drops fell into the kund and even now faint white strands form in the water.

Shri Jwaleshwar Mahadev

The temple of Jwaleshwar Mahadev, situated at the origin of the Juhila River amidst thick forests, is where Lord Shiva established a Shivaling. He also established many other Shivalings over the Maikal Mountain, and this area is known as Maha Rudra Meru and is the abode of Lord Shiva. The only two Maha Rudra Merus are in Varanasi and Amarakantak. The famous black Shiva lingam is known as Jwaleshwar Mahadev. There is a sunset point near this temple.

Kapil Dhara

Kapil Dhara, the Kapil Waterfall, is about 100 feet high and is surrounded with dense forests and mountains, which gives it a heavenly feeling. Narmada River is joined by Kapila and Erandi streams that form the Kapil Waterfall. According to scriptures, this is where Sage Kapil lived. He meditated and performed severe austerities here and received divine light. This is where he also wrote his sankhya philosophy. The Kapileshwar Temple is nearby. The surrounding mountains are full of caves where saints have been performing their spiritual practices. On the banks of the Narmada is a famous ashram where pilgrims can worship the footprints of Lord Kapileshwar Shiva and Sage Kapil.

Dudh Dhara

Through a thickly forested area, not far from Kapil Dhara, is a serene and tranquil waterfall. It is relaxing just watching the quiet beauty of the waterfall. The water appears to look like milk as it falls from a height of just ten feet, which is the reason for its name Dudh Dhara.

Mai ki Bagiya

Mai ki Bagiya (the Garden of the Divine Mother) is said to be where Goddess Narmada plucked flowers and played as a child. Bagiya means "orchard" and Mai ki Bagiya is a beautiful natural garden that has a variety of fruit trees, Gulbakavali, roses, and other flowering plants. Mai ki Bagiya is famous for its many varieties of medicinal herbs and plants. There is feeling of complete serenity walking through this orchard's walking trail. Many shrines are situated in this garden as well as a rain-fed kund. It is said to be one of the prettiest places in Amarakantak and is sure to keep all mesmerized.

Sonemuda

Sonemuda, the origin of the Sone River, is a small pond (two square miles) from which water flows into a nallah. The Sone River flows down from the Maikal Mountain in a waterfall that is hundreds of feet long. Tiny granules of gold can be found in this river. The scenic beauty of this place is breathtaking, especially as a sunrise point.

Bhrigukamandal

A highly spiritual place is the Brigukamandal, which is where it is said that Sage Bhrigu meditated. There is an intriguing rock formation here that resembles a pitcher and is oddly filled with water. Apparently the pitcher belongs to Sage Bhrigu. This mysterious rock formation is supposed to be full of water all the time.

Dhuni Pani

Dhuni Pani, situated in the thick forests of Amarakantak, is a natural hot spring. The spring is regarded as a philosopher's stone and it is believed that the water of the spring has an elixir like property that can heal people from diseases.