

# India Sacred Retreat Tour

Rishikesh-Chopta & Tunganath- Kedarnath, India – Sept. 24-Oct. 13, 2009

## TOUR PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT/ TERMS AND CONDITIONS

**RESERVATIONS:** Payments for the India Sacred Retreat Tour (the “Tour”) must be *received* by the dates indicated below:

**Registration and Non-Refundable Deposit Due:** May 1, 2009  
**Payment in Full Due:** June 15, 2009

A \$500.00 non-refundable deposit per person will secure space. The balance is due by June 15, 2009. Tour space is limited, and will be based upon date of participants' registration and deposit.

**RATES:** Tour price is \$6599 including airfare and accommodations. Tour price \$6459 for cash, bank drafts, or money order payments. Group airfare reservations for the 2009 Sacred Retreat Tour are provided by American Airlines Group & Meetings Travel.

**TOUR PRICE INCLUDES:** **Air Transportation:** Round-trip airfare from Chicago to India and return. Each participant is responsible for making his or her own arrangements for transportation to Chicago O’Hare airport from the participant's city of departure. Costs associated with travel to Chicago O’Hare from the participant's city of departure are **not** included in the Tour price and must be paid separately by the participant. **Land transportation:** Bus, taxi, and/or rail transportation within India (based on tour itinerary and not including any non-itinerary travel by participants). **Hotels:** Accommodations in Delhi will be double occupancy in a 5-star hotel. Vitality Matters, LLC (the "Tour Organizer") reserves the right to substitute accommodations. Accommodations in Rishikesh will be double occupancy rooms at Sadhana Mandir ashram, with a shared bath (including western-style toilets and hot showers) for two rooms. In Himalayan mountains, accommodations will be double occupancy rooms in guest houses and tented resorts, with attached bathrooms (western-style toilets). **Meals:** Breakfast, lunch, and dinner with Tour group. All meals are vegetarian. **Gratuities and Taxes:** All gratuities and taxes other than gratuities and taxes for personal services and purchases. **Lectures/Classes/Special Events:** All lectures, classes, kirtan, and special events.

**TOUR PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:** Passports, visas, airline baggage fees (airline fees for any and all baggage) and excess or overweight baggage charges, accident and baggage insurance, lost baggage retrieval, inoculations, any cost increase due to unexpected delays, roadblock, landslides, etc., meals in transit between U.S. gateway airport and arrival in India, laundry services, beverages other than coffee/tea/soda and bottled/filtered water with meals, cover charges, room service charges, expenses for guides or transportation not included in the itinerary, gratuities and taxes for personal services and purchases (including any health or Ayurvedic treatments received at the ashram and/or at the Himalayan Institute Hospital Trust, room service orders in hotel), phone calls (local and/or long distance), internet usage, any other items of a personal nature, private nongroup transfers, and any other items not specifically listed as included, all of which are the responsibility of the participant. Costs associated with travel to Chicago O'Hare airport from the participant's city of departure are not included in the Tour price and must be paid separately by the participant. *All participants are responsible for watching their luggage at all times, and for ensuring that their luggage is loaded on the transportation vehicle.* Tour Organizer is not responsible for luggage or items that are left behind or for cost associated with retrieving any luggage or items that are left behind. Tour Organizer is not responsible for participant who misses his/her airline flight (either to Delhi or return trip to Chicago) due to non-itinerary travel and/or activities, and participant is responsible for all fees or penalties

associated with any missed flights. Missed flight fees may include, and are not limited to: penalties the airlines charges to Tour Organizer for failure to utilize pre-booked tour group seats, non-refundable ticket charges, fees to reschedule and/or book another flight, etc. Tour Organizer is not responsible for missed flights. Tour Organizer is not responsible for participant who misses activities on itinerary due to missed transportation and/or not arriving on time for a scheduled departure.

**ITINERARY:** Changes to the printed itinerary are not anticipated. However, the Tour Organizer reserves the right to make changes that may become necessary (i.e. due to unforeseen circumstances such as landslides, road blocks, bad weather, etc.), with or without advance notice. Changes will not result in a refund or any portion of the Tour price. *NOTE: In the event of any change in rates or exchange, tariffs, fuel surcharges and/or airline taxes or fees, or itinerary, the resulting additional costs, if any, must be paid by the participant before departure or as soon as the change becomes known.*

**CANCELLATIONS/REFUNDS:** All requests for cancellation must be submitted in writing to the Tour Organizer. Regardless of the reason, cancellations result in additional costs and processing time for the Tour Organizer. Accordingly, the following service charges PLUS any hotel, airfare, or other non-refundable costs will be assessed for cancellation:

Before Tuesday July 14, 2009..... 50% of Tour price per person  
After Tuesday July 14, 2009 ..... No refunds

If the participant leaves the Tour prior to its conclusion, refunds will be made only in the amount, if any, recovered from the companies involved in the operation of the Tour. The Tour Organizer is under no obligation to seek any such recovery. No refunds will be made for fewer than four (4) nights absence from the Tour or for any excursion, sightseeing, lectures/classes, kirtan, meal or other activity that the participant misses or decides not to take for any reason. Tour prices are based upon a minimum of ten Participants, and group discounts are included in the price of the Tour. If there are less than ten Participants for the Tour, registrants will be contacted, and if Tour is cancelled by Tour Organizers, full refunds will be given.

**NATURE OF TOUR:** The Tour is a sacred retreat tour to northern India. Accordingly, participants are strongly discouraged from joining the Tour in progress or leaving the Tour prior to its conclusion. Portions of the Tour could be considered rustic and are best approached with a spirit of openness and adventure. Portions of the Tour may be in locations in which there are no telephones or means of rapid evacuation in the event of emergency. Any prospective participant with a pre-existing medical condition is advised to consult with his or her medical specialist prior to reserving space in the Tour and must advise the Tour Organizer in advance in writing or any such medical condition. Smoking is not permitted at any time or in any location while on the tour. There are no exceptions.

**GROUP ORIENTATION:** We will be meeting as a group in Glendale, Wisconsin for a group orientation three months prior to departure. This meeting is required. If you are not able to attend, or if you live in another city, Tour Organizers will e-mail group orientation summary notes for topics covered in the meeting, and it is the participant's responsibility to review these notes and discuss any questions or inquiries in a timely manner with the Tour Organizers. Participants may also choose to send a representative to record the meeting and/or take notes; however, Participant is ultimately responsible for ensuring the accuracy of these notes. Tour Organizers will not be responsible for any missed knowledge or difficulties arising in India, or for Participant's lack of preparation for Tour resulting from failure to attend to group orientation information or failure to read group orientation summary notes. *Tour Organizers will not be responsible for any difficulties or costs due to failure to submit appropriate visa and/or passport application(s) in a timely manner.* Tour Organizers will be

covering a wide range of topics such as safety in India, meals, clothes to pack, accommodations, laundry, changing money, trip itinerary details, tips on bartering and shopping, travel to Chicago airport, overseas flight and security, travel suggestions, weather in India, electricity in India, bathrooms and beds in India, suggested medications to carry, water in India, and plenty more. In addition, we will be passing out India contact information and filling out visa forms at this time (for those who are unfamiliar with the visa application process), so participants will want to bring their passports to the group orientation meeting. These meetings are a good time to bring and ask questions about the Tour. In addition, participants will be meeting other participants, and will have an opportunity to select a roommate, should they wish to do so at that time.

**WHAT TO BRING:** Prepare for hot sunny days and cool nights in Rishikesh. Temperatures range from the 40's to the high 80's. In the mountains, prepare for warm sunny days and colder nights (temperatures range from the 30's to the high 70's). The Tour Organizer recommends that each participant bring writing paper and pens, a flashlight, a calculator, a hat, sunscreen, sunglasses, gloves, a sweater, a raincoat, a warm jacket or coat, socks and sturdy, comfortable shoes for walking/trekking. A daypack is suggested. **A full list of suggested items for the tour will be sent to each participant when they reserve their space.** The airline will allow two suitcases or duffel bags per person and one carry-on bag per person (airline charges will apply for all luggage and each Participant is responsible for paying these charges at the time of or prior to departure). NOTE: Because of heightened security measures, only TSA-approved locks are permitted on luggage (the airline will cut off non TSA-approved locks during security examination of luggage.) Because excess luggage and weight can create extra travel burdens in India, *it is highly recommended that Participants limit their luggage to one checked bag and one carry-on bag per person on the flight to India.* In addition, it is recommended that individuals pack lighter on the trip to India, as participants will want to save extra luggage space to carry home with them any items purchased in India. Airline requirements limit checked luggage to not more than 50 pounds and not more than 62 inches (combined dimensions of length + breadth + height). Carry-on bags are limited to 40 lbs and must fit under the seat or in the overhead compartment (total outside dimensions limited to 45 inches). NOTE: *Due to heightened security measures, all participants are responsible for contacting the airlines prior to departure for ANY and ALL updated travel requirements and restrictions, including luggage limits. Tour Organizer will not be responsible for items left behind or confiscated due to airline restrictions.* Please note that the luggage may be transported within India on tarpaulin-covered roof racks. Weather and loading and unloading can cause more than usual wear and tear to luggage. Accordingly, all luggage should be capable of withstanding rain and rugged treatment.

**FOREIGN CURRENCY:** Unit of currency in India is the Rupee (Rs), which is subdivided into 100 paise (P). USD currency can be changed into Rupee using AUTHORIZED MONEY CHANGERS ONLY (at the airport, most banks, and hotels) and ALWAYS INSIST UPON A RECEIPT for your records, as you will need this receipt in order to have your Rupees converted back to dollars upon departure. *Avoid anyone in the street who offers to change your money at a temptingly high rate of exchange, as this is illegal.* The Tour Organizer recommends that Participants bring a small hand calculator to India in order to calculate exchange rates at shops. Participants can exchange currency at most hotels in the major cities and in the international airports. Major credit cards are accepted at the city hotels. You can bring in any amount of foreign currency, travelers checks, etc., and take out as much as you brought in. However, if you are carrying more than USD \$2500, you will need to declare it upon arrival, on the Currency Declaration Form (CDF), to be attested by the Customs Officer. (Foreign currency regulations are subject to change.) *No Indian currency may be brought into or taken out of the country.* CREDIT CARDS: American Express, Masters Charge Visa and Diners Club Credit Cards are generally accepted by larger establishments, including hotels and shops.

**PASSPORT AND VISA:** Participants will need a valid passport and visa to enter India. For passport application and information: visit U.S. Dept of State. Selected US Postal Service (USPS) offices have passport acceptance officers for passport applications. Participants must obtain visas from their local India Consulate offices (for Chicago and other consulates, India Visas are now being handled by the India Visa Center at: <https://indiavisa.travisaoutsourcing.com>). The Tourist Visa (six month) is recommended for all Sacred Retreat Tour participants. Each participant is responsible for obtaining these necessary documents prior to departure (Tour Organizers will also be reviewing the visa application process at the Group Orientation meeting and advising Participants to submit their applications immediately). *Because of extensive government delays in processing passports and visas, Participants are encouraged to obtain their passports and visas well in advance. Tour Organizers will not be responsible for passport delays or failure to obtain visas or passports in a timely manner, regardless of reasons for delays.* Passport must have a minimum validity of six months from the date of application with at least two blank visa pages (last two amendment pages are not acceptable). Passports need to be obtained prior to applying for the Indian visa. Visas can be purchased up to six months prior to the dates of travel. Participants are advised to have valid passports by the group orientation meeting date and to obtain their Indian visas prior to Monday, July 13, 2009.

**VACCINATIONS AND INOCULATIONS:** Contact the Center for Disease Control and Prevention for information on Travel Health, vaccinations and inoculations. While there are no required vaccinations and inoculations at this time for travel to India, it is recommended that all participants consult with their physicians 4-6 weeks prior to departure for advice on vaccinations and inoculations. For further information, contact the Center for Disease Control and Prevention at 1-800-232-4636.

**TRAVEL INSURANCE:** Participants are advised to consider purchasing travel insurance for their trip to cover any unexpected loss, accident, illness, death, or other unforeseen emergency. Tour Organizer or Vitality Matters, LLC does NOT provide any insurance for its participants. The Tour Organizers will take utmost care to ensure the safety of all participants. However, in the case of any unforeseen event, Tour Organizer cannot be liable for any illness, loss or injury, or for loss of life. All disputes rising due to the above are subject to the jurisdiction of the courts in Milwaukee, Wisconsin only. Participants may wish to visit [www.insuremytrip.com](http://www.insuremytrip.com), a non-profit informational website on travel insurance, or to consult their insurance agency for the appropriate insurance.

**LANGUAGE:** All tour lectures and other presentations will be in English. English is the official language of India, though it is less pervasive in the more rural regions of northern India. There will be an English-speaking guide accompanying the Tour on excursions for any needed language assistance.

**ELECTRICITY AND BATTERIES:** Small electrical appliances (razor, hair dryer, travel iron, etc.) require a 220-volt line adapter. Note: It is highly recommended that you plug your appliance and adapter *into a voltage regulator first* before plugging it into the wall in India. The currents in India are highly variable and can destroy your adapter and appliances. Battery-powered cassette players for use with earphones are recommended (bring extra batteries). Note: Many airlines have regulations against carrying batteries on board aircraft. It is recommended that all batteries be packed with checked luggage.

**PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEOTAPE:** The Tour Organizers will be photographing the Tour. The Tour Organizer reserves the right to use any photographs in its advertising, displays, publicity materials, and publications without obtaining further consent from any Participant. Each participant releases the Tour Organizer and its representatives from any liability in connection with any such use of such photographs.