

# **Long Term Residential Stays**

## **Skills and Lifestyle**

You may stay for a maximum of one month on a Skills & Lifestyle stay. This involves daily attendance in Karma Yoga, morning cleaning and after meal clean up as well as participation in yoga classes and programs. For stays longer than a month, you will be required to apply to be a participant in one of our residential courses as outlined below.

## **Long Term Residential Stays**

In order to make the most out of your stay at Mangrove Yoga Ashram we have now introduced four options for those wanting to experience a longer period at the ashram. You may participate in; the Ashram Life Style (ALS) program, full time Karma Yoga, the Teaching Internship or a Department Sevak.

Experiencing and participating in life at Mangrove is an opportunity for self-discovery and self-development. Living a focused life with the consistent practice of yoga and meditation enhances the ability to become “present” in every activity. When the body and mind are relaxed, a greater clarity and fuller expression of life is experienced. The ashram’s daily activity encourages, facilitates and supports personal and spiritual growth.

### **Option One: Ashram Life Satra**

The first option is to participate in our ongoing yogic lifestyle Ashram Life Style program. The Ashram Life Style offers a one to twelve month residential retreat where you will have an opportunity to live, study and work within the ashram structure. The ashram is committed to a lifestyle of self-study (in order to understanding the Self), Karma Yoga (working with awareness and non-attachment) and sangha (coming together with like minded people on a spiritual journey). All students of the Satyananda Yoga Teaching Diploma who choose the residential study option at Mangrove will be required to participate in this program. Submission of an Ashram Life Style application form is required.

### **Option Two: Teaching Internship**

For teachers and trainee teachers the Teaching Internship provides the opportunity to teach on ashram classes and programs while participating in full time karma yoga. All YS4 students of the Satyananda Yoga Training Diploma who choose the residential study option at Mangrove are required to participate in this program. Submission of an Ashram Life Style application form is required.

### **Option Three: Department Sevak**

This allows people who *are familiar with ashram routine* and who possess skills in a certain area to step in at a higher level of commitment. Sevaks are chosen primarily on their ability to self manage within the ashram environment and secondly according to the skill they may bring to the role.

### **Prerequisites**

A current Health Certificate obtained from your Doctor.

Some prior experience or understanding of the structured and disciplined ashram lifestyle is definitely beneficial for integration into the community.

## **Yogic Lifestyle**

Mangrove Yoga Ashram is located in quiet country bush land 1 ½ hours from Sydney or 40 minutes from Gosford. Mangrove was originally established as an ashram in keeping with the ancient Indian tradition. It was designed to provide the means to evolve and grow within a yogic culture and discipline and over the past 25 years has offered yoga retreats along with sannyasa and ashram training. Whilst the focus of the ashram has now broadened to encompass both everyday and long term yoga programs, Mangrove is still a place where one can come to explore their strengths and weaknesses, ambitions and needs and to learn acceptance of the Self.

A yogic lifestyle helps to develop awareness and balance at all levels of our being. Developing the art of awareness begins with noticing how we perform simple everyday actions and interactions that can highlight our difficulties in life. By learning to integrate head, heart and hand through different yoga practices, we develop the ability to live in harmony with others and ourselves.

Day to day life at the ashram is designed to assist you in experiencing yoga as a lifestyle. While living at Mangrove, you will have the opportunity to experience different types of yoga and to participate in the work of the ashram. Full participation in the structured lifestyle is the required commitment to derive the most benefit from the yogic lifestyle.

## **Karma Yoga**

Karma Yoga is an essential component of a yogic lifestyle. Karma yoga is action performed with awareness, without attachment to the result. It can be described as meditation in action. Karma yoga is a process of self-exploration. It provides an opportunity to watch thoughts and reactions. Slowly, over time, the practice can transform the mind and emotions. It assists in the development of an attitude of detachment which allows one to become less affected by the response of others and the outcome of events. It also helps one move away from likes and dislikes and to focus the mind on the task at hand.

Further discussions on karma yoga will be included in the program.

At Mangrove, karma yoga involves everyone contributing to the daily activities of cleaning, food preparation, gardening, maintenance, administration, building etc. The supervisor of the area / department you are allocated to will assign you tasks for this time and you will be responsible to that person.

As a department sevak your karma yoga will be focussed mainly within one department. However part of the ashram experience is likely to include you becoming involved in activities in which you have no experience or which you may not particularly like. From a yogic point of view this helps one to overcome the pull of like and dislike or repulsion and attraction. These tasks are likely to challenge you and give you the potential to develop new skills. The aim is to provide a balanced lifestyle while enabling you to experience, and learn from the ashram life and the community at Mangrove.

## **Activities**

One hour each morning is dedicated to cleaning the ashram facilities and grounds. Half an hour each day is spent in assisting in the cleanup of the kitchen after either lunch or dinner.

For much of their stay participants spend time working in a number of the following departments; kitchen, housekeeping, office, building & maintenance, gardening and outdoor work.

An important part of ashram life at Mangrove is the structured component that is required of all participants. Regular attendance is expected and provides an important part of your growth and integration over the program. This includes;

- morning and afternoon yoga/ pranayama / meditation classes (own practice in your room is also an option)
- chanting
- midday Yoga Nidra class
- evening programs

An example of the **Daily program** is outlined below.

5.00am	<b>WAKE UP with the singing alarm clock</b>
5.30am	<b>Yoga Class (can also do personal practice in own room)</b>
7.00am	<b>Breakfast</b>
7.45am	<b>Chanting</b> (optional)
8.00am	<b>Cleaning Karma Yoga</b>
9.00am	<b>Department Karma Yoga</b>
11am	<b>Morning tea</b> (formal break only when programs are running)
12.30pm	<b>Lunch</b> <Lunch cleanup 1.00-1.30pm>
1.30pm	<b>Department Karma Yoga</b>
2.30pm	<b>Yoga Nidra</b>
3.00pm	<b>Afternoon Tea</b>
5.15pm	<b>Yoga or Meditation Class</b> <On nominated days>
5.30pm	<b>Mahamrityunjaya Healing Mantra</b> <Only Saturdays>
6.00pm	<b>Dinner</b> <Dinner cleanup 1.00-1.30pm>
7.15pm	<b>Evening Program</b>
8.15pm	<b>Mauna</b> (silence)
- 7.30am	

## Daily Booklet

As part of your time here, you will complete a daily booklet. This booklet becomes an integral part of your daily routine at the centre. It will enable you to develop awareness of your strengths and weakness and give deep insights into your nature. This diary will map your participation in yoga practices, karma yoga and yogic lifestyle. As your department supervisor is responsible for you during your stay they may ask to see your booklet to follow your progress and integration into the ashram routine.

## Quiet Time - Mauna

Mauna or silence is practiced every night from the end of the evening program until 7:30am (after breakfast) the following morning. To practice mauna means to refrain from communication with others. This practice is very powerful and provides conditions conducive for meditation and study, as well as self-observation and reflection.

Mauna will also be practiced one day a week throughout all meals and tea breaks. It is important when living in a large community that this quiet time is respected as it allows everyone in the environment to relax and recharge. It is fine to quietly talk if an urgent matter arises.

## Curfew

One of the important principles of the ashram is keeping regular patterns in both work and rest. As the first activity of the day starts at 5.30am, course participants are expected to return to their room by 9pm.

## Time off

Changing from a busy daily routine to a yogic lifestyle requires time and adjustments. To help with this process, it is encouraged that you spend as much time as possible at the ashram during your stay and utilise your time here productively. To minimise distractions and dissipation of energy, it is *suggested* that participants remain at the ashram for the first **3 months of the program**. This will give you the opportunity to adapt quickly to the environment, so you derive maximum benefit from your stay. Basic shopping can be done via our weekly shopper.

In emergencies, transport can be provided.

## Accommodation

Accommodation is in simple rooms with single beds. There is little personal space or privacy. As part of ashram discipline, your room may be inspected at intervals, without notice, during your stay. Long term residents and department sevaks are accommodated in their own rooms. If a partner comes to visit they can share the sevak's room. Please note that at times of high occupancy, during large programs, you may be asked to share your room with other residents or guests for that period.

It is possible to bring your own vehicle to the ashram, however be aware that there is *no undercover parking* available and your vehicle would be idle during your time here. Public transport is available from Gosford railway station.

## **Dress Code**

The opportunity to study yoga in an ashram environment is a rare one. One of the key principles in ashram life is to cultivate simplicity in living and this principle is carried forward into the way we dress at the ashram. Residents are requested to respect the fact that they are learning within a special environment and are required to dress in clean and modest clothes, and to limit the use of jewellery, make up, perfumes and aftershaves. Revealing and tight clothing are not appropriate and men are required to wear a shirt at all times. Many residents or visitors to the ashram wear either white, yellow or geru clothing, representing a particular kind of initiation they have taken. In addition to being the colour of an aspirant who has taken a mantra initiation.

## **Conduct**

Mangrove Yoga Ashram is committed to providing an environment which is conducive to spiritual life for residents, course participants, visitors and staff. Therefore, it is expected that all people be respectful to each other, and to the property of the ashram. This conduct will help create an environment which is safe, minimises distractions and is supportive for inner work. It includes modesty and respect for others through awareness of behaviour and actions.

For the first 6 months of ashram stay it is advised that any residents focuses on developing their own inner connection, rather than on forming new relationships. This includes close friendships and in particular sexual relationships are to be avoided during this period.

## **Accompanying Children**

Children are most welcome to stay at the ashram.

Due to the different issues to manage and assess around children, your application needs to be received at least 2 months before your intended arrival time. An interview with you and your children will be required as well as the six week trial at the ashram after which the acceptance or non-acceptance of your application will be decided.

You and your children's stay may require special arrangements for accommodation, food, fees, attendance, schooling, transport to school and homework. These needs may or may not be able to be met. It is therefore necessary for everyone involved to properly assess and decide if an ashram stay is appropriate or possible. If your children's application to stay is approved it is important for everyone to be clear of the arrangements that have been made.

Parents must agree to take full responsibility for their children, their children's activities and supervision of their children at all times. The Ashram takes no responsibility or supervising roles for children who are accompanying their parents.

## **Food**

We serve three vegetarian meals per day as well as fruit and tea for morning and afternoon. Discuss any special food requirements outside of the regular ashram before coming to stay, to establish what food is provided and what supplements you may need to bring with you.

## **Smoking**

Smoking is only permitted outside of ashram grounds in designated areas.

Alcohol and illegal drugs are strictly prohibited.

## **What to bring**

Personal toiletries, bedding (including sheets, pillow, pillow case, doonas, light blanket for meditation and yoga classes), towel, work clothes, slip on and covered shoes, torch (essential), mosquito repellent, pen and notebook, comfortable clothing suitable for the time of the year, sunhat, sunscreen, water bottle, waterproof coat, umbrella, alarm clock and any personal medical or health items.

As you will be sharing a room and sometimes may need to shift rooms regularly, luggage is strictly to be kept to a maximum of 2 bags, plus bedding. Please note there are no storage facilities available for personal belongings at the ashram.

Pets, stereos, TVs, furniture are not permitted. MP3/CD players with earphones are permitted.

## **Email and Phone Calls**

Facilities are available at the ashram, however this outside communication is expected to be kept to the necessary minimum and conditions apply.

## **Self Responsibility**

Whilst staying at the ashram you are responsible for your own and your children's health and personal needs including clothing, medical expenses, toiletries, additional food and personal transport.

## **Ashram property**

Everything at the ashram, except your personal belongings remains the property of the ashram and must be respected and cared for properly. Without permission, personal use of ashram property is not considered appropriate behaviour.

## **Participating in Other Courses**

If you wish to participate in courses being run at Mangrove you will need to arrange this through your department supervisor and apply for leave to attend the course. Regular course fees may apply depending on the specific course. If you intend on enrolling in Yogic Studies then special arrangements are required. Please advise, as soon as possible, if you intend on undertaking the Yogic Studies Diploma.