

AGAMA YOGA
Dharamsala, India
2008 Season



Frequently Asked Questions

What are the course dates?

7 April – 3 May	First Month Intensive Course
5 – 31 May	First and second month courses
2 – 6 June	Special workshop to be announced
9 June – 5 July	First, second, and (pending sufficient registration) third month courses
7 – 25 July	Open classes and short seminars

What are the days and times?

The course runs from Monday through Saturday, except when noted. Generally, Sunday is reserved for personal time. The daily program is approximately five hours in length and the schedule includes:

09:00 – 11:00	Morning lecture and asana practice
16:00 – 18:00	Sun salutations and afternoon practice
18:15 – 19:30	Evening lecture

Free special events will be announced separately and include gatherings such as the anahata/heart chakra meditations, kirtan/bhajans (devotional singing), and thematic movies.

What is the cost?

The course tuition is Rs 300 (€5.40) per day if a six day consecutive cycle is pre-paid (Rs 1,800, or €32.43, for six consecutive days). If the course is paid on a daily drop-in basis, the daily tuition is Rs 350 (€6.30).

Reflecting that our space is limited to approximately 20 students and our overhead expenses are higher in Dharamsala/Bagsu than in our other Asian locations, we hope you can appreciate the value of the course experience compared to the modest tuition. There are no discounts offered for half-day attendance.

Space permitting, students may repeat for free the days they have already completed in the Dharamsala location or at any other Agama branch. We ask that students in this special circumstance also participate in our Karma Yoga efforts.

Where is the center?

The Yoga hall is located in Bagsu, the scenic village directly above McLeod Ganj, the residency of the Dalai Lama. This entire area is often simply referred to as Dharamsala, although technically Dharamsala is the city below McLeod Ganj.

How do I get there?

From Delhi: There are two main options. By train, you must travel to Pathankot (12 hours, come off at the station just after Mukerian or at Chakki Bank or at Pathankot if the station is open). From here, you can take a taxi (approximately Rs 1,100 total - €19.80 - which can be shared, three hours) to Bagsu/McLeod Ganj or a public bus, which takes about five hours and stops in McLeod Ganj (approximately Rs 75 or €1.35).

By road, there is a night bus from Delhi (Rs 500/€9) that will also take you as far as McLeod Ganj. The bus departs from Pahar Ganj/main bazaar, Delhi, around 17:00, arrives by approximately 08:00, and is usually a fascinating blend of Western seekers and Tibetan monks and nuns. Finally, Air Deccan (www.airdeccan.com) has introduced a daily flight from Delhi to Pathankot (one hour, approximately Rs 1,500/€27 minimum) and an additional connecting flight to Dharamsala.

From McLeod Ganj: You can take a picturesque 2 km walk on Bagsu Road which will lead you directly to the main Bagsu taxi stand. Or you can enjoy a quick auto rickshaw ride which costs Rs 30 (€.54) and can be shared. Upon reaching Bagsu, follow the directions below.

From the Bagsu taxi stand: Walk to the intersection where the road to the temple/pool meets Bagsu-nag Road, the street that houses the major guesthouses and shops. Take Bagsu-nag Road up the big hill, passing Meghavan Hotel, Pink White Hotel, the many German bakeries, and Buddha Hall, until you come to the end at the general store/Log-In Internet shop on the right. From here, veer left toward Dharamkot (don't mistake this with the road to Upper Bagsu which is on the right side). Cross the stream and follow the pathway past Unity Pizza and continue up the stairs until you reach Sapna Guesthouse. You will find the Agama Yoga hall to the right of the guesthouse.

Where can I stay?

There are countless comfortable and affordable guesthouses within walking distance of the yoga hall. Prices range from Rs 100-250 (€1.80-4.50), depending on the number of amenities such as private bathroom or access to a kitchen. Most guesthouses are small and family-run, and thus it is difficult to make advance reservations. We suggest you take a look around Bagsu once you arrive. Some accommodation recommendations include Omni and Sapna Guesthouses (+91 [0] 1892221594), Arudhya Guesthouse (+91 [0] 9418427440), and Lotus Guesthouse (+91 [0] 9816168957). There is also higher-end accommodation available closer to the Bagsu taxi stand.

How does the course work and what is the curriculum?

The First Month Course runs in a cycle of 24 modules offered over a four week period. You may begin at any time (thus we call this a “drop-in” course), and after completing all 24

modules, you will be awarded a Yoga certificate of achievement recognized by the International Yoga Federation.

The course is a step-by-step approach to Yoga, in the oral traditions of India and Tibet. The material and exercises build from the foundations of Yoga and develop into stronger and more complex techniques and theory. The monthly schedule highlights include:

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presentation of Yoga fundamentals • <i>chakras</i> • <i>asanas</i> • <i>kriyas</i> • 8 stages of Yoga • polarity of energy • subtle bodies • music meditation • <i>yamas</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>bandha</i> • <i>asanas</i> • <i>yamas</i> • sublimation in Yoga • <i>ayurvedic</i> principles • mental concentration • sexual continence • yogic healing • dominant <i>chakra</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>asanas</i> • <i>niyamas</i> • advanced purification techniques • special issues for men and women • Karma Yoga • diet and health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>asanas</i> • <i>niyamas</i> • <i>Yoga Nidra</i> / conscious sleep and dreams • <i>Laya Yoga</i> meditation initiation • yin/yang macrobiotic diet • final ceremony

Please refer to www.agamayoga.com for further information.

The Month 2 and 3 courses both meet three times per week. These series goes deeper into tantric yogic theory and practice.

Who are the teachers?

The Dharamsala branch of Agama was founded by senior teachers Monika, from India/USA, and Manu from Belgium. Both Monika and Manu have completed 42 months of study under Swami Vivekananda and have been teaching at the Agama headquarters in Thailand for four years. Manu managed the first two programs of the Agama Teacher Training Course and is also a certified Sivananda Yoga teacher. Monika has led the Agama Shakti Group (special tantric teachings for women) and has developed a unique blend of Yoga and belly dance that she has taught throughout Asia and Europe.

What is the area of Bagsu/McLeod Ganj/Dharamsala like?

This area has been blessed by the strong and omnipresent spiritual practice of the Tibetan community and the subsequent seekers who have flocked here for their personal evolution. There is also a unique blend of Tibetan and Indian traditions which mirrors the spiritual foundation of the Agama Yoga school.

A quaint Himalayan village reminiscent of Nepal, Bagsu is developed enough for the comforts of the modern backpacker while having the full benefits of a natural sanctuary. At 2,000 meters in altitude, the area is home to fresh mountain air, majestic views, and lots of rainbows! You can easily retreat into nature, or you can follow your desires to some of the best and most affordable international food in India.

Other advantages of the area include a free library run by the Tibetans, a Goenka Vipassana center, and countless courses in Buddhism, Ayurveda, dance, music, and alternative healing. Also, the Dalai Lama offers free teachings throughout the year in McLeod Ganj (www.dalailama.com) and the Karmapa has weekly open audiences at a nearby monastery.

The high season is mid-March to the beginning of July when the weather is at its best. The days are sunny and pleasant while the nights are crisp. The rainy season is mid-July to the beginning of September, and the winter is extremely cold and lasts from December-February. Generally, as a hill station in Himachal Pradesh, the weather is much cooler than in other parts of India and warm clothes and rain gear are necessary and easily purchased locally.

There are ATM machines in McLeod Ganj and Dharamsala (State Bank of India) and it is convenient to exchange Western currency and travelers' checks. All the expected amenities including Internet, travel agencies, and good medical help are available. There are even several movie houses in McLeod Ganj!

Most importantly, the general consensus remains that this area is an extremely special place for spiritual transformation and it continues to inspire people to return year after year.

What if I need more information?

Please refer to www.agamayoga.com or e-mail dharamsala@agamayoga.com for a personal response.