

June 9, 2017

Sai Ram Dear Pilgrimage Attendee,

Count down has begun for our Spiritual Homecoming! We are looking forward to being at Prasanthi Nilayam for the National Pilgrimage.

This email contains lots of detailed information about the pilgrimage. ***Please forward this email to other adult members of your group.***

### **PILGRIMAGE DATES**

July 6th thru July 10th, 2017

The full group must be together for the entire time, beginning with morning Darshan on July 6th till evening Darshan on July 10th. A Welcome/Orientation meeting is planned for July 5<sup>th</sup> at 8pm.

### **ARRIVAL AND ACCOMMODATION**

Please plan to arrive Prasanthi Nilayam by July 5<sup>th</sup> evening. For your safety, we do not recommend travel from Bangalore Airport to Prasanthi Nilayam (and back) in the dark. A list of available Taxi Services is provided. The average cost of taxi from Bangalore airport to the ashram is in the range of Rs. 1800 – Rs. 2400.

If you are planning to stay in the ashram, you must enter ashram premises by 6:30 pm. Ashram gates are closed between 9:00 pm and 6:00 am. Accommodation office is closed between 7:30 pm and 6:30 am. Per night room rate is about Rs. 250.

If your family has outside accommodations, you can stay outside the ashram, provided you will be in the ashram and with the group for all group activities during the day.

Upon arrival, please report at the Online Booking, Check-in Counter at the Accommodation Office (next to the N-9 block, behind North Indian Canteen). View map [here](#). The office is open from 6.30.a.m. IST to 7.30.p.m IST.

Families will be accommodated in a room. Those traveling alone will be accommodated with other devotees from the USA based on gender. If you are a room donor, then you will have your own room. You do not need to make advance reservations for rooms inside the ashram. The pilgrimage planning team will block rooms and the accommodation office will have a pilgrimage attendee list.

You will need your

- Passport and
- Indian Visa or Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) card or Person of Indian Origin (PIO) card

Non-Indian Passport Holders without OCI / PIO cards will need to submit attached Form C plus two passport size pictures. Please bring these items with you.

We are unable to make arrangements for you to enter the ashram and get accommodation once the ashram gate/accommodation office is closed.

### **CHECK-IN**

After receiving your accommodation and settling down in your room, please check-in with the Pilgrimage Registration/Help Desk at N7 building. The registration desk will be open from July 5<sup>th</sup>. All pilgrimage attendees whether they are staying inside the ashram or outside must check-in with us. During check-in, you will receive

- 1) Your Badge (needed for group seating)
- 2) Sarees for women older than 16

Remember to bring USA scarf for each member of your family. There is just one desk for all attendees.

### **DRESS CODE**

**Men/Boys:** Long white trousers and white collared shirt. No sleeveless vests or shorts. Please bring your own clothing.

**Girls up to 16 years:** White Salwar suits with a white shawl (dupatta). Please bring your own clothing.

**Ladies 16+ years:** Uniform saris will be provided during check-in at the Ashram. There are two Sarees in each set. Petticoats (underskirts) and Blouses are not included. Please bring appropriate color blouses and petticoats to go with your sarees.

### **DAILY DARSHAN & GROUP SEATING**

Since unity and discipline are really our greatest offerings to Swami, participation of the entire group in morning and afternoon darshans cannot be emphasized enough. The entire Sai Kulwant Hall area and Mandir (temple), is charged with Swami's vibrations and presence, and His Mahasamadhi infuses us with Divine energy. Therefore, we must make every effort to enter this holiest of shrines as many times as we are blessed to do so.

Special seating will be provided by the ashram authorities for our group during each darshan. It is therefore imperative that our group members gather for each darshan in a timely manner at the location provided and jointly proceed for darshan. Unfilled seating or inconsistent attendance will likely result in fewer special arrangements for our group.

### **GRAMA SEVA**

We have been given the opportunity to serve 12 villages around Puttaparthi (i.e. 'Grama Seva'), on July 10th. Please note that SSE Groups 1-3 children will be not able to take part in this service. Group 4 children can participate. Children and SSE volunteers will go for Darshan and take part in alternate activities around the ashram. Grama Seva volunteers will not attend the morning Darshan in Sai Kulwant Hall on this day and will instead gather at 8:30 am at a location to be announced. Starting at 4:00 am, at a location to be announced, volunteers will also participate in the preparation and packaging of food and supplies to be distributed during Grama Seva.

### **DAILY SCHEDULE - ADULTS (TENTATIVE, SUBJECT TO CHANGE)**

**July 5<sup>th</sup>**

<b>Timings</b>	<b>Description of Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>
8:30 am to 7:30 pm	Arrival and Check-in	N7 (North 7) Building
8:00 pm to 9:00 pm	Welcome / Orientation Meeting	TBD

## July 6<sup>th</sup> thru July 9<sup>th</sup>

Timings	Description of Activity	Location
7:00 am	Line Up for Morning Darshan	Outside N7 (North 7) Building
10:30 am to 12:30 pm	Music Program Practice or Speaker session	TBD
12:30 pm to 3:30 pm	Lunch, Rest, and Reflect	
4:00 pm	Line Up for Evening Darshan	Outside N7 (North 7) Building
6 pm to 7:30 pm	Dinner	
7:30 pm to 9:00 pm	Music Program Practice	TBD
9:30 pm	Lights Off	

## July 10<sup>th</sup> – Grama Seva & Music Program Offering

Timings	Description of Activity	Location
4:00 am – 7:00 am	Prepare Food Packets	TBD
8:30 am	Leave for Grama Seva	
8:30 am – 3:00 pm	Grama Seva	
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Freshen Up	
4:00 pm	Line Up for Evening Darshan	Outside N7 (North 7) Building
5:00 pm	Music Offering by the USA Pilgrimage Attendees	Sai Kulwant Hall
8:00 pm	Reflection Meeting	TBD

### SSE PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Please see this [link](#).

### COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE ASHRAM

Location and timings can change often and quickly. To stay up to date, please check the notice board outside of building N7 at least 2 times each day. We will not be emailing within the ashram.

### WEATHER IN PRASANTHI NILAYAM

Please expect the days to be hot with sudden, heavy rains. Average highs of 33 degrees Celsius or 90 degrees Fahrenheit. **Staying hydrated will be key for good health.** Bottled water is available for purchase inside the ashram.

## **WHAT TO BRING**

The accommodation includes one room with 2 cots, 2 mattresses, and 2 pillows with an attached bath. Additional mattresses might be available in the accommodation office. Please bring your own linens, blankets. Rooms do not have AC and bathrooms do not come with tissue/toiletries. The ashram has only a few rooms with hot water geysers and those might be reserved for donor rooms.

Each building has a couple of designated individuals who provide laundry service. Generally, they wash the clothes and bring them back the next day. You can also opt to wash your own clothes. There are clothes lines available outside the room for drying them.

## **SUGGESTED PACKING LIST**

### *Personal Toiletries:*

Bath towel/wash cloth  
Shampoo/conditioner  
Soap and Lotions  
Sunscreen  
Toothbrush and toothpaste  
Room Slippers  
Clothes detergent

### *General Items:*

Comfortable Clothing and Shoes  
Contact lens case/solution  
Sneakers for outdoor grama seva  
Mosquito repellent  
Other essential personal Items  
Personal medications  
Umbrella/Rain Ponchos  
Hand Fan  
Combination Lock  
Printed Song Lyrics (attached to this email)  
Hand Sanitizer (Needed during Grama Seva)

### *SSE Items*

Water Bottle  
Comfortable shoes for outdoor activities  
Sun Hat  
Sun Block  
Books and Other Games

## **GETTING HELP WITHIN THE ASHRAM**

For Medical Help: Please go to the International Medical Camp between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. in N4 (North 4). For after hours, please go to the emergency room of the Sathya Sai General Hospital.

For Operations Help: If things are not working in the room, please go to the operations desk located in the N7 building.

For additional Ashram information - <http://www.srisathyasai.org.in/Pages/AshramInfo/Ashram.htm>

## **ATTACHMENTS**

This letter in PDF

Music Program Song Lyrics (print and bring a copy)  
Form C  
Taxi Information & Rates

Please let us know if you have any questions.

In Sai's Service,  
Pilgrimage Planning Team