



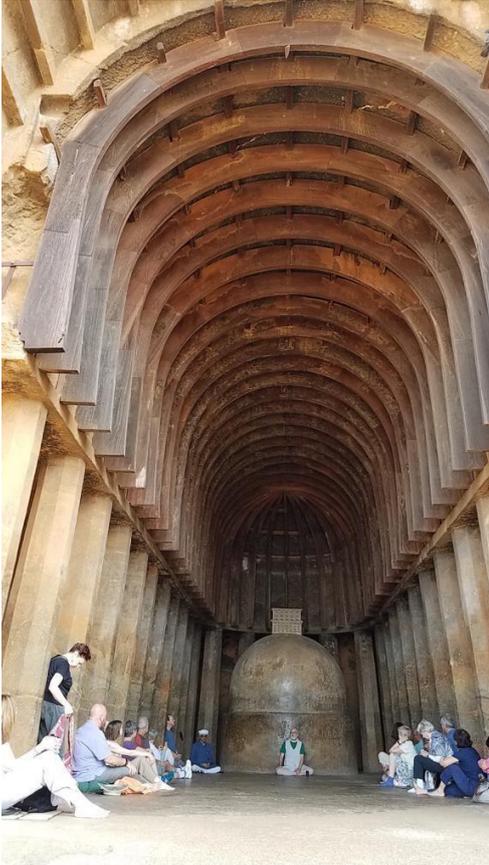
Buddhath/Eleven Directions

The Ancient Buddhist Monasteries of India

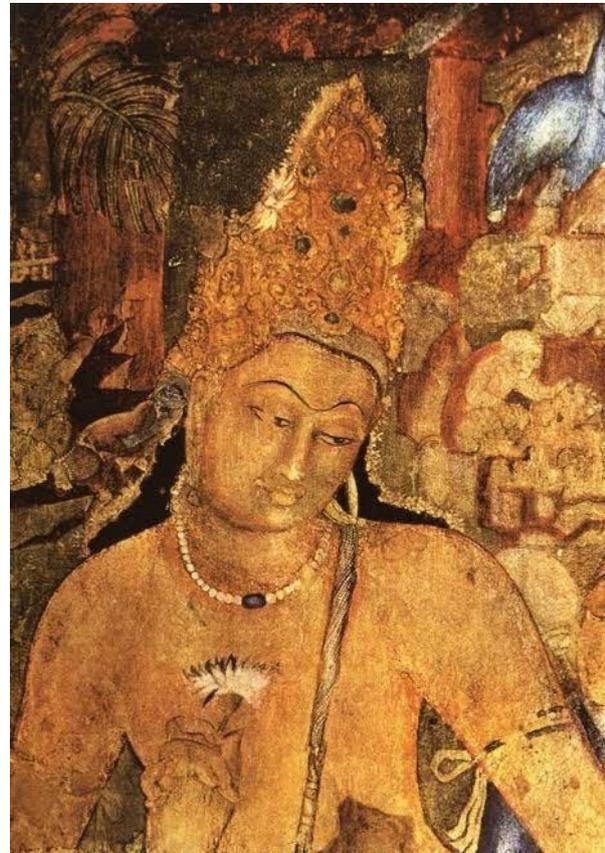
A Buddhath/Bodhi College Pilgrimage

with Martine and Stephen Batchelor, Christof Köck, Shantum Seth and Akincano Weber

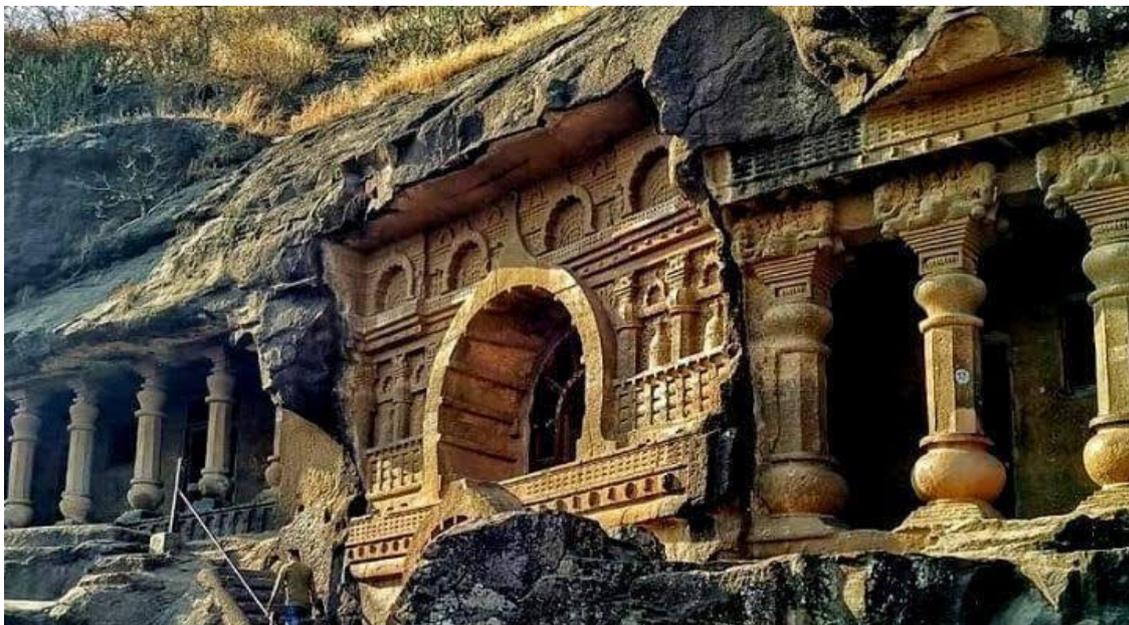
18 January — February 1, 2024



Stephen Batchelor teaching in the Bhaja Caves



Ajanta Painting



30 Ajanta Caves



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This two-week pilgrimage will take us to some of the few surviving Indian sites where Buddhism flourished on its home soil from the 3rd Century BCE. The journey will focus primarily on rock-cut temples, some of which are still in excellent condition, which are found between Mumbai (Kanheri) and Aurangabad (Ajanta and Ellora). We will finish the journey at Sanchi, the world-renowned stupa and stone gateways that go back to the time of Asoka, near the city of Bhopal. The journey will let us experience for ourselves these ancient structures, still largely found in beautiful rural landscapes, where for hundreds of years communities studied and practiced the dharma as preserved in the early canons of Buddhism. Exposure to more than a dozen such sites will grant us a vivid, physical sense of where the dharma was first practiced in India.

While these temples and monasteries have not served as places of learning and devotion for more than a thousand years, we will symbolically restore them to their original purpose with periods of meditation, the study of early Buddhist texts, talks and discussion. Since some of the sites were active for several hundred years, we will witness the evolution of Indian Buddhism from its earliest aniconic simplicity to the profusion of Buddhas and bodhisattvas, characteristic of the rich iconography of the Mahayana.

The pilgrimage will also include meetings with members of the largest Buddhist community in India today, the followers of Ambedkarite Buddhism. Primarily a social and political movement, it now includes millions of Dalits (former untouchables), who over the past sixty-five years have become Buddhists in order to escape the injustices of the Hindu caste system. We will visit Chaitya Bhoomi, the cremation place of Dr Ambedkar, the founder of the movement, who converted to Buddhism and died in 1956. Nearly 90% of all Buddhists in India today belong to Dr Ambedkar's "Navayana" (new vehicle), an inspiring historical example of a secular dharma that focuses on responding to the immediate sufferings of this world.

By travelling to locations that are off the Western tourist map, as well as the principal Buddhist pilgrimage routes, we will be able to enjoy these extraordinary sites in relative tranquility. However, it also means that we will not have access to low-cost tourist or pilgrimage infrastructures, such as are found at Bodh Gaya and elsewhere. To ensure the personal safety and good health of each one of us, we will cover the entire journey in an air-conditioned bus and lodge mainly at well-appointed hotels. The pilgrimage is therefore suitable for people of all ages.

A Brief description:

A two-week pilgrimage with Bodhi College teachers and Shantum Seth to the surviving rock cut Buddhist temples and monasteries of India. We will visit more than a dozen ancient sites, including Karla, Ajanta and Sanchi, offering meditation and teachings at each place.

There is an optional add-on:

A 3-day Delhi-Agra Sightseeing tour: New Delhi, the capital of India, is a fusion of the ancient and the modern. Delhi is a rich tapestry of culture, architecture and human diversity. It is steeped in history, monuments, museums, galleries, gardens and exotic shows. **Visit the main sites of worship in Old Delhi for Islam, Jainism and Sikhism.** Agra was the capital of the great Mughals. Emperor Akbar, was the main architect of the *Agra Fort*. His grandson Shah Jahan built the beautiful monument to love, the Taj Mahal, as a mausoleum for his beloved wife Mumtaz Mahal. Both these monuments are UNESCO World Heritage sites.



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TEACHER BIOGRAPHIES



Stephen Batchelor was born in Scotland and educated in Buddhist monasteries in India, Switzerland and Korea. In 1972, at the age of nineteen, he settled in Dharamsala, and in 1974 he ordained as a Buddhist monk in the Tibetan tradition and later traveled to Korea where he practiced as a Zen monk. Batchelor disrobed in 1985, when he moved to Devon, England to live and teach at the Sharpham Community and Gaia House. Stephen Batchelor has synthesized a distinctively Western Teaching style, drawing from multiple Buddhist traditions. He currently lives in south-west France and is on the faculty of Bodhi College.

His books include: *The Art of Solitude*, *Secular Buddhism*, *Buddhism Without Beliefs*, *The Faith to Doubt*, *After Buddhism*, *The Awakening of the West*, *Verses from the Center*, *Living with the Devil*, *Confession of a Buddhist Atheist* and *The Tibet Guide*.



Martine Batchelor was born in France and trained as a Zen nun in South Korea for ten years with her teacher Kusan Sunim. She disrobed in 1985 and returned to Europe with her husband Stephen, where she also lived and worked at Sharpham and Gaia House. Martine is the translator of Kusan Sunim's *The Way of Korean Zen*, and the author of *Meditation for Life*, *The Path of Compassion*, *Women in Korean Zen*, *Let Go: A Buddhist Guide to Breaking Free of Habits*, *What is This?* and *The Spirit of the Buddha*. She teaches Buddhist meditation worldwide, lives in south-west France and is on the faculty of Bodhi College.



Christoph Köck was born in Vienna, Austria, and spent 17 years of his life as a Buddhist monk in the Theravadin tradition. He lived mainly in monasteries connected with Ajahn Chah in Thailand and the West. Currently he lives in Vienna, working as a psychotherapist in a private practice. He teaches Buddhism and meditation internationally, and is trained to teach MBSR and MBCT.



Akincano Weber is a Swiss Buddhist teacher and psychotherapist (MA). A former monk, he has lived and practiced for 20 years in European and Thai Forest monasteries. Particular interests are early Buddhist texts, stillness and contemplative psychology. He is the guiding teacher of Atammaya Cologne, Germany, part of the program and of several Mindfulness teacher training courses, and teaches meditation and Buddhist Psychology in secular and traditional contexts in Europe and overseas. He is on the faculty of Bodhi College.



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Shantum Seth is an ordained dharma teacher in the Zen Buddhist lineage of Thich Nhat Hanh, is the foremost expert on sites associated with the Buddha and has been leading pilgrimages since 1988. He worked with the United Nations on volunteering, peace, and social development for more than 15 years, and was a Senior Advisor to the World Bank and on the Advisory board to the Minister of Tourism, on pilgrimage tourism. He has co-authored books such as *Walking with the Buddha* and been a consultant for films like BBC-Discovery's *Life of the Buddha* and BBC-PBS's *The Story of India*. He has been promoting mindfulness in education and with the police, and is also setting up a meditation practice centre in the foothills of the Himalayas through the non-profit *Ahimsa Trust*.

ITINERARY

DAY	DATE 2024	DAY OF WEEK	TRAVEL	NIGHT'S STAY
1	18-Jan-24	Thursday	Journey begins in Mumbai. Meet at 10.00 noon at the hotel. Kondivite caves/ Chaityabhoomi.	Mumbai
2	19-Jan-24	Friday	Kanheri caves.	Mumbai
3	20-Jan-24	Saturday	Mumbai-Lonavala. Bhaja Caves/Meet Ambedkarite Buddhism scholars	Lonavala
4	21-Jan-24	Sunday	Bedsa Caves.	Lonavala
5	22-Jan-24	Monday	Karla Caves.	Lonavala
6	23-Jan-24	Tuesday	Lonavala-Nasik by road	Nasik
7	24-Jan-24	Wednesday	Pandavleni Caves.	Nasik
8	25-Jan-24	Thursday	Nasik-Aurangabad. Visit Aurangabad Caves	Aurangabad
9	26-Jan-24	Friday	Ellora Caves.	Aurangabad
10	27-Jan-24	Saturday	Pitalkhora Caves.	Aurangabad
11	28-Jan-24	Sunday	Ajanta caves. Then drive to Jalgaon	Jalgaon
12	29-Jan-24	Monday	Drive to Sanchi	Sanchi
13	30-Jan-24	Tuesday	Sanchi	Sanchi
14	31-Jan-24	Wednesday	Sanchi - Bhopal	Bhopal
15	01-Feb-24	Thursday	Bhopal-Mumbai/Delhi -Departure	Departure/Mumbai/Delhi
16	02-Feb-24	Friday	Optional Extra Delhi	Delhi
17	03-Feb-24	Saturday	Optional Extra Delhi- Agra - Delhi	Departure

We reserve the right to make changes to this itinerary based on a variety of considerations, including logistics, interests of the tour group, or other reasons, and will make every effort to ensure that any changes conform to the nature of the tour.

PILGRIMAGE REGISTRATION INFORMATION & TRAVEL FACTS

The cost for the 15-day "Ancient Buddhist Monasteries of India" (Jan 18 –Feb 1, 2024) is **US\$ 6950**, based on double occupancy. The single room supplement is an additional **US\$2500**.

The Delhi-Agra option (Feb 1 – Feb 3, 2024) costs **US\$795**, based on double occupancy. The single room supplement is an additional **US\$280** (the journey ends in Delhi).



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The tour **price includes:** airport transfers and escort services in Mumbai/Delhi, guide services, transportation, monument entrance fees, all meals, bottled water and lodging arrangements (based on twin-sharing rooms) for the duration of the pilgrimage. All registration fees are payable in US dollars or the equivalent in Canadian dollars, GBP, Euro etc.

**Forced single room supplement (in case we are not able to room you with anyone else) will be 50% of the single supplement*

10% of the proceeds of all our journeys go to promoting mindfulness, educational and social work in India, primarily through the non-profit Ahimsa Trust.

Please note that **the cost does not cover:**

International airfare to and from Mumbai/Delhi, visas and other international arrangements, extra days spent in India beyond the dates of the pilgrimage, excess baggage fees on the flights, laundry and medical and other insurance coverage such as travel insurance.

TO REGISTER

A non-refundable deposit of **\$500 U.S. per person** is required at the time of booking. The remainder of the cost of the pilgrimage is due by October 15, 2023. Reservations made on or after October 15 must be paid in full at the time of booking.

To register, you may complete the form at the end of this document and email it to Ms. Bina Aranha at info@buddhapath.com

CANCELLATION

For cancellations received up to eight weeks before the commencement of the journey only the deposit will be forfeited. The cancellation fee within eight weeks of the beginning of the journey will be 100% of the total cost.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We encourage people to take travel insurance. The range of coverage can vary significantly from policy to policy, and travelers are encouraged to speak with a travel agency to identify a policy that suits their needs. Things to consider are travel delays, trip cancellation or interruption, medical coverage, and baggage loss or delay. Before purchasing insurance, you may wish to check with your health insurance carrier to see if your policy includes medical care overseas. Please note that many insurance carriers require that insurance be purchased at the time a deposit or final payment is made; check with your carrier for details.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

Arrival and departure airport is Mumbai.

For the Delhi-Agra option, departure is from New Delhi (Delhi), India.

Participants are responsible for making their own round-trip flight arrangements to and from their point of origin to Mumbai, India (return from Delhi for the Agra option).

For international flights, tickets should be booked as early as possible. Flights to and from India are frequently full, and this trip is scheduled in the midst of the tourist season. Most international flights arrive at night or early morning. You may check with us before you confirm your flight bookings.



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The journey will end on 1st February 2024 in Mumbai. You should book your departure in the afternoon of 1st February 2024 or later.

DELHI-AGRA OPTION

For those choosing the Delhi-Agra extension, the tour will end on 3rd February at 8:00pm in New Delhi. You should book your departure after 11:30pm on 3rd February or early morning of 4th February 2024.

EXTRA NIGHTS

For those wishing an extra day or two to recover from air travel before the pilgrimage begins, or who wish to stay longer after the pilgrimage ends, we would be happy to provide a list of hotels in Mumbai and Delhi and can also help to make the bookings for you. This should be done well in advance as January/February are popular tourist months.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR THIS TRIP

You will need a valid passport and a tourist visa for India. Normally the visa is valid for 6 months from the date of issue. The visa **must** be obtained before travel.

Visa Information

An Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) as e-Tourist Visa on Arrival (eTVA) is available for travelers from 164 countries including Australia, United States of America, Singapore, Germany, Russia, Mexico, Japan, France and Denmark... <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/visa/tvoa.html>

You can apply for this Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) a minimum of 4 days before your date of travel. This visa is issued for 60 days only.

Please ensure that the visa covers the travel period for which you are applying. If you need a reference in India, you can give: Mr. Shantum Seth, 309-B, Sector 15A, Noida 201 301, District Gautam Buddha Nagar, India. Telephone: +91-120-433 4284.

We can provide information about visa applications from other countries on request

You may need to submit the following information about the tour company:

Company Name: Seth Consultants Pvt. Ltd. (Government-Approved Tour Operators)

Registered Address: 50/8 First Floor, Tolstoy Lane, Janpath, New Delhi 110001, INDIA

Tel: +91-120-4334284

Email: info@buddhapath.com

PLEASE CARRY A COPY OF YOUR INTERNATIONAL FLIGHT RETURN TICKET AS YOUR TICKET IS CHECKED BEFORE YOU ARE ALLOWED TO ENTER INDIAN AIRPORTS. AN ELECTRONIC COPY OF YOUR TICKET IS ACCEPTABLE TOO.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES: By October 15, 2023 (or if registration is made after October 15, as soon as possible thereafter), each participant must provide the following details in order to reserve train, air and hotels:

Name, gender, date of birth, passport number, date of issue of passport, date of expiry of passport, place of issue of passport, and emergency contact information. Please submit a copy of your



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passport. In addition, registrants should provide the visa number, date of issue, date of expiry and place of issue as soon as the visa for travel to India has been issued.

CURRENCY EXCHANGE, ACCEPTANCE OF CREDIT CARDS & TIPPING

As stated above, hotels, food, transportation within India, and guide services are all covered by the tour fees. It is suggested that travelers carry some cash for expenses like gifts or souvenirs at the sites we visit during the pilgrimage. Travelers will also need money if they are planning to extend their stay in India before or after the pilgrimage. Credit cards are accepted in most hotels and in the larger cities we visit. There are ATM machines in most places where one can access cash, but their presence is not universal as it is in the US or other countries. One US dollar approximates 80 Indian Rupees. We recommend that you convert some cash at the airport when you arrive in Mumbai. There is no need to exchange it in your country — it is best to do so in India. There are a couple of banks with a standard exchange rate at the airport both before and after you clear customs. Please keep your bank receipts carefully in case you need to change the money into dollars when you return home.

TIPPING

Travelers often have questions about tipping. In the last few years, we have developed a system where a kitty is collected at the beginning, and the tips are distributed from it (contributing is optional). This covers all the incidental tipping/donations during the pilgrimage at hotels/restaurants etc. A tip for the guides and drivers is an optional addition to this kitty. It usually works out to \$10 to \$15 per day, but this figure could vary. It may be a good idea to set aside \$200 for tips.

If you arrive before the start of the pilgrimage or stay after it concludes, the general rule is as follows: tipping someone who has carried your luggage is common and we would suggest Rs.50 to Rs.100. In restaurants, one normally leaves a tip of between 5% - 10% of the entire bill, unless a service charge has already been levied. It is not necessary to tip taxi drivers; however, if you have hired a car for the day and you are happy with the driver, a tip of around Rs.500 is fine.

HOTELS/HOUSING

We choose the best available accommodations in the vicinity of the sites based on shared, twin-bedded rooms with a private bath or shower and toilet. The accommodations are clean and comfortable — in some cases rather luxurious and in one place rather simple. If you prefer a single room, there is a price supplement of US\$ 2500.

WEATHER & CLOTHING NEEDS

There can be a wide variation of temperatures in the places we visit, ranging from 10 to 30 degrees Celsius (50 to 86 degrees Fahrenheit) so get cotton clothing as well as some warm clothes. It's important to be comfortable and modestly dressed. There is no need to bring formal clothing.

Generally, the weather is dry with a small possibility of light rain in some places. It is handy to have an umbrella that can double as a sunshade if it gets too sunny or even be used as a walking stick.

Please bring comfortable sneakers or sandals. We do not go on treks, but the terrain may sometimes be uneven. We also visit monasteries where you will need to take off your shoes, so it is helpful to bring footwear which is easy to remove.



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It is always useful to have a hat or cap to protect you from the sun.

We are allowed 15 kilos (33 lbs.) on Indian airplanes, so we recommend that you travel light.

Laundry facilities are available at all the places we stay, and laundry is returned within 24 hours.

HEALTH CONCERNS

We stay in clean, safe places, and the food in the places we stay will be clean, fresh and prepared to suit a delicate digestive system. You will be provided bottled water to drink.

If you are coming from Africa or some parts of Latin America, a certificate of yellow fever inoculation is required by the Indian authorities. The statutory regulations with regard to **Covid** vaccinations etc is in flux and may change with little warning. Please check with us closer the date.

There is no other medical restriction upon your entry into India. We normally recommend a Hepatitis-A shot and a Tetanus shot. If you prefer to be more careful, then please speak to your physician. We do carry a first-aid kit with us, but many people prefer to bring their own supply of medicines. We would recommend you get an insect/mosquito repellent and also a stomach medicine for both diarrhea and constipation as one's stomach has its own way of adjusting to different foods.

ADDITIONAL TRAVEL SERVICES (e.g. shuttle buses, taxis)

We provide all the transport services during the journey, including having you met at arrival in Mumbai. There is no extra charge for meeting people at the airport. For those who want to make your own arrangements, the Mumbai Airport has black and yellow cabs, and radio cabs.

Depending on the time you arrive the cab fare will be in the range of Rs.500-2500. It is easy to get a cab at the hotel for the airport when one leaves for the same price.

DISCLAIMER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY

Seth Consultants Pvt. Ltd. (Buddhpath and Eleven Directions), while undertaking tours, transportation, hotel accommodation and other services only act on the clear understanding that they shall not be in any way responsible or liable for any accident, damage, loss, delay or inconvenience caused in connection with travel and other facilities arranged by the company, their employees or agents. All bookings are accepted and executed with utmost care, yet no responsibility is taken for any change or deviation on account of factors beyond their control.

By making a deposit for the tour, participants acknowledge that they have read and understood this document in its entirety, and have consented to all conditions herein, including the Disclaimer and Release of Liability. For participants under age 18, their parent or legal guardian shall sign on their behalf and the same Disclaimer and Release shall apply.

Please fill up the registration form below and email it to:

Ms. Bina Aranha info@buddhpath.com



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REGISTRATION FORM

Name (as it appears on your passport):..... Gender:.....
Address:.....
Email:..... Telephone #:.....
Date of Birth:.....Nationality:.....
Passport Number:..... Place of issue:.....
Date of Issue:..... Date of Expiry:.....

<u>I AM REGISTERING FOR</u>	<u>COST</u>	<u>PAY BY DATE</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 15-day Ancient Buddhist Monastery Pilgrimage <i>January 18 to February 1, 2024</i>	US\$ 6950* (**\$2500 single room supplement)	October 15, 2023
<input type="checkbox"/> 3-day Delhi and Agra February 1 to February 3, 2024	US\$ 795* (**\$280 single room supplement)	October 15, 2023

* includes Government Service Tax; can be paid in the equivalent currency of your country

** forced single room supplement (in case we are not able to room you with anyone else) will be 50% of the single supplement)

US\$ 500 has to be paid to register for any of the journeys. The remaining amount and optional extras have to be paid before the "pay by date". *Payments can be in US dollars or the equivalent in GBP, Euro etc*

Payment Options:

1. Credit card please add 4.8% PayPal service charge. Go to the 'Contact Us' page on our website www.elevendirections.com and click on "PayNow". Use shantum@buddhapath.com as our registered email address for PayPal')

2. Bank Wire Instructions:

Account Name (Beneficiary): **SETH CONSULTANTS PVT. LTD.**

Account No. **003106000743** for **USD**

SWIFT ID: **ICICINBBCTS**

Account No. **003106000745** for **EURO**

Bank Name: **ICICI BANK LTD.**

Bank Address: K-1, Senior MALL, Sector-18, NOIDA, Uttar Pradesh-201301, INDIA

IFSC Code: ICIC0000031 (if necessary)

3. Cheque/banker's draft payable to 'SETH CONSULTANTS PVT. LTD.' (please add US\$50 bank charges). Send via registered post or courier to 'Seth, 309-B, Sector 15A, Noida 201301, India

I understand and agree to all the terms and conditions as detailed in www.buddhapath.com

Signature:.....

Date:.....