

THE HERMITAGE



*Today the world is in ever greater need
of sanctuaries committed to spiritual
exploration and evolution.*



An Exceptional Sanctuary

The Hermitage, a 60-acre retreat centre on Denman Island in British Columbia, is as close as most of us will ever come to what the Tibetan Vajrayana tradition calls a beyul.

Beyul are hidden valleys protected by deities and blessed as refuges, places where the physical and spiritual worlds overlap and meditation practice is enhanced. For many practitioners The Hermitage, walking distance from the ocean and surrounded by forest, is just such a rare and extraordinary place.

Practice Over Profits

Sometimes it seems, in the mindfulness industry's rush to monetize the techniques of awakening, that the actual chance to awaken is being lost. From its founding in 2005 until 2014 programs at The Hermitage were offered without fees, on a donation basis. Ultimately practical reality dictated that we abandon that model and begin charging for meals and accommodation, but our objective has not changed: to provide the best possible conditions for meditation practice.

Small Is Beautiful

During the 70s and 80s our founding teacher Namgyal Rinpoche regularly took students on "Dharma trips" lasting three to five months aboard passenger freighters designed to accommodate just twelve passengers plus crew. Those of us who were fortunate enough to experience this kind of intimate exploration have a profound appreciation for the benefits of keeping to a modest scale. While some centres offer programs to as many participants as possible, The Hermitage ideal is group retreats of around twenty practitioners, and we have no plans to grow larger.

A Spirit Of Openness

Our lineage, founded by a Westerner, is unique in having a strong connection to both Theravada and Vajrayana. And while our roots are Buddhist, we have welcomed teachers from many diverse paths and practitioners from all over the world. The Hermitage provides a quiet and nurturing setting for the study and practice of meditation, for the exploration of yoga and movement, philosophy, psychology, and the healing arts as means of self-discovery. While having a deep respect for traditional forms, we recognize the need for the Dharma to evolve and to adapt to new conditions.



Our Ethical Commitment

We are committed to honouring the principles of ecological sustainability, believing that the conscious practice of love for our fellow beings and the careful stewardship of our Mother Earth are the precious seeds for any viable future. The traditional Buddhist Five Precepts outline a basic code of conduct asked of all who visit or reside at the centre. Making no judgements about the value of what might be termed unorthodox teaching methods, we also feel it is important to clearly state that no sexual activity is permitted at the centre, and in administrative and financial matters we are committed to maintaining the highest standards of transparency and accountability.

Time For Renewal

Obligated to cancel our scheduled 2020 summer residential programs due to COVID, we decided to take advantage of that break to commission a thorough, professional assessment of the centre's aging infrastructure. This process led us to the realization that major upgrades are overdue, and that the COVID hiatus has provided us with an excellent opportunity to initiate them. The resulting three-phase development plan will require that The Hermitage remain closed to residential programs for up to three years. It also requires a more ambitious fundraising campaign than any we've previously attempted.

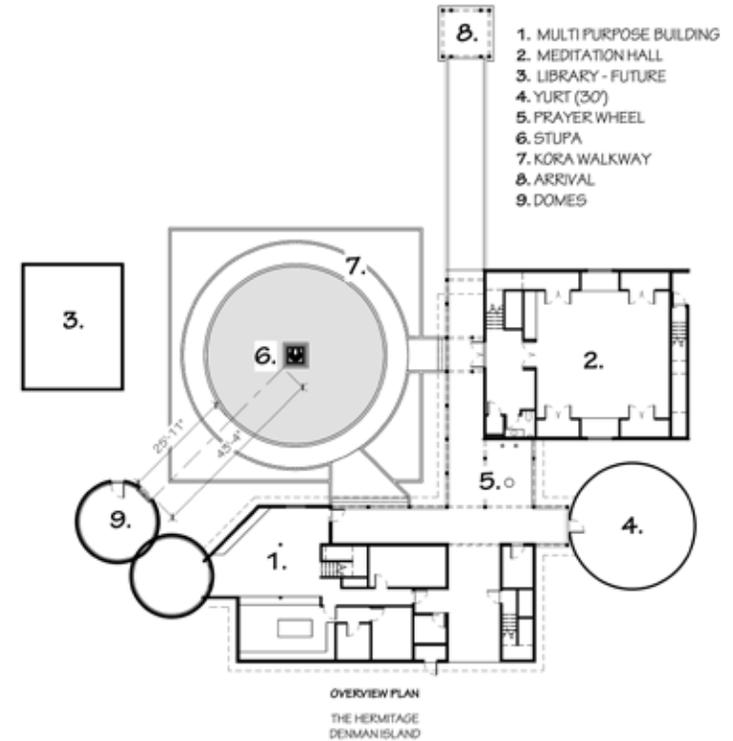
Development Plan

Phase One (2021-22): completion of three unfinished projects: the stupa, lama's cabin and the bath house; basic electrical system upgrades; renovation of the barn to accommodate community programs; exterior repairs. Phase Two (2023): installation of a generator and solar arrays; upgrading roads and parking areas; upgrading foundations and drainage of existing structures; renovation of existing structures; demolition and site preparation. Phase Three (2024): multi-purpose building with kitchen, office and staff accommodation; meditation hall; new yurt platform; six additional meditation kutis, walking pavilions. To accomplish this plan we need to raise a total of approximately \$2,405,000.

Development Plan

The Plan consists of three phases, implemented over a 3-year period, during which the centre will be closed for residential retreats.

However, once the Phase One barn renovations are completed a variety of non-residential programs will be scheduled to supplement our online programs.



PHASE ONE

\$540,000

We began by commissioning a thorough professional inspection of all existing infrastructure as well as architectural plans for replacing worn-out buildings. Realizing the scope of what was required we then proceeded to lay the foundations for a major fundraising campaign by updating our website and visual identity. Our next priority is the completion of three unfinished projects: the stupa, lama's cabin and the bath house. Finally, in addition to a much-needed upgrade of the centre's electrical system, Phase One will include exterior repairs as well as extensive renovations to the barn.

Building Inspections	\$10,000
Fundraising Initiatives	\$18,500
Stupa Project	\$10,300
Lama's Cabin	\$80,000
Bath House	\$14,000
Electrical System Upgrades	\$105,000
Barn Renovation	\$300,000
Shop Equipment	\$5,000
Exterior Repairs	\$10,000



PHASE TWO

\$405,000

In Phase Two we plan to upgrade a number of systems, complete renovations and repairs to existing structures and prepare for new construction. This phase will include improvements to our roads and parking areas, upgrading our water supply and storage, and the addition of two solar arrays and a generator to the electrical system. Additionally, we plan to renovate the domes, teacher’s cabin and library, and to repair or replace existing foundations.

Roads and Parking	\$30,000
Water Supply Upgrades	\$10,000
Solar Arrays	\$80,000
Generator	\$35,000
Foundation Repairs	\$30,000
Renovations To Existing Structures	\$220,000

PHASE THREE (2024)

\$1,445,000

New construction will consist of a meditation hall in the current yurt location, a 2-storey multi-purpose building, a new yurt platform, six additional meditation kutis (bringing our total to twenty), and four roofed platforms for walking meditation. All designs aim for a high level of energy efficiency. The 2-storey meditation hall will house a Vajrayana shrine room upstairs, while the downstairs will be a flexible, neutral space that can be set up to suit the requirements of any program. The multi-purpose building will include a kitchen, washroom, office and storage downstairs, and staff accommodation, staff lounge and full shower-equipped washroom upstairs. The existing connected domes and deck will serve as a dining area. The new yurt platform will have a sprung floor suitable for movement work and yoga, with in-slab hydronic radiant floor heat. As a final touch artist Glen Anderson will craft one of his exquisite surfaces for the stupa courtyard.

Multi-purpose Building	\$640,000
Commercial Kitchen Appliances	\$35,000
Meditation Hall	\$640,000
New Yurt Platform	\$8,000
Six New Kutis	\$90,000
Stupa Courtyard Surface	\$10,000
Walking Pavilions	\$20,000

Total Cost

\$2,405,000



We Need Your Support

As an independent, non-profit retreat center, The Hermitage is supported solely by donations and program fees.

We must act now to preserve and protect this vital refuge for spiritual practice. Every dollar you give will be used solely for The Hermitage and donations are tax-deductible in both Canada and the United States. Please consider supporting our valuable work at this pivotal time.

Financial statements and detailed cost estimates available on request.



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For further information:

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