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1. Summer Climate and Accommodations

Rocky Mountain Shambhala Center is in northern Colorado at an elevation of 8000 feet in pine forest and alpine meadows. Prepare for extremes of weather. The climate is generally dry in the summer, although fierce rainstorms and hail may occur, often in the afternoon. Days are generally sunny and warm but the air cools quickly at sundown and the temperature may drop more than 30 degrees Fahrenheit by midnight, and may drop below freezing at any time of the year. The abundant sunlight and high elevation requires that we take extra precautions against dehydration, altitude sickness and ultraviolet rays.

You'll be living in a large, sturdy, and comfortable canvas tent mounted on a wooden platform. Each standing-room tent measures 12 by 14 feet and is shared by two people. The tents are furnished with two single beds, two bookshelves, and two garment racks, and are located in campgrounds within walking distance of the central practice and dining area. Each campground has a bathhouse with flush toilets, showers, electricity, outlets, an iron and ironing board. There are campfire areas for social gatherings near the campgrounds. The central "downtown" area of RMSC includes the main shrine tent, classroom tents, the Finance Office, the Sacred Studies Building, Dining Tent, Kitchen, Infirmary and the family campground (Padma). Shotoku Children's Center is located directly west of downtown.



2. The Fragile Land

RMSC is located in a mountain meadow which means the plant life is fragile and any destruction—from vehicular or foot traffic takes many years to reclaim. Please observe the following guidelines so that our land may remain alive and beautiful.

Please:

- Keep on roadways and footpaths.
- Do not pick the wildflowers.
- Do not litter. Field-strip cigarettes and put filters in trash.
- Do not urinate outdoors.

Think and act ecologically. Help maintain recycling systems, preserve energy and water and do not introduce pollutants into the environment.

Some simple practices in conservation are:

- Do not leave water running while shaving or while brushing your teeth and do not flush every time. Use phosphate-free soap and shampoos.
- 1. Turn off lights.
- Recycle glass, cans, aluminum, office paper, plastic and newspapers. Collection bins are in several locations.



3. Fire Prevention and Control

Fire danger is a concern for everyone at RMSC. Extreme dryness of grasses and trees and unexpected high winds often turn a poorly attended campfire or a carelessly tossed cigarette into a forest fire that destroys thousands of acres. As recently as 1994, major forest fires have burned for days within miles of RMSC.

Please acquaint yourself with the fire prevention materials in your campground. Fire extinguishers are located throughout the campgrounds and there is one extinguisher at each bathhouse. Five-gallon water buckets and shovels are located at each campfire site. Hoses are located near buildings and house trailers. RMSC has a fire truck available for large blazes. Observe these safety guidelines:

- If you see smoke in the surrounding hills, notify the Dorje Kasung. If you see a fire, dial 911.
- No fuel-powered lamps, stoves or open flames of any kind. Candles are not permitted in tents.
- No fireworks.
- Be mindful when smoking. Field-strip cigarettes and put filters in the trash.
- Campfires are regulated according to the dryness of the land. Because of the constant danger of fire, we require that no unscheduled campfires take place on the land this summer.
- At a scheduled campfire (in a designated rock fire pit only), be sure there are two five-gallon buckets of water and a shovel. The fire should be thoroughly extinguished before the last person leaves.



4. General Restrictions

RMSC is a special environment for practice and study. To maintain the environment, participants are asked to adhere to the following rules:

- Controlled substances (illegal drugs) are not allowed. Possession of such substances will result in expulsion. Further, it is simply not appropriate, respectful or necessary to use "recreational drugs" of any kind on the land.
- Alcoholic beverages are allowed only during certain approved times, and are then to be consumed with a cheerful mindfulness.
- Music is allowed only when approved. No music in tents.
- Pets are not allowed. Sorry, no exceptions.



5. What to Bring

- Gomden and zabuton for designated programs or programs with a large attendance. Available from Samadhi Cushions. If you are flying in, you may ship these in advance. See pre-shipping in the "Services" section.
- Oryoki set for designated programs or programs with a large attendance. Available from Samadhi Cushions. Please see enclosed form if you are considering renting a set from RMSC.

The weather is changeable; hot during the day, cold at night and early morning. Wearing layers of clothing is best.

- Warm bedding, blankets or sleeping bag; pillows and pillowcases; twin-sized sheets (double-size for couples). Temperatures can get below freezing at night.

Shawl or blanket for chilly nights or days in the shrine tent.

- Rain gear: umbrella, waterproof boots, poncho or raincoat.
- Toiletries, including lip balm and moisturizing lotion. Towels.
- Daypack or other small carrying bag. Good walking shoes. Flashlight and batteries. Battery-powered alarm clock.
- Canteen or water bottle.
- Sunscreen, sunglasses and hat.
- Postage stamps (can be purchased at Commissary as well).
- Prescription and non-prescription medications you use on a regular basis.
- Emergen-C, a powdered vitamin C and electrolyte replacement drink for high altitude conditions. Available at your local health food store.
- If using the offsite laundry service, you must use a durable, washable laundry bag with a drawstring closure, and you must write your name on it prominently. You can either buy one at RMSC or bring one from home.
- Less essential but helpful: bedspread, small rugs, rechargeable battery-operated lamps, clothes line and clothes pins, stationery.

- The RMSC Commissary will carry a variety of snack foods, sundries, books, stationery, practice materials and gifts.



6. Health and Safety

- Infirmery

The Infirmery is in a trailer in the Padma campground near the Commissary. Hours are announced during orientation.

- 911 Emergency Services

In an emergency, you can pick up any phone on the land and dial 911. This will put you in touch with a radio telephone carried by the Kasung on duty that day. When the call is answered, state your location, the extension you are calling from, and the nature of the emergency. Remember that the person answering the call is on a radio and therefore it is a one-way conversation, alternating between you and the person on the radio. Do not hang up until directed to by the Kasung. Dialing 911 sets off a general alarm system. If you dial 911 and realize it may have been a mistake, communicate that BEFORE hanging up.

- Precautions

 - Altitude Adjustment

RMSC lies at an elevation of 8000 feet. If you have come from a lower altitude, you may feel tired, dizzy, or lightheaded. Please take it easy your first few days here.

 - Dehydration

Extremely frequent drinks are advised. Supplement with electrolyte replacements two to three times a day for the first week. Coffee, caffeinated tea and alcohol are dehydrants.

 - Sunburn

At this high altitude you can get sunburned very quickly. Use sunscreen, hats and sunglasses.

 - First Aid

Kits are located in every building. Know where to find them.

 - Holes and Poles

Watch for holes and irregularities in the land. Be mindful of tent stakes and ropes. Carry a flashlight at night (small Mag-Lites are recommended).

- Swimming

The lake near the Facilities Shop contains micro-organisms; swimming is prohibited. The green lagoon by the shop processes sewage. We wouldn't recommend swimming in either.

- Ticks

Avoid areas with tall grasses and use insect repellents containing Deet or Permethrin. Do regular body checks for ticks, especially on children and infants.

- Hygiene

It is easy for a cold or flu to spread in a closed community with high numbers. The fastest ways for illness to spread is by the hands. Wash your hands often, especially after using the toilet (come one, guys), before preparing food, and before washing dishes. Don't share eating utensils. Take extra precautions if you are sick. And assume personal responsibility for practicing safe sex.

- Oh my!

Bears are attracted by food and sweet smells. Please keep your campground free of bears by not storing food, toothpaste, deodorant, scented lotions or perfume in your tent. When you get to RMSC, read the large posted sign, "Living with Wildlife in Bear Country" for guidelines on what to do if you encounter a bear.



7. Travel Information

- Driving to RMSC

The land is dry, easily damaged and slow to recover; therefore if you drive to RMSC, you must leave your car in the upper field near the entrance. You will not be permitted to drive your car on RMSC property beyond the Tori gate. Your license plate number will be logged and fines will be levied for unauthorized vehicles parked or driven on the land.

- Traveling By Air (or Bus) to RMSC

Guidelines for scheduling your flight or bus Arrivals:

The main thing to consider is that, from the time your flight lands, it may take up to SIX HOURS to get to RMSC, and it is very hard to find your tent for the first time in the dark, so please try to schedule a flight that arrives at DIA no later than 1pm and communicate your flight arrival date and time to us.

Departures

The main thing to consider, if you wish to avoid a hurried, early morning departure, is to schedule a departing flight that leaves DIA no earlier than 3 pm. Please tell us your flight departure time when you know it.

Airline Travelers

Make Denver International Airport (DIA) your destination and tell us your flight arrival date and time. We need this information to schedule an RMSC driver to pick you up.

- Make a reservation with the Airport Express for ground transport to Fort Collins. A rule of thumb: any flight arriving more than 20 minutes after the hour is probably too late for you to catch the next Airport Express; i.e., a 12:23 flight arrival means you're at high risk for missing the 1:00 Airport Express.
- Take the Airport Express from DIA to Fort Collins. To get a current schedule of Airport Express shuttles and make reservations, you must call them at (970) 482-0505. Reservations are required. Travel time from DIA to Fort

Collins is two hours. The Airport Express fee is \$15 per person, payable to them, in cash, at the time of boarding.

- Once you get to Fort Collins, get off at the University Park Holiday Inn on Prospect Street — this is where the RMSC driver will pick you up (assuming you have communicated with us). The RMSC fee will be assessed at Registration. We want you to be able to get settled in your tent before dark, so you should ideally schedule a flight that arrives no later than 1 pm, thus allowing time for baggage claim, two stretches of ground transport, onsite registration and finding your tent.

What If You Can't Get a Flight That Arrives at DIA by 1:00pm?

Be prepared to wait in Fort Collins for the last RMSC shuttle of the day, which may leave Fort Collins at 6pm or maybe even 9pm, depending on the needs of the day. This would get you to RMSC anywhere between 7-11pm, and you might spend your first night sleeping on the shrine room floor, as many venerable practitioners have done.

Another possibility, one which eases travel stress, is to book a flight that arrives a day BEFORE you actually want to be at RMSC, and reserve a room at the Holiday Inn (call 970-482-2626). Then you can take a late Airport Express, spend the night at the Holiday Inn in Fort Collins, sleep well, and get to RMSC the next day, arriving well-rested.

Schedule a flight that leaves DIA no earlier than 3 pm if you do not want the pressure of an early morning departure. You should leave RMSC at least five hours (maybe six) before your flight leaves. International flights may require even more time because it takes longer to check in.

- Bus Travelers - Arriving Any Day

Make the Fort Collins Greyhound Station your destination and tell us your bus arrival date and time.

If your bus arrives early in the morning, you may need to wait a while. For example, if your bus arrives at 9 am and we are expecting another person who doesn't get to Fort Collins until noon, and we are running several shuttles between noon and 7pm, you may need to wait until noon. There is a "Carl's" fast-food restaurant across the street from the bus station where you can sip bad coffee and read while you wait for us. If your bus arrives late in the evening, you might prefer to stay in Fort Collins overnight. If you let us know in advance, we may be able to arrange for you to stay at the Fort Collins Shambhala Center. It is a small center, located in a sangha member's home, and they ask for a donation (\$10 is recommended). You may also need to take a cab to get to the Shambhala Center.



8. Services

- Mountain Ghanta Telephone System

If you want to make outgoing phone calls, you have two options: you can use the payphone and your personal calling card, or you can use RMSC's phone system, Mountain Ghanta, which will enable you to make calls from several locations on the land. If you choose Mountain Ghanta, you will be given an access code. Phone charges will be deducted from your facility deposit and the remainder will be returned to you by mail. Additional money will be requested if your charges exceed the initial deposit.

- Pre-Shipping to RMSC via United Parcel Service

The local Post Office is very small and is not equipped to handle large volumes of packages. Therefore, when shipping things to RMSC, you must use UPS instead of the US Mail (unless your shipment is from somewhere outside the US not served by UPS). Ship your packages to arrive no more than five days in advance of your arrival to the following address:

Rocky Mountain Shambhala Center
4921 County Road 68C
Red Feather Lakes, Colorado 80545 USA

- Forwarding Mail

To receive your mail from home, submit a TEMPORARY forwarding request to your local post office. Alternatively, get a friend at home to collect your mail and send it to you periodically. The Red Feather Lakes Post Office cannot handle a large volume of re-forwarded mail, nor can the RMSC staff guarantee your mail will be forwarded. The temporary forwarding request resolves this problem.

- Shipping From RMSC Before You Leave Here

Most shipping from RMSC is handled by UPS. The rates are fairly high and must be paid to the Finance Office before you leave RMSC. You will need to prepare your package yourself (weighing, sealing, addressing).

- Offsite Laundry Service

Since there are no onsite laundry facilities available to participants, a laundry and dry-cleaning service will be available on a weekly basis and the charges will be deducted from your laundry deposit. Laundry will be taken to a commercial service which will wash, dry and fold your clothes. (Any fine or delicate garments should be handwashed rather than sent through the laundry service.)

Parents with children enrolled in Shotoku (and nannies caring for young children) may use the onsite laundry facility, for children's laundry only, during designated hours. Parents will need to use the offsite laundry service for their own clothes.

9. Planning Your Expenses

- **Payment and Check Cashing Procedure:**

Payments, including pre-payments, tuition, deposits and commissary purchases, must be made in US funds. We accept cash, checks, Visa, MasterCard, travelers checks and money orders payable on US banks. Checks drawn on a Canadian bank will carry an \$8 service charge.

Whenever you use a credit card, there will be a 3% surcharge, whether you are using it for pre-payment, onsite registration, or a cash advance. Checks can be cashed in the Finance Office during normal business hours. There will be a \$20 service charge for any checks or credit card charges returned for any reason. Be prepared to pay all fees before or at registration. All financial arrangement must be made prior to Registration. No last-minute "deals" are permissible.

- **Oryoki Set.**

Approximately \$90, available from Samadhi Cushions. Call 1-800-331-7751 to order. See additional oryoki information near the end of this booklet.

- **Gomden and Zabuton.**

You must bring your own gomden and zabuton. If you need to purchase a set, you may call Samadhi Cushions at 1-800-331-7751.

- **Facility/Phone Deposit. \$100. Required.**

This will be used for phone bills, tent damage, parking tickets, infirmary fees and other miscellaneous charges. Additional money will be required if your charges exceed the initial deposit. We will refund your balance by mail a few weeks after the end of the month of your departure.

- **Laundry Deposit.**

\$50. Required if using the laundry service. We will refund the balance of your laundry deposit by mail several weeks after the end of the month of your departure.

- **RMSC Commissary.**

Ice-cream, cigarettes, t-shirts, books, stamps—the Commissary offers all of the essentials, and many of the inessentials as well. We can't tell you how much, but do suggest that you allow some room in your budget for the Commissary!

- Travel Service fees.

RMSC will charge \$20 per person to and from Fort Collins, or \$15 per person if two or more people are sharing the ride. You will need to pay this at registration. There is no charge for children under 12 years old. Health Insurance/Release of Liability. You should have your own health and accident insurance. All participants and staff will be required to sign a Release of Liability.



9. For Parents and Child Care Providers

Since our past experience indicates that parents bringing child-care providers for their children have special needs, we have the following recommendations for choosing a nanny as well as some general information to assist your preparation for a summer at RMSC.

Once you have chosen a child care provider, please talk with him or her about life at RMSC before you arrive! Child care providers should understand something about the daily life of a meditation retreat, such as restrictions on music, mindful speech/silence during practice periods, and joining in community life. As much as possible we are trying to create a situation that will include child care providers in community activities, but this works both ways. We need understanding and cooperation from the child-care providers who come here.

Upon your arrival at RMSC there will be an orientation meeting so you can ask questions and communicate to us any special needs you may have. Family housing will be in the Padma campground, which is part of the "downtown" area and close to a bathhouse and the Commissary. You must let us know if you are bringing a child care provider so we can allocate tent space. Laundry facilities are available onsite for children's laundry during designated hours and for emergency situations.

Also bring a canteen or water bottle, sunscreen, sunglasses, raingear and hat, rubber boots, swimsuit, daypack and towels for your child. Some of these items are stocked in the Commissary. Please bring your own supply of diapers because the commissary's stock of this is small.

The fee to accommodate a child-care provider is \$25 per day.



10. Oryoki Practice

Oryoki, or traditional Zen dining practice, is a powerful vehicle for bringing the awareness and simplicity of meditation, and Shambhala elegance to our everyday life.

Renting an oryoki set.

We have 40 sets which will be reserved on a first-come/first-served basis. To reserve a set, you must send in the form (enclosed), with payment in full. Verbal reservations don't count.

Label your oryoki set.

Nearly all oryoki sets are identical. The best way to label your set is to embroider your initials, or pin a button on a corner of the base serviette so that the identifier is visible when the set is closed.



11. Tent Care

Please follow these guidelines to help the RMSC tents last as long as possible:

- Zip tents very gently. They damage easily.
- Please, no pins, nails, tacks, tape, etc. on tent walls or poles. To hang pictures, please use string or thread.
- Do not let objects rest against the tent walls. They can stretch or rip the walls, and during rainstorms the canvas sweats and can damage your belongings. Keep items four inches from the walls.
- Do not untie your awning rope. If it comes loose, let us know by filling out a Maintenance Request Form. In high winds, a loose awning and pole can whip about and damage the tent.
- When leaving the tent, always leave it prepared for rain. Windows can be left partially open, but if they are fully open, the rain will come in. Don't learn the hard way!
- To report tent damage or problems, fill out a Maintenance Request Form (available in the mail area). All reports should be in writing. Reporting damage does not mean you will be charged for it.
- Do not use candles, kerosene or propane lamps, or any open flame in the tent.
- Chipmunks and mice, and much larger animals may chew their way through screen doors when they smell food—so don't keep food in your tent.
- Bears are attracted by food and sweet smells. Please do not store food, toothpaste, deodorant, scented lotions, perfume, etc. in your tent.



12. Mail and Messages

- Bulletin boards are located in the Lobme Lenkhang, the white tent next to the dining tent. Schedules, announcements, incoming phone messages and faxes, lost-and-found notices, Alumni Association forms, rota lists, etc. will be posted there.
- There are boxes for incoming and outgoing mail in the Lobme Lenkhang tent.
- Telephones: See "Mountain Ghanta Telephone System," above.



13. Rota

Many RMSC programs are self-staffed. Joining in cheerful exertion together is an essential aspect of community. Rather than having others do our "dirty work" for us, we take care of our own. Rota consists of various jobs in the kitchen, housekeeping tasks, and general maintenance. The rota is assigned through the neighborhood (delek) system.

Rota lists will be posted in the communications area in the Lobme Lenkhang. If you have concerns related to rota policies such as special skills, medical restrictions, etc., please discuss them with the rota person at Registration.



14. The RMSC Alumni Association

Hundreds of people contribute to RMSC each month by credit card or automatic bank withdrawal [ABW]. All donations help us to maintain, and slowly but surely expand our ability to offer meditation, contemplative arts, and educational programs to the friends and members of the Shambhala community. RMSC is a non-profit, educational institution. All donations are tax-deductible.