

Sufi Retreat

From Thursday 18th May 2017

(Arrive afternoon/evening for evening meal at 7pm)

Until Monday 22nd May 2017

(Depart 10am after breakfast)

at The College, Millport, Isle of Cumbrae, Scotland

The retreat is hosted by the Scottish Group on behalf of Shaykh Hamid, who will be present throughout. As well as giving individuals a chance to spend time in meditation and prayer with the Shaykh, the retreat is also an opportunity for members of the international groups to spend time together. In addition to the prayer and meditation programme, there will be some free time.

Location

The Retreat will be held at the College of the Holy Sprit on the beautiful island of Cumbrae, which is situated on the West Coast of Scotland, in the Firth of Clyde, approximately 70 km from Glasgow. The College (and the adjoining Cathedral) is open to those of any denomination, but during the Sufi retreat, will be used exclusively by us. A maximum of 30 people can be accommodated. There are two common rooms that can be used for group meditation and prayers, which are comfortably furnished with easy chairs and there is ample space for cushions.

The College of the Holy Sprit is set in 8 acres of lush woodlands and fields and is only 5 minutes walk from the sea front. The College itself has a tranquil quality and the surrounding environment is very peaceful. The Cathedral is the smallest in Britain. Built in 1851, its Victorian architecture is beautifully proportioned, with brightly coloured tiles and stained glass windows. There is an original refectory in which our meals will be served, and a cloister area with views over the garden.

Accommodation

The majority of the bedrooms are twin or double. In order to maximise the number of students who can come, where appropriate, retreatants may need to be prepared to share accommodation. All of the rooms are comfortably furnished, and have wash hand basins and central heating. There is one room that is wheelchair accessible. Tea and coffee facilities are also available in each room.

Please note that this year, for a variety of reasons, we are unable to accept retreatants who are not resident in the College.

As you may know the weather in Scotland at this time of year can be unpredictable. It would be good sense to bring a rainproof jacket and a warm jumper, alongside your prayer mat and meditation blanket.

Meals

The meals will be cooked for us, and will be vegetarian and halal. If you have particular medical dietary requirements, we will need to inform the cook at the time of booking, so please tell your group manager or, if you make your booking directly, the retreat organiser. If you are unable to arrive in time for the evening meal on Thursday 18th May, which will be served at 7.00 pm on this first evening, the College kindly request that you let them know in advance in order that food is not wasted.

Cost

The cost per person for the whole retreat is £288.00 (for 4 nights). Children under 5 can stay free of charge if sharing their parent's room. Children between 5 and 14 years of age are charged at half-price if sharing their parent's room.

The retreat is organised by the Scottish Group to accommodate the needs of the different individuals and groups participating. As well as covering the basic costs of the accommodation - including bed linen, bath and hand towels, breakfast, lunch and evening meal, tea, coffee and snacks - the price also includes all the expenses of the retreat.

Please note

To keep costs to a minimum, the rate negotiated is based on the College being fully occupied by ourselves. It is therefore essential that anyone wishing to come on the retreat stay at the College, according to the above details.

Booking arrangements

To request a place on the retreat, please contact Sogol.

Email: scottishschoolofsufism@gmail.com

Once we then know how many of you would ideally like to attend the retreat we can work out how best to accommodate individuals, given the type of rooms available. We have been asked, in the first instance, to give priority to Glasgow members and older members of the Order and those wishing to attend with their families.

All other places will then be allocated on a first come first served basis. As soon as it is possible for us to confirm your booking you will be provided with details of how payment should be made direct to the College. Payments will need to be made in full in order to secure a place on the retreat. Payments need to have been made in full by 18th of April.

If your payment hasn't been received by that date, then it may become necessary to re-open the booking to others who would like to come.

Please do not book your travel until your place on the retreat has been confirmed.

Travel information

Whatever means of transport you are using, you will need to get to the town of Largs, from where you take the ferry to the Island of Cumbrae. Full travel details are given below.

By air:

From **Glasgow International Airport**, the easiest way is to take the rail-air link bus from the airport to **Paisley Gilmour Street Station** (This is only 1 mile away, and can also be reached by taxi).

From Paisley Gilmour Street Station take the train to **Largs** - journey time approx 50 minutes - and then follow travel directions below.

From **Glasgow Prestwick Airport** take the train to **Largs**, changing at **Kilwinning**. Journey time approx. 1 hour. Alternatively, there is a bus service (Stagecoach 585) to Largs, which runs every 30 minutes, depending on time of day.

By train:

From London Euston Station or London Kings Cross Station, trains arrive at Glasgow Central Station or Glasgow Queen Street Station.

From Glasgow Central take the train to **Largs**.

On arrival at Largs:

Turn left out of the station and walk towards the seafront - about 5 minutes - you will see the ferry slip straight ahead of you.

Ferries to Cumbrae:

Cumbrae is a very small island, just a short distance from Largs. The Caledonian MacBrayne Ferries run half-hourly throughout the year. There is generally no need to book, but you do need to buy your ticket at the ferry terminal before boarding the boat. The journey time is approximately 10 minutes and the current passenger return fare is £5.65 (and £24.25 for a car). Last ferry times are normally 8.15pm. (Please do check ferry times and booking requirements for the last ferry on Friday evenings; the web link is given overleaf.)

Once on Cumbrae:

Buses connect with the ferries. The bus ride is a very short one. Ask the driver to drop you at Mount Stuart Street, which runs at right angles from the sea front. Walk up Mount Stuart Street (passing cycle hire shop on right) and turn left at the top (opposite 'Mansewood' sign). Almost immediately turn right at wrought-iron sign, which says 'Cathedral of the Isles', and continue up the track for approx 200 yards to the Cathedral and College.

If arriving by **car**, turn left from the ferry slip and follow the road alongside the shore. After 2 miles you will enter the town of Millport. Follow the road around the bay until you reach the Newton Bar on the right. Turn right here into College Street, then 1st right into George Street (Roman Catholic Church on

left). After 200 yards turn left at wrought iron sign for 'Cathedral of the Isles' and continue up the drive for approx. 200 yards to the Cathedral and College.

Useful websites:

www.visitscotland.com (Scotland's official tourist website)

www.glasgowairport.com

www.travelinescotland.com

www.gpia.co.uk (Glasgow Prestwick Airport)

www.firstgroup.com (all train travel in Scotland)

www.trainline.com (UK trains)

<http://www.calmac.co.uk/timetables/summer-timetables.htm?id=summer-cumbrae--larg-cumbrae-slip.png> (Ferry times)

www.multimap.com (type in the postcode of the College-KA28 0HE- to see exact location)