



Run with Heart and Mind

22–27 October 2024



Run with Heart & Mind

Trail running retreat – La Artiga, Spain

Thank you for your interest in RUN:ZEN and Bodhiyoga's 'Run with Heart & Mind' retreat.

This information pack should answer most of your questions but do please contact Stuart at runzen.contact@gmail.com if you need any further information.



© Google Earth

Run with Heart & Mind – an introduction

Join us to re-energise and unwind on our five-day autumn retreat in the stunning countryside of the Teruel region in north-east Spain.

Daily guided trail runs in the hills and valleys of Spain's least populated region will be balanced with a programme of yoga, tai chi and meditation, and with plenty of free time to relax and enjoy the peaceful surroundings.

As a collaboration between RUN:ZEN and Bodhiyoga, you will be guided in this retreat by two teachers with combined experience of practising and teaching running, yoga and mindfulness of more than fifty years.

Who is this retreat for?

We all need to step away from the stresses and strains of everyday life from time to time. If you're looking to immerse yourself in beautiful natural surroundings in good company, while finding the right balance of activity and relaxation, then this retreat will be perfect for you.

- ❖ Our daily runs will be at a relaxed pace and will include time for breaks and enjoying the scenery.
- ❖ The runs will vary in length from around 8 to 13 kilometres. The longest run might take up to two and a half hours with breaks and rest.
- ❖ Participants will need to have a suitable level of fitness for running these distances. As a rough indicator, we suggest the retreat will be best suited to people who can run 5K within 30 minutes.
- ❖ No previous experience of yoga, tai chi or mindfulness is necessary.



The retreat programme

Start and finish times

Autumn retreat: 22– 27 October 2024

We will start at 20:00 on Tuesday 22 October and finish around 08:30 on Sunday 27 October. Each full day will begin at 07:00 with the final guided activity closing around 20:30. You can see the daily schedule on page 7 and each day will include:

- ❖ Trail running incorporating *Mindfulness for Runners* – learning how to establish a foundation and focus to run mindfully
- ❖ Mindfulness Yoga – a dynamic and restorative yoga session
- ❖ Tai Chi Movements for Wellbeing – easy-to-learn mindful movement
- ❖ Meditation – guided silent practices to help calm and focus the mind
- ❖ Free time to explore your surroundings or simply relax and reset.

Through this combination of practices, we will investigate together the value of developing skills in cultivating awareness, embodiment and relaxation. We will explore how to apply these principles both to help us run with more focus and enjoyment, but also how they can support our wellbeing in daily life.

We would like to stress that our retreats are not training camps in the more traditional sense. The days will be full and active, but the training really focuses on the mind and discovering the wellbeing benefits of learning to pay attention no matter what activity we are engaged in.



The retreat leaders

Stuart McLeod

Stuart will be leading the trail runs, tai chi and other mindfulness tuition.

He spent around a decade competing in duathlon (run/bike/run) representing Great Britain as an age-group athlete at several international Championships.

Stuart has been practicing meditation in the Chinese Zen tradition for over 25 years, teaching meditation and leading day retreats with the Western Chan Fellowship. He has also participated in a variety of mindfulness programmes and is a Trained Teacher in Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) with Bangor University's Centre for Mindfulness Research and Practice.

He is also a teacher of Tai Chi Movements for Wellbeing (TMW) and a qualified Qigong Instructor with Long White Cloud Qigong.

A key focus of Stuart's personal practice centres upon the application of mindfulness techniques and skills as a means to help us re-inhabit our bodies, and he thinks there is no better way to this than through mindful running.



Sadhita

Sadhita will be leading the yoga, meditation and other mindfulness tuition.

He is a yoga teacher and trainer of teachers and one of the key founders of the Bodhiyoga School of teacher training, set up in 2012 to provide training and retreats to the public to become mindfulness-based yoga teachers. He has to date trained more than one hundred student teachers worldwide.

A Buddhist by training, Sadhita has trained in Ashtanga, Hatha and Iyengar systems of yoga. From his years of practice, Sadhita recommends that yoga is a perfect adjunct to mindful running and will help any practitioner go deeper into their experience.



“As an informed meditator, runner and yoga practitioner, I have seen all of these practices deepen and take on new meaning through the systematic practice of mindfulness.”

The trail running explained

We've carefully explored the local area to provide a variety of trail runs. Some runs will follow the riverside path in the Vallee de Olba occasionally passing through small villages, but most runs include hilly terrain with a lot of climbing and descent.

We don't want anyone to be anxious about the ability of the group and whether they can keep up. Each run will of course have a guide at the front but also a back marker so that we ensure the group remains together.

The pace of the runs will be intentionally relaxed and will include time for breaks. The shortest run is just over 8 kilometres while the longest we have planned is up to 13 kilometres in length which will take around two and a half hours to complete allowing time for breaks and rest. We will be running over four consecutive days, so it is important that all participants are sufficiently fit to be able to manage this volume of running and to run these kinds of distances.

We will mainly be running offroad with some short stretches of quiet roads. The path surfaces vary from level, compacted earth through to rough, stony winding tracks. We recommend that you run in trail shoes.

RUN:ZEN's unique offer is to incorporate mindfulness into running. In simple terms this is about learning and investigating the value of bringing awareness to the activity of running. Throughout the retreat we will explore together how to apply mindfulness skills to support greater enjoyment and focus when we run.

Yoga, tai chi & mindfulness meditation

While the central activity of the retreat is the trail runs, we will be incorporating a complementary programme of mindfulness-based practices to more broadly support your health, wellbeing and fitness.

The yoga practice will be led by Sadhita, offering an integrated session of both dynamic and restorative yoga and will explore how a mindfulness-based approach to yoga can complement our running. Also integrated into the programme to support our trail running will be guidance from Stuart in Tai Chi Movements for Wellbeing. This is a simple sequence of movements drawn from both the tai chi and qigong traditions which is particularly effective in helping us to be fully present in our bodies.

Alongside these activities in movement will be sitting meditation practice. The whole programme is designed to support you to build your 'muscle of mindfulness' – growing the capacity to bring more clarity and awareness to your moment-to-moment experience.

Our daily schedule

A typical day will look something like this.

- 07:00 Wake up
- 07:30 Meditation and introduction to the day's theme
- 08:10 Breakfast / pause and reflect
- 09:30 Tai Chi Movements for Wellbeing
- 10:15 Mindful running
- 13:30 Lunch / pause and reflect
- 14:30 Yoga – dynamic and recuperative
- 16:00 Pause and reflect
- 18:30 Evening meal
- 19:45 Meditation and reflection
- 20:30 Close / free time



Down below from La Artiga is the River Mijares. It is said that the river will never run dry as a thousand different waters flow into it. On warm days a dip in the cool clean water will quickly relieve a tired body.



The accommodation

La Artiga

We will be staying in two adjoining beautifully restored rustic houses – Casa Peñablanca and Casa Pasteles – in the tiny settlement of La Artiga.



Indoor practice space

We will be using the space pictured below in the main house for our yoga and meditation practices.



Single and shared bedrooms

There is a choice of sharing a twin room or taking a private room with twin beds. All rooms have power points for charging of devices etc.



The casita

There is also the option to stay in the self-contained casita. This has two double mattresses so would suit a couple or two people wishing to share. The price we have set is for two people sharing the casita. It would be possible to accommodate up to four people (sharing the two double-mattresses) but please contact us separately to discuss the cost of the casita for three or four people sharing.



The location

The tiny settlement of La Artiga sits in a peaceful setting at the top of the valley of Olba, in the Teruel region of north-east Spain. Teruel is the least populated region in Spain. It is rugged, mountainous and wild. You can get a sense of the heavily wooded local environment from this link to Google Earth [here](#).

The venue for the retreat has in its view Penyagolosa which is the highest mountain in the Valencia community region.



Getting to La Artiga

If you are driving to La Artiga we will send you clear instructions for how to find us.

For visitors coming from overseas, the nearest airport is Valencia which is around an hour and twenty minutes away from La Artiga by car or bus. If you are travelling from the UK or Ireland, there are direct flights from London, Dublin and Manchester. Journeys from other UK airports will require a change.

Taxi – Our preference for getting you to La Artiga is through a taxi share from a central meeting point in Valencia which we will arrange for you. A return fare works out at around £55 per person. We will organise this closer to the time of the retreat.

Bus – It is also possible to take a bus from the station in the centre of Valencia (Estación de Autobuses de Valencia) which is just over a 30-minute ride on the Metro from Valencia airport. There are two buses per day to the village of Venta del Aire. This is just under 15 minutes from La Artiga from where we can collect you.

The buses leave at either 09:45 or 17:30 and takes 80 minutes. The cost is €10 (£9) one way. You can search the bus timetable [here](#).

If you need any support and advice with arranging your travel please let us know and we'd be happy to help.

Catering

Food will be full board vegetarian with three meals per day with drinks and snacks available at any time. We will cater for special dietary requirements (one of the teachers is vegan) if requested prior to the start of the event. Please let us know beforehand.



Retreat costs

The full retreat fee includes accommodation, food and all tuition. It does not include costs of transportation/transfer to the retreat venue (see page 10 for guidance on getting to La Artiga).

There is a choice of three types of accommodation (see page 9).

- Shared twin room – £719
- Single room – £919
- Casita – £1869

Bookings can be made through the RUN:ZEN website [here](#)..

You have the option of paying the full fee or a 30% deposit and then the remaining balance which is due 60 days before the start of the retreat. We are also happy to accept payment by bank transfer, so please let us know if that is your preferred method of payment.

Before booking, we recommend that you familiarise yourself with our [Retreat booking terms and conditions](#).

Getting in touch

We are very happy to answer your questions at any time. Please e-mail Stuart at runzen.contact@gmail.com

