2015 International Vaishnavi Retreat

Realisation of the participants

**Narayani dd**:

When devotees get together to churn the ocean of Krishna katha, then out comes the cream of faith, inspiration, confidence and determination to persevere on the path Back to Godhead.

**Satyasar dd:**

Thrilling experience! I will come again.

**Shiamali:**

I could understand the importance of serving devotees and pleasing Srila Prabhupada. And the most important is I could relish chanting the holy name and connect better during japa.

**Shaili:**

I realized that it is very natural for women to connect together through chanting, associating and learning. In that spiritual atmosphere I felt a very strong connection with all the Vaishnavis, as if we were from the same village and were used to associate on a daily basis. I felt I would like to live like this forever. I could also experience a strong sense of Srila Prabhupada’s presence and acceptance.

**Ranjan:**

It was a treat to hear from Srila Prabhupada’s disciples. It is actually a retreat of Vaishnavis, by the Vaishnavis and for the Vaishnavis. I got a lot of inspiration. I was impressed by the seva bhava of the devotees serving in the various departments. My battery got charged by this retreat.

**Jai Jamuna dd:**

I felt Srila Prabhupada’s mercy and felt safe and protected.

**Nikunjavasini dd:**

Everything was much more and much better than what I expected. Each teacher had a special way to present the class and grab our attention. To grab my attention is not a easy task. It was a rare occasion to associate with women devotees. I could only imagine what a big decision it was for many of the women who came to leave their family duty for some precious time for themselves—certainly a big investment from which all families will benefit. I learnt how to appreciate more the teachings of Srila Prabhupada and also the chanting. I experienced the genuine care and concern of the senior devotees.

What I appreciated the most during the retreat is that I could get deeply inspired by seeing very young, enthusiastic and talented bhaktins starting their journey in Krsna Consciousness, and at the same time by senior and experienced devotees. We all could live together as in a family. This might happen during a stay in any temple, but being only women, it had a different flavor. In general it was easier for everybody to express themselves.

**Sandesh:**

It’s all about creating an atmosphere in which we can serve the Lord, where we are allowed to serve, participate and are lovingly appreciated for our contribution.

**Krishna Kirtan dd:**

It was a good opportunity to meet dedicated Vaishnavis who are very sincere in their desire to please Krishna and serve the devotees. The young vaishnavis had a cooperative mood and nice service attitude. We could share confidentially, know each other better and appreciate each other’s gifts and qualities. A sweet time to practice devotional service with like minded Vaishnavis in a holy place and be fully absorbed in the Lord’s glories!

**Ratikeli dasi:**

The best part about the retreat is Srila Prabhupada’s katha. It gives us the opportunity to associate with Srila Prabhupada’s female disciples. Vaishnavi retreats help all the Vaishnavis around the globe to get adcanced teachings and training by the seniors and leaders of the movement. This retreat gives nourishment to our consciousness and makes it bend more and more towards Krishna as it not only involves theoretical katha or teachings but practical application of the teachings amongst the devotees. We learn the right process of bhakti and the philosophical secrets behind the Lord’s pastimes and get many a topic to meditate on.

**Hemrupa Radha dd:**

Coming to the retreat was a very refreshing and battery charging event for me. I learnt a lot. It was a treat to hear from Srila Prabhupada’s disciples. I felt cared for. I got a lot of inspiration. I was so impressed by the service attitude of the pujari matajis and all the young girls.

**Anuradha dd:**

It is amazing how we all live in our own “bubble” (comfort zone) and even though we may be in the same community since years we don’t actually know each other or even have some warped misconceptions about each other! The retreat offers a spiritually safe environment where we happily can let down our barriers and connect with each other in a deep and meaningful way thereby we feel encouraged, enthused, strengthened, enlivened, valued, included, etc., etc. There was a wonderful family atmosphere. To hear Krishna katha with other sincere devotees is so relishable and invaluable! It helps us make spiritual progress and allows us to become a strong support for each other. Many elderly matajis are suffering physically and mentally but are determined to soldier on. The Krsna conscious ingredient is irreplaceable. It is great that Vaishnavi qualities are being taught and practiced—such a balm on the heart in this environment that we live in.

Anuradha

I loved the altar. Radha Govinda were absolutely beautiful. Everything was organized so nicely and smoothly. Very impressive! No inconvenience at all! I felt like on a holiday and appreciated that I could relaxe for a few days with no anxieties! The staff were happy and enthusiastic and very cheerfully presented everything so nicely. I loved the morning katha and the kirtanas. The lovely association triumphed over the cold rain and so it didn’t matter that we couldn’t go to Ter Kadamba. But what I really like is that it’s a “politically free” retreat and there are no hate discussions about men, authorities, etc. Just plain sweet Krsna Consciousness delivered by a variety of speakers, from sober to philosophical, to practical, humorous.

**Divya:**

I felt very happy to be here. It was my first experience in the association of so many Vaishnavis from all around the world. This is the first time my parents allowed me to associate with devotees and stay out of town without worrying about my protection. Some of my problems and mind sets which were really difficult to deal with and were putting me down got sorted out and I achieved strength through the discussion of such sensitive topics. We could do what we want to do without worrying about restrictions.

**Radhika Prasad dd:**

 My realization is how Shrila Prabhupad has touched the hearts of so many souls/living entities, and is transforming their hearts into Vaishnavis. This sanga of devotees is very uplifting and inspiring. I feel empowered to serve devotees, Guru, Srila Prabhupada and Krishna. This sanga is very special and intimate with no males—only Krishna as Purusha. The matajis are all so simple and spiritual. Mataji association is powerful and elevating to the soul. The akhanda kirtana was most amazing. I felt like I was transported to the spiritual world. Thank you for your selfless service to the Vaishnavis. I feel that I need to come for this retreat again and again. I need good association that reminds me of Krishna and this retreat has worked out perfectly.

**Purnima dd:**

This is my first time on the retreat and I wasn’t sure what I was going to get, but I must say I got a lot. I got a lot of association from the senior devotees in the form of katha. I met many wonderful Vaishnavis who are enthusiastic about Krsna consciousness. Seeing the new devotees taking up Krsna consciousness so seriously reminded me of my old days in Krsna consciousness. After a long time I got to attend mangala arati. There was such a nice, wonderful Krsna conscious atmosphere, away from any type of politics. Sitting in the lap of Govardhana listening to the pastimes of Krishna returning from the pasturing grounds was very wonderful, taking us back 5000 years in Vrindavan. At the same time the prayers of Prahlada Maharaja helped us a lot as sadhakas.

**Chandramukhi:**

 The Vaishnavi retreat 2015 in Jatipura, Govardhan was my very first retreat that I ever have been to and it was a wonderful experience. Being in the association of so many nice Vaishnavis of all ages, from all over the world, was very inspiring and I got to make many new Vaishnavi friends. The classes were inspiring and we got lots of new things to learn from them. The kirtan was ecstatic and the prasadam delicious. It was a time which will make memories. The teachers were very nice. Prashanta mataji was telling the pastimes of Krishna in such a wonderful way. Narayani mataji’s classes were very instructive and inspiring. Sukhavaha mataji and Gaurangi mataji made us ponder upon problems and situations in life and with their nice instructions opened a whole new perspective of how to look at things. Overall it was wonderful. Personally I found the kirtans were the best. So many matajis sang so beautifully. It was one of a kind experience and I hope to be able to come again next year and the year after that and every year, if possible. I pray to Krishna that I may get the association of all these wonderful matajis time and time again. Thank you very much to all the organizers for organizing such a wonderful festival.

**Meena Chand:**

This retreat is awesome and full of inspiration. It is a powerhouse of energy. Every second was a jubilant, spiritual time. I especially loved the association of senior disciples. The retreat helped me to catch the mood of Srila Prabhupada, great Vaishnavis and Lord Chaitanya.

**Madhu Malati dd:**

 It is a wonderful program. I hope more and more Vaishnavis get the opportunity to participate in it. Personally I would like to come every year and bring more and more devotees along with me.