



## ABOUT THE NAMCHAK RETREAT RANCH

The Namchak Retreat Ranch provides a peaceful and serene place for teachers and students to come together for learning, meditation, and practice. Situated on 8,900 acres on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Hot Springs, Montana, the Retreat Ranch hosts teachers and students for learning, meditation, and practice. With the breathtaking Mission Mountains as a backdrop, the Namchak Retreat Ranch provides a sustainable and sacred space to share the teachings of the Namchak lineage, help people live happier lives, and, ultimately, to end suffering.

In English, 'Namchak' means "sky iron," or meteorite. It refers to a branch of traditional Tibetan Buddhism called the Nyingma school of Buddhism, the oldest of the four schools of Tibetan Buddhism. Namchak is a lineage within the Nyingma school. Tulku Sangak Rinpoche, a Tibetan Buddhist lama, is the world lineage holder for the Namchak tradition and the spiritual director of the Retreat Ranch. Namchak Khenpo, Rinpoche's brother and Dharma Heir, serves as the resident Vajra Teacher and Lama Tsomo, a Westerner ordained by Rinpoche and co-founder of the Namchak Foundation, serve as vital members of the team building the Retreat Ranch and its programs.

Many years ago, Lama Tsomo and Tulku Sangak\* Rinpoche put in motion plans to develop a major three-year retreat center for people to learn the Dharma from the very foundational levels, starting with the Four Noble Truths to Dzogchen practices and much deeper practices that take years to learn. The three-year retreat will eventually be an option at the Ranch. This type of retreat allows students to go much deeper with their practice, which would take decades to do outside of retreat. During three-year retreat, students study the full spectrum of Vajrayana practices, from the preliminaries to the highest teaching of Dzogchen.

\*Sometimes spelled "Sang-Ngag"

## **Land Acknowledgement**

We recognize that the Retreat Ranch sits on the ancestral homeland of the Salish, Kootenai, and Kalispel peoples. The Salish placename for Hot Springs is Nayyákw, ‘place of the hot spring coming out.’ The Hellgate Treaty of 1855 established the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the Flathead Indian Reservation. Following the Hellgate Treaty of 1855, land dispossession and attempts of ethnocide against the Salish and other tribes were made in efforts to acquire land. We acknowledge the harms and mistakes of the colonial past, and we dedicate ourselves to move forward collectively with tribal communities in a spirit of reconciliation.

## **Namchak’s Commitment to Sustainability** Building Materials and Permaculture

Namchak’s commitment to sustainability and the environment will remain at the forefront of its operations and land management practices. Many years ago, Namchak began with a broad natural resources assessment to better understand the types of native vegetation and wildlife habitat on the property. From that assessment, Namchak implemented comprehensive land management strategies, including riparian restoration, noxious weed removal, native reseeding, and replacement of barbed wire with wildlife-friendly fencing.

Namchak selects efficient and sustainable materials designed to last for 200 years and will maximize the use of solar energy. A portion of the Retreat Ranch’s building foundations are made of recycled palettes called Faswall instead of typical concrete forms. However, Namchak’s commitment to sustainability goes well beyond construction materials and regularly assesses the long-term impact on the environment and ways to reduce its impact on the environment.

As stewards of the land, permaculture is a staple in the Retreat Ranch infrastructure. Permaculture is permanent agriculture, prioritizing caring for the Earth and its inhabitants. Instead of typical monoculture-style practices of growing swaths of one variety of fruit or vegetable, spraying with pesticides, and harvesting, permaculture mimics natural ecosystems to form a food-producing system. Modeled after a forest ecosystem, it has various layers that nurture and depend on one another as a closed-loop system. Permaculture follows a guild planting system, meaning plants that have beneficial relationships with each other are planted close together to support each other to achieve a truly sustainable farming system.

In the future, Retreat Ranch guests will first see a dharma-focused Welcome Park adorned with statues of Guru Padmasambhava (Guru Rinpoche), Yeshe Tsogyal, Mandāravā, and Buddha Shakyamuni (historical Buddha), along with a prayer wheel house, walking paths, and permaculture landscaping elements.