



Good to Know

Karma Berchen Ling – Diamond Way Buddhism Center in Greece

You will always find the latest information at www.berchenling.org

1. Accommodation & Prices
2. Equipment
3. Location & How to get there

Karma Berchen Ling (KBL) can be a very challenging place concerning the weather conditions. It is also very remote and therefore not that easy to reach. Please read the following information very carefully if you plan to come to Karma Berchen Ling.

Accommodation & Prices

Retreats

- In autumn, winter and early spring you can stay in one of the two houses, but you will have to provide your own food. Please find out in advance if someone will be at KBL during your planned visit and what you will need to bring along.
- *Registration*
 - Very important: when planning a retreat in autumn, winter and early spring, be sure to write an e-mail to BerchenLing@diamondway-center.org.
 - Contact Jan at +30 695 720 9904 beforehand concerning the current accommodations for guests at KBL. Otherwise, you may find that no one is there when you arrive.
- *Prices*
 - €7 per person per day for staying in the house
 - Shuttle from Athens airport to KBL (including the possibility to go shopping) – one way: €60
 - Shuttle from Xylokastro/Kiato one way: €20
- Contact Jan at +30 695 720 9904.

Building period

Food is provided by the team organising the course or building period. Depending on how many people are on site, you may be able to stay in the houses, but you also might have to sleep in your tent. Therefore, bring a tent regardless.

- *Registration*
 - Contact the person responsible for registration, which is the current house keeper. You will find the responsible person at, otherwise please contact Jan at +30 695 720 9904.
- *Prices*
 - €17 per person per day for staying in the house
 - €15 per person per day for camping

- Shuttle from Xylokaastro/Kiato to KBL (if someone can pick you up from KBL) – one way: €20

Courses

Three meals per day will be provided, and there will be a small shop and a snack bar for basic necessities. We cannot offer you rooms or a nearby hotel. You will have to sleep either in your own tent or in the meditation tent during the course.

Equipment

As KBL is located at an altitude of around 1,270 meters, the nights can be rather chilly even in the usually very hot Greek summer and outright cold in September. The area is known by the locals as *the place of the five winds*, and we have experienced a few really heavy storms here. The location is very remote, and there is no large road, no shop nor supermarket anywhere near. This requires the organisation of special preparations and equipment beforehand.

Make sure to bring

- a strong and waterproof tent capable of surviving at least medium-strength storms
- a warm sleeping bag (one you would use in spring/autumn in Central Europe)
- warm clothes for the evenings
- a wind and water-resistant jacket
- a flashlight
- solid shoes
- sun protection: a hat and strong sunblock
- enough cash for your entire stay
- If you take medication on a regular basis, please make sure that you bring enough for the entire time you plan to spend in Greece.

What you definitely do not need

The infrastructure of the centre does not have the capacity to offer Central European standards for our guests. Water is a rare resource at Karma Berchen Ling. Therefore, be prepared and bring enough clothes (especially t-shirts) to avoid unnecessary washing. The sanitary as well as the electricity situation are best described as *primitive camping conditions*. Therefore, please DO NOT bring:

- electric kettles, water-boilers
- hair dryers
- or any other device that needs extra energy

Location & How to get there

- We apologize for not being able to pick you up from the airport, but public transport is easy and good. However, don't put too much trust in traffic signs, since they are often outdated and misleading. Always ask.
- If you arrive in Athens after 22:00 local time, you will NOT make it to KBL on the same day with public transport/shuttle service. Please get in contact with our friends from the Athen's Sangha. They will try to accommodate you for one night in the center or give you advice on where to stay in Athens.
- If you departure from Athens before 9:00 am, you will NOT get to the airport in time with public transport on the same day. You have to travel to Athens on the day before your

departure unless you find a private lift by car to the airport. Please get in contact with the local Sangha if you need help with your accommodation.

- Please, send an email to our friends at the Athen's-Acropolis center.

Buddhist Center Athens-Acropolis

Lagoumitzi 42 str. | GR-11745 Athens

E-mail: Athens-Acropolis@diamondway-center.org

Phone: +30 (210) 9238247

Mobile: +30 (698) 2502727, +30 (697) 2921847

By Train

- You can go from Athens airport to Kiato by suburban railway. First train is 5:44 and then every hour; last train is 22:44. Travel time to Kiato 1:34'.
- In Kiato you have to take the bus, toward Patras, which departs in front of the train station. Get off the bus at the first stop after 25 min in Xylokastro. The bus leaves 5 times a day, at 7:37, 9:55, 12:37, 17:45, 19:45.
- Tip: Try to catch a train at the airport at 5:44, 7:44, 10:44, 15:44 or 17:44 and you will have direct connections until Xylokastro without waiting times at boring stations! If you take a train between 11:00 and 13:00 you will have to wait hours in Kiato for the connection bus to Xylokastro. If you take a train later then 17:45 at the Athens airport, you will miss the last bus from Kiato to Xylokastro. You can take a taxi for ~ € 15 to get to Xylokastro. We recommend to take between 11:00 and 13:00 and after 17:45 the bus to get from Athens airport to Xylokastro.
- In Xylokastro, you have to walk 5 min to the church area (walk toward the sea and then turn left until you reach the church.)
- You buy your ticket at the airport for €10. A round-trip ticket costs €18. If you are under 18 or over 65, you get a 50% discount. Groups (more than 2 people) get a one-way ticket for €9 per person. The bus from Kiato to Xylokastro is € 3.40.

By Bus

You can also come to Xylokastro by bus, changing buses once. Take an express bus (X93 Athens Airport – Kifisos Intercity Bus Station Express) from the airport to Athens central bus station, which runs almost every 20 minutes during the day (€5, about a one-hour ride). Get off at the final stop.

Go to the ticket office for "Korinthos" and buy a ticket to Xylokastro (one way €11.90, a round-trip ticket €20 per person, including a seat reservation). First bus leaves at 7:30, 8:30, ... every hour until 21:30. It is a beautiful trip along the coast: travel time between 1.5 – 2.5 hours depending on traffic. Get off at the "Cinema" bus stop in Xylokastro. Walk toward the water, turn right and within 2 min you will have reached our meeting point — the church area (seaside).

Our shuttle fees

- Pick up from Xylokastro/Kiato: €20
- Pick up from Yelini: €5

By Taxi (for the last part)

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Way from From Athens Airport to Xylokastro

From the airport take the highway in direction Athens (Highway nr. 6). Stay on the highway in direction Elefsina and afterwards always direction Corinth and then always direction Patras. Take the exit Xylokastro.

Way from Xylokastro to KBL

- Take the exit Xylokastro and turn left at the first crossing. After you pass under the highway you turn left in direction Trikala. Follow the road for 6.7 km.
- After a combination of sharp curves stay straight in direction Trikala. The street gets bigger and it has one proper lane in each direction. Follow this road for 11.7 km. You will know you are on the right way, if you see the BP Petrol station on your left-hand side after 1.2 km.
- After 11.7 km when the main road turns left in direction Trikala you stay right and immediately take the next turn left in front of a restaurant.
- After 400m, when the street ends, take a sharp left and cross a small bridge.
- Stay on this street for 5.3 km until you come to a small village called Sofiana.
- The street ends and you take a left turn in direction of Yelini passing a spring on your left-hand side and stay on the road for 5.9 km
- After 4.1 km keep left, when the road splits into left and right. After 5.9 km turn left at the the spring.
- After 300m turn right in front of a bar/restaurant and immediately turn left and go up the road (quite steep).
- After 1.5 km the asphalt road ends and turns into a dirt road.
- Another 500 m and you made it!!!

Way from Patras (Ferry Boat) to KBL

If you plan to come by car, there are ferries going from Ancona and Venice in Italy to Patras. When you arrive at Patras Port, follow the national road to Athens. At km 142, take the Derveni exit (see map below), and turn towards Eurostina/Rozena up into the mountains. When you reach the village Evrostina, you can stop for a coffee at Yorgos’ restaurant; he’s a good friend of ours. Continue up the curvy street into the mountains. After around 5 km you’ll see the large water tanks of a fish farm on the right-hand side. Turn left there into a bumpy, unpaved country road. After about 9 km, winding its way through the rocky environment you’ll reach Karma Berchen Ling. Whenever there is a turn, keep right and proceed uphill until you can see the centre and the entrance gate. We will put up KBL signs to make it easy to find. If you’ll be using public transportation, go to Patras bus station (Zaimi Str. 2) and buy a ticket to Xylokastro (€5.50). Usually there is a bus that departs every 30 minutes, beginning at 5:00 in the morning until around midnight. Please be aware of the extra time (45 minutes) it takes to drive up to the mountain when planning your journey.