

CHINMAYA MISSION
OTTAWA

Nityam

.....Eternal



April 2024

UPCOMING EVENTS 2024

• Sri Chinmaya Jayanthi
108th year Celebrations - 8 May

• "Divine Sangeet" by
Shashank Subramanyam
12 May 4:30 PM
Please see Poster on p. 9

• "KRISHNA MAGIC"
Bala Vihar Summer Camp with
Swamini Supriyananda
15 to 19 July
Please see Poster on p. 9

A Memorable Trip to Trinidad

SPECIAL EDITION



Many CMO Families were fortunate to visit the Chinmaya Ashram in Trinidad and enjoy a very memorable Satsang with Swami Prakashanandaji! It was a fun-filled nature get-away as well! Our CMO Bala Vihar budding youth and some CMO Sevaks have shared a few of their experiences with pictures! Enjoy reading!

Work inspired does not know tiredness. The joy of work itself replenishes the true worker.

- Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda

Chinmaya study classes are specifically designed for children, youth and adults, and are held at
Chinmaya Bharati, 1088, Ogilvie Road, Ottawa, ON K1J 7P8.

For all the current week-day and Sunday classes, details are on page 10.

Email : Chinmaya.Ottawa@gmail.com

Website: www.chinmayaottawa.com



Jishnu:

The most memorable part of the trip to me was our time in the Tapovan ashram in the forest. We went hiking and collected coffee berries and cocoa beans, went on off-road vehicles, and swam in crystal clear waters.



One thing that changed my views was when we made hot chocolate out of cocoa beans.

I really understood how much effort and time went into making our everyday foods.



Ishaan:

Chacachacare Island was one of the most beautiful experiences I've ever had. For this trip, we woke up at 4:15 in the morning. The most fatiguing part of this trip were the wakeup times, we'd be waking up

at 4:00 A.M. pretty often. We got on the bus, and arrived at the port at 6:00 A.M. From there, we took a boat from the port to the island.

On the way to the island, the water was beautiful, and the islands surrounding us were stunning. Swami Ji had told us that this vacation was supposed to be half spiritual, and half get-away. However, on this little adventure we had, I think it was a beautiful mix of them both. When we got to the island, everybody had to jump off the boat, and go into the water in order to get to the island. Me and some others dove straight off the front, and swam around in the water until we were forced to get out.



The story of the island was told to us by Swami Ji. A long time ago, the island

had many different uses. It was discovered by Christopher Columbus, and was initially called the Port of Cats. The island had become a leper colony, and kept the men and women separate. The only remains of the island now, is the abandoned church, hospital, and the Hindu Temple that we visited



which was founded in 1945. The mandir was nice, and we had a satsang with Swami Ji in it as well.

Overall, the meaningful connections and conversations that I created with others on this trip was what made it appealing to me, and I can't wait to be back in the next couple years.



Vibhav:

My favorite or most memorable memory isn't just about one moment, but about spending an amazing eight days with my Chinmaya family in Trinidad. They welcomed me with such warmth that I felt like I belonged from the start. We visited cool places like Chacachacare Island, Maracas Beach, and Tapovan Ashram but what made these experiences something to cherish were the awesome people I was with.

During this trip, I learned how strong our bond is. We're not just friends – we're like a big spiritual family. Our shared love for Chinmaya Mission brought us together, no matter where we're from. I remember a line that Swami Prakashanandaji said: "When you talk about your trip to Trinidad, don't just say you went to their Ashram – say you visited our Ashram." This idea helps us feel even closer and reminds us of our unity.

This experience taught me that being part of a community and sharing special moments with others can make them even more meaningful. It's not just about the places we go; it's about the people we're with and the connections we share.



This part of the trip definitely changed my view on the future by making me more open-minded for upcoming similar events. I realized how hardworking everyone was to put this all together, including all the food; and the owners of the temple there on the island as well, had worked hard to clear the space out for us before we visited.

Lakshitha:

For me, the most memorable part of the trip was definitely visiting Chacachacare Island. I like this specific experience, because it was very unique compared to the others. On our way there, *we got to admire the beautiful sunrise behind the mountains as we traveled on a boat through the Caribbean Sea. Once we arrived, we got to take a swim in the emerald like waters. We then got to taste the delicious handmade meals, and the fresh juice made from real flowers.* And on the way back, although the views were still beautiful, the waters definitely got more tense, just making our experience even more unforgettable.





Hari:

This year, I created great memories in Trinidad with the Chinmaya family that will last me a lifetime. There were many exciting/ learning incidents/ experiences all through the Chinmaya Mission Trinidad trip. But, one adventure stood out to me; the trip through the rough mountainous terrains towards the Tapovan Ashram. When going there, we had two options, we could ride while remaining seated, or we could stand up and hang onto the hood of the truck to not fall off. I chose to stand up, and had an amazing time with friends. ***We saw many different types of trees, and even one of the biggest bamboo patches in Trinidad. Swami Ji took us for a tour to see the cocoa and coffee trees in the area as well. The fresh cocoa's taste was just immaculate.***



In between the tour, we got to play in the crystal clear river and I had a great time playing in the water with my friends. The lessons that Swami Ji taught were very interesting and captivating. Those lessons made me understand several things. ***I understood that grief and sadness are just materialistic behaviors. This came from the example of Lord Ram telling Tara not to cry over Bali. I also learned about the importance of satsang. It symbolizes that being in good company is of utmost importance.*** When Balram Uncle took Ishaan, Vibhav, Jishnu, Pranav, and I driving, we had an unexpected and crazy experience. During Vibhav's turn to drive the truck, he drove us into a ditch, flipping the truck sideways. Thankfully, no one got hurt.



In conclusion, my journey with the Chinmaya family in Trinidad has been nothing short of extraordinary. From the exhilarating rides through rugged terrains to the serene moments by crystal-clear rivers, Swami Ji's talks, hot chocolate using the freshly ground cocoa powder, Trini food, each experience has left an indelible mark on my heart. I am looking forward to having another trip with the Chinmaya family soon.



Vinuthna:

I loved Trinidad. It was easily one of the best trips in my life with everyday being something so unique that I had never seen before. To pick one experience that I found the most memorable is impossible for me. But, I think more than one specific experience or place, I felt like the selfless service that Swamiji and every other individual whom we met on that yatra showcased was extremely memorable for me.

While we were in Trinidad, we went up to Tapovan ashram, which is an ashram built in the mountains, literally in the middle of a rainforest. We first spent three hours on the road and then another three to four hours going up mountainous terrain with an unimaginable number of bumps and ditches. But, once we got there, the bumpy ride was forgotten in an instant. The beautiful forest with coffee and cocoa trees and freshwater streams that one can literally drink from, made everything seem more than worth it.

One of the most amazing things about the ashram is the fact that it was built completely by Swamiji and the rest of the Mission volunteers. Every single ounce of cement, paint, and every pillar was lugged up the mountain one by one in jeeps. This was oftentimes in the middle of the rainy season, where the jeeps would get stuck with half of the jeep submerged in water. Despite facing so many obstacles to build the ashram, they overcame them so gracefully without a single complaint all because they know that they are building it for a cause much greater than themselves.



Along with their dedication to the Mission, their dedication towards all of us yatris was also heart-warming. From waking up at early hours to cook some of the best food I have ever tasted from scratch every day, to spraying the Tapovan ashram with mosquito spray three days before we got there so that we would be comfortable, the hospitality and love they showed us was unforgettable. There was no need for Swamiji and all of the other volunteers to do any of that, but they did, out of the love and selflessness of their hearts. Overall, I hope that I can go back soon, and meanwhile inculcate more selfless service into my own life as well.



Bharathi Indukuri (CMO Sevak):
Our trip to Trinidad has been a LIFETIME experience.

I had no idea what to expect when our journey began, but I was excited to deepen my spiritual journey with the Chinmaya Family in the presence of Swamiji at the Ashram. *The first day was packed with memorable experiences, from being picked up at the airport and enjoying delicious meals served by dedicated sevaks, settling into our accommodations, and the much-awaited first Satsang with Swamiji.*

This was followed by a visit to the Caroni Bird Sanctuary in Northern Trinidad, where we were introduced to the *delightful Trini snacks, freshly prepared at the Ashram by a group of sevaks, individually packaged for each of us.* Then, a boat tour provided a magnificent bird-watching experience, leaving us in awe. The day ended with a wonderful dinner at the Ashram and another inspiring Satsang with Swamiji, making our first day extraordinary.

Every day brought its own unique experiences, ranging from early morning Aarti at the Radha Krishna premises, to yoga and meditation sessions, a visit to the Chinmaya Mission School for Saraswati Puja, and visits to the Temple on the Sea, Hanuman Temple, Maracas Beach, Chacachacare Island, Garam Masala Dine-In, a visit to Tapovan Ashram, and local shopping on our last day.



Cont'd next page...

Bharathi's thoughts Cont'd...

We had many memorable experiences... but the one that stands out the most for me is our bond with Swamiji, the Ashram sevaks, and other Chinmaya Mission members, creating an extended Chinmaya Family. Swamiji's emphasis on calling the Ashram 'ours' cultivated a sense of belonging.

His selfless dedication was totally amazing whether through guiding spiritual practices or when preparing delicious meals such as:

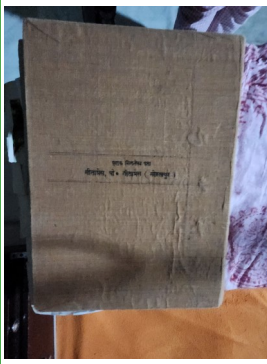
- . Making dosa dough from scratch and cooking dosas
- . Hand-picking coffee and cocoa beans to brew fresh coffee or hot chocolate
- . Preparing doubles - the famous Trini food from scratch on the mountain peaks
- . Baking stone-oven pizzas from the ground up
- . Preparing masala chai in the mornings at Tapovan Ashram



Swamiji's excellent leadership skills as evident in his lecture delivery and the organization of events at various locations, provided us with a blended experience. Also, the presence of the dedicated team of Ashram sevaks, who led us through different places and worked tirelessly to create memorable moments, was extraordinary.

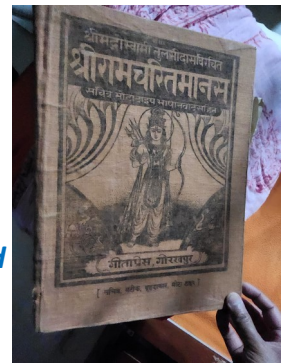
Additionally, our group had the chance to prepare meals for everyone, which further solidified our bond as a large Chinmaya Family. Serving Swamiji the meals we made added to the significance of the experience. **Overall, it was a blissful journey, made possible by Swamiji's guidance and the exceptional Trini Family, who went out of their way to ensure we had the best experience. I am truly grateful to be a part of the expansive Chinmaya Family.**





Jayasri Sundaram (CMO Sevak):

These are a couple of pictures of the Ramacharita Manas book that Swamiji read to us in Tapovan. The book was brought from India by one of the Chinmaya Mission Trinidad member's great grandparents when they first came to Trinidad!! I was amazed at how the culture is preserved and transferred through the generations, they must have had room to just bring important items on their ship journey!



Deepa Panch (CMO Sevak):

Trinidad is a beautiful Caribbean island which got its name from the three (Trini) mountain peaks; It is so far away from India, yet this small island (500mile x 1000mile = 0.5 million Square miles) houses almost 500 temples! This made me wonder, if the name Trinidad really represented Brahma, Vishnu & Shiva the "Trimurthys", or the three dads of Hindu Culture!!!



We are all familiar with our Chinmaya Pledge which says, "producing more than what we consume and giving more than what we take..." and Swami Prakashananda ji is always giving and giving, as is well evident from all the pictures. As they say, a picture can speak a thousand words. Observing Swamiji and his selfless service, we come to realize he IS a living example of "May thy grace and blessings flow through us to the world around us".

Hari Om!



Chinmaya Mission Ottawa Presents
Summer Camp 2024

Krishna Magic

July 15 – 19, 2024

Grades 1-8
8:45am – 4:30pm

Cost: \$300/child
(includes \$50 non-refundable deposit)

LIMITED SPOTS!

Presenting, for the first time ever, the most amazing and talented teacher!



Swamini Supriyananda
From Hong Kong!

Chinmaya Bharati
1088 Ogilvie Rd, Ottawa, ON K1J 7P8

Please visit for
volunteering/registration:
www.chinmayaottawa.com

OTTAWA SANGEET & CHINMAYA MISSION OTTAWA PRESENT

DIVINE SANGEET

A SPIRITUAL MUSICAL JOURNEY WITH MAESTRO
SHASHANK SUBRAMANYAM

12 MAY 2024
4:30 PM - 6:30 PM



SHRI B. GURU RAGHAVENDRA
MRIDANGAM



B.U. GANESH PRASAD
VIOLIN



TICKETS: \$35
PHONE: 613-888-7482
EMAIL: cmottawa.mail@gmail.com



RICHCRAFT THEATRE
245 centrum blvd,
Orleans ON

**Chinmaya Mission Ottawa offers the following programs from Sept. 2023 to June 2024
to foster our spiritual achievement:**

Sunday Balavihar: Every Sunday at 10:30 AM. In-person classes begin on Sept. 10 at Chinmaya Bharati located at 1088 Ogilvie Drive. Study classes for children from JK to Grade 12 will be on Hindu Culture, Values, and Philosophy through inspiring stories, interactive discussions, creative activities, fun games, arts and crafts, bhajans, chanting, etc. Adult study groups will study texts on Vedanta. **To register your family, please go to ChinmayaOttawa.com.**

Young Adults: Every Monday at 7:30 PM. For university students and young adults (17 to 30). In-person classes at Chinmaya Bharati. Please contact Shailesh Sutarwala at hariomss@gmail.com or 613-591-5961 for details.

Yoga: Every Tuesday at 6:00 PM. Based on the teachings of Patanjali, classes cover yogic jogging, stretches, and pranayama (breath control). In your home on your yoga mat and give it a try... Starting on Sept. 12. Please contact Anil Agarwal at agarwal.central@gmail.com for more information and meeting link.

Vedic chanting classes: Every Tuesday from 7:15 PM to 8:00 PM at Chinmaya Bharati Ottawa. Classes commence from 12th Sept. We will learn to chant Shanti Mantras and Rudram with proper vedic intonations. Please contact Panch Athmaraman 613-698-2658 or Bina Sutarwala 613-591 5961 for more information. Our goal is to be ready with Rudram chanting before the 2024 Maha Shivaratri.

Bhagavad Geeta: Every Wednesday at 7:00 PM. Starting Chapter 12 (Bhakti Yoga - The Yoga of Devotion) on Sept. 13. Video lectures of Swami Chinmayananda along with discussions. Please contact Anil Parekh at parekh.anil@gmail.com or 613-738-7466 for more information and a zoom meeting link.

Rise to the Geeta: Every Tuesday and Thursday at 6:00 AM EST. We cover all 18 chapters of the Bhagawad Geeta. Following the Holy Geeta by Chinmaya Mission a verse or two is first read and then we watch Swami Chinmayananda's video for a more well-rounded understanding of the verse. Please contact Bina at hariombina@gmail.com or 613-591-5961 for more information and a zoom meeting link.

Revelling repeatedly and for long periods in the beauty of Nature, the mind will finally turn to the Creator. Forgetting the external world, it will get immersed in the thought of the Auspicious One.

-Swami Tapovan Maharaj

Use the world as your field to strive and serve in such a way that the work polishes your mind and makes it more balanced in its poise.

-Swami Chinmayananda

By associating with learned and wise people, and by serving them, we will gain humility, spiritual knowledge and dispassion, which will help us to get rid of "I" and "mine".

-Swami Tejomayananda

Whatever happens in your life, there is something in it for you to learn. And, who knows, it could actually be protecting you from a greater tragedy. Everything is truly, naturally, and invariably for the best.

-Swami Swaroopananda



Our mission is to provide to individuals from any background, the wisdom of Vedanta and the practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, enabling them to become positive contributors to society.

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**Om Shri Chinmaya
Sadgurave Namaha**