



NĀMARŪPA YĀTRĀ 2015

An epic pilgrimage in two parts
from Varanasi to the Himalayas
various options during October 2015

&

an opportunity to combine the yatra with a special
ASHTANGA YOGA SADHANA RETREAT



with **SHRI R. SHARATH JOIS**
in Uttarkashi, Himalayas, India
October 12 - 17, 2015

presented by


NĀMARŪPA

&

**ASHTANGA
YOGA**
NEW YORK

Yatra, Tirtha and Darshan

The ancient Puranas of India are huge volumes containing stories of the makings of the universe as well as thrilling tales of innumerable gods and goddesses. The geography of the Puranas coincides with that of the entire Indian sub-continent. Countless places mentioned in these ancient texts are fully alive today and are important places of yatra (pilgrimage). Within their sanctums, worship of the resident gods and goddesses is performed daily in a tradition that reaches back to antiquity and beyond. These places where the sacred stories unfolded are sometimes called tirthas. A tirtha is a place of crossing over and most literally refers to fords of rivers. It also refers to a spiritual crossing place, where the divine is more easily intuited, recognized or experienced. Daily, vast numbers of yatis (pilgrims) visit the sacred places to have darshan of their favorite gods or goddesses. Darshan is both seeing and being seen by the deity. It is a source of spiritual renewal. Namarupa Yatras are centered around the experience of darshan.

Namarupa Yatra 2015

An epic pilgrimage with various options and a unique opportunity to combine the yatra with a 5-day **Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat** led by **Shri R. Sharath Jois** organized by Namarupa and Ashtanga Yoga New York to be held in Uttarkashi, Himalayas.

Yatra Options during October 2015 (see Itineraries pp. 4-5)

1st - 30th Full Yatra + Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat

1st - 19th Plains Yatra + Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat

8th - 30th Mountains Yatra + Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat

1st - 16th Plains Yatra

14th - 30th Mountains Yatra

8th - 19th Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat Yatra

12th - 17th Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat

Go here to register:

<http://namarupa.org/product/yatra-2015-register-deposit/>

Yatra guides

Robert Moses (co-publisher of Namarupa) is a veteran guide of multiple yatra through North and South India. Robert has spent much time in India since 1982, including many years as a renunciate student of Swami Vishnu-devananda. He currently lives with his wife and three children in Dublin, NH, USA.

Radha-kunda das is a renunciate disciple of Sri Radhanath Swami of Sri Sri Radha Gopinath Temple in Chowpatty, Mumbai, and is our indispensable guide, having organized countless yatra all over India.

Swami Janardhanananda lives in his ashram in Uttarkashi and will help us in all aspects of the yatra and program in that region.

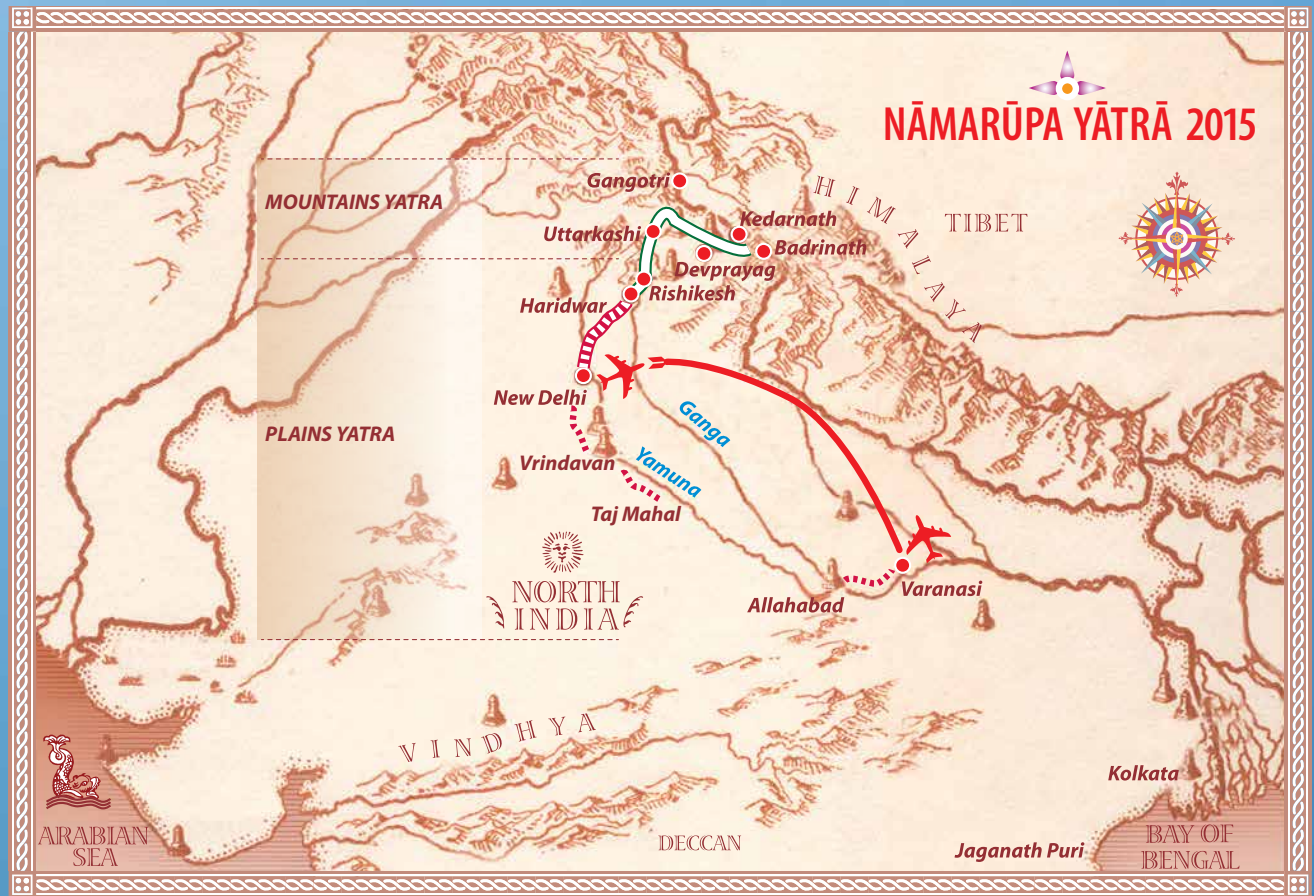
Yoginder Rana is a native of Uttarakhand and lives with his family in Rudraprayag. For the past few years, since the Kedarnath floods, Yoginder has been working with relief efforts and has an intimate knowledge of the people and places of the entire region.

Yoga and Meditation: Throughout the yatra we hold early morning Mysore ashtanga yoga classes. Beginners will be guided through the basics. Yatis who practice a different style of yoga are welcome to do self-practice along with the group. We will practice sitting meditation and pranayama as much as is practically possible.

The Places We Plan to Visit (Unplanned places are in between!)

We'll meet in **New Delhi** and take some time to greet each other and rest from our long flights. Then we'll head out to visit Hanuman Mandir, purchase some Indian style clothing at the Khadi (homespun) store, and get ready for our adventure. A short flight will bring us to the world's oldest continuously inhabited city, **Varanasi**. We'll be staying right at Assi Ghat with a view across the Ganga and all the way northwards along the ghats. The cremation fires burn day and night here and Lord Siva is said to roam them whispering His mantra in the ears of the departed. Our stay will include an evening boat ride along the Ganga, past the burning pyres, to witness Ganga Arati. We'll walk through the old city to have darshan of Kashi Vishwanath and Annapurna, visit Hanuman at the Sankat Mochan temple, and have time to shop in the maze of bazaars. A day trip will take us to **Allahabad**, where every 12 years the Kumbha Mela takes place at the confluence of the Ganga, Yamuna and underground Saraswati Rivers: An auspicious place for a holy bath. After flying back to Delhi we will board a bus to **Vrindavan**, playground of Lord Krishna and the gopis. Here there are seemingly countless temples, sacred places and ashrams. We will have darshan at a few of the more important places and take a day trip to the nearby **Taj Mahal**. Then it is back to Delhi's ever bustling train station to board the Shatabdi Express to **Haridwar**, gateway to the abode of the gods. Our accommodation is in the heart of the bazaar, right on the Ganga canal where you can safely take a holy dip. We'll visit Manasa Devi Temple and join the throngs for evening Ganga Arati. On a day trip to **Kankhal** we'll visit Daksha Mahadev Temple and the samadhi shrine of Ananda Mayi Ma. Then we board a bus to travel on to **Rishikesh** to meditate at the samadhi shrine of **H.H. Sri Swami Sivananda** and ask his blessings for a safe journey into the Himalayas. Swami Sivananda wrote over 300 books on all aspects of Indian thought and sent many of his disciples around the world, helping to spread yoga. From Rishikesh the road begins to climb and wind, higher and higher through the foothills, often alongside the swiftly flowing Ganga, all the way to the town of **Uttarkashi** where we will halt for the **Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat**. The retreat will be held in Tapovan Kuti, where the great sage **H.H. Swami Tapovananda**, guru of **H.H. Sri Swami Chinmayananda**, spent his days in meditation and study. **Shri R. Sharath Jois**, grandson of **Shri K. Pattabhi Jois** will teach two primary led classes each morning. Sharath will also give talks each day after class at the ashram. Uttarkashi is home to many Vedic and Sanskrit scholars, who spend their days immersed in study and service. They will be coming to give talks on yoga and Vedanta philosophy. Music and dance programs, showcasing the local traditions of the region, will be held. There will be time for walks through the surrounding Himalayan mountains. There are several sacred and important temples located in Uttarkashi, foremost of which is **Kashi Viswanath**. Visits to the temples and special pujas and fire ceremonies will be arranged for our group. After the Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat, we journey from Uttarkashi to **Guptakashi** where Lord Siva hid from the Pandavas. Here we'll have darshan

of Ardhanareeswara and Viswanath. We'll pass through **Chopta** with incredible views of the snowy Himalayan peaks. A short hike will bring us to **Tunganath**, second most important of the Panch Kedar, the five holy abodes of Siva in the Garwhal Himalaya. Then we'll halt at **Gaurikund** before taking our 15-km trek (or pony ride) to **Kedarnath**. This is one of the twelve spontaneously manifested Jyotirlingams. It is the most important of the Panch Kedar and Lord Siva is known here as Kedareshwara. The large lingam is in the shape of the hump of Siva's bull Nandi. This impressive stone temple is believed to have been originally built by the Pandavas and later reconstructed by Adi Guru Sankaracarya. Descending from Kedarnath, we'll visit **Triyugi Narayan**, an abode of Lord Vishnu where he witnessed the marriage of Siva and Parvati and in which there is a sacred marriage fire said to be burning continuously since the time of the marriage, three yugas ago! You can still witness the ceremony by offering pieces of wood into the sacred fire. On to **Rudraprayag** at the confluence of the Mandakini and Alakananda Rivers. Here are the Rudranatha and Jagdambi Devi temples. Rudraprayag is also the family home of Yoginder Rana, and at his request, we will visit his home and meet his family. After that we reach **Kartikswami** dedicated to Kartikeya, son of Lord Siva, who offered his bones here in devotion to his father. Hundreds of bells in the temple can constantly be heard ringing in the mountain air. En route to Badrinath we will stop at **Joshimath** "monastery of light" which is where Adi Guru Sankaracarya established one of his four original maths and where he attained enlightenment in a cave under a wish-fulfilling tree. There is also a temple of Lord Narasimhadeva here which is self-manifested and said to have been consecrated by Sankaracarya. Going further we will pass through Vishnuprayag, Govinda Ghat, Hemakund - holy to Sikhs, Pandukeswara where the Pandavas were born and Hanuman Chatti where Bhima met Hanumanji. Here Hanuman meditated in order to please Lord Badrinath. Finally we reach **Badrinath**, abode of Badri Vishal (Narayana) and one of the very most sacred shrines in all of India. The Lord is sitting in padmasana and is a self-manifested shalagrama-shila installed by Sankaracarya who found the idol in the waters of the Alaknanda river. Since that event, the priests here are Nambudri Brahmins from Kerala, South India. This is also an important place to make offerings to one's ancestors. Many sages and saints of India have come here to meditate and it is said that when the temple is closed during the six winter months of the year the devas come here to continue worship and keep the ghee lamps burning. Descending from these sacred shrines of the Himalayas, we will stop at **Deoprayag** where Rama and Lakshmana performed a yajna to purify themselves after killing the demon king Ravana who had been a brahmin in his previous life. Here there is a temple to Raghunatha. Before reaching Rishikesh we will stop to meditate in **Vasishta Guha** where one of the seven celestial sages of India, Vasishta, did tapas. Then it is through Rishikesh, Haridwar, and to Delhi by train to catch our flights back to our homes and loved ones, and bring them all the blessings from these sacred places which devas, sages and pilgrims have been visiting for countless ages. Om Tat Sat 🙏



Full Yatra + Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat

1 Thursday	Arrive New Delhi
2 Friday	New Delhi
3 Saturday	New Delhi - Varanasi
4 Sunday	Varanasi
5 Monday	Varanasi - Allahabad Day Trip
6 Tuesday	Varanasi - New Delhi - Vrindavan
7 Wednesday	Vrindavan
8 Thursday	Vrindavan - Taj Mahal Day Trip
9 Friday	Vrindavan - New Delhi - Haridwar
10 Saturday	Haridwar - Kankhal Day Trip
11 Sunday	Haridwar - Rishikesh - Uttarkashi
12 Monday	Uttarkashi
13 Tuesday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
14 Wednesday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
15 Thursday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
16 Friday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
17 Saturday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
18 Sunday	Uttarkashi - Guptakashi
19 Monday	Guptakashi - Chopta - Tungnath - Guptakashi
20 Tuesday	Guptakashi - Kedarnath
21 Wednesday	Kedarnath - Triyugi Narayan - Guptakashi
22 Thursday	Guptakashi- Rudraprayag
23 Friday	Rudraprayag - Kartikswami - Rudraprayag
24 Saturday	Rudraprayag - Joshimath - Badrinath
25 Sunday	Badrinath
26 Monday	Badrinath - Rudraprayag
27 Tuesday	Rudraprayag - Deoprayag - Vasishta - Rishikesh
28 Wednesday	Rishikesh
29 Thursday	Rishikesh - Haridwar
30 Friday	Haridwar - New Delhi - Depart

30 Days \$3900**Plains Yatra + Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat**

1 Thursday	Arrive New Delhi
2 Friday	New Delhi
3 Saturday	New Delhi - Varanasi
4 Sunday	Varanasi
5 Monday	Varanasi - Allahabad Day Trip
6 Tuesday	Varanasi - New Delhi - Vrindavan
7 Wednesday	Vrindavan
8 Thursday	Vrindavan - Taj Mahal Day Trip
9 Friday	Vrindavan - New Delhi - Haridwar
10 Saturday	Haridwar - Kankhal Day Trip
11 Sunday	Haridwar - Rishikesh - Uttarkashi
12 Monday	Uttarkashi
13 Tuesday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
14 Wednesday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
15 Thursday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
16 Friday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
17 Saturday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
18 Sunday	Uttarkashi - Haridwar
19 Monday	Haridwar - New Delhi - Depart

19 Days \$3150**Mountains Yatra + Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat**

8 Thursday	Arrive New Delhi
9 Friday	New Delhi - Haridwar
10 Saturday	Haridwar - Kankhal Day Trip
11 Sunday	Haridwar - Rishikesh - Uttarkashi
12 Monday	Uttarkashi
13 Tuesday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
14 Wednesday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
15 Thursday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
16 Friday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
17 Saturday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
18 Sunday	Uttarkashi - Guptakashi
19 Monday	Guptakashi - Chopta - Tungnath - Guptakashi
20 Tuesday	Guptakashi - Kedarnath
21 Wednesday	Kedarnath - Triyugi Narayan - Guptakashi
22 Thursday	Guptakashi- Rudraprayag
23 Friday	Rudraprayag - Kartikswami - Rudraprayag
24 Saturday	Rudraprayag - Joshimath - Badrinath
25 Sunday	Badrinath
26 Monday	Badrinath - Rudraprayag
27 Tuesday	Rudraprayag - Deoprayag - Vasishta - Rishikesh
28 Wednesday	Rishikesh
29 Thursday	Rishikesh - Haridwar
30 Friday	Haridwar - New Delhi - Depart

23 Days \$3550

Plains Yatra

16 Days \$2700

Mountains Yatra

[illegible]

17 Days \$2500

Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat Yatra

8 Thursday	Arrive New Delhi
9 Friday	New Delhi - Haridwar
10 Saturday	Haridwar - Kankhal day trip
11 Sunday	Haridwar - Rishikesh - Uttarkashi
12 Monday	Uttarkashi
13 Tuesday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
14 Wednesday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
15 Thursday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
16 Friday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
17 Saturday	Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat
18 Sunday	Uttarkashi-Haridwar
19 Monday	Haridwar - New Delhi - Depart

12 Days \$1800 Ashram accommodation

12 Days \$1900 Hotel accommodation

Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat: October 12-17

Includes accommodation, meals & all programs

Make your own travel arrangements to arrive by October 12.

6 Days **\$850 Ashram accommodation**

6 Days **\$950 Hotel accommodation**



Ganga at Uttarkashi, Himalayas, viewed from Tapovan Kuti, Chinmayananda Ashram. © Robert Moses

Cost of the Yatra: We want to keep your expenses reasonable but your stay comfortable. Lodging will be Indian-style, comfortable but not luxurious. Meals will be Indian vegetarian. Internal travel will be by comfortable vehicles (bus, mini-van, or jeep), economy flights and trains, and is included in the cost.

Full Yatra + Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat

October 1-30 30 Days \$3900

Plains Yatra + Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat

October 1-19 19 Days \$3150

Mountains Yatra + Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat

October 8-30 23 Days \$3550

Plains Yatra

October 1-16 16 Days \$2700

Mountains Yatra

October 14-30 17 Days \$2650

Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat Yatra

October 8-19 12 Days \$1800 Ashram accommodation

October 8-19 12 Days \$1900 Hotel accommodation

Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat

October 12-17 6 Days \$850 Ashram accommodation

October 12-17 6 Days \$950 Hotel accommodation

Notes about Costs: The Full and Plains Yatras include 2 internal flights and 2 train rides. Ashtanga Yoga Sadhana Retreat includes meals and accommodation and all programs.

Not Included in The Cost: International air-fare to and from India (contact us for recommended flights if required), visa costs, airport taxes, tips and temple fees and offerings. Additional collections will be made for tipping bus drivers and assistants, and to engage local priests or guides. All personal requirements during the yatra are not included in the cost of the yatra.

Reservations: To secure a place on any of the **Yatra 2015** options we will require a non-refundable deposit of \$108 per person. **Full payment will be due by July 1, 2015.** Once you have made a reservation we will assist you with further information regarding international flights, visas, immunizations, suggestions for on-going travel should you stay for a longer period, and other travel requirements.

Reservation Form & deposit payment: Go here to register:

<http://namarupa.org/product/yatra-2015-register-deposit/>

If you prefer you can fill in and print out the reservation form and mail it along with a check or money order made payable to Namarupa and send them to Namarupa, P.O. Box 271 Dublin, NH 03444, USA.

Balance Payments: Balance payments by check or money order please. We can accept credit card payments via PayPal. However PayPal takes a large percentage for the convenience of using their services. We will be obliged to add their fees to your payment if you pay via PayPal with a credit card. All banks charge wire fees which will also be added to your payment if you pay by wire transfer.

Refunds: Full refund, excluding deposit, will be made by May 1, 2015. A fifty-percent refund, excluding deposit, will be made up to August 1, 2015. No refunds thereafter. Since the cost is based on group participation, no refunds can be made for any features not taken. If cancellation occurs while the yatra is in progress there will be no refund for any unused portion.

Visas: Indian visas are required for US citizens. Citizens of other countries should check. Visas are obtainable online through www.travisa.com and must be obtained at least a month before departures.

Immunizations: No immunizations are required but several are recommended by the Atlanta Center for Disease Control.

On Yatra in India: The main purpose of our pilgrimage is to visit important temples and to have darshan of the resident devatas. Our days will be structured around temple visits, each with its own unique devata, local customs and timings. This will take some getting used to and much of what we experience will be new and outwardly unfamiliar; by trying to be as much part of it as possible, we will be able to let go and experience the inner connections. To this end, we will follow local customs and dress codes. For temple visits, women should wear either salwar kameez or saris and men can wear dhotis if possible or salwars and kurtas. These can be purchased in India.

As noted above, we will arrange comfortable lodging, meals and travel. That being said, standards in India are different to Western standards so please be prepared for the unexpected. Travelling in India requires patience, flexibility and humor. Travel in the mountains can often run into unexpected delays.

Climate, food, accommodation, dress and customs will all require some adjusting, not to mention the sheer mass of people, persistent beggars, all manner of traffic and the accompanying dust, air pollution, and noise levels the like of which are not often encountered in Western countries. These can be overwhelming for the first-timer to India, but Her incredible hospitality, warm humanity and abundant spirituality always come through and touch everyone in a deep and mysterious manner.

It will be quite hot in the plains and a little cooler in the mountains. Indian food is delicious and traditionally light and nutritious. But it can be very spicy. We will be adjusting as much as we can to make it easier on our digestive systems. Bottled water is available everywhere. We will be moving fairly frequently since there is much to see

and do, but we will try to pace our days and take our time. There will be an early morning yoga practice period on most days and we will also have time for talks, discussions and some group meditation.

Health Concerns: This is not a strenuous trip but you will be subject to jet lag, hot humid climatic conditions, fairly bumpy bus rides, dust and air pollution, very different food, crowds of people, unfamiliar sites and sounds. These all take their toll. And on a subtler level, darshan in the temples is often a powerfully moving experience and hidden feelings and emotions can be brought to the surface. Bring what comforts you in the way of any health needs or medications: anti-diarrhea tablets, mosquito repellent, sun block, basic first-aid items, etc. We also recommend bringing tea tree oil, Bach Rescue Remedy, and hand sanitizer. In case of emergencies, doctors and pharmacies can be found. If you have any medications that you need you must bring them with you.

What to Bring: Even though you can check 2 bags on your international flight, domestic flights (for those doing the Plains Yatra) only permit 1 check on bag and there is an enforced weight restriction. Anything over this restriction, you will have to pay accordingly. We strongly advise that you maintain the weight limits. Check on Bag: 33 lbs (15 kg) - easiest if this is a medium sized wheeled bag; Carry on Bag: 15 lbs (7 kg) Your carry on can be a small backpack. Passport and money must be kept secure in a neck pouch or money belt. Have a copy of the info page of your passport. Call your bank to tell them that you are traveling in India at such and such dates so they do not block your ATM card for cash. There are ATMs everywhere and they are the easiest way to get Rs. Carry about \$200 US cash for any emergencies.

You will be able to purchase temple-appropriate clothing in India. Bring about 4 changes of clothes with you, preferably lightweight, light color cotton to keep cool in the heat. Men should wear long pants and cotton shirts. Women should wear salwar kameez or saris, or long skirts. It's recommended to bring sandals that are easily taken on and off; flip-flops work well. At most places we will be able to get clothes washed. Other items to bring include: Light yoga mat, modest yoga practice clothes (please), lightweight rain jacket, small flashlight or head lamp, water bottle, clothesline and pins, camera, computer, ipad, mobile etc.

A travel umbrella is great for both rain and heat. In the mountains the weather can change suddenly. You will need a fleece, lightweight packable parka, or similar. Sneakers or light boots will be required for walking in the mountains. A sun hat or scarf is a good idea.

Try to travel as lightly as possible.

NAMARUPA, Categories of Indian Thought: Another important aspect of this yatra will be to gather audio-visual and literary material that may appear in future issues of Namarupa. ➡



Yatris at Ganga Arati, Haridwar, during Namarupa Yatra Divine 2014 © Robert Moses