

Dhamma Sumeru

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Dhamma Sumeru, meaning 'Celestial Mountain of Dhamma', is the first Swiss Vipassana centre. Founded in November 1999, it is located on Mont-Soleil ("Mount Sun") in a village of the Swiss Jura Mountains, at an altitude of 3600 feet surrounded by pastures, fields and forests. Appropriately, Mont-Soleil is one of the sunniest places in Switzerland but in winter it often receives heavy snowfalls. It is conveniently located near Biel/Bienne - two hours from Zürich, one hour from Berne and two hours from Geneva.

The ancient main building was built in 1904 and was used as a hotel until the 1920s when it was transformed into a holiday camp for children. It still had the same purpose when the Swiss Vipassana Association bought it in autumn 1999. The house is in the middle of two acres of land with many tall trees, green pastures and ancient paths.

After purchasing the house, a lot of renovation work had to be done by volunteers. All the costs have been covered by donations. Dhamma Sumeru can accommodate up to 55 meditators. The first 10-day course took place in April 2000 and was fully booked. In the year 2004, 14 ten-day courses have been held, three 3-day courses, one Satipaṭṭhāna course and two courses for children. 825 old and new students and servers who had the opportunity to benefit from Dhamma between 2004 - 05.

The Centre is proving to be too small because of high demand for Dhamma in Switzerland as well as students coming from Germany, France, Italy and other countries around the world. Consequently, the next step is to explore how student capacity could be increased or even how long courses could be held.