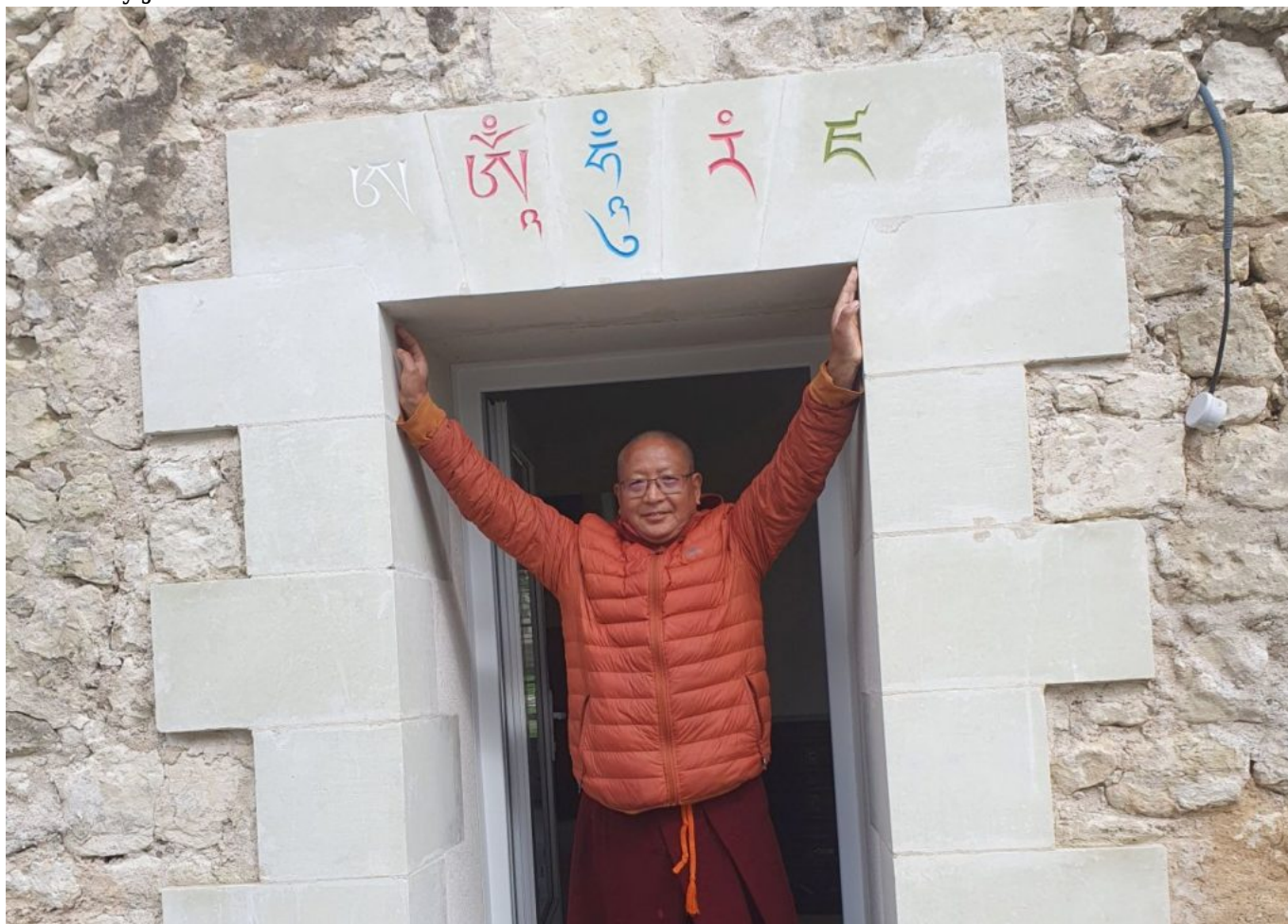


The place is perfect for skygazing, Khenpo Gelek says about the new retreat house

written by Jitka Polanská



“We have now a place at Shenten ideal for people who would like to practice skygazing and sungazing, in the similar way as they come to do a dark retreat,” Khenpo Gelek Jinpa, the abbot of Shenten Dargye Ling, says. It is the same place where Yongdzin Tenzin Namdak Rinpoche, the founder of Shenten, used to have interviews with practitioners, for many years. It is freshly renovated and it has got a name. “Last time I was in Kathmandu I asked Rinpoche to give it a name, and he kindly called it The Treasury of Instructions,” Khenpo Gelek says. He himself put lots of his work into the renovation of the building, together with a team of sangha members. Other people from the sangha supported the project, which cost around 40 000 EUR, with donations. A lovely small apartment was created in the building. It contains a kitchen, two rooms and a bathroom, and is ready to host practitioners.

“Many people come to Shenten for a dark retreat, and I think it would be very beneficial to come also for a retreat dedicated to skygazing and sungazing,” Khenpo Gelek explains while we are sitting at the side of the building of Longere, adjacent to the main building of the Chateau and facing east, toward Shenten’s small lake.

“Skygazing is different from being in the dark though,” Khenpo Gelek explains. “The senses are not completely free from objects of seeing and hearing and therefore the challenge of integration comes

into place. Integration is very important in Dzogchen practice,” he continues his reflections. “Skygazing is therefore a very powerful means of integration,” he says.

[The Longère: a top retreat place to become. Update on renovation](#)

Then he leads me to the apartment which he himself and other sangha members created with the aim to offer a place to people who would like to spend some days or even a month in a beautiful environment conducive to practice.

“Khenchen Rinpoche practiced some mornings outside there, doing skygazing, facing the sun rising above the lake. He said afterwards that the place was perfect for that practice, nothing more was needed,” Khenpo Gelek recalls.



“Such a beautiful place to stay, to practice...”

A kitchen, two rooms with wooden furniture and sacred images on the walls, a comfortable and nicely decorated bathroom - this is the place called The Treasury of Instructions by Yongdzin Rinpoche. “When I was in Kathmandu, I asked Rinpoche for a name, and this is really a beautiful one. I think that we all are treasuries of instructions, containers of teachings,” Khenpo Gelek says.

Some people may want to practice on their own, other people would wish to have guidance from

lamas. “Many seasoned practitioners already know the instructions but for whoever needs them, lamas of Shenten would be here to share them and guide the practitioners in their retreats,” Khenpo Gelek says.

“Shenten was meant to have two functions by Yongdzin Rinpoche: preserving the ancient tradition of Yungdrung Bon and offering a place for a community of dedicated practitioners to develop themselves spiritually. The place was blessed by his presence for long years and it is really extraordinary, so beautiful to be here, to practice here,” Khenpo Gelek says.



The kitchen



The bigger room



The smaller room



The bathroom



The back door of the apartment, facing east. Sacred syllables A, OM, HUNG, RAM, DZA are carved above it.

[Individual retreats with skygazing? Will be possible](#)

Photos: Jitka Polanska