

INICIATIVE ZEN CENTER IN CUBA

Dear friends, monks and nuns, practicants, bodhisattvas and sympathizers: we need your collaboration to help the Sangha at Cuba.

This last year has been difficult for everybody. The pandemic has left a trace of pain, fear and precariousness in many people, and in Cuba this has been especially hard. Since many years, I visit Cuba to give ordinations and to celebrate sesshins, following the steps of master Kosen Thibaut, who founded the Cuban Sangha in 1996. Today it is managed by Master Michel Tai Hei, to whom I transmitted the Shiho at Shorin Ji temple in 2108. The Sangha at Cuba has been practicing in private homes or in lent spaces, not having a fixed location where to get together and celebrate sesshins.

We now have the opportunity to help them to acquire a center for the practice of the Way. It is a house in the city of Matanzas. A building that barely needs improvements and for which a very low price is asked, being located in a secondary city. There, the intention is to create a Buddhist Zen Center, with a dojo, a library and accommodations for the masters visiting Cuba.

As a house with all the installations in working order, we think it constitutes an excellent buying opportunity. Even so, they need our economic collaboration to get together the amount needed to buy it (28.000 €/34.153 CUC convertible Cuban pesos). So, we have opened a bank account dedicated solely to this initiative. Followingly, we'll give you all the details about it as well as the name of a contact person in our Sangha who will furnish you with all the details you may need.

When we will have reached our monetary goal, I will travel to Cuba accompanied by several monks to hand over the funds. On this occasion, we shall celebrate a Sesshin in appreciation to which all of you who have helped with this initiative are invited. It shall be a trip and a sesshin of gratitude for the end of the pandemic and for the consolidation of our practice and of the Way in Cuba. Something we will have made possible between all of us.



Master Bárbara Kosen

Cuban Zen Center

Initiative for its creation and financing promoted
by the Zen Sangha of Bárbara Kosen (Spain)
and the Zen Sangha of Michel Tai Hai (Cuba)

Objective

To create a Zen Center in Cuba which,
besides being a dojo for the practice of Zazen,
will make possible to celebrate the sesshins in Cuba
in the Sangha's own space and to lodge practitioners
during that time.

Purposes

Besides being the dojo of the city of Matanzas,
it would have a library, a conference hall
and another one dedicated to sewing and calligraphy.

To date, there isn't any dojo in Cuba.
The dojo at La Habana is located in a private apartment.

The dojo at Matanzas is itinerant, it has not a locale
and zazen is made in parks and in spaces lent
by the Comunidad Metropolitana Church and by
the Pharmaceutical Museum.

It would constitute the urban temple for the development
of sesshins celebrated in Cuba.

(Until now, spaces have to be rented, they are scarce and do not
have the needed conditions for the practice of the Way).

...

Also, it would be a convergence center for those visiting the island
(masters as well as general practitioners).

In the future, there would be a small boutique to raise funds
with the creations made by the Sangha members.

The Cuban Zen Center will have a capacity for 30 people.

How to achieve our goal

Confronted with the need to have a Zen center for the practice of the Way in Cuba, it was thought that it would be easier to find a space in the city of Matanzas (130 km from La Habana), since prices are significantly lower than in the capital.

Once the location was decided, we looked for a house that would have the necessary characteristics at an affordable price.

Several houses and plots of land were visited until the ideal house was found in 2020.

Through this initiative, the Sangha of master Michel Tai Hei and the Sangha of Bárbara Kosen have joined to get the financing needed for the purchase of the building. For this, we need the economic collaboration of as much people as possible.

Many “littles” make “a lot”. We invite all practitioners of the Way and sympathizers to participate in this co-financing project.

Cuban Zen Center

Description of the house

Geographic location:

The building is situated in the city of Matanzas west borough,
Capital of the province with the same name.

This province has an extension of 11.798 km²
and an approximate population of 690.000.

It borders in the west with the province of Mayabeque,
to the east with Cienfuegos and Villa Clara.



One of its identity features is the beautiful beach of Varadero, 30 km from the province capital. It is also known as the Athens of Cuba due to its weight in the development of national culture.

The city of Matanzas has an extension of 761 km² and an approximate population of 145.000.

The city of Matanzas is located at a distance of 130 km from the province of La Habana. Its geography is gifted with many beautiful landscapes.

In spite of the short distance which separates them, the real estate prices are a half of those in the capital.

Since the last few years, sesshins in the island are celebrated at different locations in the city.

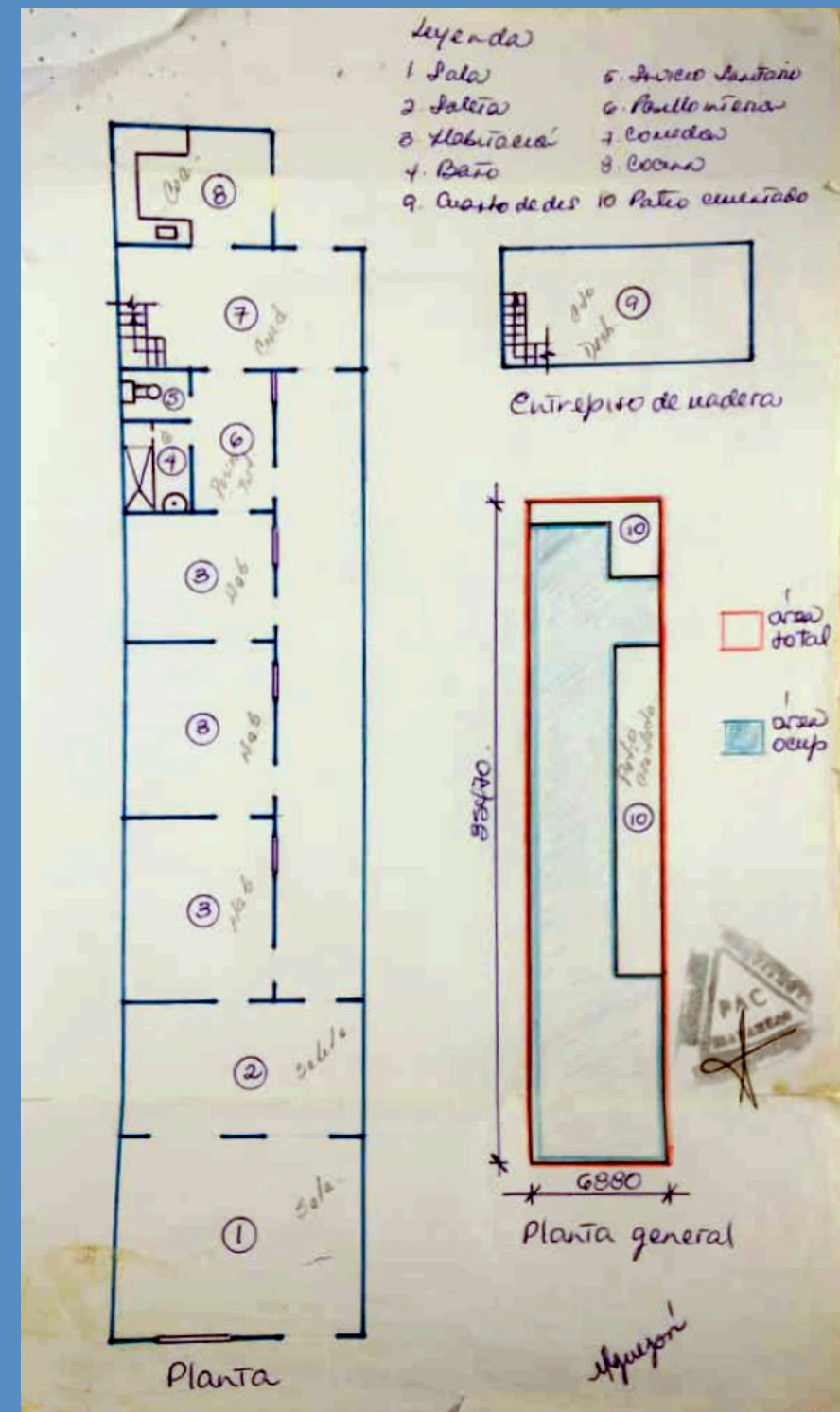
Description of the house:

Description:

Hall, small hall, 3 rooms in the ground floor plus 1 room in the second floor with wood mezzanine, bathroom, kitchen, dining room with an access to the second floor, service patio, lateral corridor and small roofed exterior storage room.

Area :

Building of 243 m², practically all usable space except for the area of the service patio and the lateral corridor.





Building condition:

Needs painting, light general maintenance work and another bathroom. (However, excepting for the bathroom issue, it can be occupied immediately).

Location:

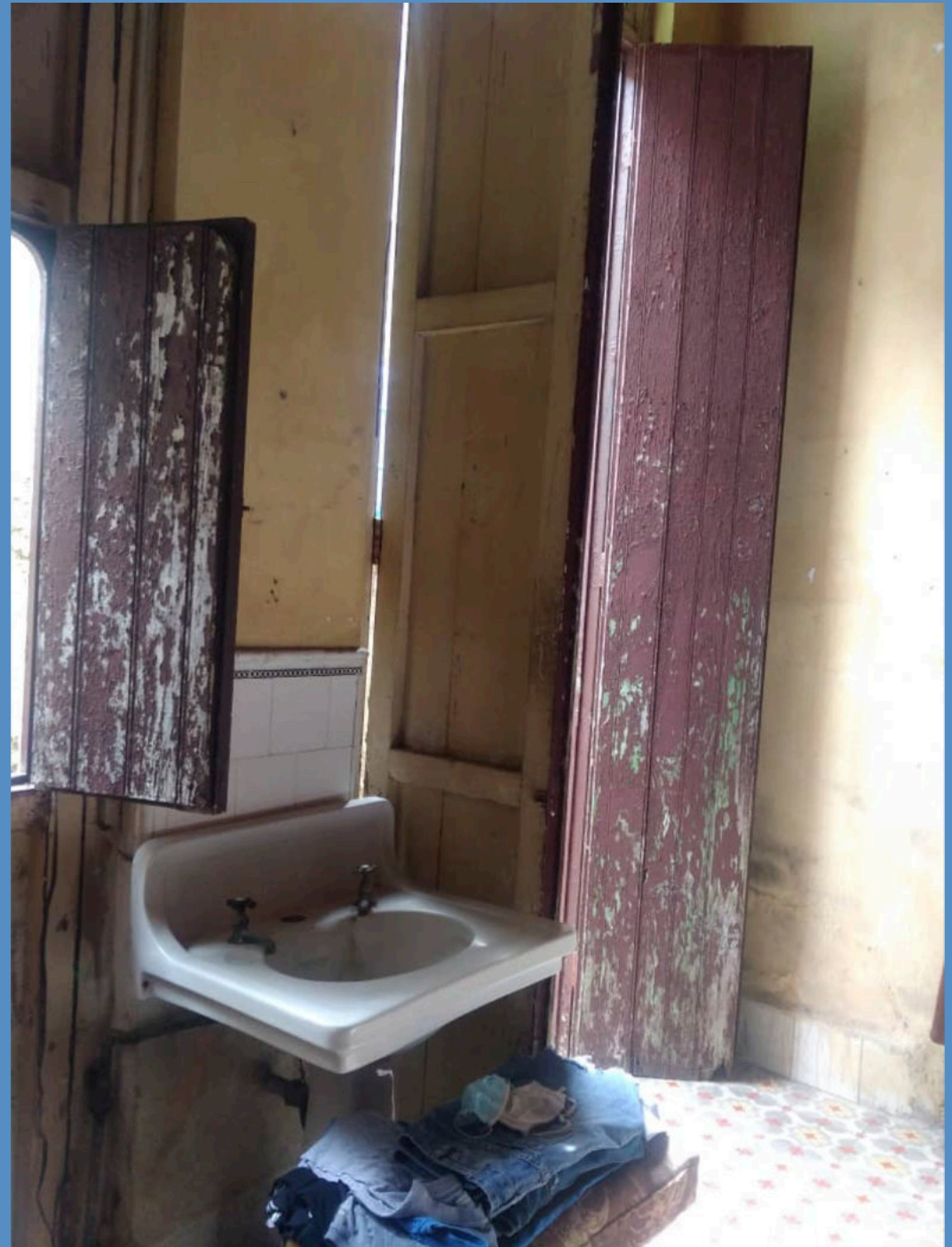
At the center area of the city but not in a main artery. In the sidewalk in front there is a catholic church and an office building with an apartment. The adjacent buildings are family homes.

Price:

28.000 € // 34.153 CUC
(convertible Cuban pesos)







A brief history of the Sangha of Cuba

In 1996, master Kosen Thibaut, Dharma heir of master Taisen Deshimaru, founded the La Habana Zen Dojo.

Since then, the practice of Zazen in the island has continued.

Despite the fact that the dojo at La Habana, the only one at that moment in Cuba, has never had a fixed location, practitioners have persisted in their determination to realize the Way of the Buddha.

In our days, our lineage has two communities/dojos in the island, at La Habana and the one in Matanzas.



Master Michel Tai Hei and some members of Sangha in Cuba.

Sesshin San Juan, Matanzas 2020

Master Michel Tai Hei (1976) started practicing in 1999 and was ordained Bodhisattva by Master Kosen Thibaut in 2001.

In 2004 he took charge of the La Habana Dojo and in 2006 was ordained monk by Master Bárbara Kosen.

In 2018 he received the Shiho as heir in the Dharma at the Shorinjí temple, given by the Master Bárbara Kosen.

Current functioning of Zen in Cuba

Zen Dojo of La Habana

(temporary location for the last years)

Calle 14 entre Línea y Calzada
Nº 9 apto. 18

- Tuesday and thursday, 7:00 a.m.
- Wednesday and friday, 7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, 8:00 a.m.
- Zazen days:
last sunday of the month

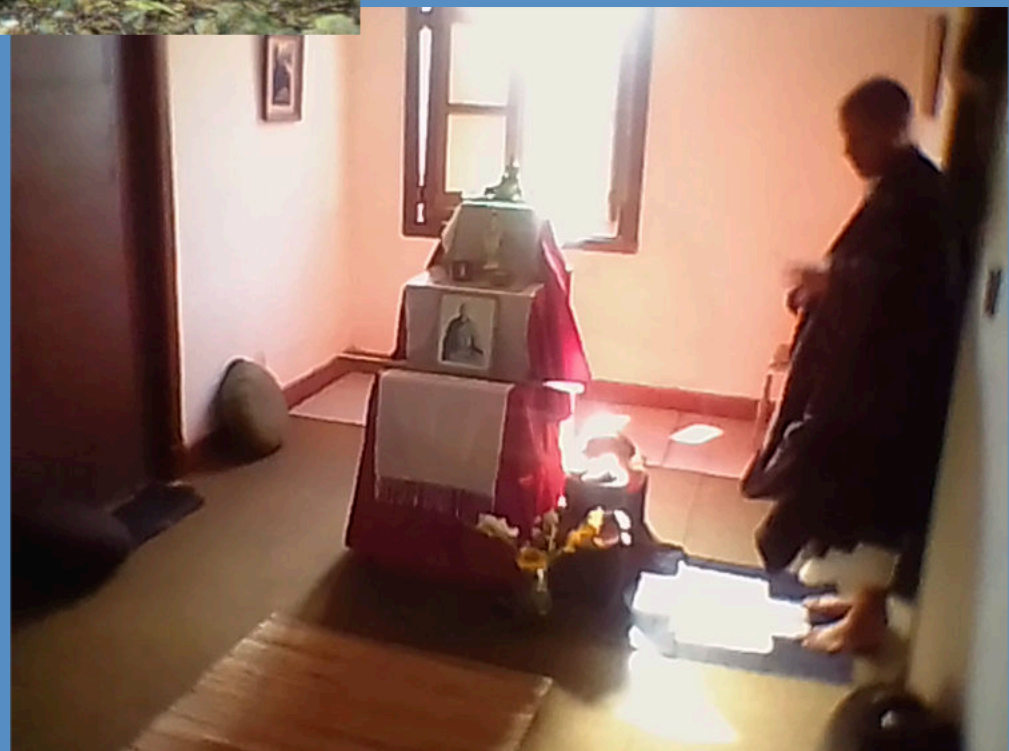
Zen dojo of Matanzas

(no fixed location)

- Saturdays, 6:30 a.m.
Playa los Pinitos (open space)
- 2nd and 4th thursday of
every month, 9:00 a.m.
at the Comunidad
Metropolitana Church



Sangha members and picture
from the Zen Dojo in Havana
before practice





Sesshin of 2016. Bacunayagua, Matanzas



Often in the city of Matanzas days are held where the arts are linked to a small zazen sit-in.

In this, all the participants were invited to take the guenmai, and learn about the sewing of the kesa.

Museo Farmacéutico, Matanzas 2016



Sesshin de 2017, en Matanzas.

It was here that Sensei Barbara Kosen announced that she would give the Shiho to Michel Tai Hei.



Lacking our own dojo, we practice in parks, and in the spaces offered by some institutions in the city, such as the Metropolitan Community Church, and the Pharmaceutical Museum.

The Matanzas Dojo is itinerant..

Matanzas, 2019



Cumanayagua, Cienfuegos 2019.

At the end of the sesshin, Master Michel Tai Hei founded
the Matanzas Zen Dojo.

Together, the Havana dojo and the Matanzas dojo
in a sesshin in 2020, with maestro Michel Taihei.
Sometimes the capacity is limited due to the accommodation conditions.



The first ordinations of the master Michel Taihei.
Matanzas, 2020.

Currently the Cuban sangha is made up of
approximately twenty-five regular practitioners of sesshins,
including 8 monks and 5 bodhisattva.



Sesshines are organized on an annual or biannual basis, depending on the availability of rental sites.

In this case, the Río San Juan campsite (2020): a beautiful place, on the outskirts of the city of Matanzas. The sessions have a monthly frequency, and are held at the headquarters of the Dojo in Havana.



Current account:

Account nº. IBAN: ES32 2038 1179 4160 0077 4554 | **SWIFT:** CAHMESMMXXX

Bank and address: Bankia; C/ Pez 6, Madrid 28004

Account holder: Asociación Zen Taisén Deshimaru

National Associations Registry nº: 145061

Date: 25 de abril 1995

Ministry of justice, Spain.

Asociación Zen Taisen Deshimaru (AZTD).

Contact: Belén B., tfno: 00 34 662164082

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Mokusan Dojo Madrid.

C/ Conde de Romanones 5, Madrid 28012.

Web Page: www.zenkan.com

Shorinji Temple.

Villanueva de la Vera (Cáceres).

Temple's mobile phone number: 00 34 622 88 51 99