



## REGISTRATION

Before registering, an online, phone or in-person interview is required. This conversation is to answer your questions about **A Retreat for Writers**, for Donna to get a feel for your writing experience and goals, and to assure both parties that the retreat is a good fit.

A \$150 non-refundable deposit will hold your place. After receiving the deposit, a registration packet with contract and travel information will be sent to you.

Balance for both retreats is due by October 28, 2016. Please inquire if you need to make other arrangements. Payments can be made by check or credit card (PayPal).

You are welcome to email or call with any questions or concerns. The information in this paper brochure is also available online.

**(530) 478-1628**

[donna@creativewritingclasses.us](mailto:donna@creativewritingclasses.us)

[www.creativewritingclasses.us](http://www.creativewritingclasses.us)

## DETAILS

### Winter Dates

December 6 (arrive) to December 14 (depart), 2016  
January 10 (arrive) to January 18 (depart), 2017



**Travel:** There is a one-terminal international airport in Oaxaca city (OAX).

United, AeroMexico, Delta, Volaris and others fly direct from USA or direct from Mexico City. An efficient, official taxi/colectivo service operates out of the airport and can bring you direct to Casa Panchita.



**Passport:** A passport valid for at least six months beyond arrival date is required to enter Mexico.



**Activity Level:** The retreat is more comfortable if you have the ability to walk in the city one to three miles a day, sometimes on cobblestone or other uneven surfaces, sometimes uphill.



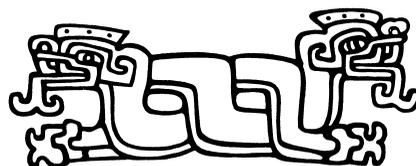
**Cost:** \$1435 to \$1245 (cost depends on room size) includes eight nights at Casa Panchita, single occupancy, ensuite bath, Wi-Fi, full breakfast and lunch daily.

Writing consultation/editing with Donna Hanelin, group discussions and feedback.



**Tours** (included in cost): A half-day orientation and walking tour of the city of Oaxaca. Also, full-day excursion in private van into one of the Oaxaca valleys.

Cost does not include airfare, alcoholic beverages, gratuities and museum admissions.



# A RETREAT FOR WRITERS OAXACA, MEXICO



WINTER 2016-17  
WITH  
DONNA HANELIN





## VISIT

*I found a little table at an outdoor café in the zocalo. The cathedral, noble, dilapidated, is to my left, and this charming alive plaza is full of handsome young people and cafés. In front of me old Indian women in serapes and straw hats sell religious icons and trinkets by the cathedral. The trees... are verdant, and the sky and air springlike. Huge clusters of balloons, helium-filled, straining upward on their leashes—some look big enough to carry a child away.... Writing like this, at a café table, in a sweet outdoor square... this is la dolce vita. It evokes images of Hemingway and Joyce, expatriate writers at tables in Havana and Paris... I love to write in an open, sunny place, the windows admitting every sight and sound and smell of the outside world. I like to write at café tables, where I can see (though at a distance) society before me.*

—Oliver Sacks, from *Oaxaca Journal*

The central historic district of Oaxaca de Juárez is a UNESCO World Heritage site. Founded in 1527 as Antequera, it was the first town laid out in New Spain. "It retains its iconic architecture and the buildings representative of a cultural tradition of more than four centuries of art and history." The colonial city is an almost surreal backdrop to the 2500-year-old original culture. There are sixteen different indigenous groups each with their own language (and many dialects), dress, customs, crafts, and foods living in the state of Oaxaca. For many, Spanish is a second language. This root wealth of diversity is what truly shapes the city and makes a visit to Oaxaca fascinating, eye-opening, at times enlightening to those of us who have more distant origins.

*I wanted sun, culture, art, food—I wanted Oaxaca.... Sometimes, I told him, a faraway place just enters your consciousness, unbidden, and stays there until you're compelled to go.... I felt comfortable and safe in Oaxaca, with its clean, grid layout (planned by Alonso Garcia Bravo, who also designed Mexico City), Spanish-style architecture, cobblestone pedestrian streets and art galleries and museums tucked into unlikely corners.*

—Laura Fraser, from *The Food of Love\**

## WRITE

**A Retreat for Writers** provides the time and space for writers to develop their work with editorial support and group feedback, when desired. Days are open for writing. Daily private consultation and group discussions give you an opportunity to test the waters. The true purpose of the retreat is to help writers advance their work, both in length and in depth. **A Retreat for Writers** is best suited for those who are ready to write independently and who can benefit from feedback and editing. All activities are optional.

*...writing itself is one of the great, free human activities. There is scope for individuality, and elation, and discovery, in writing. For the person who follows with trust and forgiveness what occurs to him, the world remains always ready and deep, an inexhaustible environment, with the combined vividness of an actuality and flexibility of a dream. Working back and forth between experience and thought, writers have more than time and space can offer. They have the whole unexplored world of human vision.*

—William Stafford, from *Writing the Australian Crawl*

Donna Hanelin, published poet and writer, teaches creative writing (fiction, memoir and poetry) in northern California and has been offering retreats in Oaxaca since 1997. A lifelong writer and teacher, she works to support the life of writers and to pay close attention to the details of the writing itself. Donna has published two books of poetry and a novella and has written dozens of essays on writing; *Flight from Oaxaca*, a novella, is available on Amazon. She lived for several years in Mexico and continues to spend part of the year in Oaxaca, her second home.

*"You mean you're not a teacher?" she said to me, eyes widening as her two strong hands held my diploma down on the kitchen table. "No," I said. "What have you been doing all these years?" she asked quietly. "Reading novels," I replied.*

—Vivian Gornick, from *Fierce Attachments*



## RETREAT

Casa Panchita, in Xochimilco barrio, is our retreat home. It's a ten minute walk down cobblestone streets along the old aqueduct to the central historic district. The Casa has six comfortably furnished rooms adorned with fine folk art; all rooms are at ground level and open to the spacious central patio and gardens.

*Eventually they discovered Casa Panchita, a place that wove them into the fabric of Oaxaca. Panchita, arguably the best cook in a state celebrated for its food, lives at the guesthouse.... My mother fell in love with Panchita and her family, and Oaxaca became her second home—the home she carried in her heart—and she would always tell me I should come, how happy I would be there.... Opening my door and looking out at the garden, my eyes were dazzled by the deep magenta bougainvillea, the rich red roses, and the bright orange and purple birds-of-paradise. My mother lived in color, and her palette was made up of the colors of Mexico.*

—Kathy Jo Brisker, from *Dia de Mi Madre\**



We'll enjoy a full breakfast and lunch at Casa Panchita. All meals are traditional Oaxacan, delicious, homemade with fresh local ingredients. Within the 100-year-old adobe walls that surround it, Casa Panchita is peaceful, vibrant, and most welcoming. For a virtual view: [www.casapanchita.com](http://www.casapanchita.com)

*Characters begin young; they grow old; they move from scene to scene, from place to place. A writer has to keep his eye on a model that moves, that changes, upon an object that is not one object but innumerable objects. Two words alone cover all that a writer looks at—they are, human life.*

—Virginia Woolf, from *The Leaning Tower*

\*from the anthology *Mexico, A Love Story*, Camille Cusumano, editor