



Yoga Classes

Yoga Anusara Inspired

Open to all levels. Intensity: EASY/MEDIUM. Good For: FLEXIBILITY, WELLBEING, STRENGTH, POWER, AGILITY, CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT, LOWER CHOLESTEROL AND BLOOD PRESSURE, STRENGTHENING OF THE IMMUNE SYSTEM.

Anusara-inspired teachers have studied Anusara for at least one year, have at least one year of teaching experience and 100 hours of Anusara Yoga studies. **Anusara** (a-nu-sar-a), means "flowing with Grace," "going with the flow," "following your heart".

Founded by John Friend in 1997, Anusara Yoga® is a powerful hatha yoga system that unifies a Tantric philosophy of intrinsic Goodness with Universal Principles of Alignment™. Currently, Anusara Yoga is one of the most popular and fastest growing yoga styles in the world with over 1200 affiliated teachers and 100,000 students world-wide. Anusara classes are now found throughout the United States, Canada, Mexico, the UK, Europe, Australia, and Japan with a growing presence in many other areas of the world. Anusara is attracting media attention worldwide including a 2004 Yoga Journal cover story, CBS national news in the US, as well as newspapers and magazines throughout North America, the UK, and Europe.

Anusara's remarkable popularity is due in large part to its uplifting philosophy, epitomized by a "celebration of the heart," that looks for the good in all people and all things. Consequently, students of all levels of ability and yoga experience are honoured for their unique differences, limitations, and talents. This life-affirming vision sets the basis for a yoga system in which the harmony and joy of a tightly knit community is exulted. Not only is Anusara an elegant system of alignment principles and non-dual philosophy, but it is also a wonderful community of highly trained teachers and fun-loving students. This community feels like it has the tightness of a family, yet the looseness of a merry band of bohemian artists.

The Anusara Yoga method is distinguished by the integration of several elements which are common in every class:

- The Tantric philosophy of intrinsic goodness underlies the methodology of teaching Anusara Yoga. Consequently, Anusara Yoga teachers, first and foremost, look for the good in all things, especially within themselves and their students. Anusara Yoga teachers help enhance and reveal the beauty and Divine qualities that are already present in the students' poses. They do not try to "fix" or "correct" students' alignment. Instead, they are dedicated to serving each student and helping them unveil their innate goodness, worthiness, and Supreme nature. Furthermore, Anusara Yoga teachers are committed to

helping build and empower each student's self-esteem, while inspiring light-heartedness, playfulness, and joyful creativity within the yoga practice.

- Each class begins with an invocation or centring as a devotional recognition of the grace-bestowing power of universal Spirit within and around us.
- Each class has a heart-oriented theme, which has a meaningful connection to the grand spiritual purposes of the asana practice. The theme usually centres on cultivating a virtue—a quality of mind or heart, which is a microcosmic reflection of our Divine nature. Each theme gives a direction for the attitudinal energy that infuses every action and breath in the poses. Effectively, all the poses in Anusara Yoga are expressed from the "inside out."
- An elegant, concise set of alignment principles called the "Universal Principles of Alignment" is applied to each asana in the Anusara method. A central idea within the Universal Principles of Alignment is the 3 A's: Attitude, Alignment, and Action. This refers to a foundational concept within the Anusara method in which every pose is infused with a meaningful intention connected to the grand purposes of yoga, awareness of specific postural alignment, and balanced action between stability and freedom. The specific principles include Muscular Energy and Organic Energy, which are the two complementary forces that provide each pose with a balanced action. Other alignment principles include Spirals and Loops, which help to bring refinement and precision to each pose.
- Movements and actions within every pose are coordinated with the breath.
- Postural alignments in each pose are checked in reference to the Universal Principles of Alignment. The teacher then gives adjustments verbally and physically to the students in order to enhance their poses.
- Poses are modified or supported with props if necessary to help each student achieve the general form of pose.
- Postural demonstrations may be used when necessary to clarify alignment instructions.
- The Anusara method is designed to serve students of any level of experience or ability, from children to seniors, and students with special therapeutic needs to advanced practitioners.
- There are over 250 poses that compile the syllabii of Anusara Yoga asanas. This syllabus encompasses all the poses that are commonly practiced in the foremost hatha yoga styles throughout the world. The syllabus covers all of the key asanas within the major classifications of poses: standing poses, backbends, forward bends, twists, hand-balancings, inversions, and restoratives.
- Practicing variations of the basic poses is encouraged as a full expression of the human spirit.

- Although there are no set postural routines in Anusara Yoga, classes are designed using principles of sequencing. One of the principles includes progressively sequencing poses to help students of all levels advance in their practice.
- Classes are concluded with Savasana or meditation or a quiet centring in order to help better assimilate the teachings and honour the spiritual experience of the class. Students are left with a blessing or a reminder on how to continue to embody the heart theme "off the mat" in their daily life.
- Ultimately, we want each student to leave an Anusara Yoga class feeling better about him or herself, empowered by the revelation of his or her Divine nature.

For more information on Anusara and Anusara Inspired Yoga, visit www.anusara.com

Why Yoga?

With over 14 million participants in the US alone, Yoga is fast becoming one of the world's favourite types of mindful exercise. Having been around since 2250 BC Yoga is hardly the new kid on the block of fitness regimes! However, its science proven effects as a stress reducing tool, fit very well in today's fast paced society. Yoga can be the missing link in your exercise programme.

Top 10 reasons to try yoga:

- 1.- Stress relief: Yoga reduces the physical effects of stress by lowering the levels of the stress hormone, cortisol.
- 2.- Pain Relief: Studies have shown that regular yoga practice reduces chronic pain.
- 3.- Better Breathing: Yoga improves lung function and triggers the body's relaxation response.
- 4.- Flexibility: duh!
- 5.- Increased strength and balance
- 6.- Weight management: Yoga encourages healthy eating and improves self esteem.
- 7.- Improved Circulation: Yoga helps more efficient oxygenation of your body's cells.
- 8.- Cardiovascular Conditioning: Yoga improves oxygen uptake during exercise.
- 9.- Better Posture: Helping to relieve back, neck, joint and muscle problems.
- 10.- Focus on the present: Yoga helps us to become more aware of our bodies and to help create mind-body health.

Is Yoga for me?

While yoga should not be the only form of exercise you practice, it would be somewhat foolish not to include it as part of any complete fitness regime. The gains in flexibility, core strength, breathing and balance will become apparent after just a few weeks of regular practice and will enhance the rest of your training. The non-competitive nature of yoga means you can take part in any class and still move at your own pace. Think of your whole training as a house, and yoga as a very strong foundation to build that house upon!

Yoga Beginners

Never done yoga before? Want to revisit alignment or breathing principles? This is the class for you. Always remember to share your yoga experience with the teacher before class. Good For: FLEXIBILITY, WELLBEING, STRENGTH, POWER, AGILITY, CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT, LOWER CHOLESTEROL AND BLOOD PRESSURE, STRENGTHENING OF THE IMMUNE SYSTEM.

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Yoga Classic Ashtanga

For students with some experience of yoga. Intensity: HARD. Good For: FLEXIBILITY, WELLBEING, STRENGTH, POWER, AGILITY, CHRONIC PAIN MANAGEMENT, LOWER CHOLESTEROL AND BLOOD PRESSURE, STRENGTHENING OF THE IMMUNE SYSTEM.

Ashtanga means eight limbs. In contemporary hatha circle there is a style of practice introduced by Pattabhi Jois that also is popularly known as Ashtanga yoga. This style is a dynamic form of hatha yoga in that there is a vigorous flow as one moves from posture to posture. Approximately six different ashtanga series (or set combinations of postures that move from on to the next without stopping) are practiced today. Generally, however, only the first and second series are taught in class settings because the remaining four series are quite physically demanding and are only able to be practiced by those who have spent a considerable amount of time learning and accomplishing them.

Ashtanga yoga was rediscovered in the 20th century when Pattabhi Jois and his teacher Krishnamacharya worked to translate the practice they found outlined in an ancient text called The Yoga Corunta. In a library housing ancient texts, Krishnamacharya found the manuscript written on leaves in a form of Sanskrit that was used 5000 years ago. The estimated date of its transcription is at minimum 1500 years ago according to its interpreters. Pattabhi Jois called the practice *Ashtanga* because he believed it to be a lost form of yoga that was meant to accompany or append the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali.

Because the term ashtanga either was not recognized or was misunderstood simply as Raja yoga by those that did know the meaning, the term power yoga was in vogue for some time. In the last twenty years, Power Yoga demystified the practice of Ashtanga for many, and the it served as a great reference to the benefits of this style. Unfortunately there is some confusion today between Ashtanga and Power Yoga. Ashtanga is the practice of set series of postures. Power classes generally are hybrids that use some of the postures and flow of Ashtanga but are not true to the sequencing.

Ashtanga means the dynamic, set series of postures rediscovered by Pattabhi Jois and Krishnamacharya. Often a hatha class is only one hour long, or the levels of the students are so mixed that it would be impossible to go over the entire first series, so many ashtanga yoga classes are composed of abridged versions of the original series.

In practicing either Iyengar or Ashtanga yoga, one sees (and feels!) both the physical and mental differences inherent within each style. However, there is an interesting common ground between Iyengar and Ashtanga Hatha yoga in that their founders B.K.S. Iyengar and Pattabhi Jois, respectively contemporaries had the same mentor, Sri Krishnamacharya. It is amazing that two styles that differ so drastically could trace back only one generation to the same root.

At Soho Gyms we have classic Ashtanga classes that are an hour long and follow the original sequence.

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Yoga Dynamic Flow

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Also known as Vinyasa yoga flow. It is the practice of linking Surya Namaskaras (Sun Salutations) or similar postures between poses. Practitioners repeat each pose in sequence before going onto the next one, and after each new pose they do a vinyasa (a flowing movement, linked with the breath). The use of variations creates a flowing from pose to pose as opposed to stopping one posture and starting again. Variations of sun salutations are the vinyasas in Ashtanga yoga. The word vinyasa refers to the flow or linking together of poses. Vinyasa yoga places emphasis on individual adaptation for therapeutic purposes and edification. Vinyasas do not have to be vigorous. They can be slow and gentle as one easy pose flows slowly into another similar one. Most of our dynamic classes are open to all levels, although everyone will benefit from attending one (or a few!) of our beginners classes.

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Yoga Hatha

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Although the name Hatha encompasses all the internationally recognized forms of physical Yoga, here at Soho Gyms we use the term to refer to classes that are softer than the dynamic classes. This method combines elements from many different styles and generally appeals to the broadest population. For example, a teacher may teach using a combination of deep breathing and background music along with attention to alignment and physical adjustments. Although one school of yoga might focus on alignment, that same school may be opposed to allowing music in class because it may be distracting (such is the case in Iyengar hatha yoga). Furthermore, a teacher's personality often colours the expression of a style, so two different teachers may present a class from the same lineage, but each class may feel completely different. If you find the dynamic flow classes too hard or wish to get a deeper understanding of alignment and breath, the hatha classes are for you.

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Yoga Progressive

For all students. Thierry Giunta's own method of Yoga. Intensity: MEDIUM/HARD.
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Thierry relates to people in a genuine, relaxed and open manner and creates a pleasant environment within which each student develops at their own pace. He identifies student's levels of suppleness, considers their needs, personalizes group classes by suggesting modifications and variations to postures and consistently offers individual adjustments and corrections. He teaches hatha yoga while incorporating other yoga influences and welcomes different levels of flexibility and fitness. Thierry delivers high standards of teaching using fresh learning methods, well structured classes and emphasis on technique, alignment and safety while regularly bringing distinctive and innovative ideas to the lesson plan. Dynamic at times, relaxed and focus on alignment other times, one never knows what to expect in Thierry's class except for great yoga. For more on Thierry visit www.progressiveyoga.co.uk

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