



Happy Holidays!!

Holiday Schedule Changes

Please check the website. There will be schedule changes between 12/24 and 1/1/08. We will have the changes posted, on the website and at the studio, by December 17th.

The Tuesday and Thursday 10:15am classes will be canceled in 2008 and replaced with 1:30pm classes on both days.

"Membership has privileges"

We have two guest passes for you, at the front desk, if you have a Yearly Unlimited or the 12 Month Auto Debit. Use them as you would like, they are our gift to you. We will gladly mail them to you, if you have not picked them up, by the 18th.

Holiday Discounts

To celebrate the gift of yoga, we're having the "12 Months for Christmas" Auto Debit special. Twelve days of Christmas is great and all, but instead of all those pipers piping, you can have Twelve Months of Christmas by signing up for the Special, where you get the 12th month for free when you sign up for a year-minimum commitment. You save \$110 and get a year of yoga for just \$110 a month!

Besides the Auto Debit special, you can get 10% off any regular price package you buy. They make great gifts for students home from school for the month, friends you've always wanted to get to try the yoga, your

Yogi Q&A: Aaron Fishman



Bikram Yogi since:

October 2004

How many times a week do you practice?

Seven. I practice every day.

What inspired you to start Bikram Yoga?

My desire to improve my flexibility and stamina.

What are your favorite things about Bikram Yoga La Canada?

The location, teachers, students & shower.

Why Bikram Yoga?

I like the consistency of the program, the intensity, the dialog and the sweating.

What's your favorite pose?

Triangle is my favorite pose because I can do it well and I feel like I am working many parts of my body when I am in the pose.

Your hardest pose?

My hardest pose is Standing Forward Bend because of my difficulty with doing a pelvic forward tilt with my knees locked.

When you started what was the hardest thing about the yoga and how did you overcome it?

When I started, the hardest thing that I found about this program was being able to control my breath in the heated room. Sheer persistence and time allowed me to get used to the environment.

Nutrition Spotlight: Eating for Yoga

Holiday eating, of course, means bigger meals, more snacking opportunities at parties, and excitement and stress affecting eating and drinking habits. Eat veggies and fruit instead of sweets and starchy snacks at holiday parties, drink a glass of water for the same amount of anything else you drink, and plan to do yoga during the holidays even if you feel a little off from all the excitement of the season. It'll help maintain balance and keep you from getting too thrown off your routine come January '08. In the meantime, here's a diet, developed by a Bikram Yoga teacher, that doesn't skimp on the eating, it just asks that you make more responsible decisions as to what and how much you eat. If you're looking to lose weight doing Bikram Yoga, this is a diet worth trying out.

Note the diet accounts for the different blood sugar and caloric needs for both morning and evening classes. The idea isn't to starve, it's to practice a more yogic eating philosophy--and still enjoy food.

Daily Yoga Weight Loss Diet for Evening Classes

Breakfast- Whatever you want.

Lunch- A nice salad with some meat or protein--chicken breast or a nice piece of fish, sandwich or some soup.

2-3 hours BEFORE class eat an apple and have a couple of spoonfuls of peanut butter or almond butter or some other "nut butter" (or a couple of handfuls of nuts). Have a banana if you prefer. If you're not fond of "nut butters" have some mozzarella cheese. (Horizon Organic Cheese Snacks control portions by offering singly-packaged string cheese.)

favorite yogi--or just treat yourself!
(Valid Dec. 15-31)

Posture Highlight: Tree Pose - Tadasana and Toe Stand - Padungustanasa

Ohhh boy. There it is. You've done tree. Maybe you've even tried to bring both hands up into prayer in tree (look ma, no hands!). And then comes toe stand, padungustanasa. Which actually isn't that different from tree. It's just like, well, tree, only cut in half. (Timber!)

Part of the integrity of the Bikram Series, is that it is a series. In other words, postures recall and build on each other, they prepare and warm-up the body for what's coming next.

Toe stand is really just tree pose, and think of tree as the warm-up to toe stand. Both build on the principal of triangle: hips actively opened so the spine can actively stretch up.

With tree, the key is to concentrate on the torso, instead of the legs. Though the hip and knee may feel it, the idea is to slowly balance that pressure with torso strength. Which is why in tree pose, as you pick up your foot and place your hand in front of your chest, the next instruction is to be gentle with the knee. Build the posture around your ability to stand-up straight, to bring the hips and shoulders into one line, and then work to bring the knee down. The bent leg is as active as the locked standing leg, and the opening of the hips is what lets you stand up straighter -- just like in triangle -- the lower you sit, the more your torso stretches when you stretch up and stretch down. The next step is toe-stand.

As crazy as toe-stand can look and feel on the knee, the idea is to get the rest of the body to do its share of the work. In other words, the more upwardly mobile your tree, the more lifted you can get your torso with your hips nice and open in tree, the more you set yourself up for toe-stand.

This is why you can think of the entrance to toe stand as its own little warm-up posture. Just hanging at the waist in toe-stand, sticking your butt up and reaching your

What's still hard for you and how do you overcome it?

Doing a pelvic forward tilt with my knees locked. I have not yet figured out how to overcome it.

What changes has doing this Yoga brought to your life?

My priorities changed. I feel younger, full of energy and have a clearer mind and improved memory. My health and posture have also improved.

What keeps you motivated?

The results that I get.

Any words of wisdom to new students?

Stick with the program for at least three months before evaluating it.

Any tips for your fellow yogis?

Stay away from my spot.

Have a V-8 or some electrolytes- like Emergen-C, to keep salts and minerals up.

For class - bring electrolytes like Emergen-C, instead of a sports drink.

After class here's where you can skip a meal! If you are doing evening classes and are trying to lose weight it is an opinion that **dinner** is the ONLY meal you should skip. If you are STARVING after yoga- again go for a little cheese. How about some toast? Or some steamed veggies sprinkled with lemon juice?

Daily Yoga Weight Loss Diet for **Morning Classes** things vary slightly:

For morning yoga have the self-discipline to get up a bit earlier and eat, but remember on Yoga days you want to finish eating breakfast at least an hour or two before class.

Breakfast toast and peanut butter. Don't like peanut butter or nut butters? Then soak some (raw unsalted) almonds in fresh spring or filtered water overnight in the fridge and have those with toast. Don't want toast? Have an apple or banana and the almonds. (Eggs are fine, too, if they don't make you too gassy).

Avoid milk, coffee, oranges, orange juice and meat in the morning of morning yoga.

After your class EAT!

Lunch- Have something nice and satisfying.

It's better to have a bigger lunch and to have a nice light dinner than no lunch and a big dinner.

Dinner- have your salad with chicken or fish or cereal and milk or fruit or rice and some meat (or skip dinner)

Avoid on yoga days and non-yoga days to lose weight:

- * Beer, Champagne,
- * Coke, Diet Coke and all carbonated beverages (yes! even carbonated spring water like Perrier and Pellegrino)
- * Beef/red meat
- * Potato chips and other fried snacks (how about a few salty pretzels instead?)
- * Candy- Candy bars, sugary stuff
- * Cookies
- * Ice Cream (have frozen fruit bars or Sorbet)
- * Whole Milk and Milky salad dressings

hands down, will exaggerate the tree stretch. Keep the bent knee active. If the pressure on the knee and hip are too great, that's okay, go back to tree.

Bikram says that a big thing toe stand works on is fear. It's literally a leap of faith to try a one legged squat, which is why its so important to break the posture down into its components so it makes sense--to you and your body. The more square the hips and straight the spine, the easier toe becomes. Once your hands are on the floor, you put all your weight in your hands and gently lower yourself, rolling up on the toe. (The range of motion in your foot can remind you of awkward pose.) In fact, toe stand is a one legged version of the third part of awkward pose. Roll up on your toe as high as you can, bring your hands out to either side of you so you can sit up straight, and then, on one leg, you're trying to get your spine straight like it was in tree. A lot of that depends on the butt and hip, but once those are nice and loose, then it's a matter of sitting up straight. In fact, the depth in the posture is from the waist up, from the balance. The muscles you'll use to just bring your left hand up (always left hand up first -- both sides) will align everything. Maybe you just do a clap, but you will be lifting your body up, turning the posture, over time, from heel sit to toe stand without getting too crazy on the knee.

What's good to eat?

- * SALT, specifically sea salt because it's high in minerals.
- * You need some fats: like low fat cheese and avocado
- * Put Celery and Carrots in every salad you make- snacking on celery is like eating FREE of calories!
- * Vinegar on your salad- Balsamic vinegars, both red and white are wonderful- add the best olive oil you can afford with a little FRESH GRATED Parmesan cheese and you will feel like you are FEASTING SINFULLY!
- * Steamed Veggies, yes have a little butter!
- * WATER WATER WATER
- * Fruit Juice in moderation
- * Veggie Juice- as much as you want
- * Fruits- especially cooling fruits like watermelon and other melons- go easy in the oranges--feast on grapefruit'.

Again, no one diet works for everybody, but there are enough ideas here and different approaches that maybe something strikes your fancy or hits you as worth trying out. Especially, as you get ready to make New Year's resolutions, honor yourself and your practice with a diet that makes sense to your yoga and your commitment to your healthy lifestyle. Happy eating and even happier yoga in '08!!!