

### Monthly Newsletter

#### "Membership has privileges"

If you have a yearly, auto debit or have been a long time student, as a token of our appreciation for your "bulldog determination," we are sending you two guest passes so that you can celebrate the gift of yoga with your family and friends. They are redeemable any time and can be used for the intro week.

#### Give the gift of YOGA!

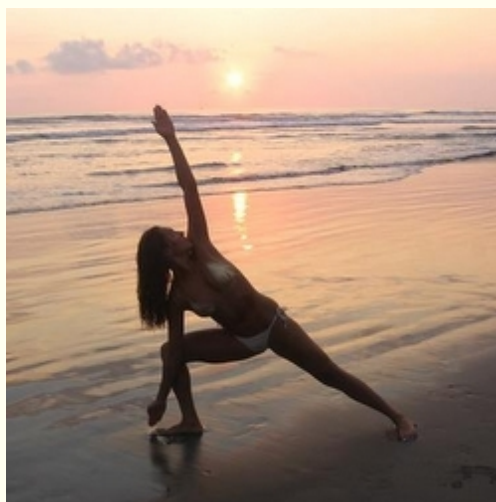
##### Holiday Specials

Beginning December 13th through December 31st, enjoy special year-end savings.  
\$49 set-up fee waived when you sign up for Auto Debit.  
15% off all unlimited packages  
10% off all class packages  
Yoga is just about the best gift you can give or get, so give yoga gift certificates to the yogis in your life. It's something they want and need, and it's never been easier or cheaper to give.

##### New Yoga Clothes

Just in time for the holidays, we're happy to announce the arrival of two new yoga clothing lines to the studio, Beyond Yoga and Shakti Activewear. No matter what your skill level or body type, we've got a new yoga outfit for you to treat yourself or a fellow yogi to, or to celebrate your New Year's resolution with a new outfit to reward and motivate your practice. Beyond Yoga blends simple design and versatile, practical sizing and styles, while Shakti tends to be more colorful, a little bit snugger in fit, and more swimsuit-inspired in its design. Check 'em out the next time

#### Yogi Q&A: Dena DePompa



**Name:** Dena Marie DePompa

**Profession:**

Bikram Yoga Instructor,  
Fit Model,  
Wine Sommelier/Server,  
(Graduated in Kinesiology Summer 2008)

**Been doing Bikram Yoga since:** June 2006

**How many times a week do you practice?!**  
practice 5-8 times a week on a good week.

**What inspired you to start Bikram Yoga?** I had a fellow co-worker at 'The Training Center' invite me. He told me that it was one of the most challenging workouts he had ever done. So, I had to try it. I thought it would be easy considering I was Olympic Lifting and running six-minute miles at the time.

**Why Bikram Yoga? Had you done other kinds of hatha yoga?** I had taken a semester of Hatha Yoga at the University of Hawaii, and I actually failed the class because I was on the University's softball team, and I missed too many classes due to traveling.

#### Try the Right Way

The most important thing about Bikram's Hatha Yoga, it's defining quality, is not the heat. Or what you could call the tough-love teaching style. It's you, the student, and your ability to listen to and follow directions. Because when you try the right way, you are affording your body and your practice the chance to grow and change. Though you may hear directions delivered slightly differently by different instructors, each posture is meant to be taught with the same detail, rhythm and result: the best posture you are capable of because you tried the right way. As Senior Instructor Emmy Cleaves says, the three things that truly shape your hatha yoga practice are "frequency, precision and intensity".

##### Frequency

This is coming regularly, so your practice becomes cumulative. Bikram suggests a minimum of three times a week. The more you come, the more defined and steady your learning curve.

##### Precision

Like God, yoga is in the details. Parallel to the floor, well, that's parallel to the floor. A triangle's a triangle. It's these archetypes that call on the exact combinations of strength and flexibility that bring maximum benefit to the body. This is the essence of trying the right way. Because when the body lines up according to the dialog of the posture, it allows the body greater access to strength and flexibility, and this is where the yoga really takes place.

##### Intensity

This is the great intangible where you are your own best teacher. Only you know hard and intently you are

you're at the studio. There's nothing like a new yoga outfit to inspire your practice.

### **Holiday Schedule**

Beginning December 22nd and continuing through January 2nd, we'll be observing a holiday schedule. Please check the website. Enjoy your holidays more by making yoga a part of them!

## **Studio Announcements**

### **Welcome our new Wednesday morning teacher Nancy Henricksen**

Please check the website for her inspiring testimonial.

### **Yoga Etiquette**

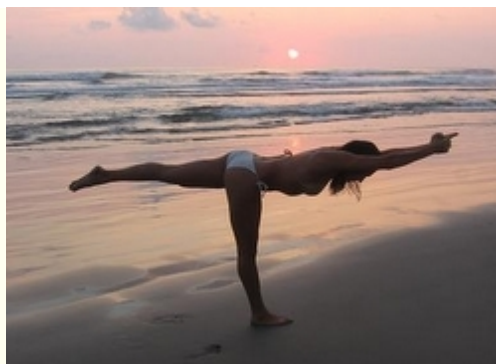
Bikram says the most important thing he learned from his guru, Bishnu Ghosh, was not how to do yoga, or how to teach yoga, but to listen. Listen to your instructor and do the poses when the instructions are given. You benefit most when you don't think too much in class. Listen and apply what you hear to your body. Be present. Be attentive.

### **Kombucha: Yoga In A Bottle**

Well, not exactly. But after a great class, it's like popping champagne on New Years' eve. If that champagne tasted like a vaguely vinegar-y apple cider with all kinds of balance-bringing benefits. We have the best, G.T.'s Synergy for sale now. Bon Anni!

### **Teacher Training Comes to Palm Desert**

In lieu of our own Dena DePompa and her recent completion of teacher training, we thought it prescient to share this communique from Bikram World Headquarters: "We have found a permanent home (next 4 years!) for teaching training. Palm Desert, California made us an offer we couldn't refuse. They have even proclaimed November 17th as Bikram Yoga Day. It will be the same fabulous and strenuous training but at a far superior location with easy airline access from Los Angeles. The Desert Springs JW Marriot Resort and Spa will be the official teacher training host for Bikram Yoga College of India. Our inaugural session will be April 26, 2009-June 28, 2009. Fall training will be September 1, 2009-November 3, 2009. This should make



### **What are your favorite things about Bikram Yoga La Canada?**

The sense of community that the studio creates. Being apart of the family, and being able to call it my second home. I know that I am always welcome, and that it is a place where people care about each other, and want the best for each other.

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

The hardest thing about the yoga was the fact that I had to look at myself in the mirror for 90 minutes. There is nowhere to hide, nowhere to run, just my eyes, my thoughts, and my body. It was hard for me to look at myself because I never completely approved of what I saw. Whether it was physically, spiritually or mentally. I always saw myself as not good enough in some way. I had a lot of insecurities, and I had to face it all when I stared at myself in the mirror. Then when I started going to yoga everyday, even twice a day, I started to like myself, and I even fell in love with myself. I finally felt centered and alive, and it was then that I was in a much better position to be a better person.

**What's your favorite pose why?** I love camel. It is a pose that releases stored emotion from the chest cavity. It opens up your rib cage so your heart gets stretched maximally. It also is the deepest back bend you do in the Beginning class, and it is so good for your spine to back bend. Bikram always says that "If you have a good spine, you have a good life." Camel may be your most disliked pose, but after you have done it, you feel like a different person.

**What's your hardest pose and why?** I always struggled with standing bow pose. I had always dreamed about locking out my kicking leg one day. Well, I am still not there yet, but I am so close. While I was at training, it improved 200%. As I practice more and more, it gets a little better everyday. That is all I can ask for. Some days it is fabulous and some days I have trouble just locking my standing knee. And that's okay. In this yoga, you do as much as you can the right way, and you get all the benefits.

working. Teachers, the heat, your fellow students, these factors can't demand intensity of you, only inspire it. But it's through this focus that your practice literally catches fire at the cellular level. In fact, burning calories and speeding up your metabolism are the result of this intensity--following directions, continuing to breathe and trying the right way.

Bikram Yoga is based on change and transformation, challenging the body and rewarding it as a result. Teachers are required to be attentive to students with special needs and injuries and always encourage you to let them know if you are injured before class and will gladly answer questions after class. Modifications in very special circumstances may be suggested, but 99.99% of the time, these are not long term solutions. Bikram Yoga may seem idiosyncratic (borderline boot camp), but it is also delivered with discipline and compassion to be absorbed and executed in a way that respects both your body and the full benefits this yoga is designed to deliver to it.

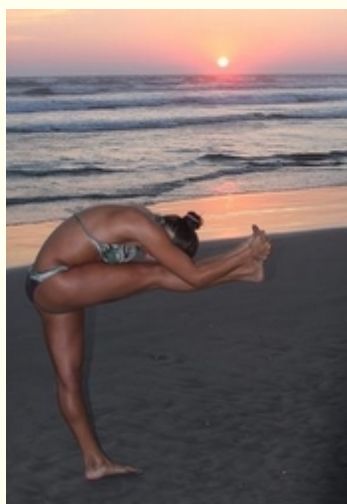
it even easier for students to attend. For more information contact Antonia at [Antonia@bikramyoga.com](mailto:Antonia@bikramyoga.com)!"



**What changes has doing this Yoga brought to your life?** In general the yoga has changed my life completely. I became a person who opens up to other people, someone who no longer underestimates herself, and someone who enjoys life's experiences to the fullest. I would say my greatest transformation came during teacher training. I understand more deeply that I can maintain a beautiful life full of health, happiness, and joy. Everyday working towards controlling my mind, and using it to increase my awareness of my body and spirit.

**What keeps you motivated?**

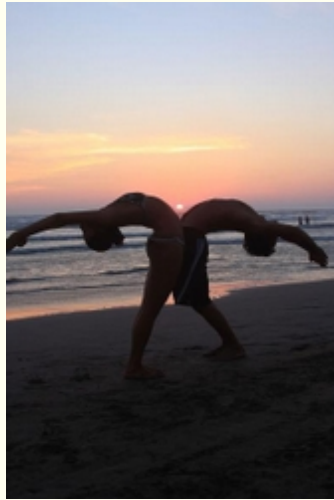
I want to use my experiences to influence and improve lives around me. I have felt the great benefits of Bikram's yoga, and experienced them first hand. If I can share that with people I know, who need it in their lives, than I can be satisfied that I have done my part to make the world a better place.



**Any recent breakthroughs you'd like to share?**

My breakthrough also came at training. It was a physical sensation I had during a standing back bend. I talked to senior teacher Emmy Cleaves about it. She explained I had an awakening of my Kundalini. Kundalini is the primal life force that is stored at the base of the spine. When the Kundalini is activated it may be very uncomfortable at first. The energy is released and surges through the body, like a vibration, buzzing, stinging sensation, or over-all

electrical feeling. The Kundalini travels through the chakras up the spine. The chakras hold memories, feelings and emotions. It is good for the Kundalini to be let loose to clean and clear the chakras. It was the most amazing thing I have ever experienced physically through the yoga.



**Any words of wisdom to new students?** Don't be discouraged when you are not meeting your expectations in the yoga room. Leave your expectations at the door. Better yet, leave your ego at the door. It won't do you any good in the yoga room. You "try" yoga, you don't "do" yoga. Your body is at a different stage everyday. Do as much as you can, the right way, and you will get better. And last but not least, "Just do the yoga!"

**\*Special Addendum: Dena discusses her recent experience at Teacher Training \***

**Why did you go through teacher training?** The first time I had ever thought about going to teacher training is when I walked into the studio June. I was feeling just okay, and then I saw Rose. She had a glow about her and she told me she had been in Acapulco helping out at teacher training. I wanted what she had. I researched it as it seemed fairly pricey to pay for tuition and stay in a resort for 2 1/2 months. So, the thought stayed in the back of my mind, but I didn't quite act on it. Rose and I talked, I told her that I would start saving money, and we'll see where I was in one month. Then we found out a scholarship was going to be awarded. I filled out all of the information, wrote a few essays, and sent in some pictures of my postures. I found out four weeks before training I received the scholarship for Fall 2008. I believed that if it was meant to be, it would be. And, it was. My dreams came true and it changed my life.

**How did you benefit from teacher training?** Teacher Training was hard. Everyday was a challenge. Getting little sleep because lectures lasted till all hours of the morning, classes were extremely HOT and HUMID, days were long, and somehow through the training, you get broken down either mentally, physically or emotionally. You can only become who you are truly meant to be, when you are broken down and built back up. Bikram says

(mainly during the floor series) "Life is hard, so you have to struggle harder!" Learn to embrace hard experiences, and never underestimate your capabilities. I definitely benefited physically (I lost ten pounds!) and mentally (I am able to concentrate and focus more deeply and remember things better). I've also benefited spiritually--I feel that I am a much more open person, with understandings that I didn't have before).

**What would you tell someone to motivate them to go to teacher training?** If you have the chance, go. It will change your life. It changed mine, and it was the best thing that I have ever done in my life. As Bikram says, "You will make your weaknesses your strengths, you will become a more balanced person, and the good will be endless."

**It's never too early to start planning and saving for two months that will change your practice and your life. Interested students can visit [bikramyoga.com](http://bikramyoga.com), or contact [shelly@bikramyoga.com](mailto:shelly@bikramyoga.com); any questions talk to Rose.**