



Hot yoga

This year, turn up the heat on your exercise routine



BY LESLIE KLIPSCH

With the start of a new year and an eye on improved health and wellness, I recently embraced a craze that I've been hearing about from enthusiastic friends for years: Hot Yoga. Excited for a new experience, I grabbed my yoga mat and headed to the place recommended over and over again, Indigo Hot Yoga.

Hot yoga, which is yoga performed in a studio that is heated to 105 degrees, has shown tremendous growth in popularity over the past decade in the United States. Many praise the benefits of hot yoga, which include the relief of muscle and joint pain and tension, increased

flexibility, greater ease in movement and mobility, and detoxification of both skin and body.

"Hot yoga has become a healthy addiction for me," says Shannon Moran who owns Indigo Hot Yoga in Davenport and Indigo Wellness in Moline with his wife, Abby Webster-Moran.

In the past, Mr. Moran struggled with chronic back pain. "My back pain is nearly gone and I actually feel better in my 30s than I did in my 20s," he told me after an hour-long class at Indigo.

Practicing hot yoga is also said to help reduce stress, which in turn can help alleviate other physical and mental ailments. Regular practice can also improve one's sleep, concentration, and capacity for joy. Personally, I've



Shannon Moran



A variety of yoga equipment and attire can be purchased at the Indigo Hot Yoga Studio. (Photos by Leslie Klipsch)

found that after an hour of exercise (hot yoga included), I desire to live and eat more healthfully throughout the rest of my day.

Classes at Indigo Hot Yoga are limited to 27 people and I found the environment nothing but warm and welcoming. Students are encouraged to drink water, rest if needed, and approach each pose with the awareness and well-being of their body in mind. All levels of students coexist and can chaturanga (a low push-up of sorts) on their mats in harmony.

Mr. Moran recommends a hot yoga practice of at least two times per week to increase strength and flexibility. Of course, the more you practice, the more obvious the benefits will be. Though I may not be ready to spring for a Lululemon hot-yoga head wrap quite yet, I enjoyed my experience at Indigo enough to make an effort to use hot yoga as a complement to my love/hate relationship with the treadmill and occasional strength-training class at the YMCA.

It's the new year and many of us feel prompted to re-evaluate our current health. We do this for different reasons — in an act of self-compassion, to heal what ails us, to lose weight, and so on. But no matter where we

look to find the exercise regimen that's right for us, I think we're all seeking the same thing: As Mr. Moran stated simply, "We want to feel good while we're alive."

My favorite part of hot yoga

It's January. We live in the Quad-Cities. A warm cup of coffee? Wool socks and a down comforter? An hour in a hot, steamy room? Yes, please. Part of my attraction to hot yoga during the winter months is simply the luxurious reprieve from the cold. After a few classes with Mr. Moran, I've also found that I love the deep, meditative breaths, the precious quiet, and the strength resulting from practice. I'm definitely a novice, so I was so pleased to find everyone I encountered at Indigo to be incredibly hospitable and supportive. It seems that the yoga principle of Namaste (an ancient Sanskrit word loosely translated by the Western world as "The good in me sees the good in you") is alive and well in the studio.

Mr. Moran's favorite part of hot yoga

Six days a week, Mr. Moran silences



his phone and enjoys his own yoga practice, finding it a refreshing break from the responsibilities of three young children and two thriving studios. This practice, he says, helps bring peace and clarity to his everyday life — something he also enjoys sharing with his students. “I love truly helping my students feel better both physically and mentally,” he said. “The gift of yoga is health and wellness; the practice is a way to be proactive and take care of your overall health.”

Why you should check out hot yoga

Regardless of whether or not you have any idea what a downward dog or a sun salutation is, a hot yoga class is worth checking out this year. Instructors at Indigo teach Vinyasa yoga, a style that focuses on the alignment of movement and breath. The vibe of the studio is calm and subdued and the hour spent in class is simultaneously relaxing and invigorating. If you go, eat something light before class (either yogurt or a piece of fruit is a good choice) and bring a yoga mat and a bottle of water.

Where you should go

You’ll find a wide variety of classes at the Indigo Hot Yoga Studio located at 5161 Utica Ridge Road, Davenport. In Moline, at 1621 5th Ave., there are ongoing, weekly drop-in classes featuring traditional yoga styles for all ranges of age and ability. The Moline wellness studio also offers therapeutic massage and bodywork services, as well as workshops. For more information, pricing, and updates, check out the Indigo Wellness website, indigowellness.info, and Facebook page, facebook.com/hotyogaquadcities. Or call 309-764-YOGA (9642).

Each month in The Gold Standard, Leslie Klipsch, a freelance writer and editor based in Davenport, shines a spotlight on the gems of the Quad-Cities area — for Gold Book readers. She enjoys reading, cooking, spending time with her husband and three young children and exploring all that the Quad-Cities has to offer.

