

A new yoga
sanctuary offers
more than
100 classes a week
in one luxurious
location.

pure
bliss

PROP ROOM
MODEL CAROLINE
WINBERG
STRETCHES WITH
STRAPS AND ROPES
IN PURE'S IYENGAR
STUDIO. BRA BY
BROOKS SPORTS.
ELISABETTA
ROGIANI LEGGINGS.

orning Mysore
in midtown;
after-work
Bikram down-

town. Ironically, yoga, at its very essence about the union of things—body and mind, breath and movement—has become as fractured as frenzied urban living. Till now. Say *namaste* to Pure, a Hong Kong-based yoga emporium that has teamed up with Equinox to open its first U.S. outpost, on Manhattan's Upper East Side. Pure's motto, "Many practices, one intention," sums up its paradigm-shifting mandate: to bring together a diversity of yoga traditions—nineteen, to be exact—all under a single, elegantly appointed roof (\$140 a month buys unlimited classes). "We wanted to create an environment where the best teachers from every school of yoga thought imaginable could cross-pollinate, where students of all proficiencies and interests could come and learn," says Lisa Hedley, Pure's creative consultant.

The sheer transporting gorgeousness of the space itself is closer to a spa

in aesthetic than any place heretofore haunted by a downward dog. A living wall of native plants—the city's first such installation—marks the Eighty-sixth Street entrance to a vast subterranean lair accented in ocher and crimson, with stone and water elements marking the entrances to each of four colossal studios (there are also two smaller ones for private instruction and meditation, as well as an Iyengar rope wall). A cushy central gathering area invites lounging with a pot of hibiscus-pear tea; the adjacent boutique sells Me & Ro bracelets and chakra-hued organic-cotton practicewear.

Luxuriousness aside, it's the thoughtfulness of the amenities—from the inversion-friendly, eco-conscious cork and palm-wood floors to the natural-rubber Harmony mats placed on them before each class, and the paraben-free products in the locker-room showers (all eighteen of them)—that is sure to banish a lifetime's worth of patchouli-scented yoga associations. Now, that's a pure practice.—MEGAN O'GRADY *fitness* >632

POSED FOR SUCCESS

Across the country, yoga studios are putting contemporary twists on an ancient practice.

*yoga to
the people*

BERKELEY CA AND NYC

Harried executives unroll their mats next to struggling musicians at this pair of urban oases, a brick-walled East Village hideaway and an unpretentious Berkeley storefront—a democratic response to the perception that yoga has become a leisure activity for the privileged. With a no-frills, no-judgments ethos and rigorous, 60-minute vinyasa flow classes (set to such chant-free offerings as Marvin Gaye and the Beatles) conveniently spaced throughout the day, YTTP is all about accessibility, a reminder of yoga's egalitarian origins (suggested donation: \$10 per class; yogatothepeople.com).

SPECIAL FEATURE

Pay-what-you-can-afford class fees.

*arkansas
yoga center*

FAYETTEVILLE AR

Built in 2005—making it among the earliest adopters of the green yoga movement—this environmentalist oasis in the hills of the Ozarks is constructed almost entirely of eco-conscious materials, including exterior aluminum walls insulated with newspaper, a large outdoor deck made of recycled soda bottles, and discarded-oak flooring warmed by energy-efficient—and barefoot student-gratifying—radiant heat. This singularly tranquil setting is the fitting backdrop for a mindful and more-

KEIRON O'CONNOR. Sitings Editor: Kasia Pyslak; hair, Fernando Torrent at L'Atelier NYC; makeup, Claire Bayley at L'Atelier NYC, using Chanel. Still life: CHRISTOPHER COPPOLA. Details, see in This Issue.

BEAUTY HEALTH & FITNESS

BODY SPECIAL

personalized style of yoga practice, including classes in VariYoga, a signature blend of Anusara, Iyengar, and Viniyoga developed by owner Andrea Fournet and senior teacher Bryan Fowler. Sessions in T'ai Chi and meditation—as well as an on-site massage center—reinforce the “tread lightly” message (\$15 per class; aryoga.com).

SPECIAL FEATURE A lush garden sanctuary and koi pond that draws students at lunchtime.

yogaphoria NEW HOPE PA

Yoga isn't just about what happens on the mat: Such is the philosophy of this Bucks County studio, which melds community awareness with perfecting one's crow pose. Students drive in from surrounding states for asana practice with a roster of internationally known yoga instructors, and regulars are encouraged to take part in *seva*, or selfless service, in the form of food drives and donations to local schools. The jewel box of a space—silk pillow—strewn window seats, an antique incense burner, an organic-tea lounge—encourages

after-class gatherings (\$15 per class; yogaphoria.com).

SPECIAL FEATURE An eco-boutique stocked with items you'd actually want to wear.

dharmamitrayogacenter

NYC

Ever wonder where yoga teachers go to practice? Aspiring gurus and studio owners sweat together at this secretive and surprisingly humble Gramercy Park studio helmed by Dharma Mittra, a 69-year-old yogi known as much for his deadpan humor as for his unsupported headstands. Despite the omnipresence of *Yoga Journal*—model types, the single-room, pink-carpeted center is a standout for its familial, workshop-like atmosphere, in which students regularly assist one another in a series of postures easily adjusted to accommodate different levels of strength and flexibility. Partner yoga stretches at the end of classes lend a playful vibe (\$15 per class; dharmayogacenter.com).

SPECIAL FEATURE Monthly Maha Sadhana sessions, a special group practice, followed by a vegetarian potluck dinner.



GREEN REVOLUTION
ECO-FRIENDLY YOGA OPTIONS ABOUND, LIKE PRANA AND AGOY USA'S PVC-FREE MATS (BELOW).

goldenbridge HOLLYWOOD

It takes a village at this nouveau ashram of sorts, which offers more than 100 classes and workshops a week in an ingeniously converted former auto showroom. Rooted in Kundalini traditions that emphasize chanting, meditation, and controlled-breathing techniques, Golden Bridge attracts people seeking more than defined abs. Here, yogis can undergo a nutritional consultation, learn about neonatal care, dine on organic vegetarian cuisine, and attend a concert of call-and-response kirtan music—all without leaving the premises (\$16 per class; goldenbridgeyoga.com).

SPECIAL FEATURE Custom-blended healing elixirs from an on-site herbalist.—M.O.



MORNING GLORY
YOUR FIRST CALORIES ARE ALSO AMONG YOUR MOST IMPORTANT ONES—MAKE THEM COUNT.

the breakfast club

A big morning meal could tip the scales in your favor.

forget cereal—scientists have unearthed the real breakfast of champions. Eating in the a.m. and weight loss have long been linked, but new research pinpoints exactly what to consume to shed excess pounds. Dismayed by the high relapse rate of low-carb dieters, Daniela Jakubowicz, M.D., looked at two groups of obese women; half followed a carb-restrictive plan while the others ate high-carb, high-protein, calorie-packed breakfasts followed by a low-carb diet. The big breakfasters lost much more weight—and kept it off. “In the morning, your body is primed to convert food into energy right away,” explains Jakubowicz, a clinical professor at Virginia Commonwealth University, who presented her research at the Endocrine Society’s annual meeting. If the brain doesn’t immediately receive what it needs, it will look to other sources—like your muscles and collagen—for energy, which slows metabolism and intensifies cravings. Jakubowicz says your first meal should account for roughly half your daily calories. Talk about a power breakfast.—MEGAN CONWAY