

in search of the ultimate exercise - we found when you're Hot... you're really

health & wellness SPOTLIGHT

HOT

"Hot Yoga" may have it all



photo by Libby Isenhower

spl to the Daily News Bowling Green, (KY)

When asked "What is the hottest place in Bowling Green?", nine times out of ten the responder will answer "HOT YOGA!" And for good reason: The Bowling Green-based studio has exploded over the past two years into one of the most popular venues of any kind - exercise or otherwise - in the region.

Hot Yoga Bowling Green is quickly becoming the destination of fitness and wellness choice for everyone from early teens, to soccer moms, college and grad students, to senior citizens. Their eldest participant is currently an energetic 87 years



Morgan Foster and Alyssa Bishop photo by Matt Fields-Johnson

young. High school students can't go up the hallway at school without hearing or engaging in a conversation about Hot Yoga. A growing number of doctors are involved in their own Hot Yoga practice while recommending it to their own patients.

So what is the secret to this not-so-secret place of high energy sweat production? We found a surprising answer: It's not only because of the sweating. It's a balanced (no pun intended) blend of everything. "Hot Yoga doesn't concentrate on one area of the body", said studio director Tony Bishop. "It works, tones, energizes and heals every part of the body from the inside out. Unlike traditional weights and apparatus workouts, you work everything in every class without injuring the muscles. This is why we can do Hot Yoga every day and still remain healthy. You aren't compromising your joints, ligaments and muscle fibers - thus eliminating the need for recovery. You can sculpt your body into an amazing thing of beauty and still be healthy internally as well. It really is the perfect fitness regimen. That's why it has been around for almost 5,000 years."

Instructor Tyler Franz loves the emphasis on breathing and breath development. Known as "pranayama", the deep breathing associated with Hot Yoga cannot be over-emphasized according to Franz. "You control your mind, you control your breath, you control your breath, you control your mind," he said, referring to the outstanding connection of mental relaxation and physical benefits that goes far beyond those of traditional "exercise". It is the breathing that really jumpstarts the body's ability to heal itself, as echoed by several Hot Yoga participants with which we spoke.

And even more compelling than the obvious calorie burning and detoxification of the body, 26 year old yogini Ashley Reynolds relishes in the friendships and sharing of everyday life that she has discovered at Hot Yoga. Reynolds spoke of the studio as a place "...like Cheers, where everybody knows your name." She goes on to say that she has met folks here that she otherwise would have never met, with such a diverse group including every age, fitness level and both genders. "A great place, with great music and great friends," Reynolds continued, noting the clever use of many styles of motivational music as opposed to the stereotypical slow and mundane offerings at some studios. Like Reynolds, many participants talk about Hot Yoga as if it were their favorite coffee house 'hangout'. They enjoy that you don't have to be an athlete here.

Hot Yoga offers a variety of classes from as many as eight instructors with class length from 45 to 90 minutes. And from a standpoint of weight loss, enthusiast Lisa Chapman touts this yoga as "...the hardest workout I've ever done. I was an aerobics instructor during college, but this burns more calories than anything else and I get the bonus of being totally relaxed at the end of the class." To date, Chapman has lost more than 80 pounds and gained to what she refers as tremendous flexibility and strength. Several regulars track their caloric burn with monitors, and have reported up to a staggering 1,000 calories expended in a single class. Not bad for an activity that is completely non-impact.

Hot Yoga Bowling Green is located in an easy-access area, directly behind the Medical Center, with the Fairview Building in a custom designed and constructed facility. "We are only slightly more than 2 blocks from the new ballpark, and right on Fairview, so we couldn't be happier with our location", said Anice Bishop, instructor and studio general manager. They offer single walk-in

classes, monthly unlimited packages and class card discounts along with some of the lowest rates in the country for full time students, and yearly packages. This creates much flexibility for their clients, who may not necessarily want to sign with any facility for a year or more. "Of course the full year unlimited is still the best buy", said Bishop. "With frequency, our clients get healthier than they have ever been and end up getting a better value and lower bottom line rate than with traditional gyms or other facilities."

Anice Bishop continued by showcasing the Hot Yoga advantages: "We are a Christian-owned business who share our love for God with our students, in a non-judgmental and welcoming atmosphere. Our various series of yoga practice offers something for everyone of every walk of life, with the addition of clean heat and humidity to take every class to another level."

Our research revealed that most hot yoga studios are actually in larger cities with a half million or more population, but Tony Bishop says that he felt Bowling Green was exactly at the point of growth for their studio to flourish. They are receiving new participants everyday, and adding to their services as they progress. "We are here to grow with Bowling Green and southern Kentucky. We appreciate that we have been welcomed with open arms." Bishop said. Aside from strength and flexibility, the ultra heated yoga room with humidity creates a sweat beyond

"...Hot Yoga is like a healthy version of 'Cheers' - where everybody knows your name."

-Ashley Reynolds Hot Yoga participant



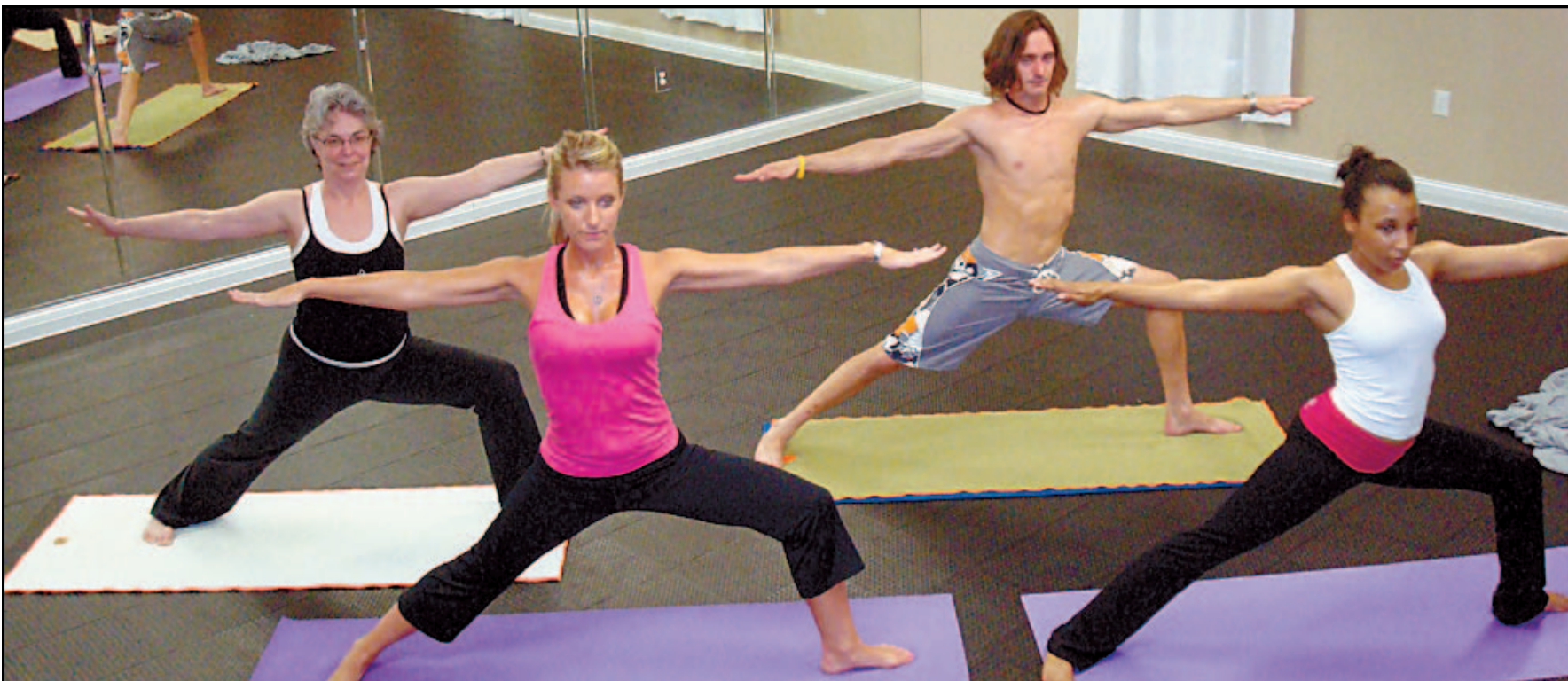
Instructor Mary Eubank demonstrates an advancement of "Pigeon". Eubank said she is thankful for such a facility as Hot Yoga to teach and practice, as the studio is so welcoming with great members and teachers, and the various heated series help everyone discover yourself in a whole new way. photo by Matt Fields-Johnson



Hot Yoga regulars (l to r) Cassie Martin, Warren Guyer, Ashley Reynolds, and Ashley White in one of their favorite "asanas" - Standing Bow. photo by Neil Holt



Studio director and instructor Tony Bishop leads the "Hot Power Hour" class through advanced "Side Dog". photo by Libby Isenhower



Hot Yoga instructors step into "Warrior II" before advancing to "Triangle" - one of the most powerful postures in Hatha yoga. This pose works every fiber of the body, with no impact movement. Left to right are: Anice Bishop (studio general manager/instructor), Brandy Mills, Tyler Franz, and Lindsey Sheckles. Absent from photo is Michelle Darnall. photo by Neil Holt

normal perspiration that detoxifies the body through the skin and respiratory system. The various yoga postures ("asanas") are also key to squeezing, stretching and tightening the anatomy - including many internal organs and the lymphatic system - for a vitality that may never be experienced in normal exercise. The studio yoga room is heated to a balmy 102 to 105 degrees with a humidity level of 40% to 48% for maximum results. The facility is also equipped with a super efficient air filtration system, which assists in keeping the place sparkling clean and fresh.

So what are your wellness goals? Lower cholesterol - losing weight - reducing stress - building lean muscle - and staying in shape all summer long? Hot Yoga Bowling Green offers all that and more in maybe the most

comprehensive health practice ever...? It's old, but it's new. Even during the extreme heat of summer, this yoga even helps you tolerate temperatures easily beyond the norm. They offer your first full week unlimited for \$25. (\$20 for a student - high school or college) so give yourself a gift that we think you will love. The one and only "ultimate fitness experience" as the phrase says. Hot Yoga. No sweat. (yes, pun intended)

Hot Yoga Bowling Green is a full-service studio with showers, lockers and changing rooms located at 730 Fairview Avenue. They can also be reached by phone at 270-793-0011 or visit their website at www.hotyogabowlinggreen.com.



Meredith Kerrick follows instructor Tony Bishop in "Dolphin", a pose that Bishop refers to as "down dog with attitude!" photo by Libby Isenhower