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YOGA REVOLUTIONISED!

YOGA AND BUSTA RHYMES IN THE SAME ROOM? IT'S TRUE AND MOMTAZ BEGUM-HOSSAIN HAS EXPERIENCED IT...

By [fashion_admin](#) | Posted Thu 14 April 2011

For someone chained to her computer most of the time, the chance to do something active is always a pleasure. When I heard about hip hop yoga it sounded a breeze; essentially doing some stretching to a rap soundtrack as opposed to the normal Europop remixes they tend to play in my local gym. So accompanied by two friends, we hotfooted it one Monday night to Hip Hop Yoga. Designed and taught by yogi and hip hop fanatic Neil Patel, a fun musical warm up is followed by abs, choreographed sequences, breakdance and yoga freezes and finally a blissful chill out.

Luckily we were eased in to the hard bits with a gentle warm up. Neil's positive energy is infectious so however you feel when you turn up to class (usually knackered if it's post work), you'll soon feel perky when you start following his choreographed routine. After that it didn't take long to discover this class was not for the faint hearted. We were encouraged to stand on our heads and perform advanced moves, and there I was expecting a few yogic stretches for the beginner - but that's Neil's philosophy, that nothing is unobtainable; beginning with the hard stuff means the easy bits will come naturally.



From the very first position, your stamina is put to the test; keeping up with the movements gets your heart rate going, making it a good form of cardiovascular exercise. Emphasis is placed on muscle toning so your abs, chest, back and butt all get definition. Neil talked us through several classic yoga poses (none of who's names I remember) and some routines which we kind of did at our own pace but the hardcore members seemed to get through fluidly without any stopping. One of my friends kept making faces at me with the 'why did you bring me here it's soooo painful' look while my other companion went straight in for the handstand, or at least tempted it. As for me, the towel I took along in place of a yoga mat (big mistake) was slippery which restricted what I could do (that's

my excuse anyway!)

As the hour and a half session came to an end (I was under the illusion most of this time would be warming up and cooling down when in fact it was mainly spent on getting a full bodywork out), I was left aching in places I never knew existed. My thighs in particular were hurting from the stretching - the friend who was making faces gave up after half the class because her legs couldn't take anymore (clearly a good thing if you're looking to tone up). My other pal was impressed and hopes to return. My verdict? You could only get hip-hop yoga in a city as trendy as London. It's a unique way to stay in shape and though I'm not really a yoga fan, I can see the fascination, especially the results. And anything that makes you look and feel fabulous in such a fun way is worth trying.

Where to do it: Hip Hop Yoga was launched in the UK by the Rapping Yogi, Neil Patel. The first class is free. For the latest class updates go to www.chikri.com.

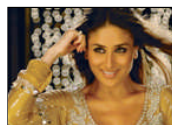
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