

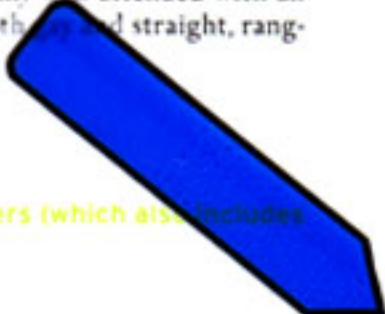
→ A GYM BUNNY CAN BE A YOGI TOO! CONTINUED FROM PAGE 48

Crunch

This Sunset gym features the perfect fusion of old and new school stretching. Traditional yoga classes are held to service students of all levels, while newfangled takes (like Luna Yoga, which calls upon guidance from the moon's lunar circles) expertly challenge students that are looking for a deeper mind/body connection. Classes are generally well attended with an athletic and attractive mix of men and women, both straight and gay, ranging from mid-20s to mid-40s.

8000 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood
323/654-4550
www.crunch.com

Cost: Free for members / \$24 for non-members (which also includes an all-day gym pass)



Equinox

For all-things yoga, Equinox is the place to get your stretch on. Offering an extremely diverse curriculum (Anusara, Vinyasa, Hatha, Iyengar and more), there is a class to push and pull even the most expert yogi. But don't feel left out, newbies; special courses are curtailed specifically for those that have never downward dogged. The gym's aesthetic, spa-like and serene, makes for the perfect upper-class, post-yoga mental unwind. But definitely remember to wear your best sweats; people in these classes dress to impress, and this is where paparazzi hide out to see and celebs go to be seen.

8590 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood
310/289-1900
www.equinoxfitness.com

Cost: Free for members / \$5 for nonmembers (but you must attend with a member)

Gold's

Although famous for its muscle demographic, Gold's also boasts a multi-faceted yoga program. So says Director of Sales, Karen Genendlis: "There are lots (more) men coming lately, as previous years used to be more female... Not anymore. And we don't have that intimidated factor. If you are not limber or don't know the poses or the names, you won't feel lost." But don't let that fool you. In traditional Gold's style, the classes (capped at about 20 students) are impassioned and push even the most hesitant beginners. Also keep in mind that you can hear the loud music of the gym during class, so don't expect serenity.

1016 N. Cole Ave., Hollywood
323/462-7012
www.goldsqym.com

Cost: Free for members / \$12 for nonmembers

Hollywood YMCA

Held in a beautiful old social hall with lots of California/Spanish charm—think hardwood floors, hand crafted wooden beams and brown tiled walls—the Hollywood YMCA's yoga classes are free for members and their guests. Multiple styles are offered to fit any interest or fitness level, including beginner's foundation yoga, Anusara, Ashtanga, Hatha, Kundalini, power yoga, pre/postnatal, and even aqua yoga for people wanting to do it in the pool. Best of all, yogis are super friendly so you'll get good instruction without any of the attitude found at certain self-important studios in Hollywood or Beverly Hills. Check out the website for full class descriptions, then try great-spirited Jody if you can practice at 6:30 a.m., Adam's fun Hatha classes, or either Joseph or Rose of Sharon's power yoga for good, hard workouts. —RICHARD ANDREOLI

1553 North Schrader Blvd., Hollywood
323/467-4161
www.ymcala.org

Initial registration fee: \$100/ Monthly membership fee: \$49

→ DESPERATELY SEEKING SHANTI CONTINUED FROM PAGE 48



YogaWorks

Though YogaWorks is a chain, with various locations scattered around the Westside, I like to think of the Larchmont Center for Yoga as the hub—even with many studios under one roof, it still has that boutique feel to it. And you won't find another studio in town with so many styles offered—take your pick from traditional Mysore Ashtanga, Vinyasa flow, Iyengar, gentle, prenatal, Anusara, Hatha, their signature YogaWorks blend...there's even a free HIV class offered! My personal fave is former Broadway singer Whitney Allen's flow class; this petite blonde will put you through the traces in an hour and a half class that starts slow with breathing exercises, and will take you through vigorous sun salutations, inversions, and standing postures, all ending in a delicious guided savasana. Unlike many studios, the instructors here are not afraid to use music in their classes, which makes for a truly transportive yoga experience. —J.S.

Larchmont Center for Yoga
230 N. Larchmont Blvd., Los Angeles
323/464-1276
www.yogaworks.com
Single Class: \$18

Yummy Yoga



In yoga, a good environment is crucial to a positive experience, and Yummy Yoga in Los Feliz offers one of the most inviting. Located in a former house, the interior space is warm and, at the risk of sounding too hippie spiritual, evokes a sense of calm amidst the hustle of L.A. traffic happening outside. Music is tailored to fit a particular class' tone, so expect smooth eclectic tunes during chill out Candlelight Flow, and organically building beats for more intense classes. (And trust us, those beats are important for the workout awaiting you in Level 2&3 classes.) Students are a creative and fun mix, from work-at-home locals to experienced practitioners who found this oasis after much searching. Add in relatively small class sizes—emphasis is on proper form and helping you improve your practice—and it's no wonder why Yummy has been kept a secret for so long. —RICHARD ANDREOLI

1717 Hillhurst Ave., Los Feliz
323/953-8449
www.yummyyoga.com
Single class: \$16