



can you take the heat?

Get a workout and detox at the same time with hot yoga. **WONG SIOW YUEN** sweats it out in five such classes.

DID YOU KNOW?

HOT YOGA COMPRISES A SERIES OF 26 POSES DONE IN A HEATED ROOM. IT'S BELIEVED THAT THE PROFUSE SWEATING HELPS DETOXIFY THE BODY.

MAIN PHOTO: BIKRAM YOGA



Simply Her
ed's rave

PURE YOGA

30 Raffles Place, #04-00 Chevron House, tel: 6304-2257, www.pure-yoga.com/en/singapore/.

COST Monthly memberships from \$90 to \$200. Choose from a three-month to a three-year membership.

FACILITIES A lift from Raffles Place MRT brings you straight to its posh reception. There are four studios which can accommodate up to 48 people, plus a studio for one-on-one sessions, all of which are heated to between 37-40 deg C. The changing area is spacious and well-equipped with things like hair dryers, tissue, cotton buds, moisturiser, shower cream, shampoo and conditioner.

CLASS I attended the 60-minute Hot Hour, one of four classes they offer. Instructor Vikram was humorous while leading the class, which relaxed us. It was an adaptation of the 26 traditional Bikram poses, with some punishing thigh and abdominal work. At the end, he brought down the room temperature so our bodies could acclimatise to the air-con outside the studio.

SERVICE The staff were friendly and helped me reset my locker's combination lock twice. There are many towel stations and you can book your next class via the Internet terminal there.

VERDICT Plush facilities, thoughtful service and relaxed class atmosphere.

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ABSOLUTE YOGA

491 River Valley Road, #02-01 Valley Point, tel: 6732-6007, www.absoluteyogasingapore.com.

COST \$34 for a trial class (refunded upon signing up). Packages range from \$270 for 10 classes to \$8,080 for a lifetime membership.

FACILITIES Two studios which can take 22 and 47 students each, and are heated to between 39-40 deg C. About a dozen heaters blast hot air and instructors have to use a microphone headset to talk above the din. Basic setting, with 16 shower cubicles and roomy lockers, even deodorant.

CLASS The instructor asked if there were any yoga or hot yoga first-timers. Throughout, he reminded us to stop and have some water and even went around adjusting our poses.

After the first set of poses, I was confident enough to execute the second without constantly having to look at him.

SERVICE Before the day of the class, they called to advise me to bring water and not to eat two hours before class.

VERDICT A good workout; and the instructor is careful about safety.

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Simply Her
great find

BIKRAM YOGA

#02-14 Raffles City Shopping Centre, tel: 6339-6639, www.bikramyoga.com.sg.

COST \$43 for a walk-in session; \$110 for a Beginners Intro Weekly Pass with unlimited classes. Monthly memberships from \$200 to \$350. \$1,600 (50 classes) or \$2,800 (100 classes).

FACILITIES Rooms are heated to 40 deg C, with a humidity of 40 per cent. Flooring is anti-bacterial. Two studios that take 30 and 50 persons each. No changing rooms – change in the locker area or toilet; nine shower cubicles with luxe products.

CLASS Latecomers are locked out; and there's no talking in the studio. The mat is a towel with a plastic backing – good for soaking up perspiration but no small towels are allowed. It's fast-paced, with a 20-second break in between poses, so there's little time to drink water. We did two sets of 26 poses over 90 minutes. The instructor did not demonstrate all the poses, but came over to correct mine.

SERVICE Friendly staff who greeted everyone by name.

VERDICT Hardcore yoga run with strict discipline, which may not appeal to all.

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PLANET FITNESS

30 Raffles Place, #07-00 Chevron House, tel: 6438-3000, www.planetfitness.com.sg.

COST \$128 for a monthly membership. Enquire about rates upon application.

FACILITIES The 38-deg C studio takes up to 40 and has a platform for the instructor, Dr Venky. Its eight shower rooms are clean and well-equipped; there are lots of roomy lockers and even a waiting area.

CLASS During the 60-minute class, Dr Venky demonstrated the poses with clear instructions and went around to adjust our poses. He explained that the heat could slow down our reflexes, but didn't ask if anyone had a health condition or say what to do if we felt faint (I did, at the start). But he reminded us to drink water. The class of 20 was cramped – I could touch the woman next to me when my arms were outstretched.

SERVICE They provided face and bath towels. I noticed some dark patches on the mat, but the staff reassured me that they were disinfected twice a day.

VERDICT Given the smaller class size, I would have expected more guidance.

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TRUE YOGA

20 Raffles Place, #27-00 Ocean Towers, tel: 6536-3390, www.trueyoga.com.sg.

COST \$38 for a single walk-in session, monthly subscription starts from \$88.

FACILITIES There's a comfy waiting area. The studio, heated between 38-40 deg C, has floor-to-ceiling mirrors and can take up to 40 people. There are three water coolers. Shower cubicles were generally clean but the water pressure was low. Lockers are free-for-all for ordinary members, who have to bring their own lock.

CLASS All students have to sign an indemnity form to declare themselves fit for hot yoga. I tried the 60-minute Hot Yaad class and was perspiring furiously after seven minutes. The instructor stressed the need to drink lots of water. His demonstrations were very clear, and he went around to adjust our poses. It was strenuous but I felt rejuvenated.

SERVICE You get a face and bath towel before class. Mats are laid out for you, and wiped down with a sanitiser after class.

VERDICT Highly recommended for the yoga enthusiast.

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