

SHADE

WWW.SHAPE.COM.SG

f SHAPESINGAPORE

@SHAPESINGAPORE

SINGAPORE

APRIL 2019 | \$6.00

FIERCE, FIT, FOCUSED

Actress Amber Heard
spills her
success secrets

METABOLISM
MISTAKES
YOU'RE
MAKING

Under-the-
radar beauty
brands to
check out

PG 90

SHAPE-APPROVED

Best running
and gym
shoes in SG

PG 68

SMASH
THOSE GOALS

Expert tips on how to
find joy in every step

TRANSFORM
YOUR BORING
TREADMILL
WORKOUT

Super nutrients
for better sex

"I MEDITATED EVERY DAY FOR
2 WEEKS - HERE'S WHAT HAPPENED"

PG 28



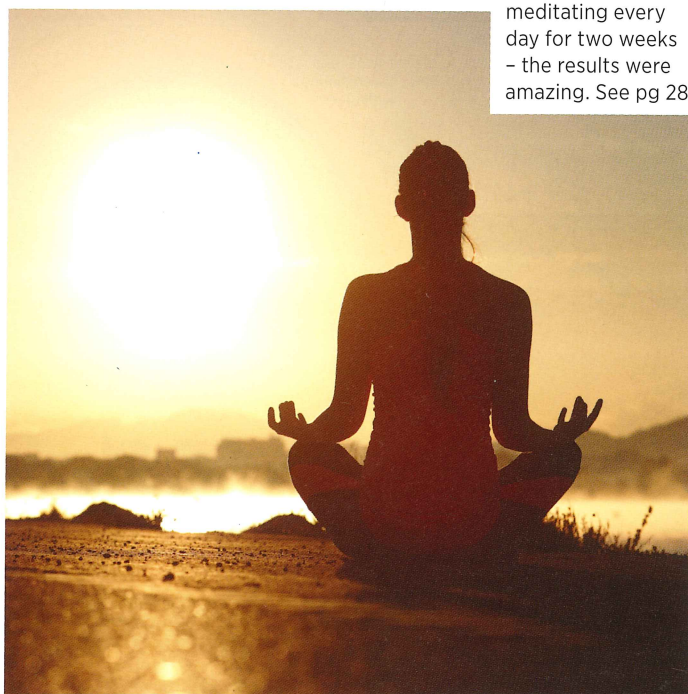
8 888737 105050 >

TEAM *SHAPE* IN ACTION...



Writer Yi Wen learnt how to fend off potential attackers at a Brazilian jiu-jitsu trial class. Read about her experience on pg 60.

Freelance writer Zarelda tried meditating every day for two weeks – the results were amazing. See pg 28.



Freelance writers Carissa and Charlene went for an aquatic massage and abdominal therapy respectively. Turn to pg 34 for their verdicts.

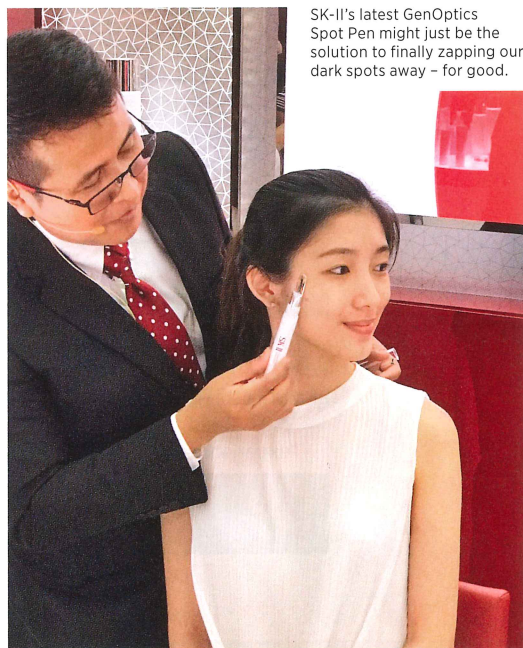
SHAPE BUZZ

Follow us on social media for exclusive behind-the-scenes sneak peeks, the latest health, fitness, food and beauty scoops... and more!

www.facebook.com/shapesingapore www.instagram.com/shapesingapore

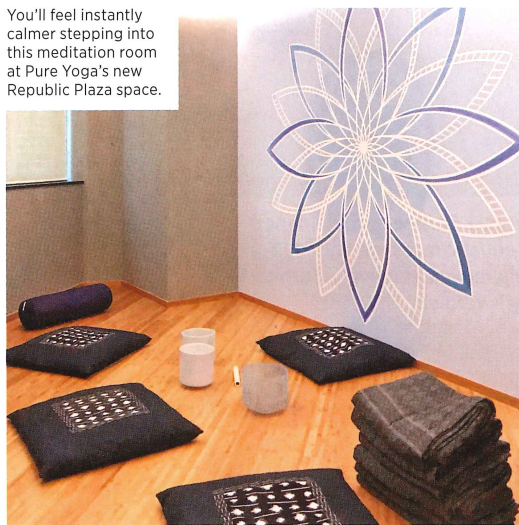


Team Shape with Shape Fit Girl Roxanne (in white) after a kick-ass self-defence class led by Brazilian jiu-jitsu black belt Claudia do Val (second from right) at Maverick Martial Arts.



SK-II's latest GenOptics Spot Pen might just be the solution to finally zapping our dark spots away – for good.

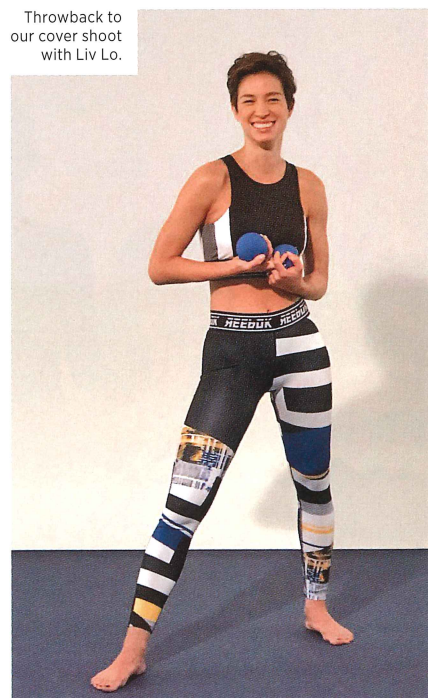
You'll feel instantly calmer stepping into this meditation room at Pure Yoga's new Republic Plaza space.



Garmin's Vivosmart 4 is super slim and lightweight – perfect for ladies with small wrists.



Mala-flavoured casava chips, anyone?



Throwback to our cover shoot with Liv Lo.



Maverick Martial Arts owner Pedro Wolff gives writer Yi Wen a surprise attack.

CHOKE-FULL OF FUN

*Brazilian jiu-jitsu isn't as terrifying as it looks, as **PEH YI WEN** finds out during a basics class at Maverick Martial Arts.*

'Body slams, chokeholds and heaps of close body contact – my first thoughts about Brazilian jiu-jitsu (BJJ) from watching a showcase at a fitness studio launch were “brutal” and “a nightmare”, as I wasn't a fan of contact or combat sports.

I avoid them like the plague for fear of getting injured and the sheer discomfort at the thought of being pressed against a stranger. The closest I've come with martial arts? Throwing hooks and uppercuts at boxing bags with the occasional weaves for defence practice – totally non-combat and in my safe zone.

When the opportunity came for us to try a jiu-jitsu class, I was hesitant. But I psyched myself into saying yes since it fulfilled one of my New Year's resolutions: to step out of my comfort zone and try something new. Plus, it's always useful to learn some self-defence moves.

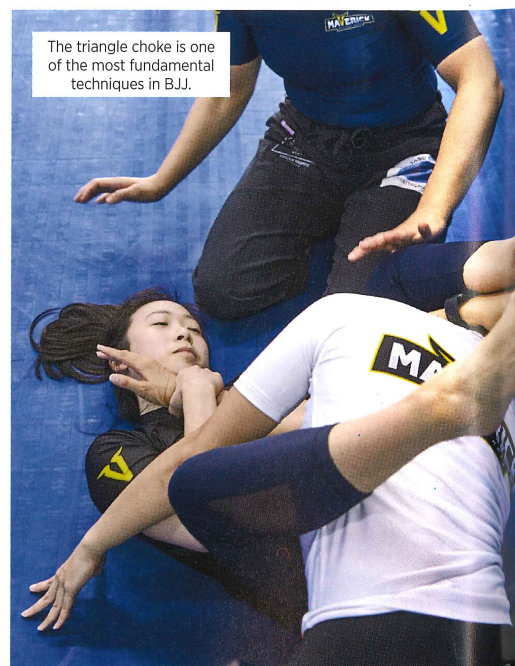
Compared to other martial art techniques like

taekwondo and Muay Thai, BJJ is said to put you in very real situations, where attackers are often at close proximity, giving you no wiggle room or opportunity to escape. It is also designed to allow someone much smaller and weaker to defeat a bigger and stronger opponent – perfect for petite women like me.

THE EXPERIENCE

At Maverick Martial Arts, owner Pedro Wolff and visiting Brazilian jiu-jitsu black belt Claudia do Val led us through an hour-long basics class. Instead of wearing

The triangle choke is one of the most fundamental techniques in BJJ.





the gi (traditional BJJ uniform), we were given silky-smooth rash guards that are often used in No Gi BJJ, where grabbing of your opponent's clothing is not allowed.

To warm up for the class, we did plenty of hip mobility drills involving mat rolls, glute bridges and a basic BJJ move known as shrimping. Here's how it works: You start by lying on your back with bent knees and push your hips out to either side before returning back to the starting position. Each exercise tested our coordination skills and helped to familiarise beginners like ourselves with the movements used.

Then came the fun part – getting down to learning some introductory techniques. Claudia taught us easy self-defence moves that she felt all women should equip themselves with. These are moves to use in various situations, whether we find ourselves pinned to the ground, being grabbed from behind or choked against the wall.

BRAIN OVER BRAWN

Jiu-jitsu emphasises proper technique over strength, so no amount of strength training will give you the upper hand in this martial art. We learnt to use our elbows and knees to lock our opponent in place, along with methods to push them away to create space for a quick escape.

One of the most important things we learnt: tapping out. What it means is to tap the mat or your training partner with your hands to let them know the minute you feel the pressure. If you don't, you might end up injured or even lose consciousness if the choke cuts

off blood flow to your brain. Safety first!

It took a fair bit of coordination, agility and memory work to nail the flow of each technique. Since the demo ran at a slower pace in an air-conditioned studio, we hardly broke a sweat at the end of the class. However, I imagine it to be an intense workout when back-to-back drills and sparring take place. If you've ever play-wrestled with a sibling growing up, you'd understand how exhausting it can get.

SURPRISE ATTACK

And just when I thought class was over, Pedro caught me off guard by charging at me from the back to enact a real-life situation. I panicked for a moment before my newfound knowledge quickly returned to me, and I had him tapping out on the ground in seconds.

I might have walked into the studio that morning feeling super intimidated, but my fear certainly peeled away during the class and I left with a fresh perspective on jiu-jitsu. More than a workout to burn calories and lose weight, it helps to sharpen your mind and train your awareness skills, especially during sparring where it's almost like a human chess game – tons of strategic thinking required.

"Jiu-jitsu also teaches you to be humble. No matter how strong you think you are, someone seemingly weaker can defeat you easily with the right techniques. It also reminds women that they are much stronger than they think," says Claudia. I definitely gained more confidence that day. Similar to all sports, BJJ requires constant practice – Claudia recommends

“More than a workout to burn calories and lose weight, BJJ helps to sharpen your mind and train your awareness skills, especially during sparring where it's almost like a human chess game.”

going for a BJJ class three times a week – to master the techniques and fully reap its physical and mental benefits.

The next day, the muscles in my neck were sore, probably because I wasn't used to cranking my neck that far. My advice: do plenty of neck stretching exercises before and after your first BJJ class, and tap out as soon as you feel the pressure in any chokeholds to avoid strains and injuries.

REPORT CARD

● FUN FACTOR: 8/10

Brazilian jiu-jitsu is a super dynamic sport that forces you to think on your feet and adapt to each situation. Where is my opponent's weak spot? Which technique do I use to create space and gain control? It truly makes you forget you're working out.

● FIT FACTOR: 5/10

As promised by the instructors, there are no fitness requirements for jiu-jitsu, neither do you need to possess the flexibility of a gymnast. The warm-up session, designed to improve your hip mobility and condition you to basic BJJ techniques, was the most tiring part for me as it got

increasingly fast-paced towards the end. Thankfully it lasted just five minutes!

● FEAR FACTOR: 4/10

After trying my first chokehold, my fear for jiu-jitsu vanished, knowing that I was capable of applying the techniques correctly. The instructors are friendly, encouraging, and they give clear step-by-step instructions that are easy to follow. We hear the jiu-jitsu community is family-like too – plenty of workout buddies to befriend!

WHERE TO LEARN

Located at 322 Joo Chiat Road, Maverick Martial Arts offers a variety of BJJ classes for adults, teens and kids. A free trial class is available for first-timers. Rates start at \$25 for a drop-in class. Find out more at www.maverickma.com. **S**

ONLINE EXCLUSIVE!

Watch the *Shape* team demonstrate life-saving BJJ moves in simulated attacks. The digital edition of *Shape* is available for download at the App Store and Google Play.

