

Black Yogi in Jozi



Company and Instructor Profile

My Name is Michelle Banda, founder of “Black Yogi In Jozi “a brand that came along after a trip I took to India and deciding that I wanted to study to become a Hatha Yoga teacher, I studied at the Isha Foundation in the South of India under the Guidance of Guru, **Sadhguru** and did over 1000 Hours of yoga training that happened over a period of 6 months, I have a diploma in Classical Hatha Yoga now.

After qualifying and moving back to South Africa, my decisions to start teaching were influenced by The conditions in which we live in South Africa, mainly Johannesburg where everything is fast paced And there is the energy that gives a feeling of not being able to breath, with the hours we spend in the Office and how we would feel there is no time to go to the gym after work, feeling exhausted the usual Person just wants to go home thus promoting all sorts of habits of not exercising, eating out, and feeling drained after a long days work and repeating the same process again the next day, my other influences to teach have been the high rate in which our youth is prone to drinking, no exercise leading to obesity, sense of community living and volunteer work and giving back to our communities As best we can.

As an instructor and understanding that disadvantaged communities don't have disposable income to pay for yoga classes, I teach free classes in the communities and play games to give a sense of worth, working together and finding more ways to give back with the right tools.

I am part of an NGO called “Centre of Happiness” and through the NGO we are involved in building Communities in different ways. We are a group of people who give their time to develop projects, Events, training for disadvantaged communities so this is where giving back to the community come in – this is my biggest passion.

I have been privileged enough to work and teach in Switzerland, South Africa and in India, but my most memorable place to teach is in the South African Townships.



Type of Yoga – Classical Hatha Yoga

*What is Classical Hatha Yoga?

The word Yoga is from a Sanskrit (Indian) word **Yuj**, which means to yoke or bind and this brings us to why yoga means Union or a method of discipline, the word Hatha means wilful or forceful. Hatha Yoga

refers to a set of physical exercises (known asana's or postures) and sequences of asana's, designed to align your muscles and bones. The postures are also designed to open the many channels of the Body- especially the main channel the spine, so that energy can flow freely.

Hatha is also translated as **ha** meaning "sun" and **Tha** meaning "moon" this refers to the balance of masculine aspects – active, hot, sun and feminine aspects – receptive, cool, moon, within all of us, Hatha Yoga is a path toward creating balance and uniting opposites. In our physical bodies we develop balance of strength and flexibility of the body and focus of the mind.

Hatha Yoga is a powerful tool for self transformation, it makes us give attention to our breath, which helps us to still the fluctuations of the mind and be more present in the unfolding of each moment.

Unlike stretching or fitness, Yoga is more than just physical postures, it's a unique path because we connect the movement of the body, fluctuations of the mind to the rhythm of our breath, connecting mind, body and breath helps us to direct our attention inwards, through this we learn to recognize our habitual thought patterns without labelling them, judging them or trying to change them, we become more aware of our experiences from moment to moment, the awareness that we cultivate is what makes yoga a practice, rather than a task or a goal to be completed. Your Body will most likely become much more flexible by doing yoga and so will your mind.

In Hatha Yoga there are so many different practices but what they have in common is that they focus on 8 guidelines.

1. Yamas (**Restraints**)
2. Niyamas (**Observances**)
3. Asana (**Postures**)
4. Pranayama (**Breathing**)
5. Pratyahara (**Withdrawal of senses**)
6. Dharana (**Concentration**)
7. Dhyani (**Meditation**)
8. Samadhi (**Absorption**)

As we explore these 8 we begin by refining our behaviour in the outer world, and we focus inwardly until we reach Samadhi (Liberation and enlightenment)

Benefits of Yoga

1. Promotes sleep
2. It increases concentration and Attention
3. Increases Memory
4. Increases Learning and focusing abilities
5. Brings about a great emotional balance
6. Reduces anxiety
7. Reduces stress
8. Can help increase productivity in work environments
9. Energy levels increase
10. Posture improves
11. Weight Normalizes
12. Mood improves and subjective well-being increases.

Our Teaching Focus

Today most people teaching and practicing yoga are engaged in the 3rd guide which is only practicing the Asana's (Postures) only, which is a program of physical postures designed to purify the body and provide the body with physical strength and stamina. this type of yoga if done and monitored very closely can provide you with the stamina needed to go into long hours of meditation, as a foundation. The type of yoga we teach has a huge basis on traditional teaching methods, by monitoring all participants from all levels, from beginner , intermediate to advanced, all taught in the same class as we are well aware that people have different experience we teach yoga as an inward process where it happens within you and you taking yourself to the next level with our guidance , keeping an emphasis on technique, breath and overall keeping the channels of questions open and available to the participants on everything Yoga.

Classical Yoga versus Gym Yoga

Public perception of yoga has shifted significantly in recent years; it's been distorted into a practice that fits in to what our lives have become, fast paced, suited to fit into an hour of time that we can only put aside so our lives continue as if nothing has changed.

Gym Yoga: which today is seen as aerobic yoga, reasons being that when taking part in a Yoga class at the gym the focus is shifted from getting quantity then getting quality, from the moment the class starts, you having left work, arrived late you are thrown into the class, so this means what you get from this type of class is a Yoga practice filled with as many postures to do in a period of an hour with the instructor posing in one posture after another, giving you only enough time to imitate their

posture as best as you can, at the time they are also in the same posture leaving you to your own wits to get it right, and then moving on to the next posture.

Classical Yoga: Keeping with as much of the traditional way of teaching, we make sure that before

the class starts we are all settled down, some breathing deeply with eyes closed and an inward focus on the self, we introduce the posture with its benefits and some history, we demonstrate first and then the participants go into the posture while the instructor is giving instructions on how to get into it while observing everyone, then corrections are given from the observations seen from the participants 1st attempt, then they try again incorporating the corrections, and try again the 3rd time, leaving memory in the muscle and mind, so without even touching the participant they will be able to correct themselves and giving them an inward focus, after every posture there is a resting posture.

Depending on the time given for the class we will focus on as many postures as we can and on the next class review what we did and add on more postures and so on and so on, every time focusing on breathing the right way, technique and inward focus, Usually students don't understand some things or want explanations so after every class they are able to ask questions about the practice or yoga in general. the thing with Yoga is that I should not be seen as an exercise, Yoga is a subtle process to direct and activate your energy in a particular direction, this must be clearly understood, why I stress that it is not an exercise , When one goes to the gym the idea is that when your friend does 20 reps, you want to do 20 more, so we drop that kind of attitude here, it is very important that we do it with full awareness and as consciously as you can.

Who can practice?

Anyone can practice and as we don't put emphasis on what level of experience, flexibility, whether you are advanced, intermediate or a beginner our yoga is for you, because yoga is a personal experience, when attending a classical yoga class you are focused on how far you can push yourself, your friend may be flexible but you are not so because we close our eyes in postures y for that inward focus your only concern is you. Many people think you have to be flexible to practice yoga, it is not so, you come as you are and you will find the practice will help you become more flexible, this new found agility will be a balanced strength, coordination and enhanced cardiovascular health as well as a sense of physical confidence and overall well being.

What is needed to begin?

*All you need to begin practicing Yoga is your body, your mind and a bit of curiosity, but its also helpful

to have a pair of sweat pants, leggings, a t-shirt that's not too baggy, and a Yoga mat .

* **No eating 3 hrs before class** - why no eating in Yoga practice we twist from side to side, turn upside down, and bend forward and backward, If you have not fully digested your last meal, it will make itself known to you in ways that are not comfortable. If you are a person with fast acting digestive system and are afraid you might get hungry or feel weak during class, experiment some hot water with honey before class

Charity events

1. **Township Yoga** - Free classes given to disadvantaged communities, to help heal and bring people together, uplifting communities and also giving us the platform to evaluate what more can be done to build up communities.

This is also a way for companies to invest in communities, by getting themselves involved in areas that they can align themselves with, introducing causes that are close to Companies into communities, there is a lack of information given to this part of the population and working closely with these communities opens up a gate of knowledge.

2. **Corporate Yoga**

One of the wonderful things about yoga in today's modern world is that it has made its way out of the studios and is taught in a variety of settings. Corporate yoga has taken off, with many taking advantage of classes offered at their office. Corporate Yoga is seen by employers as a way to contribute to employees' overall health but it's also a great way to help employees work better

together and improve their perceptions of their job as well as feel positive about their employer. The whole Science of Yoga is the very basis of fundamentals; it is to bring balance and vibrancy into one's body so that it naturally becomes balanced in mind and body. The body comes to ease. In a corporate setting the benefits of yoga will go a long way, with companies invested in their staff's health and wellbeing it promotes a work friendly environment, for everyone concerned.

Benefits for the Company

1. Higher Productivity, response time and focus.
2. Lower Employee absenteeism.
3. Makes the Company more attractive to work for.
4. Better team work and bonds with colleagues.
5. Lower staff turn over.
6. Increased job satisfaction.
7. Improved problem solving skills.
8. No need for expensive gym equipment.
9. Tailor made yoga sessions specifically for your employees needs

Programs Offered

1.The Introductory workshop consist of the following

1. Aum chanting - 5 min
- 2.An Introduction a 35 minute video on Inner Engineering, how one can benefit from practicing yoga and having an inward focus in life.
- 3.Practicing a few + - 5 Yoga postures to get the feel of what to expect when doing a full class of Yoga 20 min

Total time - 1hr

2. Surya Kriya { The Original Sun Salutation) - Surya means Sun, and Kriya means inner energy process.

Surya Kriya is different from Surya Namaskar which is taught worldwide, it is different as it is the real practice taught to a select few , and in the old days taught to Yogis. It is a way of aligning yourself with the sun and it is a much more refined Process which needs enormous attention in terms of geometry of the body .

Surya Namaskar is a country cousin of Surya Kriya, There is another process called Surya shakti which is a far off relative, if you want to use this system as just a physical exercise to build muscle to become physically fit, Surya Kriya is more for your spiritual process, which includes a lot of focus on the breath and geometrics of the human body.

I teach this class over 3 days and the participants leave with a practice that strengthens their spiritual process , a practice they can do every day in the morning , once they have mastered all parts they can move onto Surya Shakti for more of a core practice. So bookings beforehand are essential.

WE teach both Surya Kriya and Surya Shakti

3. Breathing and Guided Meditation is also taught.

4. Angamardana –

Angamardana means to have mastery over limbs or body parts, use your own body weight and momentum to increase flexibility of the muscle over a period of time, all you need is a 6 by 6 space, your body is everything so, wherever you are you can do it , it is as effective as Weight training is and does not create any unnecessary stress on the system, this practice is ideal for people on the move, and are busy all the time as after you have mastered the practice you need about 30 min a day, so

this is a practice that one can do every day to build strength, muscle, flexibility, and work the core.

5. 1hr 15min Class consist of the following

1. Continuous practice of yoga Postures / Asana's twice or 3 times a week, preferably Tuesday and Thursday or as agreed upon with client, if there are questions about the practices, there will be videos shown on relevant issues, questions that are encountered in the classes.
2. The structure of the class is such that we would start off with Aum chanting for 5 min to settle the mind and body. – **5min**
3. Review of postures taught in the introduction class and practices an addition of another 5 postures, which each posture can take up to **15 min** to teach so depending on how long the Participants can hold pose it will determine how many postures can be taught in the class
4. So every class we are reviewing and adding postures .
5. Meditation for **15 min**

Total time – 1hr 15 min

5. Detox Yoga.

6. Chair Yoga – Chair yoga is an extremely affordable way to introduce yoga into a Company, workers sitting all day in front of the computer tend to suffer on the spine, their spines take a lot of strain as well as their eyes, introducing yoga into their everyday work schedule allows them to build a good posture, stronger back and a bit of relaxation in the work place.

7. Yoga for relaxation.

8. Gentle Yoga for mindfulness

9. Team building games

1. For the benefit of the Staff and the Employers, I have put together games that bring together both departments, thus giving the benefit of a healthy working environment, promotes working as a team, and bringing moral to the company as a whole, these can be arranged according to the company as a full day or half day workshop

1. Dodge ball – played in teams, a ball is thrown and following a set of rules brings together workers and employer in a friendly game.
2. Stick it through – Also a game that involves 2 teams , a physical game that includes running throughout the game, similar to relays.
3. Save the Hanky - Played in teams of 2, the aim of the game is to give a point to your team by saving the hanky and delivering it safely to your team and a point is given, also involves some physical activity of running.
4. Working together – Here is a game where the whole group has to keep the ball in the air until a certain number of hits and the game is complete; it promotes working as a team.

There will be videos shown on relevant questions from the class, on health, and some music before the class starts, so the use of a TV / projector, and some speakers will be needed from time to time

For More information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank You

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