

EXCERPT FROM *THE YOGA EXPLORER'S ROADSIDE GUIDE...*

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Introduction

From mega-stars to mahjong moms, the whole country is giddy with yoga. Everyone you know either does it or thinks they should. It's taken some prodding, but you've finally worked up the gumption to give it a go. Only one thing stops you...you have absolutely no idea what yoga is!

So, you ramble down to the bookstore to read up a little before you take the next step. Standing in front of the section entitled YOGA a short while later, your head begins to spin, your eyes cross and you start to feel that same tick that visited before every middle-school oral report.

Instead of the first step to enlightenment, there before you stands the very definition of confusion. Eight rows, five-hundred books deep on the life-simplifying pursuit of yoga. New words leap from bindings. Iyengar, anusara, vinyasa, ashtanga, pranayama, linguini, oops, misfiled that one. Correction, it's The Yoga of Linguini, leave it be.

"How do I begin," you wonder, "if I don't even know what yoga is?!" You scan mentally back to various conversations with friends plying you with their latest yoga dalliances. It's a head-to-toe workout, said one. A zoney, meditative love-in, boasts another. A gentle rejuvenating stretch, claims a third. A sweat-drenching temple of pain, cries a fourth. A secret cult-like religion, incants a fifth. Oy vey! This is not going well. How can you start to do yoga when you can't even figure out what the heck it is?

The good news is that yoga has grown and evolved so rapidly in this country that pretty much anyone can find a home, a teacher or a class that is right for them. The bad news

is that this same breakneck evolutionary pace has created a yoga landscape that can be downright daunting to the uninitiated.

Attempting to begin this gorgeous, life-empowering practice with an inappropriate “style” of practice, in a place that doesn’t feel good or with a teacher who is your polar opposite can quickly put an end to what would otherwise be an exquisite, lifelong journey.

The Yoga Explorer’s Roadside Guide is a beacon in the yoga sea, it’s your easy-as-pie manual to discovering and beginning yoga in a way that makes you fall in love with the practice from the very first day. **And...it won’t teach you a lick of yoga!** Rather, it explains all the different, often massively confusing styles, schools, cultures, ethics, unspoken do’s and don’ts, elements and offerings in plain English. It’s the one complete resource that makes sense out of all the others!

In the pages within, you will learn the yoga big picture. You know, what it was back when men wore loincloths and women giggled in the corners, respectfully, of course. You’ll get a taste of where it all came from and what it was originally for.

But that’s not really the meat, er, faux, organic, vegan meat of this guide. We’ll quickly jump a few thousands years ahead to the current U.S. yoga scene and shine the light on what the practice has turned into, from the studios of Santa Monica to the gyms of New York and the spas of the Berkshires. We’ll talk about all the claims being made, what’s real, what’s a stretch (sorry couldn’t resist the pun) and what’s total fabrication.

I’ll explain the elements of the practice that cross most styles offered in the U.S. today and then, here’s the coolest thing about this guide, I will catalogue and give you the yo-skinny on all of the major schools and styles of practice in the U.S. and their madly-morphing offshoots.

In doing so, you’ll begin to understand what each approach offers, who it’s best for, what the unspoken pre-requisites are, how cultish/individuated each school is, what the social vibe is and how each differs from another.

You’ll learn whether to expect to sweat like longshoreman on an August day, flow like a rolling Maui wave or dangle from a dungeon-inspired rope harness (wipe that smirk off your face).

Armed with this information, I'll do my best to show you how to find the right home, the best style, the greatest teachers and, of course, the coolest gear right in your own personal yoga-hood. You'll learn what to look for, what questions to ask and, most importantly, to re-value your intuition and inner-giggle along the way.

It is my greatest hope that this lighthearted, yet informative guide emerges as a user-friendly tool for the huddled masses of curious, yet confused yoga explorer's to finally make sense out of the beguiling modern yoga world and take their first step.