

Solshine Yoga offers the South Coast a unique and transformative yoga experience like no other

The word *yoga* is increasingly becoming an English word in the same way pizza, latte and pajamas have become “English.” Words adopted from other languages that have become such a part of our culture that they seem like they *are* English words and have always been there.

The idea and the word have been assimilated which is something truly at the heart of yoga: being inclusive, bringing together, uniting. In fact, the word itself is Sanskrit for *union*. Why has yoga become a part of American culture? Why has it become so popular? Why is there hip-hop yoga, nude yoga, aerial yoga, rave yoga. and even yoga with goats? Why is it “cool” to update your social media with images of people doing *āsana* or postures?

Plain and simply said: it produces results.



If you do yoga regularly you **will** get results and those results will go far beyond physical improvements and extend to every aspect of life: your well-being, mental flexibility, happiness, lowering your blood pressure, produce a quieter and calmer mind, improve your ability to deal with stressful situations at home and work, gain clearer thought processes, and more. In essence, to “do” yoga is to improve every nook and cranny of who you are – physically, mentally, psychologically, spiritually.

That is why this import is as American as apple pie and so incredibly popular.

However, this presents its own problem: with so many yoga studios and instructors where do we go? Who is affordable, knowledgeable, and capable of addressing a variety of needs and levels? Who can we trust in this vast ocean of choices? Where do we start? Do I have to be in shape? Do I have to be athletic or flexible? Is it strenuous enough to lose weight? What if I am already athletic – will it actually challenge me? These and many more questions are a normal, natural part of the process.

One of the studios that has entered this crowded arena is

Solshine Yoga on West Rodney French Blvd. Started in 2018 by co-owners, business partners and “soul friends” Erin Poyant and Sarah Moniz, their objective was to bring world-class yoga with all its many physical and mental benefits right here to the South Coast; to share the transformation and power of yoga that they themselves have experienced.

I can attest personally to the benefits: after years of combat sports I took up yoga as a way to increase flexibility and compliment my training but I quickly found out that it is far more than a stretching routine and as much of an athlete as I was, I learned that a good instructor can challenge the most athletic person. That was more than 25 years ago, I was hooked -that is the power of yoga.



In 2017, I had a major stroke and woke up in the ICU at Mass General after being in a coma for three days. I had to relearn to tell time, walk, count change, talk, use my left side, loss of balance and too many other aspects that come with a stroke. As soon as I could stand I did yoga and I can say unequivocally it is directly responsible for my mental and physical recovery, likely my life. I went from having no balance, limping, and barely being able to stand to nursing myself back to health after a year and a half by solely using yoga as a rehabilitation program.

This demonstrates not only the benefits, but the accessibility

of yoga to a wide range of people, virtually everyone regardless of how strong and athletic you are...or how physically challenged and awkward you are, and how little balance, coordination and strength you have. If a person who can barely stand or hold himself up can do it, **you** can do it and transform your life for the better.

What the ladies felt was pivotal to convey was this very thing. That yoga is genuinely for **everyone**. This is not a cliché or platitude but people from every walk of life are giving yoga a whirl. There are levels to yoga and a good coach does not cookie-cutter everyone – you are not a number among an anonymous group but that coach will get to know you and your wants and needs.

Want to learn to de-stress and relax? Deal better with the incessant chatter in your head? Your anger, fear, and anxiety? Lose weight? Increase your flexibility, utilize yoga as a recovery program for intense athletics? Lower blood pressure? Deal with anxiety better? Build confidence?

Yoga is for you.



If there is any doubt about the inclusiveness of their classes, a quick glance over the social media accounts attached to the studio – or better a visit – will show a reflection the variety of individuals that attend Solshine Yoga. Young, old, overweight, men, women, children, athletes, the uncoordinated, beginners and advanced alike.

In the genuine interest of bringing the best that yoga can offer, Erin and Sarah take into account each person's "starting point," then maps out a way for them to get to where they want to be, but they do it in a way that is thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding. Knowing full well that there are as many reasons a person will come to yoga as there are people, they offer a yoga *experience* that incorporates different styles of yoga, meditation, Reiki, breathing techniques (Prāṇāyāma), aromatherapy, sound healing, and positive messaging (learning to be more optimistic on attitude and approach to life.)

You can check out the variety of workshops like Family Yoga, Buti Glow, Make a Mala Bracelet and Mantra Meditation, Restorative Yoga & Sound, Reiki and others here. If you prefer yoga or these workshops in a more private setting, you can do that as well.

Erin, Sarah and all the instructors at Solshine Yoga (all of whom are certified and have over 200 hours teaching experience) bring all of these components together to offer a unique experience that is flexible in its approach to an individual's needs – a sort of prescription.

"All instructors have full creative freedom, allowing each class to be a new experience that is personalized to the clients in the room. Incorporating different techniques like sound healing and aromatherapy together *with* Yoga enhances the experience for clients and also makes it easier for them to receive the mental and emotional benefits all of these healing practices are meant to provide," said Erin.

“Clients describe leaving class ‘with a clear mind and a full heart’ and ‘grounded and refreshed.’ added Sarah. “It’s about feeling the mind/body connection.” That is another layer of the meaning behind the word itself – the union of body and mind.



Their approach, attitude, and outlook are what makes them stand out like a tsunami among the vast ocean of waves that are yoga studios. All stemming from a shared vision and passion between the two girls who met teaching yoga and workshops together at various studios and centers throughout the South Coast.

Want to talk knowledge and expertise?

Erin is working towards her 500-hour RYT (Registered Yoga Teacher) certification through Yoga Medicine – a program that fuses eastern and western healing principles with a focus on how Yoga can heal the body. Erin is also a Reiki Master. Sarah is a 200-hour RYT, advanced Buti Yoga instructor and Energy Medicine I practitioner. Sarah is also has a Reiki Master certification.

Complimenting the studio is a natural backdrop: beautiful water views. While seemingly of not much import, the ladies

feel that it is actually very important as “Yoga is a very personal practice and clients need to feel comfortable and safe in their space. Seeing the sun rising, or sun setting or seeing the sunshine on the cove water brings in the healing element of nature that we are all missing in our lives so much spending most of our time indoors or driving in the car.” Sarah explained.

Nature is a much better “gimmick” to attract one to yoga.

So no matter where you are in life in terms of your physical ailments, abilities or capabilities there are benefits waiting for you at Solshine Yoga. A better you in every way – physically and mentally is one small step away and one that costs nothing: your first class is completely **free**. Free because Erin and Sarah know that once you have a taste of what they are doing and what it does for you, you’ll be hooked. All it is required to a new better you? Just you and your ability to breathe.

No goats, no wine, no gimmicks needed.



Want to give Solshine Yoga a try? Beyond that first free class, Solshine Yoga offers a “Buy 2 Get 2 Free” package of 4 classes for \$30 to new clients. In addition, every weekend there are specialty workshops like Family Yoga, Restorative Yoga and Sound, Buti Glow with Live DJ Ace on Earth, etc. You can even book classes online!

Solshine Yoga

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