



Lindsey Lewis relaxes into  
her yoga practice in Queen  
Elizabeth Park

PHOTO BY KK LAW

# YOGA IN THE CITY

Looking for some downward dog and savasana? Here's everything you need to know **BY SHERI RADFORD**

Students of yoga are drawn to Vancouver by its laid-back vibe and stunning natural beauty, not to mention the plethora of yoga studios offering every style of yoga imaginable and the chance to study with esteemed teachers such as blissologist Eoin Finn ([www.blissology.com](http://www.blissology.com)). And the West Coast's yoga profile keeps growing; for instance, last month Whistler hosted the first-ever Wanderlust Festival ([www.whistler.wanderlustfestival.com](http://www.whistler.wanderlustfestival.com)) to be held outside the United States.

## INDOOR YOGA

Whatever your style, Vancouver has a yoga studio to match it. All of the large studios offer hatha, yin and power vinyasa. In the heart of the Kitsilano yoga community, Semperviva Yoga ([www.semperviva.com](http://www.semperviva.com)) has friendly folks and a relaxed attitude. Open Door Yoga ([www.opendooryoga.bc.ca](http://www.opendooryoga.bc.ca)) gives

off a grassroots East Van vibe, while upscale YYoga ([www.yyoga.ca](http://www.yyoga.ca)) feels like a yoga spa.

Those who like the high energy of kundalini head to Yoga West ([www.yogawest.ca](http://www.yogawest.ca)) or Semperviva Yoga. If temperatures over 40°C (104°F) are more your thing, visit Bikram Yoga Vancouver ([www.bikramyogavancouver.com](http://www.bikramyogavancouver.com)), West-coast Hot Yoga ([www.westcoasthotyoga.com](http://www.westcoasthotyoga.com)) or Moksha Yoga ([vancouver.mokshayoga.ca](http://vancouver.mokshayoga.ca)) for a good sweat.

To get a full-body workout before class, try out the multiple floors of fitness equipment at downtown's Steve Nash Sports Club ([www.stevenashfitnessclubs.com](http://www.stevenashfitnessclubs.com)), then head upstairs to the top-floor yoga studio. The newest facility in town is Chopra Yoga Center Vancouver ([www.choprayoga.com](http://www.choprayoga.com)), which incorporates Deepak Chopra's seven spiritual laws of success into all styles of yoga.





In Queen Elizabeth Park, Lindsey Lewis demonstrates exalted warrior pose  
PHOTO BY KK LAW

Want to save on drop-in fees? Take a free class at a Lululemon Athletica (page 32) store. Or try the community classes at Yoga for the People (oneyogaforthepeople.ca), which are by donation.

If you'd rather go it alone but need some guidance in your practice, purchase a subscription to [www.myyogaonline.com](http://www.myyogaonline.com) and stream classes in yoga, pilates, meditation, and health and wellness. Or pick up a DVD such as *The Pursuit of Happy Hips with Eoin Finn and Elite Athletes*, which was filmed against the backdrop of Vancouver's gorgeous ocean and Whistler's majestic mountains.

### THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Vancouver's sandy beaches, picturesque mountains and lush greenery offer reasons aplenty to do yoga outside. On Tuesday and Thursday afternoons in summer, yogis show up for Waterfront Yoga at Canada Place (to Sep. 13; page 63). Semperviva Yoga offers free classes on Kits Beach, Sep. 2 and 9 at 6 p.m.

If you prefer solo outdoor practice, pack up your yoga mat and head to a scenic spot. Lindsey Lewis, a local yoga instructor, life coach and founder of [libre living.com](http://libreliving.com), recommends Queen Elizabeth Park (Map 4: E4), Jericho Beach (Map 4: D2), Kits Beach (Map 4: D3), English Bay Beach (Map 1: B3) and Stanley Park

(Map 5), as well as the countless small neighbourhood parks around town.

### RESTFUL RETREATS

Take your practice to the next level with a retreat to Galiano Island offered by Semperviva Yoga, Sep. 28 to 30. Renew both body and spirit during a weekend filled with hiking, meditation, vegetarian meals and multiple styles of yoga. Or head to the serene setting of The Salt Spring Centre of Yoga ([www.saltspringcentre.com](http://www.saltspringcentre.com)) for a yoga getaway or retreat. Part of the Gulf Islands, both Galiano and Salt Spring have a peaceful atmosphere and a mild, almost Mediterranean climate, attracting creative, eco-minded residents.

### NOURISHING NOSH

The last thing you want after a blissful yoga class is heavy fried foods. Some of Lewis's favourite spots for healthy refuelling include grocery stores Whole Foods (page 29) and Choices (page 29), for juices and fresh food to go, and OrganicLives Take-Away Cafe (page 93), for nutritious, organic, sustainable fare, including smoothies and light meals. She also recommends East Is East (page 88), which serves traditional dishes from India, Afghanistan, Tibet and Turkey, as well as Gorilla Food (page 93), with its raw, organic, vegan foods.



Lululemon's Iconic Wrap (above) and Karma's Cleo Tank (right)

### LOCAL GEAR

Vancouver's own Lululemon Athletica started as a single yoga clothing store in Kitsilano and has since exploded, opening locations around the world; look for its stylized-A logo, ubiquitous on toned Vancouver bodies. Other local yoga labels include Karma Wear ([www.karmawear.com](http://www.karmawear.com)), Tonic ([www.mytonic.ca](http://www.mytonic.ca)) and Public Myth ([www.publicmyth.com](http://www.publicmyth.com)), which Lewis describes as "rock star yoga clothing." Local company Halfmoon Yoga Products ([www.shophalfmoon.com](http://www.shophalfmoon.com)) produces everything else you need for your yoga practice, from blocks and bolsters to mats and straps. [W](#)