

EVENTS

BANGKOK CITY BALLET

6th Floor Cityresort, 49 Sukhumvit Soi 49, 5min from BTS
Phrom Phong or Thonglor Stn (0 2662-7933, www.bangkokcityballet.com
E-mail: info@bangkokcityballet.com.)

Contemporary Dance from France

Bangkok City Ballet will open a new contemporary dance for adult class students with Mr. Patrice Leroy, who won 1st prize at the 6th International Contemporary Dance Competition of Paris in 1994. He is a professional Ballet & Contemporary Dancer from France. The class will start from May 4 (Every Wednesday 5.30pm-7pm), and be one year in length. B350/lesson.

Jazz Dance

Bangkok City Ballet introduces the new regular Jazz Dance class, every Saturday (11.30am-1pm) with Ms. Para Isidro. She is well known a ballet & jazz dancer, choreographer in Philippines. She has trained and in NY and LA. The first lesson will be on May 7. Joining Fee is B400/lesson.

THE EMERALD HOTEL'S FITNESS CENTER

99/1 Rachadapisek Rd., Din Daeng (0 2276 4567, www.emeraldhotel.com,
E-mail: em@emeraldhotel.com)
The Fitness Center is fully equipped with the latest fitness equipment. It offers many classes, including aerobics, ballroom dance, yoga, and squash - all supervised by a team of skilled personal trainers. The Fitness Center is now offering a special membership package, both monthly and yearly. You can also choose your exercising time in the morning or afternoon for a special price. For more information, call (0 2276 4567 ext. 8031, 8340)

THE OLYMPIC CLUB

Pathumwan Princess Hotel, 444 Phaya Thai Rd., Wangmai, Pathumwan (0 2216 3700, www.pprincess.com
E-mail: ppb@dusit.com.)

Wednesdays and Thursdays. The Olympic Club focuses on aerobic dance, stretching, and conditioning with small dumbbell, Theraband, and cudgel. Control your body movement, improve your balance, and coordinate your muscles. Suitable for all age groups. Open 11am-12am. For more information, call (0 2216 3700 ext. 20805).

HOUSE OF INDIES

House of Indies, 45 Soi Sukhumvit 23 (Prasanna), Sukhumvit Rd., Klongtoey (0 2664 0399,
E-mail: housemail@houseofindies.com)

Flamenco Dancing involves improvisation. It's the dancer's spontaneous expression of the moment's emotions. The Spanish call it *duende* (DWEN day). The word means goblin or fairy, but to the flamenco dancer it signifies an inner force that fuels an inspired performance. The secret lies in the act of discovering and capturing the essence of Flamenco within oneself. A dancer with *duende* goes beyond technical mastery to vent his or her feelings, achieving a powerful, compelling dance. The course begins at various times throughout February. For more information, con-



YOGA VS PILATES

Nowadays, people have come to see physical exercise as much for the benefit of the mind as it is for the body. This approach to fitness keeps you interested longer and, in the long run, is more effective, too. The mind controls the body - if you engage your awareness, you perform any task more effectively. The two most popular body-mind techniques are **yoga** and **Pilates**. What are the differences between the two? What do they have in common? Which one is best for your needs? Let's take a step-by-step look at both practices.

Similarities:

- Both techniques incorporate both the body and the mind
- Both techniques are safe and gentle—you don't have to be fit to start practicing either of them
- In both, there is a big focus on the breath and its powers
- Concentration plays a main role in both techniques
- Both increase flexibility: yoga emphasizes flexibility over building strength (although it enhances both), while Pilates emphasizes toning over flexibility.

Differences:

- Yoga has been around for thousands of years, originated from Hindu philosophy, and was brought to the West more than hundred years ago. Pilates is much younger (1920's) and was created by Joseph Pilates, a German, who built upon rehabilitative techniques he used on wounded soldiers during World War I.
- While Pilates takes a mind-body approach to exercise, yoga's view involves mind, body and spirit. Its principles come from Hindu ideals and its approach is decidedly Eastern in nature. Yoga's teachings encourage us to be kind to all beings, including ourselves, and to search for balance in our lives and lifestyle. You won't find any of this in a Pilates class, which focuses on mental concentration, posture, breathing, and movement.
- Yoga is performed on a mat using blocks, blankets, and straps. When we practice Pilates on the mat, we use balls, fitness circles, weights, and bands. We may also use machines, like Reformer, Cadillac, or Wunda Chair. These are spring resistance machines created by Joseph Pilates.
- Pilates focuses primarily on the core muscles of your trunk (called the "powerhouse") and each exercise focuses on this area. In yoga, there is no work on single muscles.
- In Pilates we work on the smallest and deepest group of muscles, to create a truly strong and well-aligned body. In yoga, the concept is seeing the body as a whole, and working evenly on all body parts without isolation and differentiation of the muscles.
- Yoga, (in some parts) involves static poses, which are held while exploring your breathing, physical feelings, and emotions. Pilates is about moving in ways that help strengthen your powerhouse, including your stabilizing muscles.
- Pilates is considered to be a valuable form of rehabilitation and is being used by hospitals, clinics, and physical therapists all over the world.

Both yoga and Pilates are excellent forms of exercise, which can be beneficial for anyone. The choice between them depends on what you are looking for. If you want an exercise that improves flexibility while toning your muscles - especially the abs - then Pilates is probably a better choice. If you want to concentrate a bit more on flexibility and a little less on toning (perhaps you're getting your strength training elsewhere), and you are also searching for something that gives you an opportunity for some quiet time, then you should try yoga. In fact, either choice is good - you're enhancing your body's health in a way no other forms of exercise can accomplish. In fact, the two practices complement each other very effectively. Each discipline offers a different type of workout where the focus is inward, the element of competition is removed, and both satisfy our increasing desire to understand our bodies better.

Always be sure you are working with a qualified instructor. Ask questions and go for a trial session before you agree to sign up for a program.

Ory Avni is a certified Pilates and yoga teacher. She owns the first official Pilates studio in Bangkok, called **The Pilatesstudio**, where yoga and Pilates classes are offered. For more information, visit www.pilatesbangkok.com or call 0 2650 7797.