

Eye Candy

When I read the *Time* magazine cover story on how yoga has become embraced by millions of Americans as the fastest growing physical activity, I had mixed reactions from “it’s about time” to “Madison Avenue is going to kill this trend”. The article is a wonderful marketing piece for the many qualities that yoga provides – spiritual connections, health benefits, stress reduction, and self-awareness. Testimonials from a wide range of yoga students – from Hollywood stars to working class heroes such as a truck mechanic – all provide stories about how the practice has changed their lives. What really tested my sensitivity to the marketing of yoga to the masses was the great photography of yoga student and model Christy Turlington. Just out with her own new line of yoga apparel, Turlington helped to show off the clothing in some challenging poses. The photographs were captivating – so much so that it made yoga seem more like a performance art than a spiritual practice.

Asanas



Vrksasana
Tree



Virabhadrasana 3
Warrior 3



Sirsana
Headstand



Vasisthasana
Side Plank Pose



Bakasana
Crow



Hanumanasana
Split



Urdhva
Dhanurasana
Backbend



Navasana
Boat



Padmasana
Lotus



Supta Virasana
Reclining Hero

Application. Hatha yoga history does include a very theatrical time – when yogis performed for royalty in Mysore India. In order to entice others into the practice of hatha yoga, we often show off some of the poses – just like the early entertainers. Although the practice of showing off the poses is really frowned upon by the yoga police, sometimes we just can’t help ourselves. It reminds me of my father – who decided to do a headstand during my sister’s wedding reception. Sometimes we just can’t help ourselves and want to show off what we have learned in our yoga practice. So this week’s poses focus on yoga as performance art – but in this practice we are only performing for ourselves.