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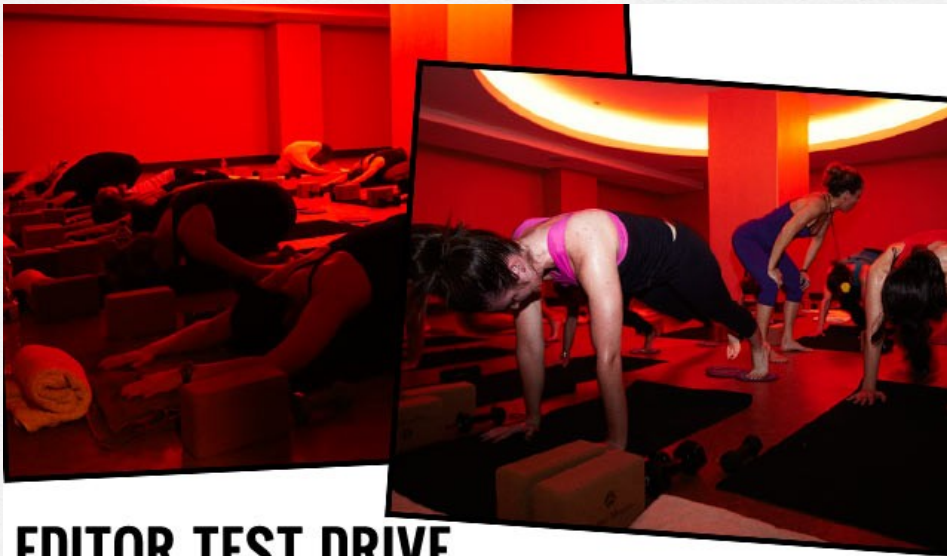
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Thursday, January 10, 2013



EDITOR TEST DRIVE I LIVED THROUGH HOT YOGA BOOT CAMP

Courtesy of Pure Yoga

EDITORS TEST DRIVE Hot Yoga Boot Camp

I'm not a yoga expert—let alone someone who goes to heated boot camps that are supposed shrivel you into shape.

However, I've followed a regular (and rigorous) workout routine since I was 13. You would say I'm in good shape, right? Wrong.

Last week marked my first experience at **Bassett's Boot Camp** at [Pure Yoga](#). It was quite dramatic: I left feeling pathetic, like the weakest link. The 75-minute-long workout is a combination of hot power yoga (the room is heated to approximately 95 to 100 degrees F), high-intensity cardio intervals, strength training, and core moves—and supposed to target every single muscle of your body, even ones you didn't even know existed.

Yoga instructor and class creator **Loren Bassett** was patient enough to let me take as many breaks as I needed (which turned out to be after every single exercise move). The class was so intense that something as simple as stretching felt harder than curling a 50-pound dumbbell with your pinky finger.

Walking into Pure Yoga, I was mesmerized by the facility. It felt like I was walking into a retreat outside of New York. It was relaxing, calm, and even the scents were soothing. At that point, I was

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still smiling, thinking, Yeah, piece of cake. Then I was directed to the locker room, where I was told to leave my phone because the heat might damage it. Huh? Well, how hot could it possibly be?

Once dressed and mentally prepared, I headed to the heated room. At first it wasn't bad, but after five minutes of just standing there, I was already sweating. I was excited thinking that in just five minutes I had probably burned calories without having to move a muscle. If only it were that simple—I could stand there for two hours a day.

Class begins. As a newbie, the first thing I found challenging was getting used to the terminology. Plank pose? Downward facing dog? What's the difference between Warrior I and Warrior II, anyway?

For the warm-up, Bassett had me meditate for five minutes relax my body and mind. Then she asked me to focus on a goal or something I really want. She then explained the proper breathing technique and why it's important.

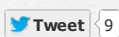
The first part of the routine is hot yoga, where you do most of the balance postures such as Warrior I and Warrior II. My muscles burned as I felt my balance slipping away. Next, we moved onto one-minute high-intensity cardio intervals that included calisthenics and jumping, which doesn't sound like long time until you realize you can't go on any further with 40 seconds left on the clock. Then, it was off to the strength-training portion. I was looking forward to testing my strength, or at least, what strength I thought I had. Surprise! What I assumed would be the easiest part of class turned out to be my biggest nightmare. I had to do saluting push-ups (with weights) where at the top of the move, I was to extend my arm towards the ceiling *and* do as many as I can in one minute. I could only manage six.

Once we got to the core exercises, I knew the end was near. I did ab exercises I've never done before and boy, did I feel it the next day.

Bassett ended the class by asking me to close my eyes and relax while she massaged my shoulders and neck with aromatherapy lotions. My body immediately went Zen and the stress and exhaustion from the moves disappeared.

I always thought that lifting weights and running were enough to look and feel good. But after Bassett's Boot Camp, I realized that there were areas in my body I neglected. The workout is ideal to test your endurance, strength, and balance. And although I was ready to collapse and on the verge of tears every couple of minutes, I managed to make it through the entire class. Giving up was not an option. With my inhaler by my side, I told myself that all is mental—and can be conquered. I can't wait to go again. —[Julio Carrillo \(@juliocarrillo84\)](#)

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