

KYM Experience

Following years of Yoga study in Australia, I finally felt compelled to take that great leap and travel to the source of it all, the Krishnamacharya Yoga Mandiram (KYM) in Chennai. I left Sydney with the intention of deepening my understanding of yoga and to submerge myself into the tradition that has inspired me since my Yoga journey began. Little did I know that the journey would yield far more than this. It turned out to be a life changing experience and my expectations were exceeded by more than I could ever have imagined.



The people at the KYM embody how the practice of yoga surpasses asana. Experienced volunteer teachers lovingly devote their time for their enjoyment of yoga and their dedication to the teachings of Sri Krishnamacharya. In the five weeks I spent in Chennai, the people I interacted with, demonstrated how yoga becomes a way of life and a way of interacting with the world. My own rich and enduring personal experiences blossomed with the daily teaching during the month long intensive.



Walls of woven grass decorated the lecture / yoga room. Colourful floor rugs throughout gave a splash of distinctly Indian vibrancy and provided a stimulating learning environment. Yoga practice and lecture studies were held in the same venue with desks and chairs being made available for those not used to sitting on the floor. I learnt that every object and item had its own unique utility. The setting exuded ritual and tradition down to the last decorative mala (flower string necklace).

Throughout my stay I was met with true Indian hospitality. Kindness and generosity was abundant. The teachers captured the imagination and attention of their audience so precisely. All 26 attendees were keen to listen intently and absorb all that they could. The day began at 7am with an asana practice which set the pace for the day. After asana we were treated to an Indian breakfast. It's my experience that Indian people have lost all sensitivity to chili and as a result nothing is ever spicy to them, however to my Western pallet most mornings my mouth was on fire and I learnt that brekkie comes with a little chili kick.

In order to digest breakfast and ponder our asana practice we had a theory class on asana and pranayama. One of the unique aspects to the course was that each class practice was so carefully thought out that it was linked into the following lecture. As always the information was clear and the delivery precise. We were lead from a gross level to more subtle levels of understanding as the weeks passed. I felt like a little child in an amusement park, wanting to go on every ride at once, but I knew I had to sit out one ride at a time. I especially loved the way practical stories are shared during classes Iso that concepts can be better understood and brought to life in our reality. Our philosophy classes were filled with the ancient teachings of Patanjali. I still remember many stories shared, particularly one of a shy person being referred to as a 'quiet wall flower'.

I was one of the many students that joined into the optional chanting class, and thoroughly enjoyed this class. Before we walked to the Veda Vani, the chanting venue, we would all quench our thirst with the juice from a freshly cut coconut. Aaah, yum!!! I've found that chanting isn't something I've had the opportunity to practice much in Australia, but now that I've has a taste it'll be something that I continue with. In fact I took the opportunity to do extra lessons in chanting and was so fortunate to have a most remarkable teacher. Once again I found out that there was more to what I was doing than chanting, I was building relationship and linking back into the rich tradition of Yoga.

The afternoon rests flew by, sometime I snuck in a little garment shopping, but one cannot rush in Chennai, its way too hot for that.



Application of Yoga Therapy demonstrated to me how important it is that a suitable practice is taught for an individual. The KYM program showed me how to make the yoga fit the person and not the person fit the yoga. I was invigorated with the positive feedback that I heard from the people that presented as our case studies. The most simple practices were the most powerful and the most important was that people had total conviction of what they were doing as prescribed by their teacher. The Yoga Therapy classes have helped me enormously as a yoga teacher and I am more certain now that this is the direction in which I wish to develop as a yoga teacher.

At dusk practical evening meditation classes were ever enjoyable and a perfect way to see out a full day of learning and still that busy mind and reflect. These classes were like the cherry on the top following a delightful day of practical, intellectual and culinary feasting.

From time to time additional talks were arranged, even some entertainment. I don't want to give it all away. You will experience it all and more in your own journey to Chennai, one day I'm sure. If you haven't yet, I give this experience a double "thumbs up". For those considering the journey ... if you have space in your bag ... please consider taking me with. I can travel in yogamudra.

