

VEILS OF ARABIA BELLYDANCE

Welcome to Veils of Arabia's beginner belly dance course! I hope to show you how enjoyable belly dancing is not just as an exercise but also as a wonderful dance form that has no boundaries of body shape, age or size.

History

Belly dance is a popular, but not necessarily correct term....it possibly comes from the French term 'Danse du Ventre' (Dance of the stomach) or from the Arabic word 'Beledi' which means country. Other popular terms used for Belly Dancing are Danse Oriental (from the East), Raqs Sharki which is Arabic for dance of the east and Middle Eastern Dance.

The origin of Belly Dance has seen evidence such as drawings from the tombs of Pharaohs in Egypt as well as statues from Greece. It is believed that they used dance to worship goddesses as well as in religious ceremonies. It comes from many places including Lebanon, Persia, Turkey, India, Egypt, and Morocco. Belly Dance even has some influences from Spain, Greece and Central Asia.

In the Middle East today women often dance for other women – friends, neighbours, aunts, mothers and cousins. Dance is used to celebrate happy occasions such as Weddings, Birthdays etc. The women dance with women and the men with the company of other men. When they are dancing for each other there is no competitiveness and every one is seen as a dancer no matter how skilled she may or may not be. Trills and clapping are used to show their enjoyment of a dancer.

Today Belly Dancing has become very popular and can be seen in music clips, television shows and movies.

About the Dance

Belly Dancing is great for all women no matter what size, shape or age they are. Belly Dancing uses isolation of muscle groups on different parts of the body. It takes time for muscles that in our western way of life we don't use very much to stretch, so it isn't something that comes in a week or 2.

It is also great for women who are thinking about having a child or have just had one as it strengthens the pelvic floor muscles that are so weakened by childbirth.

Belly Dance is great for older Women as it is gentle and is a low or no-impact activity so it protects joints that have seen some wear and tear over the years.

Belly Dance is a weight-bearing activity so it helps to preserve bone density in the hips and legs. Fragile bones combined with impaired balance often lead to hip fractures, which are devastating and sometimes fatal in older women.

When learning to belly dance, there are many elements involved: foot work, hip work and arm work. Make sure to start with the foot work first. Learn the basic steps and then add the hip work. Once you get those two together, add the arm frames.

You may get frustrated learning this dance as a beginner. BUT that's also the fun part: the challenge! Don't quit too early, practice is key. However, without having fun, you will never learn this art. So put on your smile before your hip scarf and check your pride at the door :)

Don't Belly Dance for the wrong reasons! Yes, many chose this dance form for the seduction factor or costumes... etc. This is a hard dance to master. It requires hard work and dedication along with a lot of fun and an open mind. So, take it seriously to learn it at its best. The costumes follow and the only person you need to seduce is yourself.

Belly Dancing allows you to interpret the music to suit your mood or your style.

Styles of Belly Dance

What I teach is generally called Cabaret Raqs Sharki. There are many different styles whether authentic or modern.

Some folkloric styles are:

Karsilama – Turkish, Dahiya - Egyptian Scarf Dance, Ghawazee - Egyptian Gypsy Dance, Zar, Egyptian Trance Dance, Tunisian, Khaleegy Saudi Arabian Gulf, Bandari Persian Gulf, Raqs Assaya - Egyptian Cane Dance, Melaya Leff, Nubian, Tunisian, Beledi.

Some modern styles are:

Gothic, Bollywood, American Tribal Style, Cabaret, Fusion, Goddess, Fantasy.

Some of the pops used in Belly Dance are:

Swords, Canes, Zills (finger cymbals), Tambourines, Veils, Wings of Isis and Fan Veils.

Benefits of Belly Dance

Improves posture, body awareness and expression.

Improves co-ordination, precision and concentration.

Enhances confidence and wellbeing, improves body image.

Improves muscle tone and strength, including arms, abdominals, upper and lower back, thighs, calf muscles and quads.

Improves circulation and helps reduce body fat.

Relaxes the mind, body and soul. Improves breathing.

Can help with menstrual cramps and has been reported to help menopause and child birth.

Heightens one's sense of femininity and sensuality.

Promotes flexibility and improves suppleness

Course Layout

During this course you will learn the basic movements and isolations of Belly Dancing. I also hope to teach you a short choreography that you can show off to friends/partners etc so they can see what you have learnt. Classes are designed to be a fun and enjoyable while still learning the correct technique and posture for Belly Dance.

If you have a pre-existing medical condition or you become pregnant, please let me know as some movements may not be suitable for your condition.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on 4975 0815.

If you are coming to Classes regularly and are on Facebook, please join: Veils of Arabia Belly Dance – Students Only. This page will give you information regarding classes and things happening throughout the term.

About Veils of Arabia Belly Dance

Veils of Arabia were founded in late 2002, starting out as a small performance troupe with just 3 members. Since then it has evolved and grown to include children's, beginner, beyond beginner and intermediate classes for those who wish to belly dance for fun and fitness as well as catering to those who wish to perform publicly. Within these classes there are women of all ages, body shapes and sizes.

Veils of Arabia are Gladstone's leading troupe of professional Belly Dancers. We dance to a wide variety of Arabic, Turkish Lebanese and Modern music. Props are also used for performances and just a few are canes, zills, veils, candles, swords and the Wings of Isis.

Melanie, the principal teacher has been performing and teaching Belly Dance since 1999. She has learnt Belly Dance from some of the best Australian and International performers and instructors. In 2012, Melanie travelled to Istanbul, Turkey to participate in the "Tarazade" Festival. Whilst there learnt from "Masters" of Belly Dance.

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