

Get a Bollywood Body

By Lara Rosenbaum for MSN Health & Fitness
ExerciseTV

Chances are, if you watched Oscar contender "Slumdog Millionaire," you were moved. And if you enjoyed the dancing at the end of the film, you probably felt the urge to move yourself. "Slumdog" has helped Masala Bhangra—the invigorating, traditional Indian folk dance shown in the film—become a fitness phenomenon. Here's how it all shakes down.

The skinny

"Masala means spicy, and Bhangra is the name of a Northern Indian farmer's dance," explains fitness expert Sarina Jain, who first morphed the dance into a workout about 10 years ago, developing and naming the exercises herself. Jain now splits her time between New York, California, and India.

Masala Bhangra is essentially a high-energy form of aerobic exercise that works your whole body. "Your arms are in the air most of the time, so your shoulders and arm muscles get lots of work," Jain explains. "You also challenge your core, because you keep it pulled in during the exercises, and your legs get worked, too, because you're constantly moving around," she adds. To challenge your entire body and increase strength, try her "Power Bhangra" workout on ExerciseTV.

Perhaps the best part of this Indian folk dance is that it burns hundreds of calories in an hour, and the upbeat music and swirling moves render boredom obsolete. "The drum beat definitely keeps you moving so you don't notice the clock," Jain says. For a cardio workout that will increase your heart rate and speed up your metabolism, try "Bhangra X-Ray" and "Bhangra Love."

Steal this move

"Like any cardio routine, ideally, you'll follow the workout at least three times a week," Jain says. But if you want to incorporate Bhangra into your regular workout, try Bhangra Squats. Perform a traditional squat, but with your arms overhead, in line with your ears. "Having your arms in the air works your core, along with your glutes and legs," Jain says. "In the dance, it's also traditionally a male move. When I break it out at an Indian wedding, all the guys are ready to dance with me."

Take it home

Jain recently released a video called "Return to Bollywood," which features a 45-minute workout, complete with warm-up and cool-down sections and a complete Bhangra "jam." It also includes an instructional feature, in which each move is explained separately, so you can learn each at your own pace and then later combine them together for the workout.

Jain filmed the video in India at the Film and TV Institute, where many Bollywood films are shot. "The whole set was handmade, and there were about 5,000 people working," Jain says. It was an authentic experience."

You can watch "Return to Bollywood" and find more of Jain's workouts on ExerciseTV at www.exercisetv.tv.

Lara Rosenbaum is a writer, editor and personal trainer based in Park City, Utah.

© 2009 ExerciseTV LLC. All Rights Reserved.

URL: <http://health.msn.com/fitness/womens-fitness/articlepage.aspx?cp-documentid=100233344>1=31036>

Masala
Dance & Fitness Inc.