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Pop-up posing: Taking yoga out of the studio and into the city

by Sarah Schug,

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SUMMARY

A Flemish-Thai yoga teacher brings some Balinese influence to Brussels, with classes around the capital

'Overworked and exhausted'

In the wake of pop-up shops, bars and restaurants, a new urban trend is emerging: pop-up yoga. Abandoning the idea of a permanent studio, the pop-up version of this ancient pursuit sees yogis laying their mats in all kinds of city locations, from a hotel rooftop to an art gallery.



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Michel Van Cauter, 40, who has a Flemish father and Thai mother, is the first to have launched the idea in Brussels, with his company [Pop Up Yoga Concepts](#).

His creation is also the story of a personal transformation. Originally a marketing manager, Van Cauter traded his corporate career for that of a yoga teacher after discovering it during a trip to San Francisco.

It was during a particularly trying time that he realised the enormous benefits it had on his health, he says.

"I was working stressful jobs in London and Hong Kong, I was overworked and exhausted, and yoga was the only thing that made me feel better," he recalls.

After more than a decade in a high-paced marketing job, Van Cauter decided to switch paths. He quit his job and bought a plane ticket to Asia, where he spent a year immersing himself in the yoga scenes in Indonesia and India, with workshops and teacher training.

Breakfast combo

Eventually, he started giving classes at a hotel in Ubud, Bali, home to one of the world's major yoga communities.

"I never thought I'd become a yoga teacher," he says, "but during that year off I realised how much I liked the dynamic of teaching.

"I love teaching yoga because I strongly believe in it. It has huge benefits that can seem subtle at first, and I enjoy bringing this knowledge to people."

Back in Belgium, the plan was clear – the only missing piece was a location. "I started checking out spaces in Antwerp and Brussels, but was struggling to find something attractive," he explains. "Then I remembered how people in Ubud would just meet up in a square to do yoga and I thought, why not try this here?"

The result was his one-man company, which offers English-language yoga classes, at all levels, in unlikely spots in Brussels and beyond.

Venues so far include outdoor yoga-with-a-view on the rooftop of the Jam Hotel, after-work yoga in the Sint-Hubertus Gallery, and morning yoga at Chicago Café, combined with a healthy breakfast.

Photo Credit: Pop Up Yoga Concepts

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<http://www.flanderstoday.eu/living/pop-posing-taking-yoga-out-studio-and-city>