

1

**ONE-LEGGED INVERTED  
STAFF POSE**

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THE  
BEAUTY  
OF

# B A N C E

## ACTRESS MEGHAN MARKLE ON YOGA, GUILTY PLEASURES AND HER PERFECT DAY

WHEN I MET MEGHAN MARKLE LAST FALL AT SOHO HOUSE in Toronto, she was a vision in white – flowy dress pants, a camisole and a long sleeveless blazer.

As I introduced myself, she complimented my outfit and we immediately shared some of our favourite places to shop.

*by* MELISSA GREER

*photography* GENEVIÈVE CHARBONNEAU

*styling* INGRIE WILLIAMS

*makeup* SHERI STROH

*hair* ANNA BARSEGHIAN



And the conversation was so natural, it's easy to forget that she is a TV star with a huge social following (700,000+ Instagram followers!). In fact, Markle comes across as genuine, relatable and oh-so-polite – you'd think she was Canadian!

The 34-year-old was born Rachel Meghan Markle in Los Angeles – coincidentally, the name she shares with her character, Rachel Zane, on the breakout television series *Suits*. Acting isn't Markle's only love, though. After graduating from Northwestern University with a dual major in theatre and international relations, she spent some time working for the U.S. Embassy in Buenos Aires and is now active in international affairs as the UN Women's advocate for political participation and leadership.

That passion for sharing information and female empowerment is something Markle carries over to her lifestyle website, *The Tig* ([thetig.com](http://thetig.com)), which profiles inspirational people and covers topics like self-image, food, travel and decor. Oh, and Markle doesn't just oversee the site; she writes all of its content.

For our cover story, Markle and I caught up a few times to chat about all things life, work and wellness. Here are the highlights.

**You've spent a lot of time in Toronto filming suits since the show premiered in 2011. What do you love about the city?**

[Toronto] is like my home now. At the onset, I didn't know what to expect, but everyone has been so welcoming. The people are so kind, I love the food scene, and I really love exploring little nooks around the city with my two dogs. (Markle has two rescue dogs, Bogart and Guy.) We'll explore new ravines and jaunt through new areas. I love how much green space there is tucked away – you wouldn't expect that, and it reminds me of LA in a lot of ways.

**What do you do to stay in shape? Is there a workout or activity you do regularly?**

Yoga is my thing, and I work out with a trainer in Yorkville as well. My mom is a yoga instructor, and I started doing mommy-and-me yoga with her when I was seven. I was very resistant as a kid, but she said, "Flower, you will find your practice – just give it time." In college, I started doing it more regularly.

I used to run all the time, but I typically get picked up for work at 4:15 in the morning on a Monday, so there isn't much time for jogging and I would rather have that extra hour of sleep. Now, I change it up: I'll do yoga a couple times a week – hot yoga, specifically – with Duncan Parviainen (see "Duncan Dos!"). He is so positive and, especially in my industry, it's so important to surround yourself with people who are grounded and really optimistic.

As I've gotten older, running has become hard on my knees, so I can't run outside the way I used to, but I'm still planning to run a marathon!

**Is "Flower" a nickname from your mom?**

Did I say that? How funny. Yes, my mom calls me "Flower." She has always called me "Flower." It's really funny because I don't even think about it when I'm describing how we chat.

**We don't see Rachel working out on the show, but what would she do if she did?**

I bet Rachel does spinning. She's so tightly wound, I could see that being her type of exercise. It feels like her temperament.

**As you get older, are your health and wellness priorities shifting?**

As I'm getting older, my approach to aging is quite different. I make sure that I take care of my skin and body, especially with the work hours I have. And I don't just take care of myself for aesthetic reasons but because how I feel is dictated by what I'm eating, how much rest I'm getting and how much water I'm drinking. If I don't have time for a long workout, I'll grab my dog and go for a quick run. Being active is my own moving meditation.

**You have some gorgeous food shots on Instagram and on your lifestyle website, *The Tig*. Are you a foodie? How did you cultivate your passion for food?**

I love to cook. I grew up on the set of a TV show called *Married with Children*, where my dad was the lighting director. Because of the content of the show, my dad would have me help in craft services, which is where they make

## WHAT DOES YOGA MEAN TO MEGHAN?

*"So much. My mom is a yoga instructor. I just find it to be my happy place. Going to the mat is where I can calm down. Even if I'm not in the mood to go, I never leave class regretting having gone – I always leave feeling sort of euphoric."*

2

**MERMAID  
POSE**

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3

**BOW POSE**

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4

**REVERSE WARRIOR II  
POSE**

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- 1 BRA TOP, \$70, AND LEGGINGS, \$60, **LOLÉ**
- 2 TOP, \$123, **BCBGMAXAZRIA**, BRA TOP, \$70, LEGGINGS, \$60, **LOLÉ**
- 3 SLIP, \$290, **CHRISTINE LINGERIE**
- 4 SHIRT, \$60, AND SHORTS, \$30, **H&M**, BRA TOP, \$35, **GAP**



## DUNCAN DOS!

Meghan Markle frequently works out with Toronto's Duncan Parviainen, who has been teaching yoga for nine years. On shoot day, he was on hand to help her warm up. Here's his take on the beauty of the practice.

### WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF YOGA?

There are so many benefits that come with the practice of yoga. A few benefits of vinyasa yoga include increased flexibility and muscle strength, greater happiness, increased mental focus, a greater ability to relax, decreased anxiety and better sleep.

### WHAT DOES YOGA MEAN TO YOU?

At this moment in my life, I would define yoga as the balance between desiring more and being content with what is.

### CAN YOU TELL US HOW MEGHAN HAS EVOLVED WITH HER PRACTICE SINCE YOU MET?

I remember helping Meghan with some of her first inversions. They can be fun yet terrifying if you aren't comfortable going upside down. I remember Meghan being quite timid yet coming into handstand anyway. Her ability to trust, feel fear and then move beyond it speaks volumes about her as a person.

all the food and nibbles – that's where I started to learn about garnishing and plating. After being there every day after school for 10 years and seeing the appreciation of food, I started to learn the association between food and happiness and being able to entertain – I think that's where the seed was planted. Beyond that, we travelled a lot when I was young. My mom was also a travel agent, so with the exposure to different cultures and different flavours and with LA being such a melting pot – much like Toronto – I think that all developed my fascination [for food].

What's your healthy eating philosophy? Do you have a kryptonite?

French fries – I could eat French fries all day. And I love pasta. I love carbs – who doesn't love a carbohydrate? But of course, when I'm filming, I'm conscious of what I eat. I try to eat vegan during the week and then have a little bit more flexibility with what I dig into on the weekends. But at the same time, it's all about balance. Because I work out the way I do, I don't ever want to feel deprived. I feel that the second you do that is when you start to binge on things. It's not a diet; it's lifestyle eating.

The same goes for wine. Of course I'm going to have that glass of wine – it's delicious and I enjoy it. Do the things you enjoy within reason. Know your body and what works for you and you'll be fine.

The Tig also covers travel, living, fashion and beauty. How did you come up with the concept for a lifestyle site? What has been the most rewarding aspect of launching The Tig?

The concept was really to have a hub for all the things I find exciting. There's no strategy to it, which is perhaps the reason for its success. It just organically comes from me about the things I want

want to travel more and I can't wait to start a family, but in due time. *HR*

to share. The think pieces I write about empowerment and self-identification are the real heart of the site. Maybe [readers] come to the site because they're in search of the perfect blowout, but they end up walking away from it thinking, 'I'm enough. Wow, that's a great reminder.' For me, that has been the real joy.

It's great if they like my clothes or my hairstyle, but at the end of the day, when all that stuff is gone, let's talk about what's really important. Thankfully, The Tig is an outlet for me to start that conversation candidly.

Between filming Suits, managing The Tig, representing Reitmans and the other projects you have on the go, you're incredibly busy. What does your perfect day look like?

I love to work, to be honest. On my perfect day, I would wake up late, take my dogs for a walk, do some yoga, work on The Tig and have a great sashimi lunch. And, because I love to work, if I was able to go and shoot one scene, then that would be fantastic for a little creative impulse. Then I would have a really great dinner with friends. I love to cook. I'm pretty low-key. I travel so much that, in my downtime, I really relish the quiet.

What's next for you? Do you have some bucket-list items?

We are confirmed to film two more seasons of Suits, so I'll be here [in Toronto] for at least a couple more years. And really the hiatus [between filming] is so brief that I just want to use that time to grow The Tig. I'm so grateful for how it's taken off. And I love doing comedy [this winter Markle filmed a romantic comedy in Vancouver]. Other bucket-list items: I

Meghan Markle was the brand ambassador for Reitman's fall/winter 2016 collection and just finished collaborating on a spring capsule for the 90-year-old Canadian brand. "The Meghan Markle Collection for Reitmans" was set to hit stores April 24. "I'm really excited. It's the first time I've ever designed and we're launching with a dress collection of four signature, staple dresses. I've been involved in every facet of [the design process], so it's really personal."