

# Sunny Salutations

SOL Yoga's second location turns up the heat on the standard studio.

BY MADISON FLAGER PHOTOGRAPHY BY DANNY CARDOZO



SOL Yoga owner and founder Cathy DeFrancesco brings a special touch to the soon-to-open downtown Fort Lauderdale location, including two infrared heated studios, beauty and health treatments, plus a boutique with curated lifestyle products.

**Just two months from** her second studio's launch date, Cathy DeFrancesco is in Toronto caring for her father. Two of her kids are back in South Florida, with two more in London. Her life is split among a handful of cities, and her work is stretched across several projects. The one thing bringing her balance and tying it all together? Yoga.

"It's so cliché, but honestly, it changed my life in every way," she says of starting to practice yoga eight years ago. "It changed who I was as a person, it changed who I was as a friend and mother—how I spoke to people, how I reacted, what I ate. You become mindful." DeFrancesco's goal is to share that overarching lifestyle change with others. Fresh off the heels of her successful location in Wynwood, DeFrancesco will soon unveil SOL Yoga's second studio this winter in Fort Lauderdale.

**On what to expect from the Fort Lauderdale space:** My second location, which is more than double the size of the first, is more like a one-stop destination. There are two studio rooms with infrared heating for yoga and a shop with products I found in my travels that I'm passionate about. We're also doing a smoothie bar and offering LED light therapy, which I've done in London. Essentially, I'm bringing everything I

love to this destination. It's not a "take a class and leave" kind of place; it's a lifestyle. SOL, which stands for "secret of life," is about taking care of yourself; once you do that, you can take care of everyone else.

**On the success of the Wynwood location:** It was a dream to open a yoga studio, and it has been so well-received. I'm overwhelmed and humbled. People are finding the health benefits of infrared heat and loving it.

**On the benefits of light therapy:** It's not a laser; it's a noninvasive skin treatment. It emits wavelengths of light, and it does everything—it gives a glowing complexion, rejuvenates the skin and reduces pore size.

**On fitting yoga into your day:** At the end of the day, whether you have kids, whether you're 25 or 45, everyone says, "I'm exhausted. I'm so busy, I'm overwhelmed." We put ourselves at the bottom of our to-do list. But taking care of yourself is a necessity. If you do that, you go out into the world a happier, more caring person—and that's contagious.

**On the value of change:** I'm a big believer in change. I try to teach my children that change is good. That's how you grow. We're not trees; we don't have to stay in one place for 20 years. Seek out the people and places that nurture your soul, and let life unfold as it's meant to! ■