

## Therapist watch: movement therapist Ivana Daniell on Wimpole Street



Movement therapist Ivana Daniell works out of a studio in Wimpole Street, London.

'I see the body as a book, and when I study your body I can read your life'

*Caroline Phillips has a Life in Movement session with Ivana Daniell at 61 Wimpole Street in London*

**In short:** Ivana offers Life In Movement therapy, a brilliant combo of postural movement analysis, aerobics, Pilates, Alexander Technique, Ayurveda, Feldenkrais Method and Gyrontonics. Perfect for those who have injuries or sedentary lifestyles, it features bespoke exercises – mostly on pilates machines – tailored to your postural misalignments, muscular needs, lifestyle and ayurvedic body type. The aim is to help you attain a fully functioning body that operates at its optimum. As well as working out of her own clinic at 61 Wimpole Street, she is much sought after by private clients globally and works for retreats run by Aman Resorts on a consultancy basis.



**Our experience:** Ivana is a former ballerina turned movement therapist. She must be knocking 60, but looks and has the energy of a 40 year old, as well as *parfaito* posture.

First she offers a calming atmosphere, ginger tea and almonds. After an exhaustive look at my daily habits, exercise regime and medical history, this Sicilian dynamo has me exercising gently on reformers while she spots my postural misalignments. She identifies, particularly, how my body has compensated for a recently broken ankle.

'I see the body as a book,' she says, 'and when I study your body I can read your life.' She then creates an exercise regime appropriate for, among other things, my ayurvedic dosha.

'Drop your shoulders from your ear. Smile from one shoulder to the other. Visualize wearing a beautiful La Perla corset – as you breathe in, tighten its strings. Now,' adds this queen of metaphor, as I continue to lie on the foam roller, 'we're going to practise the cafetiere exercise. Inhale and bring the filter up to your chest, now exhale...'

She works on my breathing, core stability, pelvis and posture, mostly using her Align Pilates Cadillac and Reformers. She challenges the way I move, ultimately decreasing my backache, muscular tightness and overall tiredness. There's homework too. She teaches me how to sit on an inflatable wobble cushion (great for core muscles) and how to use a gymnastics yoga ring for doing resistance work *chez moi*. Exercise haute couture, she calls it. And certainly it's not off-the-shelf. If you want to look/move like Ivana – and who wouldn't? – book her!



A postural assessment kick-starts the therapy.

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**More on Ivana Daniell:** She's inspiringly passionate, super-charged and *multo elegante*. She sorted the Duke of York's limp (following his broken foot) and works closely with Nancy Dell'Olio and the Duchess of York. She's a graduate of the London Laban Dance Centre and then studied post-rehab Pilates and the Gyrotonic Method (exercises based on yoga, dance, tai chi and swimming). She worked in Asia for 20 years in her own rehab in Singapore's leading hospital. And she's brilliant on post-session support – she sends you home with your iPhone recording of personalised exercises and answers any email queries in a jiffy.

Ivana also has a brilliant network of complementary therapists, working closely with John Loftus (excellent cranial osteo), Thomas Mueller (superb for panchakarma in your home) and Merjen Tokgajeva (masseur who apparently banishes cellulite with an extraordinary Russian plastic cupping method).

**More on the venue:** Ivana works from a fabulous Georgian-meets-Zen studio. Only an Italian could make a space that might double for a torture chamber (with its high-tech rehab equipment) look instead like the annex of a B&B. Think wooden floors, zebra rugs, orchids, Eastern artefacts and portraits of Ivana in movement – alongside those str-e-tch and twist your body Pilates machines. Overall, the venue is great, from the waiting room with its Oriental antiquities to the peace of this Georgian building with its elegantly decorative ceilings.

 **What's queenly:** Ivana offers a unique synthesis of disciplines that is truly bespoke. She lives and breathes her motto – 'Change your body, change your life' – enthusiastically motivating her clients to do the same.

**What's lowly:** Some find Ivana's polished appearance a little daunting. As she's so sought after, she can also be hard to book.

**How to book:** Postural analysis sessions from £250 for 120 minutes. Subsequent 60-min sessions from £90 with a qualified Intelligent Movement instructor or £150 with Daniell. Go to [www.ivanadaniell.com](http://www.ivanadaniell.com).

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Ivana Daniell's glamorous Life in Movement studio space at 61 Wimpole Street, London W1



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