

Learn to Salsa Like the Pros at Tropical Vibes

Written by Christine Whitton

Since season one of reality TV show “Dancing with the Stars,” interest in salsa dancing has grown in popularity. Known for its sultry rhythmic moves, salsa can be performed fast like the mambo or slow like the rumba. Either way, the technique behind the dance is as much fun as it is a workout.



Partners both on and off the dance floor, Manny and Cory Gutierrez met in January 2005 and quickly became dance partners later that June. “Cory was an experienced ballroom dancer, and I was in the middle of my street salsa/mambo education. We combined our skills into a smooth, sophisticated and elegant style,” Manny says. Since then they’ve choreographed more than 10 nationally performed salsa and mambo routines.

In January 2006, Cory and Manny combined their 26 years of talent to open TropicalVibes in Mesa where they teach and dance New York Mambo On2 - a unique style of salsa. This style can be used for beginners in night clubs and professionals on stage. “Anyone can be a good salsa dancer. We have taught the most uncoordinated of people how to use and understand their body,” Manny says. “A dancer can be proficient at the intermediate level by six months (for a lady) and one year (for a guy).”

Interested in learning? Here are TropicalVibes's classes.

Beginner I: Learn the basic footwork of salsa dancing needed for the dance floor.

Beginner II: Learn basic turns, counts, lead/follow variations and fundamental dance techniques. Minimum requirement: Beginner I class.

Salsa Training On2: Taught by both Cory and Manny, students will receive a student to teacher ratio of 1:10 learning more advanced steps, the story behind salsa and its dance etiquette. Minimum requirement: 8 weeks of beginner classes with TropicalVibes or approval of instructor.

Salsa Footwork On2: According to TropicalVibes Web site, this “class focuses on sharp footwork technique, musicality, fluidity and body motion, and spin technique.” Salsa Condition: Have fun and get in shape while learning the necessary moves needed to carve out the perfect performance.

Dubbed the “Best Salsa Instructors” by Latino Perspectives Magazine for their sharp, syncretic dance, Manny and Cory don’t compete in way of ballroom dancing; however, they do perform street salsa/mambo as part of a national team at surrounding salsa festivals. To date, their team, of which they are co-artistic directors for, has performed in Los Angeles, San Diego, Safford, Puerto Villarta and is in the running to perform in Canada and/or Europe.

For more information of TropicalVibes please visit www.tropicalvibesdance.com.