

THE GODS OF YOGA

THE DEITIES FOR WHOM THE YOGA ASANAS GOT THEIR NAMES - **PART 2**



LORD GANESHA



ARDHA CHANDRASANA: Half Moon Pose

GANESHA

The Remover of Obstacles

- **LORD GANESHA**, the son of Shiva and Shakti, is the remover of obstacles. He turns obstacles into sweets.
- In one story, Ganesha was riding home after eating sweets (obstacles), when he fell off the mouse and his sweets went flying everywhere. As he bent down to pick them up, he noticed the moon God, Chandra, laughing at him, so he broke off his tusks, reached up, and stabbed the moon.
- They compromised by Ganesha creating the phases of the moon.
- **ARDHA CHANDRASANA:** Half moon represents Ganesha's one arm reaching down to pick up sweets as his other arm reaches up to stab the moon with his tusk

(full story in Module 7: Gods of Yoga: **Lesson 7 Video**)



ANANTASANA: Reclining Vishnu Pose



GARUDASANA: Vishnu's Eagle Pose

VISHNU

The Preserver of Dharma

- **Lord Vishnu** reincarnates in human form to restore dharma in the world. There are 10 avatars (incarnations of Vishnu)
- When resting between incarnations, he lays on his thousand-headed snake, **Ananta**.
- When he flies into new lives, he rides on his eagle, **Garuda**.
- **ANANTASANA:** sometimes called "reclining Vishnu pose" represents Vishnu resting on his snake Ananta (the raised leg represents the cobra's heads).
- **GARUDASANA:** Eagle pose is named for Vishnu's eagle Garuda who had the ability to shape-shift and change size. He went from a vast eagle as bright as a thousand suns to a vahana small enough to carry Vishnu. When we go from Tadasana to Garudasana, we compress ourselves in size like Garuda.

(full story in Module 7: Gods of Yoga: **Lesson 8 Video**)



ULUKHASANA: Owl Pose



GAJAHSANA: Elephant Pose

LAKSHMI

The Goddess of Abundance

- **LAKSHMI**, the goddess of abundance, is the counterpart of Lord Vishnu.
- She rides on a white owl vahana, which is so rare in India that when seen, they're considered good omens of coming abundance
- She is also shown with elephants, who are likewise considered symbols of prosperity.
- **ULUKHASANA:** the version of malasana with knees taken out wide represents Lakshmi's owl
- **GAJAHSANA:** Elephant pose, where you hang in uttanansana like a rag doll, representing an elephant's trunk, is a symbol of Lakshmi's elephants and our ability to surrender to blessings of abundance.

(full story in Module 7: Gods of Yoga: **Lesson 8 Video**)