

# stand strong

*Find steadiness inside and out with this powerful leg-strengthening sequence.*

To navigate the hectic and often emotionally charged holiday season with ease and grace, New York City yoga teacher Nikki Costello suggests that you slow down and really come home to yourself on the mat.

Costello's method of choice is a sequence of simple yet effective standing poses, shown on the following pages. Costello recommends setting the intention of creating a firm, **grounded base** from your feet up into your legs and hips. "The legs hold you up. They take you where you want to go," Costello says. "When you focus on the legs, you go back to the source of your power and strength." She suggests moving your legs more slowly and deliberately than you would normally and focusing your awareness on the details of your alignment to help draw your attention inward. "Ground into the legs to sink deeper into yourself," she says.

The sequence is prop free, so you can do it anywhere at any time—even while traveling or visiting family. Try it as we present it here, turning the feet back to parallel between each side, or try it as a flow practice (which we demonstrate in our online video) by inserting Adho Mukha Svanasana (Downward-Facing Dog Pose) between each pose. Enjoy giving yourself some quiet practice time this season! ANDREA FERRETTI

## to begin

**Sit in** a comfortable cross-legged position. Elongate your spine from the base to the crown of your head. Fold your palms in front of your heart. Chant Om to invoke the steadiness that resides within you.

## to finish

**Lie in** Savasana (Corpse Pose). Follow your breath in and out, patiently and gradually extending the exhalation until your limbs are relaxed, and your body and mind become tranquil.