

Tibetan Singing Bowl

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Tibetan singing bowls are beautiful copper bowls used in Buddhist meditation. Tibetan monks traditionally live a life of austerity. When they travel, the Tibetan singing bowl is one of their only possessions. The monks use the bowl for everything: for begging, for eating, and for the purpose for which many westerners acquire them. The Tibetan singing bowl, when used for meditation, emits one of the most soothing, powerful tones you will ever hear. First, the Tibetan singing bowl is balanced on the palm of one hand. Then a spoon is drawn around the rim. Soon, the bowl begins to perform the singing spoken of in its name. It works exactly like drawing your finger around the rim of a glass except, the tone is not high and piercing, but deep and mellow.

Like a mantra, the tone of the Tibetan singing bowl can draw you into a state of deep, focused meditation which will allow you to cast off the stresses of the day, and relax fully. There are many beliefs about the powers of meditation, and the abilities of certain tones or certain words to penetrate the different chakras, or energy centers, causing healing and balance throughout the body. Tibetan singing bowls are believed to tap in to this body energy and help the person playing it, and all people listening to it, to reach higher states of consciousness. Although the Tibetan singing bowl is traditionally made of copper, and the size of a moderately large soup bowl, the resonant qualities of the shape have led people to make them in many different sizes and of many different materials. I was recently at a new age party where several Tibetan singing bowls were demonstrated. They were made of crystal, and were impressive in size — each between one and four feet across. Just to get the four foot Tibetan singing bowl to “sing” took about half a minute of continuously running a stick around the perimeter, and once it began to reverberate, the whole room hummed along with it. The person selling them claimed that each had unique healing properties, and the ability to tap in to different chakras. Although I didn't believe this, I did recognize the awe inspiring tones that each Tibetan singing bowl was making, and their use in deep meditation and I wanted this topic for my writing resource. Particularly impressive was the beat frequency between two of the bowls. Every few seconds, their sound waves would cancel out, only build to a spectacular crescendo, to cancel out again.