

The Museum of Amazing Musical Instruments - The Singing Bowl

The sound of the Himalayan singing bowl is a spiritual and healing sound. Bowls like this have been used all over the world for therapy and meditation for over 3000 years. The singing bowl comes from the Himalayas, the mountain range in Asia where you will find Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain. In the rugged lands of Tibet, singing bowls are used as part of Buddhist meditation.

Meditation is a powerful way to calm your mind, relax and focus on your breath. It helps to have something simple to concentrate on, like a picture or a sound.

Singing bowls come in many shapes and sizes – the largest can be 60 or 70cm across and make a very deep sound. This singing bowl is made out of bronze. Bronze is an alloy – a mix of two metals - of copper and tin. It's the same type of bronze that is used for church bells, and the crashing cymbals you hear played as part of a drum kit.

The long sound is produced by stroking the stick around the outside of the singing bowl. The stroking creates friction, which makes the singing bowl resonate – the louder sound you can hear that is this natural, resonant note.

You can try this at home – take a wine glass and gently stroke the lip of the glass with a wet finger. You'll hear an eerie sound as the glass sings. You can experiment with putting water in the glass to change the note. If the glass is crystal, the sound is usually better.

The special, resonant note of the singing bowl is what creates the meditative, healing properties of the sound. Some people believe that special singing bowls produce sound of immense power and meaning, which can have a positive effect on every single atom of your body.

Links

Many singing bowls

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AFp5M5hw1w>

Very Large Singing Bowl

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGQpxryzeGs&t=20s>

Himalayan Singing Bowl with water

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-2ciRGCM8Ro>

Singing Glasses experiment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCuBXbpxDXs>

THE SINGING BOWL QUIZ

1. Which mountain range does the singing bowl come from?
2. What is the name of the world's highest mountain?
3. In Tibet, what religion uses singing bowls?
4. What is meditation?
5. Singing bowls are made from what sort of metal?
6. In science, what is the action of rubbing things together called?
7. What part of a drum kit is made of the same metal as a singing bowl?

THE SINGING BOWL QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Which mountain range does the singing bowl come from? HIMALAYAS
2. What is the name of the world's highest mountain? MOUNT EVEREST
3. In Tibet, what religion uses singing bowls? BUDDHISM
4. What is meditation? A WAY TO CALM YOUR MIND AND RELAX
5. Singing bowls are made from what sort of metal? BRONZE
6. In science, what is the action of rubbing things together called? FRICTION
7. What part of a drum kit is made of the same metal as a singing bowl? CYMBAL