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Angie Fenton | December 15, 2011 | 0 Comments



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MAGAZINE ONLINE



There is a major difference between simple and easy – especially when it comes to exercise, as I recently experienced first-hand at Core Pilates.

The beautiful studio located in Norton Commons on the East End is a soothing mix of blonde wood floors and furniture surrounded by sky-blue hued walls. The instructors are encouraging, nurturing and energizing all at once, much like the exercises the classes offered at Core Pilates.

Over the course of one week, I partook in a variety of sessions, both group and private, which varied from Pilates to core and balance training on a machine called the Vertimax to my new favorite group class, Burn at the Barre.

fitness

The first night, I was taught a number of simple Pilates movements. Again: simple does not equal easy. Even though I work out at least five days a week and participate in hour-long boot camp sessions, do road work and love to lift weights, nothing could have prepared me for the awesome intricacies of Pilates. It's no wonder professional dancers have been using the techniques for years, and it's obvious instructor Haylee Sullivan practices what she preaches.

Although naturally gorgeous, thin and tall, Haylee possesses a powerful strength that is evident both in her long, lean muscles, stunning balance and enviable flexibility. "Pilates is all core based," she tells me. "It's all about a flowing movement the whole time so it feels good. You stretch and strength at the same time."

Haylee leads me through a series of exercises that, when finished, leave me both exhausted and energized (the mark of a perfect workout, as far as I'm concerned) – and ready for round two. The best part, said Haylee: "Anybody can do it. Any. Body."



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The next night, Bear Decatur connects me to a machine called The Vertimax. “What we use it mostly for is balance and strength conditioning,” he explains. “The good thing is I don’t have to think. I just put you in the right position and your body takes over.”

After tightening a padded belt around my waist, Bear connects bungee cords on either side. Suddenly, I feel as if I have a small child hanging from either side, which makes me laugh. Then, I’m silent and concentrating, baffled as to how the simple contraption has suddenly made easy movements like standing on one leg and stepping side to side incredible difficult – at least for a short while.



It’s not long before my legs feel fatigued as if I were training on weights. Bear lessens the tension just a tad and has me do various stances to test my balance; suddenly, I’m as wobbly as a toddler. Small “rabbit jumps” while in the contraption quickly accelerate my heart rate so I try to distract myself by looking at the framed black ‘n’ white photographs of a woman in myriad poses hung around the room. She is flawless and strong, beautiful and serene, powerful and at peace. This is Core Studio.

Still connected to The Vertimax, I do sweeping jumps, bending from the knees and extending upward. “Pretend you’re Peyton Siva,” Bear recommends. I’m pretty sure Coach Pitino would bench the junior guard if he was as vertically challenged as I, but I get Bear’s point and crouch down just before using my arms to help propel my body upward again and again. Bear takes off the belt and has me do one jump; I laugh heartily. The feeling is effortless, weightless. I leave the workout smiling. The next morning, I hurt in places I can’t even name – and then asked Bear when we can do another session. Although I ache, I walk through the day in a five-inch pair of stilettos feeling stronger and more balanced than I have in far too long.

I spend my final days at Core Pilates trying a group class unlike any other: Burn at the Barre. The class is a convivial mixture of ballet, cardio, yoga, Pilates and high-energy dance moves, many of which are done on a “bar” or “Barre” (hence the



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 - [Award-winning](#)

name of the class). There is nothing traditional about it, including the results. Fans – and there are many – swear the classes increase flexibility, endurance, improve posture, firm up trouble spots and increase definition. I tell Haylee that while I love lifting weights and working out with my trainer, I'm not looking to build up bulk and have always loved the strong, lean, sculpted physique of a dancer. She recommends enrolling in regular sessions of Burn at the Barre and my fellow students all nod their heads in agreement.



The diversity of students in the class vary in age, body size and gender: Like Pilates, this is a class for anyone. The music is fun, the movements engaging and, on occasion, a bit sassy, which elicits laughs and smiles and makes the time pass quickly.

After it's over, I linger at the front desk to look over the upcoming Burn at the Barre schedule and spot the session time that works best for me. I walk out the door feeling lighter, taller and energized. I look side to side as I cross the street to my car. Seeing no one, I do a plie and leap onto the sidewalk, breaking into a pirouette.

core

Burn at the Barre

The L.A. based Burn at the Barre workout is a fun, high-energy group fitness experience, which fuses core exercise techniques from the worlds of Pilates, Dance, Cardio-Sculpting Moves and Yoga. It combines the muscle-shaping principles of isometrics, the body-elongating practice of dance conditioning, and the intense pace of interval training. You'll firm, tighten and tone your whole body without adding bulk and you'll burn mega-calories along the way. This dynamic and exhilarating class targets the seat, thighs, abs and arms while strengthening your core!

Contact writer Angie Fenton at 502.551.2698 or angie@voice-tribune.com.

photos by CHRIS HUMPHREYS | Voice-Tribune and JACOB ZIMMER | contributing photographer

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Net tda

(Author Profile)



You've seen her on T.V.

You've seen her out and about.

She is Angie Fenton, The Voice-Tribune's Managing Editor. More than just a print journalist, she's also the entertainment correspondent for "Great Day Live," WHAS11's morning show; 84WHAS; Churchill Downs, the Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks, and Breeders' Cup. Whew, that's a mouthful.

Angie holds both a bachelor's and master's in English from Central Michigan University and began her career as an adjunct professor at her alma mater. In addition to her multimedia life, she mentors several formerly homeless families, rescues stray animals and commits time to numerous nonprofit organizations.

Angie is the youngest of five and a Michigan native. She and her three dogs, Bud, Herbie and Yoda have called Louisville home since June, 2002.

birds

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The Voice-Tribune, a Blue Equity Company, is a weekly newspaper in Louisville, Kentucky covering news, society and sports.



