



From The Pool To PILATES

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Exercise crazes come and go.
(Remember the Thighmaster?)

But in more recent years, many fitness experts, physical therapists and specialists in the fields of sports and sports medicine have realized the many benefits of Pilates, which focuses on flexibility and strength.

This is one craze that's here to stay,
and **Kendra Jordan** wants everyone to know about it.

Kendra Jordan Pilates, the only classical Pilates studio in the north-east Valley, has recently moved to a much larger studio space, which will offer an expanded class schedule and a brand new signature exercise class designed to “Karve” your figure into tip-top shape.

To those new to the term Pilates, it is important to know that it is not some passing fitness fad or an on-the-fly exercise regimen designed for a select few. Rather, it began in the early 1900s, when it was invented by a German gentleman by the name of Joseph H. Pilates.

While confined in an infirmary during World War I, he began developing a fitness program aimed at rehabilitating soldiers with emphasis on breathing, concentration, centering, control, precision and flow of movement. It has been nearly 100 years since he opened his first studio in New York, and the benefits of the low-impact exercise method are now embraced by people the world over.

When it first began, Pilates was a male-dominated discipline, as women of that era did not typically work out. Several decades later, the dance community embraced the regimen, and now the pendulum has swung the other way. Jordan noted, “About 90 percent of my students are female, which follows the national percentage.” Despite this trend, Jordan said, “Men’s muscles tend to be less flexible than women’s, and [Pilates] helps to loosen things up.”

She also explained that many male golfers benefit from Pilates because it increases flexibility and core strength, which in turn improves their swing ability. Anyone can benefit from the method, as it is a discipline-oriented exercise that can help to tone the body, center the mind and help maintain flexibility and muscle tone in both major and minor muscle groups.

Perhaps it is this all-encompassing bodily focus that has physical therapists recommending it as a short- and long-term exercise program for their patients. Jordan said, “A good 20 percent (of my clients) are working with a therapist, and many therapists recommend Pilates to strengthen the body.”

A few years ago, Jordan decided she wanted to offer more classes to residents of the East Valley, which would require moving to a larger studio. “Mainly, the challenge was the time that it took,” she explained of her new building. Now, Kendra Jordan Pilates is ready to move forward and serve more clients in a more spacious and relaxing setting.

She and her staff of eight instructors offer a variety of classes for adults, including private and group lessons. Group classes are kept to a maximum of six people to ensure class quality and client attention. An initial consultation for newcomers is recommended, and there is also a specially designed introduction course to train clients on apparatus prior to participating in group classes.

Some of the equipment used in Pilates include the Reformer, Cadillac, Wunda Chair, electric chair and barrels. Various devices utilize springs, straps and pulls for resistance, resulting in a different type of workout than going to the gym and lifting weights. Group Reformer and group tower classes are also available. Jordan said, “It is toning and conditioning and it really works on developing a sound body balanced in strength and flexibility.” In the near future, she anticipates adding some classes for teens.

Jordan began using Pilates while she was a diver in college to aid in her physical training. After college, she studied Pilates, completed a nine-month long program with 500 hours of required study and held an apprenticeship in Los Angeles. She has a B.S. in kinesiology, as well as a master’s degree in sports and fitness management, and she is also a gold certified member of the Pilates Method Alliance, the regulating body of Pilates.

Because of her extensive training and thorough education in anatomy and physiology, she is in a unique position to offer the most comprehensive Pilates training as well as valuable insight when working with students. She also personally trained her staff, thereby keeping instruction at the most cohesive level. “All instructors have gone through nine to 12 months of a rigorous training program,” she said. One of Joseph Pilates’ original protégés, Romana Kryzanowska, trained both of Jordan’s master instructors, and Jordan is eager to introduce these original techniques to her clients.

Being involved in Pilates for many years at such a concentrated level, Jordan knows firsthand how tough it can be to find properly trained instructors. Many local gyms and health spas offer the program, though they are usually just relegated to mat work, but sometimes their training is not quite as thorough. “You should find out what your instructor’s experience is,” suggested Jordan, who will offer Pilates instructor classes at her new studio beginning in November.

At the new location, she is also launching an intensive teacher training program that is approved by the Pilates Method Alliance. Although the instruction takes a dedicated, nine- to 12-month commitment, it is a rewarding experience, and once completed, all potential teachers will be qualified to sit for the Pilates Method Alliance exam. The program represents about 450 hours of study, tests, coursework and teaching. “All of the instructors I have trained have passed the test the first time,” Jordan proudly stated.



Another new offering is Karve, a Kendra Jordan signature class that combines ballet work, stretching, Pilates and some yoga. It is an intense workout with a little more cardio. Jordan herself got the core workings of her Karve program at The Dailey Method in San Francisco. She said, “I’m very excited about it. The first time I took (the class), I was hooked. It’s intense and complements Pilates very well.”

At the studio, clients will enjoy a retail area that carries Pilates and yoga-focused workout clothing, including the high-end line Lulu-Lemon. (Jordan’s studio is the final account in the greater Phoenix area that will be able to carry the elite line.) Also, be on the lookout for a grand opening event to be posted on the Web site very soon.

With the new year just around the corner, it’s time to start thinking about resolutions. Whether you’re in need of a complete overhaul or just an extra boost to your current exercise regimen, Pilates provides incredible benefits for all shapes and sizes. The new studio is located on the southwest corner of Thomas and Power roads. Visit www.kpilates.com for class schedules and updates or call 480-840-1860 to get a jumpstart on the new you. □