

SELF



2013
May 30
6:00 PM

FITNESS
By SELF Staffers

It's a Thing: Workout Challenges



Want a challenge? You're in luck, because trainers everywhere are doling out comprehensive, yet short-term programs that push you out of your normal comfort zone and deliver serious results that promote healthy lifestyles. Fitness challenges are popping up all over and we couldn't love them more; they keep you accountable for your workouts, help you overcome plateaus and shake up boring gym routines. Fitness challenges are simple -- commit to a fitness regimen at a studio or gym that matches your personality and fitness goals and will get you motivated to schedule in gym-time on the reg. Think of these as **bridal bootcamps** for those who want to get fit for themselves and fit for life, not just a special occasion.

Dr. Nadya Swedan, a physical medicine and rehabilitation specialist in New York City says these programs are a cool concept for those looking to mix up their fitness, as long as gym-goers are not doing the same class 6 days in a row. "It's all about keeping the variety," and avoiding repetition or overuse, she says. Choose a program that fits your exercise persona from these editor-approved picks.

For the Ready to Be Dedicated: FlyBarre Challenge at Flywheel Sports

Even for non-barre goers, like our editor who completed the challenge and melted 8 1/2 inches off her bod, FlyBarre offered a positive and encouraging environment that anyone could -- and should -- feel comfortable in. Participants are set up with a

coach for the 6-week program and are instructed to take four classes a week (in the studio pictured above), with complementary cardio sessions suggested two to four times per week. "My coach was great and always checking in with me," said our ed. Measurements are taken each week and there are additional 30-minute intensives offered on the weekends for Challenge participants, focusing on key areas of the body that are toned. The challenge kicks off and ends with a fly soiree that helps to foster friendships between participants. The challenge is offered 4 times a year at all 13 U.S. FlyBarre locations.

For the Frequent Traveler: Barre3 28 to Great

If you're fretting that there isn't a fitness challenge program in your area or can't commit to a studio-based challenge because of a busy travel schedule, the popular Barre3 studio, with locations in 14 states, Washington, D.C. and the Philippines, also has an online program for you to literally challenge yourself with. For \$28, you get a workout and nutrition guide, a core exercise ball, a barre3 wristband and one month of access to the video workouts. Follow the 28-day program and you'll perform 10- to 60-minute workouts most days of the week and follow a whole foods diet with recipe suggestions. Plus, the props are easily manageable: The core ball packs up easily in a suitcase once deflated, and you sub the light weights for canned soup or even water bottles. Participants reported shedding pounds, losing inches and gaining energy.

For the Anti Group Exerciser: The People's Bootcamp

Founder Adam Rosante created this supercharged workout to get more people moving; "We are a family," he says of the diverse group of clients in his no-judgement, no-pressure bootcamp classes that will convert any group-exercise hater into a weekend warrior. The four-week-long challenges are offered once a month and meet twice a week, with each class consisting of "Power Intervals" and functional body weight exercises. He boasts that his workout "torches calories like a banshee and builds a long, lean body that draws looks like WHOA!" Most challenge participants sign up for more after their first challenge is complete. Now that's a serious change of mind.

For the Time Crunched: Bassett's Bootcamp at Pure Yoga

Crunched for time or just want a little something extra to add to your regular routine? Special series classes, like Bassett's Bootcamp in NYC, meet for a shorter period of time and less frequently, so you can add an extra 'oomph' to your usual routine for a challenge that won't make you totally redo your schedule. If you've ever had doubts that yoga is a killer workout, Loren Bassett will prove you wrong. Hands down one of the hardest workouts I've done, this 75-minute class combines hot power yoga with intense cardio, body weight exercises and strength training, and core training. If the 110-degree room doesn't push you to the edge, the military-style drills straight into a Vinyasa flow certainly will.

For the Competitor: #31DaysofSweat at Revolve Fitness

Prizes? Who doesn't love prizes? If you need an extra motivator or some friendly competition with the hottie on Bike 17, prize based or point based challenges could be your zen. Co-creators and Senior Master instructors Kristin Keneny and Christianne Phillips of the DC- and NYC-based cycling studio, Revolve, created this cycling challenge to support their riders' goals in a way that "helped them stay motivated with prizes while also creating community among Riders and neighborhood businesses." Riders earn points through things like taking certain combinations of classes and checking in on Facebook or Instagramming healthy food choices. The Grand Prize in each city is an Urban Cruiser bike, and other rewards have included a sweet outfit from Lululemon. One challenge participant tweeted, "4/14-5/14 I've gone to @RevolveDC 29x & lost 9lbs! The #revolve31 challenge=extra bonus. Hooked & buying at least a 6 mo plan!"

For the Self-Motivated: **Physique 57 Monthly Challenges**

Physique 57 offers barre-based challenges each month on their blog, with suggestions of what classes to take and how often, providing just enough oomph to get you going that extra mile. It's up to you to keep on track, but the extra motivation and tips provided by each monthly challenge can push you a little harder than you would on your own. Participants can take classes at the NYC or LA locations, purchase the DVDs and follow the online calendar, or stream online videos and workout at home or on the go. You can track your own progress by measuring and weighing in on Days 1, 15, and 30. A featured bonus of the June 2013 Challenge? Sign up for the Newcomer's One Month Unlimited and earn savings on your next package. Results can be seen in as little as 8 classes and June's challenge recommends from 12-18 in-studio workouts.

For the Team Player: **Equinox Training Camp at Equinox**

Commit to 6 weeks of three workouts per week with this B.S. free bootcamp that replaces tedious drills (typical of military-style workouts) with sequences that progressively work to improve athletic prowess and get fitter, faster and stronger. ETC was developed, after much research, to be safe, effective and fun, with new challenges each week, so participants are never bored. The hour-long sessions burn an average of 600-1,000 calories, not to mention the after-burn effect, too. The program first launched this spring at 15 Equinox locations and will return in the fall to help more fitness devotees break out of their own ruts.

For the Go-Getter: **Core Evolution at Exhale Spa**

Get an individualized experience with the 6-week Core Evolution, which provides you with unlimited access to Core Fusion and yoga classes (it's recommended to attend 3 or 4 times per week), a nutrition evaluation with a nutrition and wellness coach, and follow-up nutrition sessions each week. "This program is great for those looking for extra motivation and looking to make a transformational change in their routine. The classes they take are still a group experience so they are getting the energy of the group classes with the individual program for their needs," says Core Fusion co-creator Fred DeVito.

So, will you guys sign up for a challenge? Tweet us @SaraAngle22 and @SELFmagazine!

RELATED:

- **5 Tips for Barre Beginners**
- **It's a Thing: Themed Spin Rides**
- **Would You Aqua Cycle?**

Image Credit: *Courtesy of Flywheel Sports*

KEYWORDS: **BOOTCAMP, CHALLENGES, EXERCISE CLASS, FITNESS, FITNESS NEWS, WORKOUTS**

OLDER

Snack Time: Grimmway Carrot Dippers

NEWER

Get Katie Cassidy's Slammin' Behind

HIDE COMMENTS ▲

0 comments

Sign in

2 people listening