

A woman with dark hair, wearing a black tank top and dark shorts, is smiling and rowing a red canoe on a body of water. She is holding a wooden oar. The background shows a lush green forest under a bright sky.

Working Out

DITCH THE STUFFY GYM AND HEAD OUTDOORS FOR THESE UNIQUE SUMMER WORKOUTS

By Gina Gotsill
Photos by Norma Lopez

Have you ever counted the hours

you spend indoors? Start with the time you spend at the office and add the hours you spend sleeping, shopping and doing chores around the house. Even when you cruise around town — unless you drive a convertible — you are enclosed, contained.

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This summer, think outside the box and get outdoors. Go ahead, bask in the sunshine and take some fresh air into your lungs. The change of scenery may be all you need to kick-start your exercise regimen.

"Outdoor exercise is exercise as it was meant to be," says Michelle Van Otten, owner of Ultimate Outdoor Fitness in Los Gatos. Van Otten, a personal trainer and longtime outdoor athlete, offers a variety of programs that focus on general fitness as well as sports conditioning. People who want to lose weight or get into better physical shape benefit from her classes, which meet Monday through Friday.

Van Otten looks for parks and trails that stimulate the senses, and strives not to hit the same location twice. Each weekly session is designed to increase cardiovascular conditioning, flexibility, balance, muscular strength and endurance. Workouts are tailored to clients' individual needs and ability levels.

During the summer months, Van Otten plans to launch an outdoor yoga program that starts with a hike and ends with a 60-minute yoga class.

"Training in the same environment will make you hit a plateau," Van Otten says. "My goal is to take people into different environments to keep them motivated and keep them challenged."

Special thanks to our
model Sydney Breeden.
Location: Loch Lomond
Recreation Area in Felton.



There are plenty of ways for people of all ages to get out and get in shape this summer, especially if you need more encouragement and motivation at Time Out Services' Community BootCamp, it is not unusual to see adults in their 60s and 70s doing push-ups alongside teenagers, although a majority of participants are in their 40s, says manager Cathy Orca-Nadell. Clients come out rain or shine for the back-to-the-basics workout that caters to all ages, sizes and fitness levels.

"One of the great things about the program is people don't have to think about what they need to do to get in shape," Orca-Nadell says. "The instructors are prepared with strength training and aerobic exercises, and they make it fun."

At Community BootCamp, mobile equipment such as jump ropes, free weights and cones keeps people moving. Clients get outside and sweat for one hour Monday through Friday during five-week sessions that are offered year-round. And although the program meets in a group setting, clients get personal attention from instructors, as well.

Community BootCamp was started in 1996 in Cupertino and offers sessions in Cupertino, Los Gatos, San Carlos and Saratoga. There are also programs at San Jose City College and Stanford University. Community Boot Camp also offers corporate programs for company employees.

In Milpitas, kids — and their parents — can get in shape at the Sports Center. Funded by the City of Milpitas, the Sports Center offers volleyball, flag football, tennis, soccer and aquatics for kids, and tennis, scuba and golf lessons for adults. Softball leagues are also available for adults.

People line up early to register for popular outdoor activities, says Aaron Bueno, program coordinator with the City of Milpitas. Most activities are held at the Sports Center campus and fields, Gill Park and nearby swimming pools.

NATURAL WONDERS

If you want to do some exploring while you get in shape, think about hooking up with the Sierra Club. Founded by naturalist John Muir in 1892, the Sierra

Club offers a variety of outings ranging from hiking to kayaking. Outings vary in difficulty from very easy to difficult.

Do you have a bicycle and an urge to hit the road? Check out the San Jose Bicycle Club or the Western Wheelers Bike Club. Both clubs organize regular events all year long and welcome cyclists of all skill levels.

"Cycling is a great mode of transportation, a great way to stay in shape, and besides that, it's fun," says Bob White, president of the 66-year-old San Jose Bicycle Club.

So, there you go — no more excuses. Get up, get out and go! ♣

RESOURCES

City of Milpitas Recreation Services

Aaron Bueno
408.586.3210
www.ci.milpitas.ca.gov

Community BootCamp

Cathy Orca-Nadell
800.926.6552
www.timeoutservices.com

San Jose Bicycle Club

Bob White
408.920.1771
www.teamsanjose.org

Sierra Club

Loma Prieta Chapter
lomaprieta.sierraclub.org

Ultimate Outdoor Fitness

Michelle Van Otten
408.910.8684
www.uofitness.com

Western Wheelers Bike Club

www.westernwheelers.org