

Metamorphoses



The trend's been making waves in the UK, US and Australia for some years, But they're right: it is great fun.

It's hugely rewarding when you're finally sliding through that hot move.

It's a real body conditioner. My shoulders have had a better workout than in any of the tedious weight pumping sessions at the gym. My quads, inner thighs and lower back are also feeling the burn.

I've heard all the stars in Hollywood have started pole dancing for exercise. Where can I get lessons?

Poler Express, Shouson Hill

Physically it can be very demanding. In the beginning, you don't really need a lot of strength. The moves you learn as a beginner you do with momentum. As you get more advanced, strength becomes more important.

"We're going to see a revival in doing a workout that's fun, takes no equipment and doesn't need two pages of instruction to do"

Juliane Arney Fitness instructor

Pole dancing offers fun, fitness and femininity, she says.

But it's not just the glam girls who are taking to it. Pole dancing has attracted ordinary women looking for something different in a bid to get fit.

"Every muscle ached the next day,"



The sensual secrets of pole dancing are a fitness staple for some Hong Kong women. And now men are keen to give it a whirl, too, writes Lee Wing-sze

Conquests of the pole

"IT'S FUN WHEN THE TEACHER TELLS YOU TO WALK AND POSE LIKE MARILYN MONROE OR CRAWL LIKE A CAT" *J. Chan Pole-dancing student*

"Sensuality is quite different from sexuality. It's associated more with the state of mind and self-confidence."



Pole-dancing instructor Kate Spanton (left and top) says the classes are never competitive and everyone is supportive of each other



Pole dancing combines aerobic exercise and strength training. According to Spanton, it's an effective way to burn calories while increasing muscle definition, and toning the arms, thighs and buttocks as well as the stomach.

"You do a lot of dipping and pulling yourself up, which uses your thighs," she says. "A lot of triceps and core muscles are used when you hold your legs up. It's pretty much all the muscles ladies want to work." A five- to 10-minute routine is the longest most people can manage before they tire,



The List

The Magazine That Knows

Pole dancing at Pole Divas



While learning to swing from the pole and practising sensuous hip-rolls might be as far removed from a traditional workout as you can imagine, it requires a huge amount of athleticism and is picking up quite a following. To a soundtrack of hip-hop, R&B and Motown, students build tone, strength and flexibility, while bringing out the confident, sassy woman within.

"I tell them it's not sleazy at all. What we do is completely respectable: a lot of hard work, but lots of fun. It makes me feel sexy and really happy." Some of



Wiggles and giggles

Tis the season for finding your high heels, losing your inhibitions and enjoying a workout that aims to empower you. **Rose Tang** totters off to pole dancing classes

"Dancersize Asia brings to Hong Kong the latest fitness craze — pole workout and lap dancing," reads the course manual she shows me. "Fitness, Fun and Femininity" is its catchphrase and, it adds, Kate Moss, Demi Moore and Sharon Stone use the "routines" to increase their tone, strength and flexibility.

The room is now packed with women of all colors and shapes, merrily flying around like butterflies. Lots of giggles and laughter as Spanton shouts: "Swing those hips! Lift up your chest!" Bankers, students and housewives — Malaysian, Chinese, French, British and Indian — dressed in gym gear or lacy outfits writhe around the poles like serpents.



NEW MOVERS

Need a good, healthy workout? Pole dancing is the answer

LIFE C5

