

Fit to be Tried

This Time It's Personal

by PATRICIA KUTZA



VALLEY RESIDENTS LIKE TO STAY HEALTHY and fit. Whether they exercise inside or outside, alone or with others, they also like to customize their exercise routine to fit their goals and lifestyles. It's a match that many clubs in the Tri-Valley fitness industry are eager to make.

Seventh Heaven Workout

To understand how far the fitness club concept has evolved from its nascent days in the Fifties, you need only visit a large-scale fitness center like ClubSport. With locations in Walnut Creek, San Ramon, and Pleasanton, this facility offers so many amenities that it qualifies as a resort-style destination. Members can work out with nine different types of cardio equipment and weight equipment from nine different manufacturers. For swimming enthusiasts it borders on nirvana.

There's a six-lane lap pool, an exercise pool, a kids' wading pool, and programs customized for everyone from the new swimmer to the trained triathlete. Crave court competition? ClubSport has courts for tennis, racquetball, and squash. There's also a class schedule to fit almost every fitness niche, from yoga and pilates to ballroom dancing and kickboxing. They offer nutrition counseling as well. A staff of personal trainers offers one-on-one coaching; and, there's a café on hand to refuel those hardened bodies.

This Time it's Personal

With such a veritable cornucopia of fitness options, it may be difficult to understand why anyone would look elsewhere to train. Look they do, says Rich Cunha, owner and operator of Livermore-based Fitness Together in Ruby Hills. "At least eighty percent of our members also have memberships at conventional sports clubs," says Cunha. "A couple who are part owners in ClubSport train with us; they could easily use their own facilities, but they like the privacy and services we offer."

At Fitness Together, members exercise with personal trainers in their own private workout rooms. While many fitness clubs in the Tri-Valley offer personal trainers, these trainers tend to be transient, making it difficult for members to build relationships with their trainers. "The large club business model is built around attracting as many members as possible," says Cunha. "In contrast, we are focused on building accountability with our existing members," he says. This accountability is based on an underlying philosophy that combines "functional fitness" goals with a formal commitment between the trainer and trainee.

No Field of Machines

"We train our members to become stronger by using their bodies as they would in real-life situations, such as stepping out of their cars or shopping for groceries," says Cunha. "In these everyday tasks, they use many muscles simultaneously. Functional fitness exercises are designed to mirror these tasks, engaging many muscles rather than engaging them in isolation." That's why you won't see an army of machines in his gym. A competitive bodybuilder earlier in his career, Cunha remembers the Seventies, when working out with Nautilus equipment was the rage. "It was a safe way to go and clubs still feature this equipment because it's good for beginners just getting started in fitness training. Bodybuilders are the only people who really need to have this type of isolation training. Muscle health is emerging as a health principle. What matters for health is how you use your muscles. We concentrate on movement, using exercises that combine resistance, balance, and coordination, instead of isolating muscle groups in static positions."

Same Sex Sweating

As much as fitness club members cherish working out in their own private spaces, there are many individuals who prefer getting



Garre Vineyard & Winery

Martinelli Event Center

- Bocce Ball
- Award - Winning Restaurant
- Exquisite Banquet Facilities
- Award winning wine available only at the winery
- State of the Art Meeting and Conference Space

BOCCE BALL & ITALIAN DINNER
NIGHTS EVERY WEDNESDAY NIGHT
VINEYARD NIGHTS SUMMER MUSIC
ON THE PATIO SERIES EVERY
FRIDAY NIGHT

Café Garré open daily for lunch
Tasting Room open Sat & Sun 11:30 - 5pm
7986 Tesla Road, Livermore
www.garrewinery.com • 925.371.8200

Health and Beauty for Every Age

From acne to sun damaged skin, families and doctors refer their loved ones to us for our excellent medical care and aesthetic results.

Call (925) 837-8848
www.WallachDermaCenter.com
400 El Cerro Blvd., Ste. 204, Danville

WALLACH DERMA CENTER
Dermatology, Cosmetic Surgery and Medi-spa

Discover Comforting, Board Certified DermatologySM

personal exercise » health

in shape with their own gender, in most cases, women. To do this, they gravitate to women-only clubs like Kathy's Health Club (located in San Ramon and Pleasanton) and Curves (located in Walnut Creek, Alamo, and San Ramon). "My clients tell me that they feel less pressured to dress fashionably or put on makeup than when they go to a co-ed gym," says Elaine Ilmberber, a personal trainer at Kathy's Health Club. There's that competitive impulse too. "Some women have even admitted to me that they tweak the co-ed club machines after using them, so it looks like they can press more weight."

Exercising the Price Point

Personal preferences aside, prospective club members will find the fitness club market fiercely competitive. Unlike such other highly competitive sectors like the airline or hospitality industries—where prices are routinely posted—it's hard to find any membership prices quoted online, on the phone, or in print. To get that information, most clubs require an on-site visit. Many clubs offer tiered memberships, and the benefits of each tier can often be found online, making some comparative shopping possible. Processing fees along with monthly memberships are a staple of the large clubs, while almost all kinds of clubs offer a free guest pass to try out their facilities before signing a contract. **VLM**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

ClubSport
ClubsportSR.com
(925) 635-8500

Curves International
CurvesInformation.com
(800) 754-7505

FitnessTogether-RubyHills
FTRubyHill.com
(925) 461-6379

Kathy's Health Club
KathysHealthClub.com
(925) 426-0105



in·di·vid·u·al

Meaning: of or pertaining to a single human being

You are an **individual**
let my office treat you like one

J. Frederick Riedel, M.D. is a true aesthetic eyelid specialist performing eyelifts for over 25 years.

SEE THE DIFFERENCE EXPERIENCE MAKES

Also Specializing in:

- Lasik - Wavefront - advanced precision corrective eye surgery
- Botox - Radiesse - "wrinkle control" • Skin Resurfacing - "crows feet"



Diablo Valley Eye Medical Center
106 La Casa Via, Suite 200 • Walnut Creek
925-934-6300 • www.dvemc.com



J. Frederick Riedel, M.D.
Board Certified
Ophthalmologist
Refractive Surgery
& Ocular Plastics

Let us change your profile!



We now carry

ENJOY
PROFESSIONAL HAIR CARE

925.838.2123
374 Hartz Ave. Danville, Ca
www.completesalon.com

CHRISTINE'S

A Complete You

SWIMMING AGAINST THE CURRENT



WHILE BENICIA RESIDENTS Dan and JB Gerth work out at a public gym, they prefer to swim at home. For sheer convenience and economies of scale, the Gerths give high marks to the Endless Pool they installed last year. With a footprint of just 8 X 15 feet, their in-ground pool features an adjustable counter current that enables them to get a robust workout while swimming in place. "We were attracted to its small size and initially planned to install it in our backyard," they say. The Gerths eventually built a separate pool house for the pool so they would be able to use it year-round. "It's been a great way to keep in shape," says Dan. And it seems, a great way to keep the family around. Both of their mothers frequently drop by to swim.

Endless Pools
EndlessPools.com, (800) 233-0741