

# aquatic fitness

## Not Your Grandmother's Water Aerobics Class

Written by Helen M. Ryan



Training in water brings fitness to a new level



**n**ancy and Bob Dubay of Temecula are very fit. The couple strength trains, walks, golfs and performs regular cardiovascular exercise. So when they signed up for private aquatic training last summer both were unsure of what to expect. They were pleasantly surprised

"It's a good workout," says Nancy Dubay. "The intervals were hard and got my heart rate up. But I felt refreshed after – full of energy."

"I was very pleased with how easy it was on my body, while still being challenging," adds Bob Dubay. "I wanted to try working out in the water because my back was bothering me from other forms of exercise. My heart rate was elevated, my legs and core definitely felt it. And core strength is important for back health."

Aquatic training provides a well-balanced workout. It encompasses the main components of physical fitness - aerobic training, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility. The buoyancy of water creates a low impact exercise alterna-

tive that is easy on the joints, while water's resistance, 12 times that of air, challenges the muscles.

"There are so many new ways of training in the water," says Julie See, President and Director of Education for the Aquatic Exercise Association. "Current popular formats in aquatic fitness are kickboxing, sports-related training including plyometric-type activities, and deep water running, which is great for runners of all ability levels."

Teri McQuaid, head of Aquatic Fitness for Temecula-based Trainer to You, a mobile fitness training firm, likes the versatility of training in the water. "Everyone can do it," she notes. "Athletes like aquatic training because it's great for cross-training. It improves speed and agility and the training can be designed to be sports-specific. Beginners, those with physical limitations such as joint pain, and the very overweight find that working out in the water is easier on their bodies, yet still provides a challenge."

Trainer to You client Leandra George of Temecula agrees. "I didn't realize training in water could feel so fabulous," she says, adding, "I'm using muscles I didn't know I had. Teri assessed my current physical condition and tailored a program just for me. Working out in water is a wonderful experience that gets results."

"Here in southern California, we have the benefit of doing aquatic training all year," McQuaid, a certified personal trainer, points out. "The water and air may feel cool in winter, but when you're working out, even in water, you don't notice it."

Aquatic training is beneficial to people of all ages and abilities, from kids to seniors. Some participants notice a better quality of sleep, while others feel a limbering of stiff joints. The force of working against water also aids in weight loss, burning 400-500 per hour. "I worked with a couple who had not exercised in years and were somewhat overweight," notes McQuaid. "Their goal was to be able to walk around while on vacation without discomfort and with energy. They worked hard and made great progress. It was amazing to see how well they – and their bodies – responded to the water workouts. And they made their goal a reality."

"If you have a chance to try this I would definitely recommend it," says Bob Dubay. "It's a dynamite workout." Wife Nancy is in agreement. "It was the break in my routine I was looking for. I like variety, something different. I hope to get back into it this summer."

So for a great new workout, try adding water.

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