

Confident, sexy, strong

Flirtease's pole-dancing classes offer whole-body workout in serene, discrete setting



PHOTOS COURTESY OF FLIRTEASE

Fear not. You really don't have to strip, but you can get a good workout, cut your stress, increase your confidence and have a lot of fun at Flirtease in Naperville.

By Jennifer Rundell

Contributing Writer

So, you're at a local store and somehow happen upon Carmen Electra's Striptease exercise video. For a fleeting moment, you take a glance or a long stare at the back cover. Whether you want to admit it or not, a little voice inside you says that you wouldn't mind giving it a try just to see what it's like. That voice gets a little louder after you spot more than one of her videos on the shelves.

The phenomenon has migrated from TV life to real life, and exercise studios are now being created with a focus on pole dancing, lap dancing and strip-teasing moves that give you a full body workout. And we aren't just talking about a workout for size 2 teenagers; classes are pulling in women of all ages.

One such studio is Flirtease, founded and created by Kristin Hubbard, in Naperville.

"I fell in love with it from my very first class and that was well over two years ago," says Mary Bielawski, manager of the Naperville location as well as a certified personal trainer.

At Flirtease, you won't be working out in a room with a lot of prying eyes and treadmills; the class is in a room lit only with candles and soothing music

in the background designed to put you at ease. As you lie down on a mat, you see stars lit among the colorful sheer curtain that embraces the ceiling.

"The 90-minute session is broken into different parts and is the most effective kind of workout," Bielawski says. "It combines stretch, cardio and

strength all into one amazing workout. Each pole exercise incorporates every muscle group."

The workout starts with meditation so you can clear your mind of the day's stresses. Then you are introduced to Pilates movements to strengthen your core muscles. In between, you are taught some sensual movements that include the moving of your hips and your legs. Even though you are feeling free and flirty, so to speak, there's a good burn as your core keeps you stable. Then the lights are turned up a tad and it's time to try some moves on that pole you've been eyeing cautiously and anxiously during the floor exercises. Or, if you're more advanced, it's time for the moving meditation portion of the class.

"The moving meditation is when the girls are blindfolded and they dance freestyle," Bielawski said. "This is a way to let loose and



allow the active juices to flow."

During the beginning-level classes, after the meditation portion begins the various pole exercises or tricks, where you start off with the basic fundamentals in level one and move up from there. By level two, you learn how to climb the pole and even perform the pole and even perform

movements upside down. The class ends with dance routines of various skill levels (it's unbelievable how many pole tricks there are).

"It doesn't matter if you are coordinated or have two left feet," Bielawski says. "You are moving to the rhythm of your own body, and the movements are slower than the music."

"When people first start classes they are a little nervous but excited at the same time because they have all of these expectations and no expectations at all. Women take it not only as an exercise but also as an escape from their daily routine," she says. "It is a sanctuary to forget about all the stressors."

This kind of exercise is definitely a way to be comfortable with yourself in every aspect of the word. As the Flirtease motto goes, "Be Confident ... Be Sexy ... Be Strong".

Flirtease

1841 Wehrli Road, Naperville, (630) 901-9697, flirteasefitness.com

Cost: Eight-week session (one class per week) costs \$250. Classes are held every day. Private parties are offered on Saturdays.

