

THE PENINSULA

Fighting Fit

Heave-ho: Personal trainer Shenda Falvey runs a (surprisingly fun) bootcamp



Shenda Falvey

"I've always been mad into fitness," enthuses personal trainer Shenda Falvey. Her enthusiasm for feeling the burn is a trait that motivates clients attending her bootcamps, which are far more fun than they sound. Sessions are held at leafy Central Park on the Peninsula, adjacent to the Pilot Inn—admittedly, it's more than a little tempting to put down the weights and jog over for a pint in the historic pub. But Falvey's flat-out gusto, and the camaraderie among clients, seems to give everyone the necessary staying power. As she says: "And who could not love Central Park? It has the most amazing vista of the O2 and Canary Wharf, which night or day is just spectacular."

Falvey makes full use of the park furniture, which allows her to mix up the session activities. There are benches for triceps dips and step-ups, as well as ledges and walls for core and leg work.

"And other torturous exercises," she jokes—sort of. "Add to that the trees for shade or rain cover, depending on our fantastic British weather and it makes for a perfect combination to enjoy the outdoors while getting fit." Falvey comes from a media and PR

background, having worked as a director at Jackie Cooper PR, before moving to Hill & Knowlton in Soho. She led an intensely active lifestyle, and relied on personal trainers to get her fitness fix. "I had to pay the premium to get the really good workout done," she says. It was while working at H & K that she had her first daughter, who is now ten, and a second daughter soon followed—when childcare turned out not to be a good fit, Falvey began studying personal training on the weekends and in the evenings, when her husband was free to look after their daughters.

Falvey's fitness education is a hit list of physical activity: boxing, Pilates, sports conditioning, and so on. Her business is now five years old, and, hewn from her own experience, she decided to also specialise in ante-and post-natal training. Her company started with mid-morning bootcamps, held in specially designed timeslots so that mums or carers could come once the kids were at school or nursery. "I know myself the nightmares of trying to find the time. I used to train six times a week, and with two small children, that's really difficult." Regular evening and weekend classes cater for busy professionals who might also be time poor.

Falvey also knows that to keep motivation up variety is key, so every session is different. "If it's boring, people are just not going to want to come back. And trying to motivate people when it's raining is not the easiest thing, so you've got to offer something that's fun and interesting."

Falvey's bootcamps offer complete body conditioning with an interval training focus, and despite sessions being a group-based workout, she utilises her qualifications as a personal trainer to the benefit of clients. "I like to give everyone a bit of PT attention. I try and make sure my clients get the personal-training part, without the personal-training fee."

And Falvey's fitness maxim? "I encourage people to do two training sessions of bootcamp a week, but I hope they'll make exercise a part of their daily life." Falvey is also a nutritional specialist, and is happy to advise on a client's food diary, offering meal plans and strategies to help achieve their goals. "It's not just



about weight-loss, it's about health." For Falvey, this means sourcing her produce locally and avoiding processed foods. "I don't eat wheat, but I buy rye bread from Paul Rhodes. I tell all my clients to do that as well." Falvey sites Craft Café and Meantime Brewery as top neighbourhood picks, as well as Zaibatsu for Japanese—"It's a very small noodle and sushi BYO that does a great curry laksa and seafood udon. My husband and I go every Wednesday evening after bootcamp, and the kids love it."

The promise of a hearty post-workout feed aside, it's Falvey herself who is actually the best motivation to attend bootcamp. "I just love the way I feel after a hard workout. Lungs open, endorphins rushing around my system making me feel great, and that very satisfying after burn. Add to that the feeling of having a strong body, rarely getting ill and having lots of energy—win-win!"

Hometown?

I come from Banstead Village in deepest darkest Surrey—actually, it's now nearly in Greater London but at the time it was a bit more countryside!

Greatest indulgence?

A glass of champagne at a spa, or in reality a glass of wine with an hour to relax and read a book in the sun.

What are you reading?

I would like to say something profound, but actually I'm reading *The Name of the Wind* by Patrick Rothfuss, as recommended by a friend.

To celebrate five successful years of outdoor fitness at Central Park, Falvey is offering readers the chance to sample a free bootcamp for themselves. Visit shendafalveypersonaltraining.com for full bootcamp and personal training details, or contact Shenda on shenda@shendafalveypersonaltraining.com for more information or to book your spot.

