



Courtesy Master Spas



Courtesy Master Spas

## Moving Your Daily Workout into the Water

### Turning land-based Pilates into water-based Poolates™

Everyone either has one or has access to one, yet many people don't consider the swimming pool or swim spa as a piece of exercise equipment.

If you thought swimming pools were just for swimming, you are sadly mistaken. Today, water fitness classes have grown not only in attendance but also in the variety of types offered. Carving out a niche among them are land-based exercises slightly modified for the water. A leader in this emerging trend is Poolates™, developed by Rebecca "Boo" Pfeiffer, J.D., M.P.H., a certified Pilates instructor and certified personal trainer. In 2003, Pfeiffer was on a mission per her students' request.

Three of her students had varying exercise needs: one wanted to convert his mat Pilates time to the water; one was overweight and preferred the stress-free quality of water; and the other had arthritis. All asked her the same question, "Why can't we do our Pilates in the water?"

Turning their question over in her mind, she decided to take action.

"The combination of wanting to meet the needs of these clients, combined with my love of

Pilates and respect for water exercise made me think, 'Is there a valid way to turn the pool into a Pilates apparatus?'" Pfeiffer says. "And the testing began."

She developed a program called Poolates™. True to the Pilates principles of breathing, centering control, precision, concentration, awareness, fluidity and efficient movement, Poolates™ incorporates the powerful, gentle benefits of water exercise.

The key characteristics of Poolates™ are the marriage of the basic Pilates principles with the benefits of water exercise; these benefits include enabling a person to gain strength, tone muscles, enhance balance and improve flexibility in a stress-free but challenging environment.

"Poolates™ is an extension of land-based Pilates, almost like the pool is an additional piece of Pilates apparatus," Pfeiffer explains. "The aquatic environment enhances flexibility and is a safe place for

## Hot Spot

Learn more about swim spas online at [SPASEARCH.ORG](http://SPASEARCH.ORG)



Craig Price

balance training, which is crucial for injury prevention.”

She adds that Poolates™ also provides a safe exercise for people who have, or are at risk for, osteoporosis since beginning and intermediate Poolates™ movements are largely performed while standing, using the resistance and buoyancy of water, instead of gravity, for strength building.

“At the other end of the spectrum, the water is the most challenging environment on Earth for stability training,” Pfeiffer says. “We offer Extreme Poolates™ for athletes and others who need every extra split second of balance.”

Participants in a Poolates™ class may range in age, but typically fall into one of four categories. They may be people of all fitness levels looking for a new challenge, people with arthritis or other illnesses, people with injuries that make water the location of choice for their exercise or

“I am a water person who finds [exercise] even more relaxing in the water,” says Michelle Morrow, a certified Poolates™ Master Instructor in Santa Barbara, Calif. “I also tend to feel safer in the water. For example if my abdominals are not fully engaged or my alignment is not perfect, I am not as worried about hurting myself. The water takes the ‘harshness’ out of gravity.”

Morrow adds that if a person already

While Poolates™ can be performed effectively in most any pool, Pfeiffer endorses the Master Spa H2X SwimSpa for at-home Poolates™ use.

“The H2X has steps for some of the abdominal-specific Poolates™ movements and railings at just the right height and depth for much of the Poolates™ work we do with Versa-Tubes,” Pfeiffer says.

Pfeiffer also points out that the H2X has the smooth and adjustable Exerswim propulsion system that can increase the resistance against which the Poolates™ stabilization movements are performed.

“This allows participants to keep increasing the challenge of their workout as they get stronger and more stable without changing depths,” she says. “In non-H2X pools, we use the depth gradient to modify and vary the degree of challenge of the Poolates™ movements.”

Master Spas developed the H2X swim spa after carefully researching the concept of aquatic exercise done in a small body of water. Their partnership with Pfeiffer was happenstance. Lauter, president of Master Spas, mentioned swim spa and aquatic

(Continued on page 30 ➤)

*“The aquatic environment enhances flexibility and is a safe place for balance training, which is crucial for injury prevention.”*

— Rebecca “Boo” Pfeiffer, Poolates™ creator



Courtesy Master Spas

athletes and dancers seeking to increase stability and power and enhance their performance.

“Poolates™ is the only internationally recognized instructor training and licensure program for water-based Pilates,” Pfeiffer says. Today Pfeiffer spends the majority of her time developing Poolates™ instructors.

does Pilates they will learn that when they are in the water they find areas of the body that they did not know they could access before.

“For example if a person has difficulty finding their abdominals on land, they might find them easier in the water,” Morrow says.

## Get the Arctic Advantage

You look for the technology of today when buying a car, a house, a washing machine. Now why wouldn't you keep those same standards when looking for a hot tub?

Arctic Spas uses exclusive cold weather construction technology to produce the world's most durable and energy efficient spas in order to provide you with a lifetime of stress relief.

Seeing is believing and ownership is the ultimate validation.

Engineered for the World's Harshesst Climates® [www.arcticspas.com](http://www.arcticspas.com)



exercise to a mutual acquaintance who recommended Pfeiffer and Poolates™.

"It [Poolates™] was developed to be executed in the shallow end of the pool," Lauter says. "The H2X is the right depth for most of the exercises. There are places to sit down for the core exercises and places to attach exercise bands. It is the perfect vessel to do Poolates™."

Master Spas spent two years researching the project. One thing that they looked at closely was the way people would use the swim spa. It wouldn't be used just for swimming, but for exercise.

"We wanted this to be a swim spa where people could work on strength building and their flexibility," Lauter says.

In developing the product, Lauter and the team wanted to determine exactly how much space was needed to swim without someone's hands or feet hitting obstructions like benches or steps. They also wanted to find out how much flow and thrust would be needed, as well as locate the "sweet" spot in the swim spa for the swimmer. And, they wanted to develop a way to keep the current going in one direction without hitting the back wall and flowing up the sides the wrong way. Finally, they submitted the prototype propulsions system to a national safety testing lab to test for hair entrapment, safety suction and electrical safety. Lauter believes that the stand-out feature on the H2X is the patented propulsion system with variable speeds.

"The lowest speed is perfect to do Poolates™ core exercises against," he says. "At higher speeds, you can jog in place or do kickboard exercises. At the highest speeds, it gives the strongest, smoothest, widest current of any swim spa."

He adds, "We have this big bubble population of baby boomers that are more active than their parents, but perhaps, for some reason can't participate in extensive [land-based] exercise. Poolates™ and H2X is a perfect combination for those who can't have high impact exercise." ●

— APRYL CHAPMAN THOMAS