

I TRIED PILATES AND PINOT SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO

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3 MINUTE READ



I could feel my pupils dilate as I read the email invite: *“I’m teaching a Pilates + Pinot class. Would you like to join as my guest?”*

Um, did you just offer me wine with my exercise? I’ll be there with bells on!

Let’s be real. No one really likes working out. We say we do, but we don’t. True, there are real benefits – like being fit and living longer and all that jazz – but I know in your heart of hearts you’d rather spend the time drinking with friends. But thanks to a growing trend in the fitness industry, your days of having to choose between being good and hitting the gym, or being naughty and tapping that keg, may be numbered.

Gyms and fitness instructors all over the country, who may be just a wee bit tired of hearing our excuses for skipping out on exercising, are transforming the dreaded workout into a de facto happy hour complete with booze. From [Beer Yoga](#) to wine workout retreats that take you around the world, fitness experts are literally handing out “shots” of encouragement to get us to do our sit-ups with a smile.

“We make sure to offer a balance in all of our retreats, but our wine events and retreats are definitely popular,” said Stacy Schwartz, founder of [Ketanga Fitness Retreats](#). “[Wine](#) is seen as an ‘acceptable’ splurge and people feel better about indulging when they know they are balancing with workouts and healthy meals the rest of the time.”



Schwartz is kind of an expert on helping people find that balance between healthy living and moderated indulgences. Her company, Ketanga, does around 30 to 40 workout retreats and local fitness events a year, covering everything from boxing to boot camp to Pilates to HIIT. Not all her events include wine (bummer), but she says all are about “fun, motivation, relaxation, and pushing yourself just the right amount.”

“You’re not *not* going to be sore after a tough workout if you have a glass of wine,” said Schwartz. “You have to look at your intentions for working out to understand if eating or drinking certain things, regardless of your workout, will affect your goals. It is all about balance, and following your own path — not your neighbor’s — to achieve your personal goals.”

So, sipping on some spirits after squats may not actually help you burn calories faster, but it can feel like a nice reward and act as inspiration for you to exercise a little bit harder. That’s the thought I kept in my head as I geared up to try Ketanga’s Pilates + Pinot class in New York.

The mid-afternoon Saturday event was held in a spacious workout studio on the bottom floor of the Lululemon retail store on 17th Street and Fifth Avenue in Manhattan. The group of 24 female attendees ranged in age from young adults to more mature professionals, and were diverse in ethnicity, body type, and athletic ability.

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As for me, I totally see the appeal of participating in a workout class that provides a boozy bonus every once and a while. Any treat is a little sweeter when you’ve worked hard to earn it and it’s more fun when you have people working toward the same goal as you. I wouldn’t recommend rewarding yourself with a glass of wine after every workout, but if you’re going to splurge, why not pregame with a workout first?