

THE KEY TO STICKING TO YOUR NEW YEAR'S GOALS: MINDFULNESS

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**MOVES THAT
CHALLENGE
BALANCE**

**PILATES'
#METOO
MOMENT**

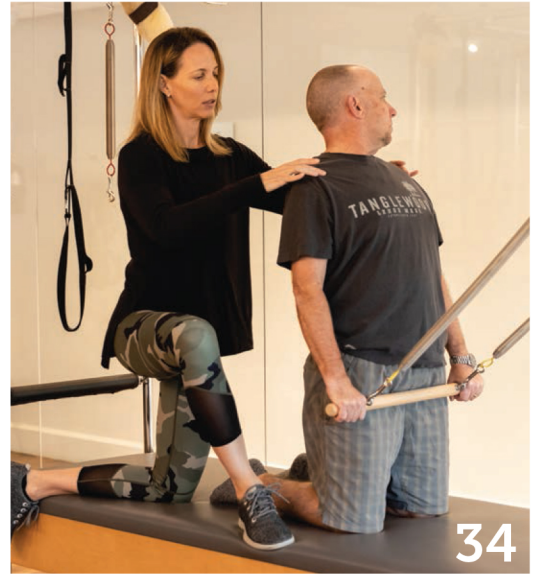


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La Dolce Pilates

Pilates in the vineyards of Piedmont, a UNESCO World Heritage site region in northern Italy? *Sì, per favore.*

THE CHARMING VILLA NESTLED IN THE HILLS OF PIEDMONT, A REGION OF NORTHERN ITALY LESS THAN TWO HOURS FROM MILAN, HOUSES AN ASTONISHING SURPRISE: A FULLY EQUIPPED PILATES STUDIO. It's the brain- (and love) child of Shell Bern, a Montreal-based

method fan who first fell in love with the region 10 years ago. "I had found a villa in the area with a room large enough to build a state-of-the-art studio," he recalls. "Then in 2016, I had dinner with friends at a boutique hotel in Piedmont that was renovated by a local

designer and artist named Cristina Pas. I outlined the project and Cristina and I worked together on the details."

Another key player was Claudia Fink, the owner of Pilates Italia in Milan and the distributor for STOTT PILATES® equipment in Italy. She helped design the studio, which is equipped with eight Stott Reformers with Towers, eight Stability Chairs and separate areas for mat and barre work. "There

are also stability balls, stability cushions, resistance rings, straps and toning balls, plus a SONOS sound system and high speed internet for streaming music," Bern adds.

When guests aren't doing Pilates, there's a spacious common area for group meals, cooking classes, lounging and a heated outdoor infinity pool. "Local agencies can help plan activities in the area, from cooking classes at the villa, local e-biking or road

biking, and city and winery tours," Bern explains.

"Instructors can rent the villa for the week and bring their clients, or a group of Pilates practitioners can rent the villa and bring an instructor," Bern explains.

Carla P. Vercoe, owner of Studio BE Pilates in Fairfax, VA, took a group of eight to Pilates in Piemonte in October. "It was wonderful!" she exclaims. "The villa was beyond comfortable and the Pilates studio left nothing out. We had classes every day; the studio is fully equipped so we were able to

do Reformer, Tower and Chair in addition to mat. It allowed for much variety and as a teacher I was able to accommodate students of all levels. We also rented e-bikes and toured the countryside—the scenery took my breath away."

"I cannot express how absolutely fabulous this villa is!" agrees Jennifer Christophel, owner of The Balanced Body Studio, with locations in McHenry and Rockville, MD, who hosted a retreat for 10. "It far exceeded our expectations! Not only was the villa furnished exquisitely, with every

comfort and detail addressed, but it is set in the most beautiful part of Italy I have ever seen—more stunning than even Tuscany! The town of Canelli is charming, friendly and so near we could enjoy everything from fine dining to outdoor markets to winery tours."

The villa contains four one-bedroom apartments, which sleep two, and a studio that sleeps one. Each apartment also has a sofa or Murphy bed for an additional person, "so a total 14 people can be accommodated at once," Bern says.

"I hadn't even concluded the week

"The villa was beyond comfortable and the Pilates studio left nothing out. We had classes every day; the studio is fully equipped so we were able to do Reformer, Tower and Chair in addition to mat."

of my retreat before I was already online looking to see what week I wanted to reserve next year!" Christophel says.

Rates range from €6,000 (around \$7,000) in high season, to €3,450 (around \$4,000) in the low seasons. For more information and to book, go to pilatesinpiemonte.com.
—Anne Marie O'Connor



OPPOSITE PAGE: "THE EQUIPMENT IS PERMANENTLY SET UP IN POSITION SO THERE IS NO NEED TO MOVE EQUIPMENT IN ORDER TO TRAIN," SAYS BERN.

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: VISITORS CAN SOAK IN THE VIEW OF THE SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE FROM POOLSIDE; THE SPACIOUS FAMILY STYLE DINING ROOM ALLOWING THE GROUP TO ENJOY TIME TOGETHER, SAYS CHRISTOPHEL. "PILATES GROUPS GET A DISCOUNT, EXCEPT IN HIGH SEASON," SAYS BERN.



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Pilates in Piemonte

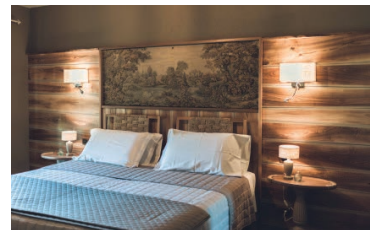


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