

Feel the Beat

Work up a sweat while having the time of your life at Miraval Life in Balance Spa's most thrilling fitness class: cardio drumming.

BY ASHLEY RYAN

Soothing treatments like the Sea Salt Serenity Body Ritual and the Pacific Body Polish provide visitors with a chance to unwind, but the cardio drumming class at Miraval Life in Balance Spa does precisely the opposite—in the best way possible. Put your expectations on hold because this high-spirited fitness class is about as far from a calming spa day as you can get. With the help of stability balls, drumsticks and loud music pumping through the speakers, you're bound to feel a rush while getting your blood moving.

Though Trish Sachs, Miraval's lead trainer and programming instructor, has been teaching it for about a year, the cardio drumming class at Monarch Beach Resort was originally designed by Carrie Ekins of Drums Alive in 2014 following a hip injury. Steadily gaining popularity, the workout is quickly becoming a must-try among resort guests and locals.

MOVE TO THE RHYTHM

The cardio drumming class isn't choreographed—and that's just how Sachs likes it. "It's an opportunity for people to tap into their inner child," she says.

With giant yellow stability balls and thin wooden drumsticks, it's not difficult to see why the activity might inspire some youthful enjoyment. Grapevines, a dance movement frequently used in aerobics that employs side steps, accompany high kicks that encourage students to get dancing, yet there is no set routine.

"It's [all about] functional movement—movements you would do in everyday life," Sachs says. Along with these particular actions, she often incorporates freestyle dance



Miraval Life in Balance Spa's lead trainer Trish Sachs (left)

sessions. Students often line their exercise balls up in different combinations and participants dance around the entire room—sometimes even creating a conga line.

While completing both fun and functional dance moves, students will also drum on their stability balls, which is what gives the class its name. But even with these loose recommendations, following the teacher is never required.

As Sachs notes, the class is "all about being uninhibited and having fun."

FULL BODY BENEFITS

Although the workout is a fun and playful experience, Sachs says it's also incredibly high-energy, with no breaks incorporated into the 45-minute sessions (or 30 minutes on family-oriented Saturday sessions, where the kids are invited to practice outdoors).

The benefits that accompany such an active workout are unparalleled. The cardio components of dancing and drumming will get your heart rate up and keep it racing—an obvious plus to any workout. Sachs says the drumming movement is also a great workout for the arms, and the legs are worked extensively with squats and lunges throughout the program. But even with the intensity of the movements and increased



Cardio drumming is a high-energy workout.

energy levels, Sachs says you can barely feel it during the actual class.

"It's really just an experience," she says. "You work your full body without realizing it."

While the physical benefits are great, Sachs says the mental component is equally as important. According to Sachs, it's imperative to relax your mind, let go of your worries and put aside your mental to-do list.

"[Cardio drumming] instantly allows someone to be uninhibited in a healthy way," she explains. "... No one is watching. Be silly. Allow yourself to be free. It's a practice, like meditation, over time."

She says those of any age and fitness level can enjoy the workout and reap both the physical and mental benefits, resulting in an experience that provides a workout for the whole body.

TRY YOUR HAND

If it's your first time taking a cardio drumming class, don't be intimidated. The fun, relaxed nature of the class, coupled with a sense of trying something new, is an adventure in and of itself.

"Trying new things is important," Sachs says. "If your instinct says 'it's not for me'—you don't know until you try it. You can't tell from watching."

The class provides the stability balls, the drumsticks, towels and even purified water for your water bottle. All you need to bring along is some enthusiasm. Following Miraval Life in Balance Spa's emphasis on mindfulness, Sachs says her only requirement is that participants stay conscious of their movements and stay in the moment.

"Be you. Express yourself through dance," she says, "like you're creating a piece of artwork." Although she has worked as a personal trainer for more than two decades, Sachs maintains that few exercise classes are as exciting as cardio drumming.

"How many times do you get to be a kid?" she asks. "When we become an adult, we feel like we can't do that anymore." But, with cardio drumming, it's easier than you think to free your mind, become conscious of your body and, most importantly, have some fun. 🐼

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SHAKE, RATTLE AND ROLL

These items, which are all available at Monarch Beach Resort, are perfect for dancing and drumming the day away.

Get comfortable and ready to move in Beyond Yoga's MESH BEHAVIOR HIGH-WAISTED LEGGING, which features stylish mesh panels, \$110, at Miraval Life in Balance Boutique. (949-234-3206)



Stay hydrated with Monarch Beach Resort's custom S'WELL BOTTLE, \$38, at Part and Parcel. (949-234-3316)



It's the little details in ALO Yoga's MOLD TANK, including a raw hem and double straps, that will keep you looking trendy. \$68, at Miraval Life in Balance Boutique. (949-234-3206)

