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LIVING

MAY 2011

GOING PLACES & DOING THINGS

KAYAKING IN LAKE TAHOE, GARDEN HOPPING IN
SAN LUIS OBISPO, DINING IN LOS ANGELES,
AND FOLLOWING THE AMGEN TOUR OF
CALIFORNIA FROM START TO FINISH



Mind/Body/Soul

By Maryann Hammers



ADVENTURES IN EXERCISING

Local sportswomen lead the way with alternative workouts.

Mary Osborne: THE ZEN OF HANG 10
“Surfing is empowering in many ways,” says champion long-boarder, professional surfing instructor, and Ventura resident Mary Osborne (maryosbornesurf.com). “You overcome doubt, find camaraderie, and feel braver. You are in the moment, alone with your thoughts, focusing on the elements. Only a surfer knows the feeling.”

For those who’ve never surfed, a little apprehension (or even downright terror) is to be expected. Osborne’s classes offer the opportunity to face one’s fears, in a safe, nurturing environment. She specializes in teaching women individually or in small groups.

“Taking baby steps is the best approach,” Osborne says. “We do a beach lesson first, then head into the water. Sometimes just getting a client’s feet wet is a great start. Then we slowly move to the waist, surfboard, and eventually catch a wave. When I see a group of women cheering each

other on in the water, I know I did my job and left my clients with something they will never forget.”

On Mother’s Day weekend, Osborne offers a special Mother-Daughter Surf Day package, including 90-minute instruction for two, use of wet suits and surfboards, and a copy of Osborne’s book, *Sister Surfer* (Lyons Press, 2005). Price starts at \$185 for two.

Individualized surf weekend retreats can be custom-created, with the addition of morning yoga on the beach, afternoon spa treatment, lodging if needed, including pickup and drop-off service from hotel. Price starts at \$195 (not including accommodations) per person.

Dayna Canada: DUEL LIKE IT’S 1499
The sport of fencing conjures images of ancient warriors, European noblemen, and scenes from Shakespearean plays. But it’s part of daily life for former competitive

fencer Dayna Canada, owner and instructor of Gold Coast Fencing (goldcoastfencingcenter.com) in Ventura, silver medalist at the 2007 North American Cup, and gold-medalist in the 2005 USA Fencing National Championships.

“Several fencing clubs have sprung up from Thousand Oaks to Santa Barbara over the last five years,” says Canada, who offers group sessions and private lessons for adults and children. “That’s a good sign that the sport is becoming more popular.”

The appeal, Canada says, is the way that fencing—often called “physical chess”—blends physical prowess with mental focus. “You learn specific movements that increase fitness, flexibility, concentration, and agility,” she says.

“You use problem-solving skills and strategy to outwit your opponent with skills, techniques, and tactic. You really learn how to think on your feet and remain calm under pressure.”



Beyond the gym: Surf instructor Mary Osborne (left) helps people face their fears one wave at a time; Sol Fitness Adventure owner Melanie Webb encourages clients to find inner strength in the great outdoors (top right); and fencing instructor Dayna Canada's Gold Coast Fencing offers a workout that sharpens both physical and mental skills (bottom right).



Melanie Webb: EXTREME TRAINER

Whether their dream is hiking Mount Kilimanjaro, climbing El Capitan, or running America's Toughest Marathon at Pikes Peak, aspiring adventurers and hard-core athletes would do well to have Melanie Webb, personal trainer, adventure guide, and owner of Sol Fitness Adventure (soladventure.com) in Santa Barbara, on their side.

"We mentally and physically prepare adventure travelers for their quest," says Webb, whose services include fitness training; researching local culture, climate, and necessary vaccinations; coaching on nutrition, hydration, and supplements; clothing and gear instruction; and coordinating private pre-trips and training hikes.

She trained a Montecito mom to hike Mount Kilimanjaro, putting together a comprehensive package that included strength-training sessions, day hikes, weekend camping and hiking trips to Mammoth, gear and equipment outfitting, gear training, and networking with the tour operator. She's currently training a group of women who are preparing to hike the Cinque Terre in Italy.

Starting in June, Webb offers backpacking trips to the red rocks near the outskirts of Utah's Zion National Park. "We are the only multiday trip operator with a U.S. government permit to guide in this primitive area," she says. "Guests encounter a place of wonder and solitude, fall asleep to the gurgling of a river, sleep under the brilliant blanket of Milky Way stars, and contemplate their unique place in the universe, while they find strengths they never knew they had." For a sample of what's in store, Webb offers a Santa Barbara "Day of Adventure" on May 14, including a core workout on the beach, half-day hike, stretching class, and workshop on hydration, nutrition, and supplements (\$150, includes lunch, snack, and water bottle). ■

DAVID BASSETT



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