

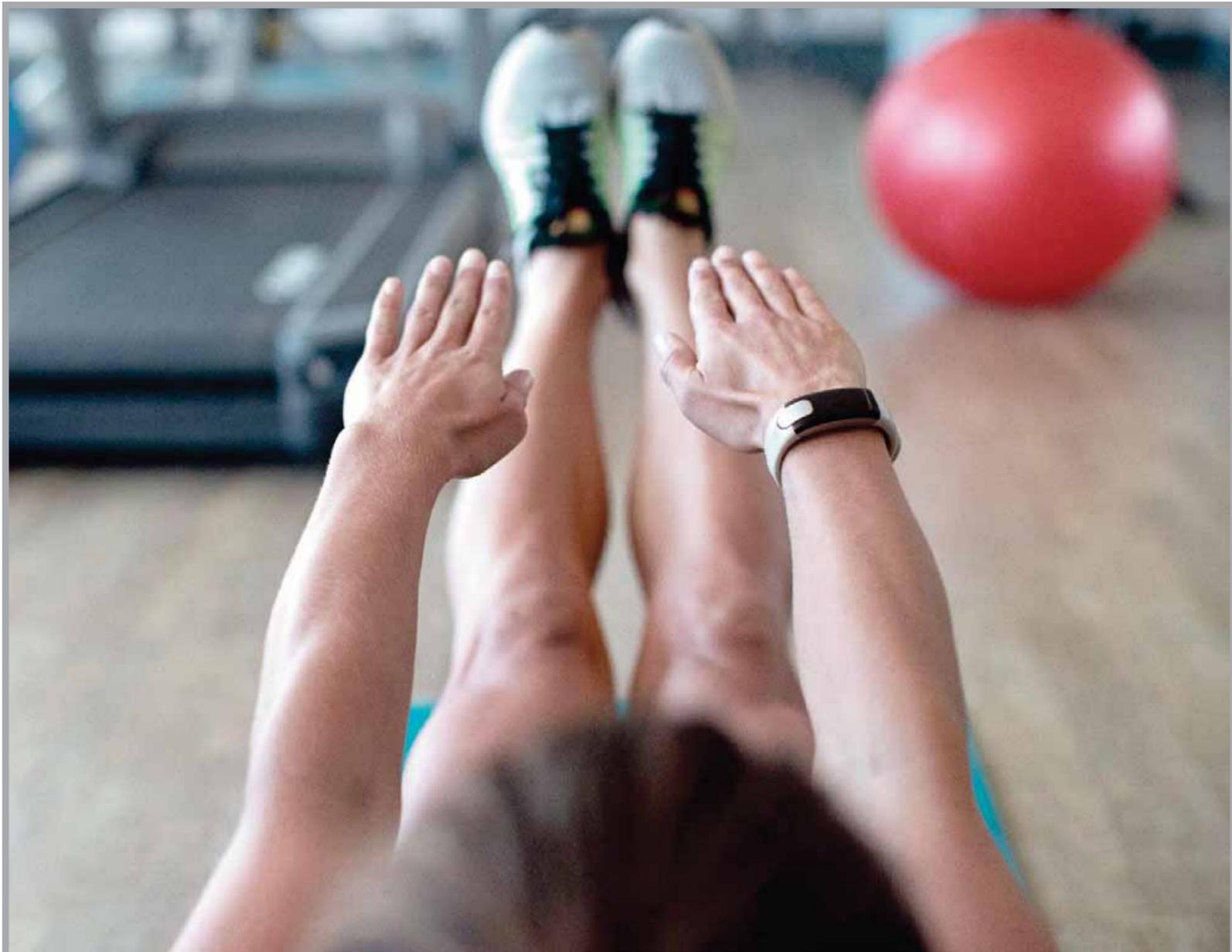
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ASHLEY BARKER

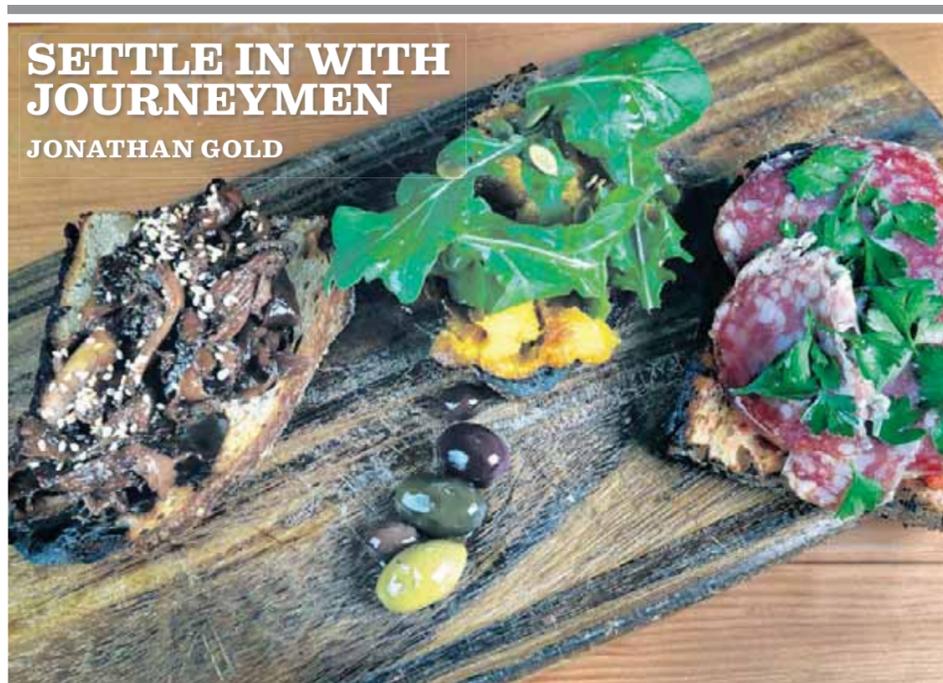
EXERCISES you can do without equipment, such as crunches, pushups and lunges, are especially helpful when you're traveling. Do what you can when you can.

FESTIVE BUT FIT

The holidays can wreak havoc on your routine — all those feasts, all the travel to visit friends and family. But there are ways to still work in your workouts. **MIND & BODY**



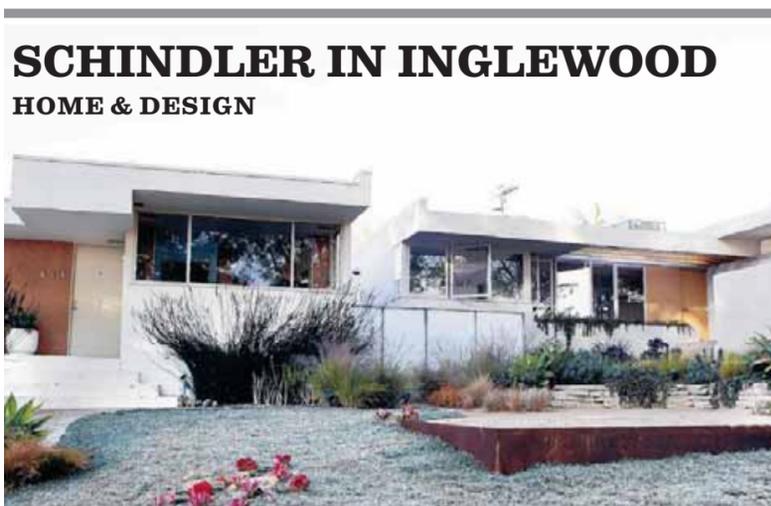
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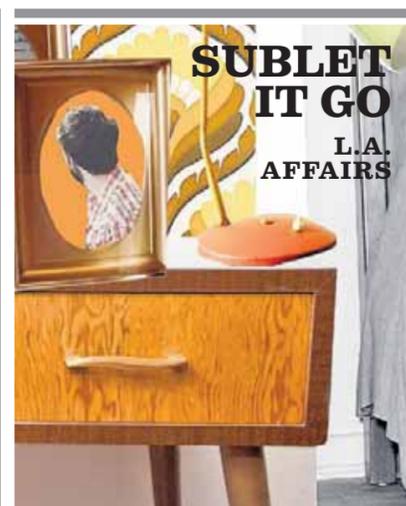
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MIND & BODY

GET MOVING

5 tips to be festive and fit

By MELINDA FULMER >>> If there's any time for excuses, it's during the holidays when sweaters come out, socializing heats up and the overindulging begins. ¶ With so much to do, it can be hard to imagine a way to squeeze in the American College of Sports Medicine's recommended fitness guidelines of 150 minutes of moderate activity or 20 to 60 minutes of vigorous cardio three times a week, plus strength training and stretching. So many simply abandon their exercise routine until the new year, says Los Angeles-based trainer Mike Donovanik, making it harder on themselves in January.

"They start out defeated, already shutting down the possibility of staying active and fit during the holidays," Donovanik said.

Bad idea.

Research shows that half the weight you gain over the holidays takes until the summer months to come off — if it comes off at all.

Rather than giving up and giving in to the Spanx, Donovanik advises his clients who have an existing fitness routine to compress their workouts into short but intense sessions that get your heart rate up and build strength.

"If you can fit in 20 minutes [of circuits] three or four times a week, that will hold you over until January," Donovanik says, when you have more time and energy to tackle those fitness goals.

Here are some pro tips for getting the maximum fitness benefits in the shortest amount of time over the holidays:

1 HIIT it If that hour-long cardio class doesn't seem likely given your to-do list, try squeezing in 15 to 20 minutes of high-intensity interval training (HIIT) on the treadmill or at the park, raising your heart rate to 80% of maximum in one running interval for three minutes, then lowering it to 60% in the following three-minute recovery period by walking or slowing to a light jog, says Walt Thompson, the American College of Sports Medicine's president. Repeat the sprint-and-recover intervals three or four times each workout.

2 Do-anywhere circuit When you travel over the holidays, it's hard to keep up with your strength routine. Donovanik recommends picking a handful of basic body-weight-based strength exercises such as lunges, squats, pushups and plank-ups that can be done anywhere — at your mom's house or between stints on Amazon.com. Set a timer on your phone and crank out 15 reps of each, rest for the remainder of the minute and then switch to the next exercise. Repeat the exercises in this every minute on the minute (EMOM) circuit three times a session at least three times each week.

3 Snack on exercise Just because you can't manage a big workout doesn't mean you can't squeeze in mini-workouts throughout the day. Called "exercise snacking" in the fitness industry, it means squeezing in at least 10 minutes of exercise at a time two or three times a day when you can find the time, such as a few calisthenics when you wake up, a brisk walk at lunch, and a longer walk or jog when you take the dog out in the evening. You will get the same benefits of a longer session, Donovanik said, if you commit to it.



MICHAEL OWEN BAKER For The Times

GO FOR A WALK whenever you can. Find a park or a holiday-decorated neighborhood and get a friend or relative to join.



BARBARA DAVIDSON Los Angeles Times

NO TIME FOR CLASS? Try doing a 15-20-minute high-intensity interval cardio workout.



CHERYL A. GUERRERO Los Angeles Times

BODY-WEIGHT-BASED exercises such as plank-ups can be done when you're traveling.

4 Make a plan During the holidays it's easy to prioritize shopping, cooking and cleaning above all else. "We need to make sure that during this holiday period we make appointments for ourselves for exercise," Thompson said. If you know you have a party or family gathering coming up on a Saturday evening, make sure to schedule an exercise session on your calendar for that afternoon. Then you feel better and can indulge without all the guilt, Thompson said.

5 Do what you can do (and don't feel bad about it) When in doubt, just move. It's easy to say you don't have time, Thompson said, but everyone has a few minutes that he or she can devote to feeling better, even if it's parking far from the store where you're shopping, dropping into pushups during that Christmas special or walking through neighborhoods looking at holiday lights. "Any time you can devote to a structured exercise program is beneficial," Thompson said.

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It's a virtual gym

Go online for more ideas about how to stay in shape through the holidays, including L.A. Walks which guide you through easy-to-hard hikes, stories about fitness equipment including gear for home workouts, and more.

HEALTH HAPPENINGS

Keep the holidays stress free. Yes, it's possible.

By KAVITA DASWANI >>> In Santa Monica, acupuncture goes mainstream and a gym rolls out a new high-intensity interval training class; a new meditation studio in Sherman Oaks offers mindfulness sessions for teens; and a crystal healing workshop is happening in Silver Lake. Here are some well-being options around Los Angeles over the most stressful time of year.



Amplify Acupuncture

Accessible acupuncture

At the newly opened Amplify Acupuncture in Santa Monica, founder Yunuen Beristain's goal is to make the ancient Chinese practice accessible and welcoming.

"A lot of people say they've always wanted to try it but are intimidated," said Beristain, a licensed acupuncturist and master of traditional Chinese medicine. "The fact that we are in a retail location with big windows is an open invitation to walk in without an appointment and get a treatment." Clients sit in zero gravity reclining chairs separated by dividers in the open-plan 750-square-foot space; mellow music plays in the background as their acupuncture points are stimulated to neutralize stress, encourage better sleep or recover from illness.

Info: Amplify Acupuncture, 2717 Main St., Santa Monica. Until Dec. 15, a one-hour consultation and treatment is \$60. Thereafter \$90. Follow-up 30-minute sessions are \$60. amplifyacupuncture.com



Exhale Spa

Burning off the calories

For those seeking an effective yet quick workout, Exhale, a spa in Santa Monica that also offers barre and yoga classes, earlier this month introduced its new HIIT 30 workout. The 30-minute class spends five of those minutes just on abs; the rest is a series of intense sequences on a mat, some using weights, done in 50-second intervals. The regimen is designed to keep the heart rate up while providing a full-body workout.

Info: Exhale Spa, 101 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica. \$27 a class. exhalespa.com



Heirume Photography

Meditation studio

Another addition to the wellness landscape in the San Fernando Valley is Soul Hum, a meditation studio in Sherman Oaks that opened in October. Founder Natalie Kiwi said she began practicing in earnest a few years ago while dealing with chronic fatigue and realizing she enjoyed being part of a class more than meditating solo. Her 1,400-square-foot studio will host drop-in classes throughout the day, with some sessions tailored to middle- and high-schoolers.

"These classes help families deal with stress," Kiwi said. "Students especially learn how to breathe and visualize and be at their calmest whether they are getting ready for a test, recital or playing at a sports event." Classes vary in length from 30 to 45 minutes and explore different types of meditation and breath work.

Info: Soul Hum, 13721 Ventura Blvd., first floor, Sherman Oaks. First class free. Thereafter, \$23 a class. Discounts available with packages. For the first week of December, the studio is offering a monthly membership for \$100 for unlimited classes. Thereafter \$130. soulhumstudios.com



Templework LA

Sound bath, healing circle

Templework LA, which offers Swedish and deep tissue massage and other types of bodywork, is opening its doors Dec. 10 for a group sound bath and Reiki healing circle, held by Los Angeles healer Janae Archuleta. The hour-long class will take the form of a group meditation accompanied by singing bowls and relaxation using crystals and Reiki.

Info: 7:30 p.m. Dec. 10. \$25. 3401 Glendale Blvd., Los Angeles. (323) 522-3131. Register at templeworkla.com