

**GET FIT**

## Take your workout on the road

Travelers are finding it's easier to exercise

By Linda Stahl

[lstahl@courier-journal.com](mailto:lstahl@courier-journal.com)

The Courier-Journal

It used to be that being on the road was a reason for not exercising.

The barriers ranged from not feeling safe walking or running on the streets near your hotel to finding the hotel gym sorely lacking in properly functioning exercise equipment.

"So many times the hotel exercise room smelled bad and all you found were old run-down treadmills and a Universal gym that didn't work," Doug Galligan said.

But Galligan, who is fitness center manager of the new Club 360 at the Galt House Hotel and Suites, knows that first-rate fitness options are becoming the focus of more and more hotels.

Instead of barriers, business or spring break travelers are greeted by opportunities in the form of first-rate hotel fitness centers, new in-room fitness equipment and instruction and easy-to-access services of a personal trainer.

Club 360, perched on the 18th floor with a panoramic view of the city and Ohio River, is a prime example.

It opened on Feb. 1, just in time for the arrival of a large gathering of Air Force members at the Galt House.

During their convention, they used all of the state-of-the-art machines that circle the 18th floor of the East Tower -- steppers, gliders, cycles, weight machines and more.

They arrived at 6 a.m., when the fitness club opened, and on one occasion at 5 a.m., when it opened early at a general's request.

Last week, Chris Pinkham of Hillsboro, N.H., was using a seated leg curl machine at Club 360 after a long day of meetings of the International Association of Square Dance Callers.

"I always work out when I travel, and this is the nicest of many gyms I've used," he said, "Besides the view, the equipment is the best."

Back in New Hampshire, Pinkham is employed as a square dance caller but also works as a personal fitness trainer. He said clients expect exercise amenities when they travel.

"I've belonged to a health club most of my life," said Sharon Kuester of San Francisco, who was staying at the Galt House while on a business trip. When traveling she expects hotel exercise machines that are well maintained, she said while walking on a treadmill.

But it isn't just the business traveler who is making such demands.

Barbara Strohbeck of Corydon, Ind., who is planning a vacation trip to Gulf Shores, Ala., said, "One of my requirements is to have a nice workout area where I stay."

This week, when the new Louisville Marriott Downtown opened, guests found a third-floor fitness room filled with top-of-the-line equipment and situated next to the hotel's lap pool and hot tub.

But guests at the new Marriott and at other full-service hotels in the chain also have another option: the delivery of fitness equipment for use in their room.

These days, exercise may be accomplished outside the hotel room at a hotel fitness facility or in the hotel room itself.

Sometimes, the preference for an in-room workout revolves around the mood of the guest, what clothes he or she has on hand and whether he or she feels self-conscious at a gym.

Shane Weaver, director of marketing for the Louisville Marriott Downtown, said the in-room equipment could be in place when the guest arrives if it is requested in advance.

The Marriott in-room equipment consists of BodyRev, a handheld weighted device with video routine that helps the exerciser create more strength or get an aerobic workout; BodyWedge21, a large foam wedge with 21 exercises printed on it; and Michael Sena's Traveling Trainer, which includes high-quality resistance tubes and a guide on using them.

"The traveler wants to be as comfortable on the road (with his exercise routine) as at home, or better," Weaver said.

Hilton hotels offer in-room equipment, too, including a yoga mat, resistance tubes, elastic exercise bands and 3- and 5-pound hand weights. They make personal trainers available for a fee through Bally Total Fitness. A guest can work with the trainer at the hotel gym or at a nearby Bally's.

Some hotels will deliver more than a small exercise equipment kit to the room. They'll give you a room with its own exercise bike or other equipment.

Westin hotels, which recently spent \$12 million on new fitness centers, also offer in-room exercise programs on the hotel TV channel. The Pilates and yoga workouts are designed by Reebok University's Lisa Wheeler.

Other hotels, too numerous to name, offer in-room fitness videos on demand on pay-per-view TV.

The Zone Workout, available as pay-per-view, offers 20-minute workouts designed for travelers. There is cardio stretching, core conditioning, yoga, Pilates and a total body workout. The routines don't require special equipment, and the instructors are shown in a hotel room doing the workout. Their props are a chair, bed and towel.

So the rule today is ask what's available when you book your hotel and let them know your preference for exercise settings and amenities.

And leave the excuses at home, because being on the road is a lot more workout-friendly than it used to be.



Chris Pinkham of Hillsboro, N.H., exercised at the Galt House's Club 360 recently. "I always work out when I travel, and this is the nicest of many gyms I've used," he said. "Besides the view, the equipment is the best." Many hotels are improving workout rooms. (BY BILL LUSTER, THE COURIER-JOURNAL)



Courtesy of Zone Workout Series Renee Beshures demonstrates a Pilates move in her hotel-room workout video. She makes use of a towel, chair or bed -- not special fitness equipment.

AquaBells are portable, collapsible lightweight weights that you fill with water. They are easy to pack for a quick hotel room workout.

