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THE RADAR BEAUTY

BY ROBIN IMMERMAN GRUEN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY KEITH CLAUNCH



THE BEAUTY BUNCH! From left: Jean Tindle, Victoria Slone and Alessandra Rosa.

NATURAL WOMEN *Beautiful skin is in for three local makeup stars specializing in fab, from-the-Earth products*

A few years ago, finding all-natural, good-for-you makeup and skincare in Chicago was as challenging as finding a sunny sky in January. If you wanted mineral makeup, a hunt on the Internet was in order. If you craved Earth-friendly body wash, a trip to the countryside was the answer. But fast-forward to 2008, and Chicago meets a whole new breed of local beauty brands, all dedicated to making the most of nature's goodness. In fact, we found three up-and-coming, female-run-and-inspired companies, each making a gorgeous mark in the Windy City—and all pioneers on a mission to help you beautify naturally.

Q GARDENS, THE GURU: Logan Square resident Jean Tindle, 55, and New Yorker Barbara Quintero, 52, sisters and founders of this Amazon Rainforest-inspired line of skincare. **THE CONCEPT** Body elixirs, oils, masks and muds that bring the power of the Amazon to your bathroom, each product is made from actual plants that have been used for centuries by indigenous healers in the rainforests near the Amazon in the northern sections of Peru. **THE PROMISE:** You can improve and nourish your skin while helping to support this vital ecosystem. Q Gardens is one way to contribute to sustainable growth and jobs in Peru. **THE INFO:** Shop online at www.qgardensherbals.com.

LOTIONS & POTIONS, THE GURU: Victoria Slone, 29, a self-taught aromatherapist on a lifelong search for the Holy Grail of natural skincare. **THE CONCEPT** A four-year-old line of bath products, including lotions, scrubs and soaps, that contain organic or wildcrafted herbs, butters, hydrosols and plant oils. Each product is 100 percent vegan; all packaging is recyclable. Products are sans mineral oil, artificial colors and fragrances, and everything is made in Slone's Lincoln Square apartment. **THE PROMISE:** If you have sensitive skin or want to be as true to your bod as you are to the environment, this is the line for you. **THE INFO:** Learn more at www.lotionspots.tripod.com.

ALESSANDRA COSMETICS, THE GURU: Alessandra Rosa, 41, a makeup artist with a specialty in brow makeovers (she studied under brow goddess Anastasia in Beverly Hills) and a passion for helping every woman feel beautiful in her own skin. **THE CONCEPT** A line of mineral-based makeup, free of alcohol, talc, dye and mineral oil. The makeup is hypo-allergenic, anti-microbial and anti-inflammatory. The lines includes foundation, lip gloss, eye colors and brow makeup. **THE PROMISE:** High-quality makeup that is both beautiful and beneficial. **THE INFO:** Purchase the cosmetics at Exhale Spa, 954 N. State St., or order at 312.753.6500. www.alessandracosmetics.com ■

THE RADAR HEALTH

BY AMALIE DRURY, KOREY HARNES,
JAYDINE SAYER AND KATIE TETELIN



BODY BASICS: Students in a Core Fusion class at Exhale.

BURN, BABY, BURN!

These four luxe fitness fads have blasted onto the Chicago workout scene. But do they really work? Four CS editors tested 'em out...

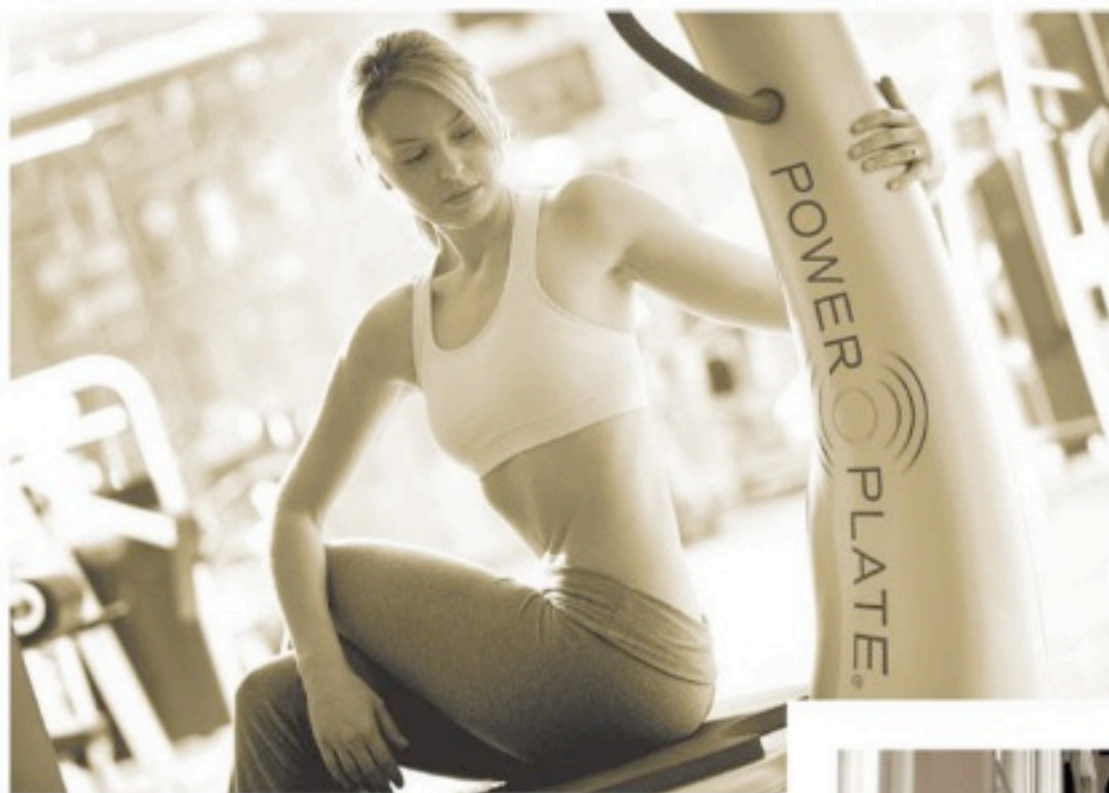
THE WORKOUT: THE SIX-WEEK BODY TRANSFORMATION AT EXHALE

THE PRICE: \$2,000 for unlimited Core Fusion and yoga classes (the program suggests attending at least three Core Fusion and two yoga classes a week), plus weekly acupuncture and wellness coaching/nutrition sessions. **HOW IT WORKS:** Exhale's unique, signature Core Fusion classes (a mix of Pilates, conditioning exercises and yoga-like stretching) work your entire body—arms, abs, back, thighs and bum—to tone, build long, lean muscle and increase metabolism. A wellness coach helps you monitor your nutrition, energy levels and progress. (Bye-bye potato chips and mindless eating, hello fruits, veggies and a food journal.) Acupuncture balances your energy and works to heal issues ranging from joint pain to fertility concerns. Overall, you'll never feel more in touch and in sync with your body. **SUCCESS STORIES:** While all of our numbers were within the "normal" range at the beginning of the program, by the end of week six, we'd said adios to six pounds and five total inches from our arms, thighs, chest, waist and hips, along with two body-fat percentage points and four years off our "metabolic age" (the average age associated with an individual's metabolism). According to our wellness coach, these results were typical of the program. **FAVORITE TEACHER:** While all of the instructors, acupuncturists and nutritionists at Exhale are truly delightful (former dancer Tammy Rowe's Core Fusion classes are standouts), there's something about the positive energy surrounding Erin Jacques, who teaches Core Fusion and yoga, that always put a smile on our faces—and motivated us to work that much harder. **OUR VERDICT:** Obsessed! Not only does Exhale's transformation program offer real results in terms of

weight loss, toning and overall wellness (i.e. more energy, better sleeping and a general lightness of being—and no, we never thought we'd use that phrase), but it is truly a pleasure to be there. The crowd includes a wonderful mix of ages, body types and backgrounds, making it feel both inclusive and inviting. It's hard to find a person among the mostly female crowd who's not in a good mood—even during the most intense Core Fusion sessions (don't underestimate those petite, perky instructors; believe us, they can be brutal!). Bottom line: If we could move in to Exhale, we would. *Exhale, 945 N. State St., 312.753.6500, www.exhaleja.com*

THE WORKOUT: POWER PLATE

THE PRICE: \$300 for 12 sessions. To see quick results, experts suggest you go three times a week for four weeks. (Note: This is a much cheaper option than buying your own machine, which costs around \$10,000.) **HOW IT WORKS:** In a class of four people, an instructor leads you in a series of arm, core and leg workouts—all while the Power Plate is vibrating intensely beneath you (you can change the vibration and intensity depending on your skill level). This generates muscle contractions that give you a deeper, more intensive workout than you can find anywhere else. (Most professional sports teams have a Power Plate in their workout rooms.) Though it often depends on the teacher, most 25-minute classes will make you break a sweat—but not so much that you can't go back to work afterwards. **SUCCESS STORIES:** Users claim everything from weight loss to fewer wrinkles to a disappearance of back pain. Our instructor had lost 10 pounds in four weeks. **CONTINUED...**



RESOLUTION TIME! Clockwise from top: One of the best benefits of the Power Plate is a tighter core; co-owner Denise Morton takes partner Theresa Snyder through a strenuous lifting regimen at Citywide SuperSlow; metabolic training at Equinox kicks off with a rigorous test that pushes your heart rate to your max.

...CONTINUED simply by doing Power Plate three times a week for 15 minutes. Other people noticed improved posture, great bone density and a more toned body. **FAVORITE TEACHER:** For a serious workout, try Don on Tuesday and Thursday mornings (call to double-check!). He's not afraid to push you. **OUR VERDICE:** After four weeks we didn't see a huge change, but we felt a lot tighter and more toned. Unlike a lot of other workouts, you can actually feel yourself working to your maximum ability every time you hop on the Power Plate. This is a terrific workout for people who don't have much time to dedicate to exercise. Plus, there's something about the class that makes us happy. It's a workout that we actually looked forward to. *Power Plate Institute Chicago, 1022 W. Armitage Ave., 773.472.8315, www.powerplatechicago.com.*

THE WORKOUT: SUPERSLOW AT CITYWIDE SUPERSLOW

THE PRICE: \$50 a session. Usually people go twice a week, although some go only once. **HOW IT WORKS:** A trainer takes you through a six-machine weight training circuit in under 30 minutes. Each exercise is done with very controlled lifting—10 seconds up and 10 seconds down—and is designed to get your muscles to a state of complete exhaustion, or failure, in two to three minutes. Research has shown that these slow movements build muscle quickly and without injury. After the initial session, a trainer will chart how much weight is lifted, and for how long, for each exercise, and then, in the next training session, you're pushed to exceed what you did in the last, thereby gaining strength at super speed. Advocates believe that these intense, short workouts are all the body needs to get and stay fit—no cardio necessary. **SUCCESS STORIES:** Judging by the owners Denise and Keith Morton, as well as partner Theresa Snyder, then we believe the hype—they're in their 40s and 50s and have tight, taut physiques that would make even twentysomethings jealous. Denise does two workouts a week, while Keith does only one. Yes, they still do cardio (like biking) in the summer months, but it's for recreation, not exercise. Other clients claim it helped ease body pains as slow lifting is easier on joints, especially for those over 35; others boast toned, tight muscles. **FAVORITE TEACHER/TRAINER:** Denise pushed us to the brink without flinching; Theresa is friendly, but she's a killer. **OUR VERDICE:** After four weeks of training, there is a visible difference in the shape of our bum (a bit more perky), core muscles are flat and the beginning of a six-pack is visible. But mostly we just feel better—we have more energy and just feel tighter and stronger. We didn't lose any numbers on the scale, but we can tell weight has been redistributed in an

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...THE RADAR HEALTH CONTINUED
FROM PAGE 62 advantageous way.
CityWife Superlow, 1901 N. Clybourn Ave.,
773.281.7569, www.citywifesuperlow.com

THE WORKOUT: METABOLIC TRAINING AT EQUINOX

THE PRICE: Three-month Tier IV training program with metabolic assessment, \$4,495. **HOW IT WORKS:** You know that girl at the gym who stays on the elliptical trainer for two hours and never breaks a sweat? Chances are she's not getting much out of her workout—unlike us, after Equinox's elite staff of Tier IV trainers put us through a series of metabolic tests. Using a mask and tube connected to a computer, the trainers measured the oxygen and carbon dioxide we transferred while at rest (to determine our resting metabolic rate) and during activity (exercise metabolic rate) to calculate how many calories we use to function, and, therefore, precisely how many calories we need to consume and burn to achieve our goals. From there, we worked with the Tier IV trainers on a challenging weight-training program to build muscle and used our personalized exercise prescription to increase cardio capacity. **SUCCESS STORIES:** The program is brand-spanking-new, but so far clients have reported lost weight and inches and increased strength. **FAVORITE TEACHER/TRAINER:** All of the Tier IV trainers are experienced pros hand-selected based on their track records of helping clients reach their goals, but we had particularly great sessions with our lead trainer Beth Sullivan, a former physical therapist who created our overall fitness regimen and always struck just the right note between tough coach and cheerleader. **OUR VERDICT:** Hallelujah! After four weeks of training, we were stronger, had better balance and noticed much-improved firmness in the arms and glutes. We learned new techniques to use on our own in the gym, and a bit of knee pain that cropped up was under control thanks to careful modifications. When one of the trainers exclaimed, "Girl, you look like you're teaching me to do that exercise!" during one of our final sessions, we knew we'd come a long way. *Equinox in the Loop*, 200 W. Monroe St., 312.252.3100, www.equinoxfitness.com ■