

Face off: fresh air workouts

We try two outdoor classes and compare their fitness benefits...

VIRGIN ACTIVE OUTDOOR ACTIVE

→ **What is it?** An outdoor circuit combining relay races with mini-obstacles, kettlebell-training, shuttle runs and traditional moves, such as press-ups, and lunges.

→ **Body benefits:** 8/10

Challenges your entire body and combines resistance with cardio intervals. Take at your own pace.

→ **Tester's verdict:** 8/10 'The variety and cool equipment (we like the weighted bolsters) kept us entertained. Nothing lasted too long, so, although it was tough, it didn't feel too gruelling.'

→ **Availability:** 6/10 At most Virgin Active health clubs nationwide. It's free to members. For more info, visit www.virginactive.co.uk.

BRITISH MILITARY FITNESS

→ **What is it?** The original and most widely available park workout. All instructors are ex-army and training is targeted to suit individual fitness. The intensive cross-training mixes running with short bursts of resistance exercises.

→ **Body benefits:** 9/10 A great way to blitz fat and boost cardio fitness. The lack of rest between each exercise means your heart rate stays elevated throughout.

→ **Tester's verdict:** 8/10 'I loved it. The instructors are motivating and it suited my competitive nature.'

→ **Availability:** 8/10 Classes in over 30 UK locations; visit www.britmilfit.com. Monthly fee is from £29 and first class is free.



TOP TIP

There's now a boot camp specifically designed for new mums – Outdoor Active For Mums. Visit www.outdoor-extreme.com for info on UK locations.



Outdoor active IN THE PARK

Craving a fitness challenge? Zest's new outdoor active page brings you the latest on fitness outside the gym. This month, park-based workouts...



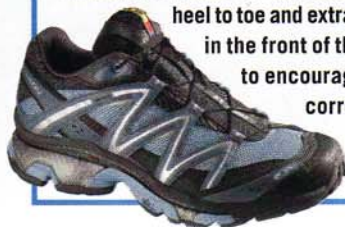
Psst! SPOTTED: THE OSCAR-WINNING ACTRESS REESE WITHERSPOON WORKING OUT AL FRESCO WITH HER PERSONAL TRAINER. THE RECENTLY DIVORCED MOTHER OF TWO IS ALSO A KEEN RUNNER AND FREQUENTLY ATTENDS YOGA CLASSES.

Book it...

April is a very popular time to book an activity holiday, according to tour operator Neilson. Check out some exciting opportunities at www.neilson.co.uk, www.wildfitness.com and www.crystalactive.co.uk.

ZEST TESTS Mud-friendly trainers

SALOMON XT WINGS, £80 (WWW.WIGGLE.CO.UK) With Salomon's new Agile Chassis System (ACS) technology, these offer stability from heel to toe and extra weight in the front of the shoe to encourage correct foot-strike.



PUMA TRAILFOX, £60 (0845 1237862) The latest update of Puma's best-selling trail shoe, these are perfect for girls with narrow feet. Snug and secure, they won't slip around when you're sprinting from one activity to another.



TEVA WRAPTOR BREATHE TRAIL SHOE, £75 (WWW.TEVA.COM) Designed for running through water as well as on mud, these will keep your feet dry whatever the weather, ensuring you won't get blisters.



www.zest.co.uk