

Barre Las Vegas: Where Small Movements Make Big Changes

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I took dance classes growing up, and I'm still a relatively active person with a passion for running, so when I learned that Las Vegas had a ballet *barre* workout studio, I quickly signed up for a few classes. After all, a girl can always use a little more flexibility and balance in her workout routine—not to mention her daily life.

Upon arrival to my first barre class, the instructor gave me a quick briefing about proper posture and showed me where the mats and hand weights were (she suggested I use one-pound weights). Without wasting a minute of class time, we began our workout with small, calculated movements using the weights—pulsing up, to the side and behind. The instructor led us smoothly from one exercise to the next without giving us an opportunity to pause between the micro motions. After only a few minutes, my arms were fatigued, the one-pound weights felt like 15-pound bricks and I was already sweating.



So much for being an athlete.

I quickly learned that barre class is *not* strictly limited to ballet stretches and movements. In fact, the motions used in class tend to be small and contained, not sweeping and elegant like those found in a dance studio, and it's these tiny movements that are key to a successful workout.



After using the weights, we actually did move to the barre, which lined the perimeter of the studio, and then we moved to seat strengthening, abdominal exercises, planks and push-ups. Using controlled motions, I made my way through a leg-shaking, ab-tightening, toe-pointing workout that left me both exhausted and excited for my next class. (Admittedly, I was also a little humbled, given the fact that the one-pound weights had kicked my butt.)

When I got home, I dropped the owner of [Barre Las Vegas](#), Sue Harragan, an email to learn a little bit more about the barre workout in general and her business in particular. It turns out that the workout itself has been around for awhile, was introduced to the United States in the 1970s and was really only known by models and dancers in New York City until just a decade or so ago. She discovered the workout in Southern California and introduced it to Las Vegas in 2009 when she opened a studio at Town Square (a second studio opened in Summerlin in July 2010).

So what's the point of a barre class? It turns out that barre workouts are exceptional for toning and firming muscles. Some clients lose several inches off of their waists without bulking up. The goal is a slimmer appearance with long, lean muscles. Nothing happens overnight, though, and those interested in a better body shape are encouraged to attend class 3-5 times a week.

As for me, I've got a few more barre classes lined up, in which I'll tighten, lift, stretch and quiver. And you better believe that I won't be upgrading to two-pound weights any time soon.

Author's Bio: Joanna Haugen is the writer behind [WhyGo Las Vegas](#), a popular Las Vegas travel guide. | Photo Credit: Barre Las Vegas