



## **A** NIMAL FLOW

Participants train like beasts during this primal workout. It's a free-flowing combination of elements of Parkour, breakdancing and gymnastics that includes walking like a crab, ape-like squatting and scorpion-esque stretching. It was created by Miami-based trainer Mike Fitch, and devotees use their body weight to train rather than complicated equipment.

## **B** IKES

While most city roads are thick with Lycra-wearing cyclists, it's bikes going nowhere in particular that are really taking off. Spin classes have been around for some time, with stationary bikes in mood-lit rooms, a trainer out the front and a doof-doof soundtrack. But big in the US is SoulCycle, which also incorporates resistance bands or weights into the workout, and adds candles for a spiritual ambience. New is the Spin Doc at Bardon in Brisbane's inner west, with classes that include Tour de France footage, a free espresso

and a wine club. [thespindoc.com.au](http://thespindoc.com.au)

## **C** ROSSFIT

Muscle up the body beautiful with CrossFit, a strength and conditioning program that's a mix of Olympic weightlifting, gymnastics and aerobic exercise. "You lean down and tone up," says Belinda Staples from CrossFit Resolve at Brisbane's inner-north Teneriffe. She says workouts can be adapted to all levels, including those who want to take their buns of steel and



six-pack to compete in the likes of the CrossFit Games. [map.crossfit.com](http://map.crossfit.com)

## D EVICE

Out later this year will be Sony's SmartBand, which will have an activity tracker called "the core" to report information back to your smartphone. An app will combine the data from the activity tracker and the GPS in the phone to create a daily journal that not only monitors your activity but tracks where and how you travelled, what photos you took and what music you listened to. Then it will be able to do clever things such as compile a playlist for your activities.

## E RGNOMICS

Stop slouching this minute! Strap on the LUMOback, a position sensor waistband that nestles under clothes and you'll be forced to straighten up. The device vibrates if it detects slumping and connects wirelessly to an app, which keeps track of how often you stand and how many steps you take during the day. [lumoback.com.au](http://lumoback.com.au)

## F ASTING

After the 5:2 fasting diet was the talk of 2013, Chicago scientist Dr Krista Varady's *The Every Other Day Diet* (Hodder & Stoughton, \$28), also known as the 4:3 diet as it involves fasting every second day, looks set to freshen up the trend this year. It's a feast or famine plan with dieters able to eat whatever they like, then on "fast" days restrict themselves to a individual intake of 500 calories. ▶

## G REENS

Celebrities can't go outside in Los Angeles at the moment without being photographed carrying takeaway cups of green liquid. Nutritionists are always banging on about eating your greens and in her new book, Australian nutritionist Lola Berry has included a "Greeeen" juice recipe. Load your high-powered juicer with 4 cups of baby spinach leaves, 2 cucumbers, 4 stalks of celery, 1 whole lemon, 1 whole lime, ½ cup mint leaves and one 2cm piece of ginger. Drink. *The 20/20 Diet Cookbook*, \$35, Pan Macmillan

## H IGH-INTENSITY TRAINING

Instead of time-consuming long runs, walks or gym workouts, scientists are finding that short bursts of intense exercise may yield dramatic improvements in fitness. New out is *Fast Exercise* by 5:2 diet deviser Dr Michael Mosley (Short Books, \$20), which says the secret of high-intensity training is to "get fitter, stronger and better toned in just a few minutes a day". One exercise bike workout suggested by Mosley involves two minutes of pedalling, then 15 seconds sprinting at the maximum resistance you can stand, followed by a couple of minutes' gentle pedalling. Repeat, then you're done.

## I ONIC DETOX FOOT SPA

This treatment aims to pep you up with an invigorating foot bath. It sounds a little Frankensteinian but a mild electric current in the water (hence the ions) is meant to recharge your body from the soles up. [myhealthspecials.com.au](http://myhealthspecials.com.au)

## J UICE

Sydney-based health advocate and documentary-maker Joe Cross's *Reboot with Joe Juice Diet* (Hodder & Stoughton, \$23) follows on from his 2010 doco *Fat, Sick and Nearly Dead*, which chronicled his battle with obesity and an autoimmune disease he had acquired while leading a fast and furious, pies-and-pizza lifestyle. His book suggests "rebooting" your diet by ingesting loads of fruit and vegetable juices.



## K ALE

The vegetable of the moment (*top*) is beloved of many a cookbook writer and celebrity seduced by the charms of the leaves once mainly fed to cattle and munched on by medieval peasants. Now dubbed a "superfood", the heartless cabbage is fawned over for the vitamins and antioxidants hidden in its luscious green leaves.

## L UCUMA

Billed as another superfood, lucuma is a Peruvian fruit that can be used as a natural sweetener. Its nutritional value lies in its high levels of carotene and B vitamins. One of a list of South American "supers" that include berries of the small Amazonian camu camu bush and maqui berries (bursting with antioxidants and grown only in the Patagonia region of Chile), it is mainly sold here in powdered form and used in desserts and smoothies.

## **M**EDITATION

Thirty minutes of meditation daily may improve symptoms of anxiety and depression, according to a study released by scientists at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, US, last month. Dr Madhav Goyal and his colleagues found that so-called "mindfulness meditation" – a form of Buddhist self-awareness designed to focus precise, non-judgemental attention to the moment at hand – also showed promise in alleviating some pain symptoms as well as stress.

## **N**O-EQUIPMENT EXERCISE

While the amount of props available for fitness lovers is ever-growing, there's also a trend back to using your own bodyweight for resistance while training. Burpees, lunges, squats, push-ups and pull-ups and planks are all part of the arsenal.

## **O**NLINE PERSONAL TRAINING

Possibly a solution for those who work unusual hours or travel extensively, online training allows participants to work out wherever and whenever they like, messaging their trainer with questions. Clients can even link up with other onlineers for virtual mutual support. There are also plenty of apps available to help you to go it alone with the aid of your smartphone. [personaltrainingonline.com.au/](http://personaltrainingonline.com.au/)

## **P**ORTION SIZE

A key component of weight control is portion size, according to Nutrition Australia spokesperson Aloysa Hourigan. Plates are far larger now than in our grandparents' day, beverages are sold in larger containers and restaurants serve bigger portions, Hourigan says. It's part of the "supersizing" trend prevalent in fast-food and movie theatre outlets. All of this adds up to people losing a sense of how much they need to eat. As a general guide, protein portions should be kept to the size of the palm of one hand and plates should be half non-starchy salad or vegetables, a quarter protein and a quarter starchy vegetables, pasta or rice. [healthyfoodhealthyplanet.org](http://healthyfoodhealthyplanet.org)

## **Q**UINOA

If food fashionistas aren't eating kale it's because they're too busy cooking quinoa, the ancient South American seed that has taken kitchens by storm. Recipe books and menus bulge with references to the protein and amino acid-laden Peruvian and Bolivian staple. Launches of products containing quinoa in Australia rose nearly 50 per cent over the 12 months to the end of September 2013, according to Innova Market Insights.

## **R**UNNING

Whether it's deep-water, marathon or to benefit charity, running now has endless variations including mountain runs, trail runs, twilight runs and costumed runs. Timed 5km park runs are also taking off. [parkrun.com.au](http://parkrun.com.au); [runningcalendar.com.au](http://runningcalendar.com.au)

## **S**UGAR

The no-sugar bandwagon rolls on with media personality Sarah Wilson's new *I Quit Sugar for Life* out next month (Pan Macmillan, \$35), following her bestselling *I Quit Sugar*. Countering this is *Don't Quit Sugar* by Sydney nutritionist Cassie Platt (Hachette, \$30), who says eliminating all sugars from your diet will do you harm.

## **T**OWER RUNNING

There's a chance to test your vertical climbing prowess at the 37-floor, 810-stair Waterfront Place in Brisbane CBD on May 25 in an event, Climb for Cancer, which supports the Mater Foundation. The Stair Climbing Australia website talks of the pleasure of running up stairs in skyscrapers and also lists venues for outdoor stair running pleasure. [towerrunning.com.au](http://towerrunning.com.au)

## **U**PSIDE DOWN

Who knew that spending an hour in a hammock could be a workout? With some of the poses upside down it's known as AntiGravity or flying yoga – where participants use specially designed hammocks to revive compressed joints and align the body – and it's taking off, with studios and classes that use the technique popping up around the country. [flightkschool.com.au](http://flightkschool.com.au) or [antigravityfitness.com](http://antigravityfitness.com)

## **V**EGAN

When Jay-Z and Beyoncé went vegan (no meat, no fish, no dairy, no eggs) for 22 days in December, it highlighted the growing high-profile passion for a diet beloved by the likes of Al Gore, Ellen DeGeneres and Russell Brand (*right*). People were even encouraged last month to go vegan for January – Veganuary – to sample the diet and see how it might improve their life.

## **W**ATER WORKOUTS

While various fitness centres offer water-based workouts – benefits include no sweating, staying cool and support for joints and tendons – the H<sup>2</sup>O Fitness centre in Brisbane's east offers an array of classes including aqua Zumba, aqua Pilates, deep-water running and diving with buoyancy belts and dumbbells. [sleemansports.com.au](http://sleemansports.com.au)

## **X**TREME EXERCISE

If plain long-distance running is not enough for you, do it via an obstacle course designed by British special forces with lots of mud thrown in and you have the Tough Mudder races, happening on the Sunshine Coast in August and Townsville midyear. Another mud-laden obstacle race is the Stampede, held in Woodford, north of Brisbane, in August with 5km and 10km options and a beer brewer-sponsored after-party. The inaugural Moreton Mongrel in March



is a new extreme athletic event with a 3km swim, 20km paddle and 20km run (including sand hills). [toughmudder.com.au](http://toughmudder.com.au); [thestampede.com.au](http://thestampede.com.au); [mongrelevents.com](http://mongrelevents.com)

## **Y**OGA

Ever-morphing yoga offshoots now include Modo yoga – a New York-based hot yoga that's a little less heated and structured than Bikram – and the US-based Dungeons and Dragons, in which participants take on the roles of fictional characters. New at Red Hill in Brisbane's west is Cue Power Yoga, which co-owner Jay Jenkins says is a contemporary mix of several dynamic forms of yoga focusing more on fitness and less on spirituality. "There are also relax classes with deep stretching and breathing," he says.

## **Z**AGGORA HOTPANTS

Popping into hot pants might not seem appealing to anyone wanting to lose weight, but these pants – designed by a former British banker who wanted to get into shape for her wedding – use ThermoFit multilayer fabric technology that harnesses body heat during exercise to help you burn more calories. [zaggora.com](http://zaggora.com) ●



