

Pilates Studio

First in Deep Creek Lake and now in Cumberland, too!

Allegany County's first Pilates studio – complete with unique spring-loaded equipment and certified fitness instructor Karen Smith leading sessions – opened this fall in the historic Cumberland Brewery building at 711 North Centre Street.

The Balanced Body Studio/Cumberland serves as the satellite studio of the Deep Creek Lake-based business, owned by Master Pilates teacher-trainer Jennifer Christophel, who has taught Pilates, fitness and dance for more than 15 years in the Western Maryland region. “We’re looking to complement fitness operations already in Cumberland,” Christophel said.

“Non-impact, core-conditioning Pilates exercises build strength, flexibility and overall health for anyone, age 10 to 100, provided they are instructed and taught by a properly trained and certified teacher,” according to Jennifer Christophel. Pilates can help people lose inches,

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Photography by **Lance C. Bell**



Inset photo: Certified fitness instructor Karen Smith (left) and Master Pilates teacher-trainer and studio owner, Jennifer Christophel.

offers toning and develops core strength by working the four true core muscles. It restructures and restores posture, helps prevent back problems and builds long lean muscles. Pilates exercises are performed on a mat and on specially designed spring-loaded resistance equipment. Many have misconceptions about Pilates; they think it's just done on a mat, but it's much more than that. The equipment provides resistance to the user that deals with the range of motion in the entire body. It vastly improves flexibility without straining the joints or muscles. Pilates stretches every muscle group of the body and can be performed by anyone, from the athlete who wants to enhance their sports skills, to those needing rehabilitation for chronic back pain, muscle degeneration, muscle strain or joint pain. "Pilates helps you do the things you love to do, only better," says Jennifer. "It is so different from any other fitness program out there."

Jennifer is delighted that Karen Smith, who holds numerous fitness certifications and a B.A. degree in dance from the University of Arizona, is working with her at the new Cumberland location. Karen will be doing the teaching at the new studio, however, Jennifer will be available for post-therapy exercise planning and health and wellness consultations at the Cumberland site.

"Pilates is a way to integrate mind and body," said Karen, who also serves as treasurer for the non-profit Wellness Coalition. The Coalition includes a diverse group of wellness practitioners from Allegany County, who promote individuals' journeys to better health and well-being. Karen said teaching at the new Pilates studio seemed a perfect fit with her background and wellness philosophy.

Karen maintains group fitness certifications through Mad Dogg Athletics, the Arthritis Foundation and Silver Sneakers. She is also certified through the Road Runners Club of America as a running coach and is a marathon competitor. A dancer since age 4, she views Pilates as a "gratifying return to the study of body and movement" since she began training under mentor and Pilates teacher, Jennifer Christophel.

The new studio will offer private, duet and small group sessions by appointment or schedule. Along with offering classically based Pilates Equipment Classes, the studio also offers the only TRX Suspension Training® Classes taught by Certified TRX Instructors in Allegany County. Originated by the U.S. Navy SEALs and developed by Fitness

Anywhere®, Suspension Training® is a revolutionary method of leveraged bodyweight exercise. Safely perform hundreds of exercises that build power, strength, flexibility, balance, mobility, and prevent injuries, all at the intensity you choose. The studio also plans to add Booty Barre and several forms of Yoga to its class schedule this spring.

The new studio has free client parking and is equipped with classic Pilates apparatus in spacious quarters with refinished hardwood floors and paneling. We are really trying to get outside the "gym" atmosphere and mentality and create not only a destination of both serenity and wellness but also fun and fitness." says Jennifer. "We are a small, personalized studio and plan to maintain this mind-body approach in all our classes in order to help clients create balance in their busy, sometimes hectic lives. That is something hard to find now days."

For more information, to schedule a time to stop by and see the studio or to sign up for sessions, contact the Balanced Body Studio at their central office number of 301-387-7585.



Karen Smith demonstrates some of the new Pilates equipment at Balanced Body Studio's satellite location at 711 North Centre Street, Cumberland, Maryland.