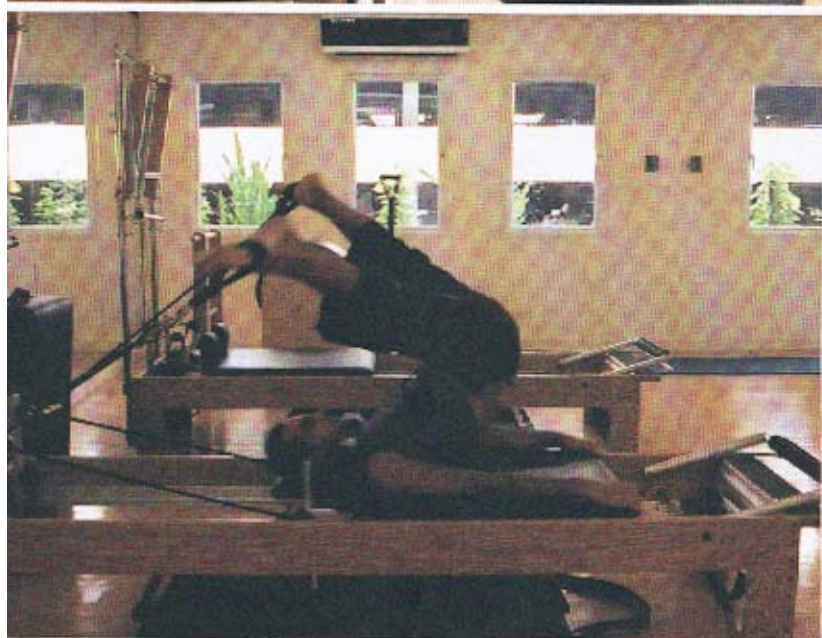
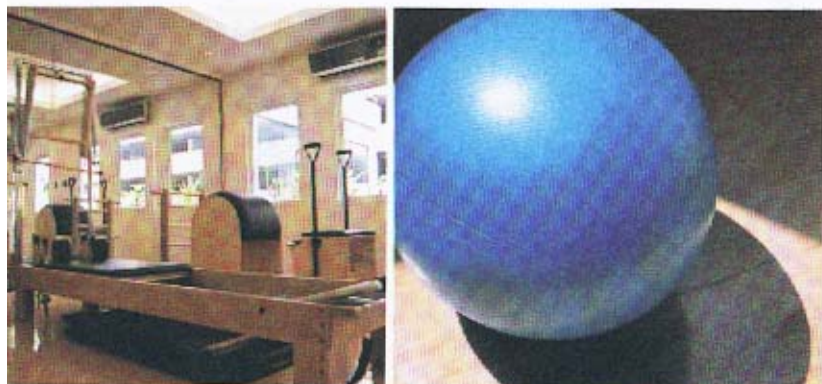


Pilates Please

New studio offers equipment and professional instruction by **Dasita Amornvivat**, photography by **Bhatara Chirdchuen**



Courtesy of Pilatestudio

Pilates is a highly focused, precise yet gentle series of exercises that is said to be suitable for just about everyone: young or old, strong or weak, flexible or inflexible. It is often recommended by doctors, physical therapists and chiropractors as a form of rehabilitation for physical injuries. It strengthens and stretches the body while building up the deepest layers of the core abdominal muscles—the lower back, abs and pelvis—providing benefits such as a stronger, more flexible spine, better respiration and body circulation, improved balance and coordination and improved posture and alignment of the body.

Bangkok's first professional Pilates center, **The Pilatestudio** (888/58-9 Mahatun Plaza, Ploen Chit, Patumwan, 02-650-7797. Open Mon-Thu 8:30am-9pm, Fri 8:30am-3pm, Sun 9:30am-2pm. www.pilatesbangkok.com), is owned and operated by Or-Yah Maor, a trained dancer and certified Pilates instructor from Israel. She has extensive knowledge of yoga, gyrotonics and body-mind techniques and has been teaching in Tel Aviv, New York and Bangkok for the past eight years. At her newly opened studio she teaches classes along with fellow instructor Avi Twina.

The sleek and modern studio is the first of its kind in Bangkok to offer practice on authentic Pilates equipment: Reformers, Cadillacs, Wunda

Chairs and the High Barrel. Located by the Ploen Chit BTS station, The Pilatestudio's facilities include lockers, showers, towels and changing rooms in addition to three studios for practice. Studio one is for private mat and reformer classes, studio two is for reformer group classes and studio three is for mat work and yoga classes (with no more than 15 people per group). Classes are kept small and intimate (with private one-on-one to semi-private classes with up to five people), so that the instructor can give each student proper guidance and attention, which is an integral part in the practice of Pilates.

Though at first glance equipment such as the Reformers and the Cadillacs, with their straps, harnesses, chains and springs, may look like modern-day torture machines, they are in fact very effective tools at strengthening and toning the body. The spring tension challenges the body, while straps to hold feet, hands, back, neck and shoulders provide support to prevent over-straining. Pilates mat classes are also available, in which participants use props such as fit balls, rings, bands and weights. Special womanhood classes are also available that provide exercise for pregnant women as well as women going through menopause. In the future, The Pilatestudio plans to provide a teaching certificate program for those interested in becoming certified Pilates instructors. ■