

All the instructors at Joe & Clara are comprehensively trained in Classical Pilates and can trace their lineage back four generations to Joseph himself.

STACEY PHILIPSEN  
Owner & Instructor

GABRIELLE LAWRENCE  
Owner

ROMINA LAYGO  
Owner & Instructor

"The testimonials and transformation our clients go through are reason enough for us to do this," Philipsen said. "We set out to create an intimate, spa-like facility focused on using the benefits of Pilates to nurture the mind, body and soul of a more discerning clientele. This is the driving force behind everything we do."

**PILATES INSPIRED STUDIO**

Classical Pilates consists of more than 600 exercises and Joe & Clara is the only studio offering classes across all of the five most popular Pilates apparatus designed by Joe Pilates himself. Classes on the Reformer, Tower, Mat, Jump Board and Chair are limited to a maximum of six participants in order to deliver an experience that feels like semi-private training.

"In addition to Classical Pilates, the club houses an entirely different space dedicated to a range of classes it refers to as Pilates Inspired," explained Philipsen, who is comprehensively trained in Classical Pilates with more than 2,000 hours of teaching experience.

The workouts in this Pilates Inspired Studio use props and equipment developed after Joe Pilates passed away in 1967.

"The intention is to reinforce the principles of Classical Pilates on equipment such as JumpSport Fitness Trampolines®, Bosu Balance Trainers®, stability balls, and ballet barres," Philipsen said. "Additionally, the Pilatesstick® and Pilates Arc® are ideal tools to help transition someone who may be new to Pilates as well as challenge one's muscle memory. The maximum number of participants ranges from seven to 10 depending on the class."

Joe & Clara is also the only Pilates studio with an extensive schedule offering several classes morning, midday and evenings for beginners, intermediate and advanced practitioners.

"Because the club houses three different studios it can run up to three different classes simultaneously," said Laygo, Joe & Clara's athletic director who is certified by the Pilates Method Alliance.

**CLIENTELE**

Because of the studio's name, Joe & Clara typically attracts Pilates aficionados; however clients come from all walks of life. Most range between the ages of 45 and 60. The oldest recently turned 77 and the youngest is a college student.

"There are those who used to frequent the big box gym and are looking for something a little more intimate and others who have experienced Pilates as part of rehabilitation and want to continue with it as part of their overall wellness program," Laygo said.

Then there are those who simply want to make a change. "They realize their regular routine has become less effective as those little aches and pains that come with age set in and they turn to Pilates to help restore balance and flexibility while continuing to strengthen and tone," Laygo said. "That is the beauty of the method. It is not necessary to sacrifice one for the other."

**KEY PILLARS**

"Addressing the needs of this more sophisticated and discerning clientele guides our every step, from how we develop the program to the type of service we deliver," Philipsen said. "They are paramount to our success and we strive to let each and every customer know how much we value his or her business."

continued >>

# Joe & Clara Nurtures the Mind, Body and Soul

FEATURING THE WIDEST RANGE OF PILATES APPARATUS IN THE CONEJO VALLEY, JOE & CLARA PILATES INSPIRED HEALTH CLUB IS TRULY A ONE-STOP SHOP FOR ALL THINGS PILATES.

"EVERY HEALTH CLUB SETS OUT TO OFFER SOMETHING UNIQUE AND PILATES STUDIOS ARE NO DIFFERENT," SAID STACEY PHILIPSEN, OWNER OF JOE & CLARA ALONG WITH ROMINA LAYGO AND GABRIELLE LAWRENCE.

BY ALICIA DOYLE // PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARY MYERS



"We do have younger clients as well as many men; we try to stand out by delivering a superior experience in terms of both style of service and fitness instruction to women over 45," Philipsen said. "We want them to have a place where they feel nurtured and supported—where they can form new friendships not only with us but their fellow members and together feel inspired to live a healthier lifestyle."

It's important to understand that Classical Pilates is different from many other forms offered in the area, Philipsen further explained. "Classical is as close to the way Joseph himself taught his method and it is focused on key principles by which the body is strengthened, toned and sculpted—even flexibility and balance are restored."

The six key principals include centering. "Pilates does not work the core but rather from the core," Laygo said.

Concentration is about being present and aware of how your body is moving, while control is being in complete command of how your body is moving. Precision focuses on correct movement, which is far more effective than many inaccurate repetitions. Flow is about performing the exercises seamlessly one after another so the overall workout appears as one continuous motion.

Last but not least: breathe. "Breathe deeply! It will cleanse your blood and invigorate you with new energy," Laygo said.

"Pilates is easy until it is done correctly," Philipsen said, "and that can sometimes take a while for participants to discover and absorb into their being, so many facilities opt to alter the Classical Pilates method by simulating a more traditional gym workout on the reformer or adapt

// **Joe & Clara is the only Pilates center in the area that has a studio dedicated solely to the Pilates Chair. This elegant, yet simple device is comprised of a seat with a spring-loaded pedal at its base. //**

the mat work into a series of floor exercises that may not tap into the deep-rooted principles that distinguish Classical Pilates from calisthenics."

"However, with the right instruction, Classical Pilates is the only method that remains authentic to how Joseph and Clara Pilates themselves intended it to be—a complete body conditioning system that ultimately incorporates all of the six key principles mentioned [above]," Philipsen said.

**COMPREHENSIVELY TRAINED**

All the instructors at Joe & Clara are comprehensively trained in Classical Pilates and can trace their lineage back four generations to Joseph himself.

"They do not work out alongside clients or lead from the front of the class—rather they circulate the room providing precise cues with the intent of empowering participants with a sense of both strength and balance to improve their function, better their sport and promote longevity," Laygo said. "Because of the extensive training, all instructors are

well-prepared to assign modifications and substitutions for a variety of physical conditions."

**MOST POPULAR AND UNIQUE OFFERINGS**

The reformer has become synonymous with Pilates so it's no surprise that most clients want to start with it and there is a great fundamentals class that's perfect for beginners.

"Classical Pilates is a journey and people are pleasantly surprised to see how many different types of exercises there are, from resistance training that tones and sculpts to the more technically-advanced exercises that challenge even the most elite athlete," Philipsen said. "Joe & Clara uses Peak Pilates® MVE + Tower equipment which is ideal for group fitness."

Joe & Clara is the only Pilates center in the area that has a studio dedicated solely to the Pilates Chair. "This elegant, yet simple device is comprised of a seat with a spring-loaded pedal at its base," Laygo explained.

It can be used for a variety of challenging exercises, many of which are considered some of the most advanced in the body of Pilates work because the chair is unforgiving. It challenges one's core strength and balance.

"Ironically, very few exercises are actually performed in the seated position," Laygo said. "Rather, Joe Pilates named it a chair because it was thoughtfully designed for smaller spaces that wouldn't fit his reformer. Therefore he designed it to double as an actual chair when positioned upside-down."

The Pilatesstick® is also exclusive to Joe & Clara. "It simplifies the traditional

Tower system into a single bar that is attached at both ends to a bungee," Philipsen said. "The bungee is then anchored onto a wall mount and this unique form of resistance mimics the springs in the classical equipment. Many find it easier to maneuver through a more intense workout. Clients yield impressive results in toning and strengthening the upper body."

The Pilates Arc® is another unique class which allows one to build core strength while supporting and decompressing the spine. "It is made of high density foam and is the modern version of his original barrel system, a device with a curved surface that Joseph Pilates designed to mimic the curvature of the spine," Laygo said.

Joe & Clara is also home to an authentic Tahitian Cardio program. "Pumehana Peralta teaches traditional Tahitian dance, guiding you through a series of melodic rhythms before hitting the drum beats that not only get the hips shimmying but also get the heart pumping," Laygo said. "It's a natural fit with Pilates because of its extensive use of the core."

**MEETING A DEMAND**

"The baby boomers were the initial trailblazers of a fitness craze that has influenced every generation since and they will continue to set the tone as they carve out a much needed, new and improved definition of what aging gracefully really means," Philipsen said.

"On one end of the spectrum you find high-intensity workouts and boot camps. On the other end there is a whole category of senior programs."

"Joe & Clara is the place in between where they can come as often as they like and always feel welcome among a community of like-minded individuals," Philipsen emphasized. "Now wiser and more sophisticated, they look forward to the future with passion and the intense workouts have been replaced with an intense need to remain active—to feel their best in addition to looking their best." **yhc**



For more information, visit [www.joeandclara.com](http://www.joeandclara.com) or call **805.496.2929** to schedule a complementary orientation.

**Joe & Clara Nurtures the Mind, Body and Soul**



Pilates Chair



Front Reformer, (L-R) Ladder Barrel, Cadillac, Chair



Pilates Arc and Pilatesstick