

We survived BRIDAL BOOT CAMP!

PW'S RACHEL FINDS OUT WHAT SPENDING A WEEKEND AT XTREME BOOT CAMPS IS REALLY LIKE

Reviews for *PW* are definitely one of the best parts of my job. Spa break? I'm there! Trip to the Maldives? Yes please! But I have to be honest and say I wasn't as eager to sign up for a weekend of gruelling exercise at Xtreme Boot Camps. I mean, the name itself is terrifying enough! However, I took one for the team and decided to take the plunge, embarking on a fitness quest like no other. How hard can it be, right?!

Saturday, 14:30
As soon as we arrived, ex-servicemen James and Adam had that 'I mean business' look on their faces. Our welcome talk was where the sweating began (I blame the nerves) and also where our military-inspired rules were outlined to us: always report to every activity five minutes early. *Always*. Or there would be punishments. Eek!
Along with our other recruits, we headed straight to the gym hall for the bleep test. Yes, that is the same bleep test that you had the er; pleasure of doing in school.

15:00
When our initial fitness test was over (hello tomato complexion), we were then ordered to jump straight into the pond (yes, really) and complete a round of press-ups. Talk about throwing us in at the deep end!

18:00
Dinnertime! Our buffet dinner had a whole range of hearty foods to choose from – even carbs. After a well-earned sit down and a delicious meal, everything was looking up. That was until we got out of line when walking back to base and had a punishment of 20 press-ups right there and then! After that we were dismissed and told our next meet would be at 6am the next morning, but I still slept with one eye open. Expect the unexpected, right?

Sunday, 06:00
Everyone woke up feeling rather sprightly and ready to tackle the first full day. A run before breakfast wasn't exactly my idea of fun and eight laps of an Olympic-sized track was far from easy, but a dose of good old team spirit got everyone through on a mega high. Go team, go!



ONE, TWO, MISS A FEW... 99, 100!

09:00
After a filling breakfast we headed out for a military-inspired circuit. Press-ups, burpees, planks, squats... the list was endless. Just when we thought that was it, we had to sprint to the end of the field and back – which became commonly known as 'hell's corner' (and yes, it really was hell).

14:30
Lunch was over in a flash and we were soon armed with boxing gloves ready for a boxercise session. With the music pumping and the team digging deep, this was when, dare I say it, I realised that I was *actually* enjoying myself.

19:00
An hour-long pilates session was seen as a welcome relief from the extreme cardio activities, but that's not to say it was easy. The instructor, Sarah, made it look so effortless, but with heavy legs and aching abs each movement was a struggle. Climbing into bed that night felt like sheer heaven.



L-R: OUR INSTRUCTORS ADAM, SARAH AND JAMES



ALL SMILES WHEN THE WORKOUT WAS OVER



TEAM WORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK!



18:00
Before checking out, we were given a nutrition advice session which involved going through our food diaries with a fine-tooth comb (gulp). It turns out wine *doesn't* count as one of your five-a-day..

Monday, 06:00
At just 30 minutes long, our HIIT session (high intensity interval training) was the shortest of them all. But after just 20 seconds of sprinting, we all realised that this was set to be the longest half an hour of our lives... and it was.

10:30
Another day, another military circuit. Er; yay?! Working as a team was the key to this one, because if someone gave up, we all had to start again. It's amazing what a bit of peer pressure can do – we completed it and earned every morsel of our tasty lunch.

15:00
Swimming was on the agenda for the afternoon. Surely this would be a little rest? Well, if you call two hours of lengths a rest, then yes.

19:00
The last supper. Saying goodbye to the amazing troops who still had the rest of the week to complete was really hard. But that chocolate stop on the way back home was the best thing *ever* (sorry guys!).

THE VERDICT
I can't say it was easy. In fact, at times it was hellish. However, I came away with a great sense of achievement, bags of energy and a new found determination – I've even signed up for a 10k run! We also set up a boot camp Whatsapp group to stay in touch and keep motivated. For brides looking to get fit before the big day, Xtreme Boot Camps really is the best place to start.

For more information, go to xtremebootcamps.com



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