

Silicon Valley

MODERN LUXURY

THE FEAST ISSUE

FROM HIDDEN GEMS TO
BUZZY DEBUTS, WHERE TO
EAT & DRINK RIGHT NOW

On the Food Frontier

CHEF JIN JEONG OF TAPAS
TOKKI, PALO ALTO'S
MULBERRY GUY & MORE

Rise of the Robots

THESE MACHINES
WANT TO WHIP UP
YOUR NEXT MEAL

PLUS

IS A WINERY IN WOODSIDE
PRODUCING THE BEST PINOT?
HOT NEW SHOPS & COOL
CULTURAL HAPPENINGS

FEEL THE BURN

A fitness-minded mompreneur turns her passion into a business.

By Nerissa Pacio Itchon
Photography by Angela DeCenzo



While many new moms try to sneak in precious little sleep while caring for their newborns, Erin Wetzel was tightening and toning her way back to her pre-baby physique. A lifelong athlete who played competitive sports throughout high school and college, the Menlo Park fitness enthusiast began sweating it out at The Dailey Method—a mere eight weeks after giving birth to her now-8-year-old son, Wyatt—and got hooked on the ballet barre-based workout. “My husband jokes that, when I first met him, I had three different gym memberships,” says the 43-year-old San Francisco native. “And I really did!”

Wetzel got certified as a The Dailey Method instructor, left a successful 15-year corporate career in marketing and started her own branch in San Jose’s Willow Glen in 2010. Two years into her contract as a franchisee, she was plotting to do her own thing. Wetzel is now owner and founder of Lift Exercise (liftexercise.com), which first launched in San Jose in March 2016 and is slated to open a second 4,600-square-foot studio in August in San Mateo’s burgeoning Bay Meadows development.

Lift hits that sweet spot between a big box gym and a high-end single-format studio, offering a trifecta of what’s trending in fitness: indoor cycling, ballet barre and high-intensity interval training. Of Lift’s three classes, Wetzel says Barre—incorporating principals of yoga and Pilates—is the single most body-changing. “It’s designed to get you really long and lean, trim and tight,” says Wetzel, who canvassed classes across the country to develop Lift’s curriculum. “It’s a great pull-it-all-back-in workout.” Lift’s beats-driven, candlelit bike class has a similar vibe to the popular SoulCycle, but with Wetzel’s own motivational spin. High-intensity interval training takes place in an 80-degree heated room and is designed to jump-start the metabolism and maximize caloric burn during eight low-impact intervals, without the use of exercise machines as in other high-intensity workouts.

While Wetzel knows a main goal of clients is to lose weight, she’s also hoping to inspire that mood-boosting, mind-body connection. “At Lift, yes, we will strengthen your body; you will burn more calories,” says Wetzel, whose own exercise regimen includes hikes along Skyline Boulevard with her two dogs on the weekends. “But what’s even more important to me is how exercise will make you feel. You’ll be happier. You’ll feel—lifted.”