

# Give in to the *Rhythm*

Denise Smith recommends dance to get your heart racing and your muscles working



**K**eept fit can be a fearful phrase. For some it conjures up memories of cold afternoons on the school playing field. For others, the expensive membership fees for a gym they only used twice, come to mind.

So why not take to the dance floor instead. It's a friendly, convenient way to get fit without expensive equipment or workout clothes. "Dance is good for all-round fitness as you use mind and body," says Rachel Wadey, an ISTD-qualified dance teacher. "Apart from increasing stamina, dance

helps improve memory and can be a great stress reliever."

## LATIN LOVER

From Argentine Tango to Zumba, there is an alphabet of dances to choose from. Once considered rather stuffy, ballroom and Latin are enjoying a renaissance, thanks to Strictly. Nikki Casey, Principal of **Impact Dance and Cheer** (07710 566827), says "Ballroom dancing provides a fun, sociable way of keeping fit. It

also helps to improve posture, balance, coordination and memory."

A Latin American style of dance with Cuban origins, Salsa (try Salsa-Asi, www.salsa-asi.co.uk) is now claimed to be the most popular dance on the planet. The pace of the dancing is usually quite fast – think Shakira or Gloria Estefan – and can help lower blood pressure, improve cholesterol levels and reduce heart rate. A half-hour session claims to burn between 200-400 calories – just as many as walking, swimming or cycling.

do need a pair of tap shoes, but a starter pair can cost as little as £12.

**Divine-Dance** in Bishopsbourne (01227 832268) offers exotic dance classes including Burlesque, Belly Dancing and Zumba. Talking about Burlesque, dance teacher Sally Stonier says: "Every woman can feel fabulous, enticing, and seductive regardless of age, shape or dancing ability. There are no barriers."

## SAUCEY!

Lisa Payne, also known as **Miss Maybe** (07870 343870), recommends her burlesque classes for those with fitness problems. "The moves are gentle and I have two ladies who use sticks to walk and a lady recovering from heart surgery in my classes. It is non impact and you work to your own capacity, plus we have a laugh, which is of course the best medicine!" She has plans for classes in Whitstable this autumn. **L**

## TOE TAPPING

Tap dancing has many health and fitness benefits, in addition to those already associated with dance. It boosts cardiovascular performance, tone the leg muscles and reduce blood pressure. You



Miss Maybe recommends burlesque as a gentle workout with a lot of laughter



# Jumpin' jive

Ceroc isn't just a dance class; it's a complete night out. Described as a mixture of dances, Ceroc is sometimes referred to as 'Modern Jive', but without the complicated footwork. Dancers can dress up or dress down; though smooth soled (non-rubberised) shoes are highly recommended.

Ceroc is said to burn up to 800 calories an hour, so it is quite an aerobic workout.

Veronica Cousins wouldn't miss her weekly dose of keep fit. "I've become very fit. I have a noticeable improvement in stamina, muscle tone and trim," she says.

A Ceroc evening follows a set format: a beginner's class followed by an intermediate session. Then the DJ takes over for an hour and a half of uninterrupted dance.

Virginia Wolf, of Ceroc Kent (0208 466 5030) says: "It's a hectic evening but great fun and a good place to meet people."

Westgate Hall, Canterbury,  
Wednesdays, 7:45pm-  
11pm (just turn up).

Ceroc dancing burns  
800 calories an hour

