

# Let the ocean trigger a state of calmness

◆ **Yoga at the beach:**  
Change of scenery  
complements yoga classes  
taught in a studio.

By **DEENA FERGUSON**  
Special to the Union Leader

Beach season is upon us. Comes every year without fail.

The beach body? For most of us, that sort of comes and goes ...

But there is still time to get that better summer body underway. And some of those ways actually happen on the beach itself.

Yoga instructor Michele McCauley, owner of Movement by Michele and The Pilates Room in Portsmouth, has taught yoga classes for 10 years and beach yoga for six of those years. Her outdoor classes are a complement to the ones she teaches at her studio.

"In yoga, you are seeking a close connection to nature. The goal is to be calm and relax, to find your breath," she said. "At the beach, it is easier to reach that state of calmness. ... The ocean itself is a trigger for that. Just the movement of the water, the sounds. It is so easy to be there in the present moment

when you're at the beach. It's amazing. It's better than therapy.

"It's funny. I've had students tell me it is the one hour out of their week that they keep going back to as the best time they had."

In previous years, McCauley's classes have been held at Jenness Beach in Rye and on other beaches along the Seacoast. During a conversation in May, she said her summer schedule and locations will be posted on her Facebook page (search for "Seacoast Outdoor Yoga"). Her one-hour classes are held weekly during the season with a suggested donation of \$10 a class.

There are some logistical differences between beach yoga and a studio class. For example, most beach yoga participants use a beach towel rather than a yoga mat. "If you do want to use a mat, bring an old one," McCauley said. "The sand is kind of tough on the mat."

Another difference is in the poses themselves. "The sand makes some of the poses a little trickier. It takes a little more balance, but it's not impossible."

McCauley said all of her yoga

classes are open to all fitness and experience levels. "There are modifications for every position. You do not have to do what your neighbor is doing. There is a place for everyone in yoga." She said men, women and children can all participate together.

One new trend McCauley spoke of is beach yoga for wedding parties. "I have done a lot of those," she said. "It's becoming really popular to have a class with your group before the wedding. Calms everyone down."

And while that perfect beach body might be the goal, there is more to it than just looking good in a swimsuit.

"It's about finding the balance," McCauley said. "To reach your ideal fitness goals, of course there is cardio, strength and stretch. All of that will get you into better shape. But food has to come into play. Food is the other half of feeling good, of being strong."

McCauley, a western Pennsylvania native, is a Johnson & Wales-trained cook who will work with clients on food and nutrition. "It's all about how to obtain and cook the best food for your body. You can change your diet to fight



Yoga instructor Michele McCauley, left, directs a yoga class on the beach, above. COURTESY

fatigue, to fight headaches, to aid digestion. I'm not a doctor, but food and nutrition have so much to do with our overall health."

More information on McCauley's classes can be found at [thepilatesroomnh.com](http://thepilatesroomnh.com). She also has pages on Facebook and Pinterest.

## Beachbody coach offers advice for keeping summer fitness on track

By **CHRISTINE DeANGELIS**  
Special to the Union Leader

As a coach, my job is to be a support system to others. Regardless of where you are in your journey, maybe today is day one, maybe it's day 675, I'm here for you. It's hard with families, civic commitments, full-time jobs, little league practice, to fit it all in.

But having a support system that you can tap in to makes a huge difference. Accountability is a powerful thing. We're a lot more apt to stick to something

when we feel accountable to others.

I now run monthly challenge groups for others to join. The groups are all done online and they support not just exercise and weight loss, but clean eating habits as well. It's really a well-rounded lifestyle change that I'm looking to support, not a quick fix.

The Beachbody mission



CHRISTINE DeANGELIS

statement is to "help people achieve their goals and enjoy a healthy, fulfilling life," something I try embody daily as a coach.

**Q: Now that summer is here, I want to add some outdoor activities to my exercise routine. What do you recommend?**

**A:** There's so much to do in New Hampshire in the summer. Hiking, trail walking, biking, surfing, swimming. We are so lucky to live nearby the ocean and the mountains. I love to hike but trail walks are also fantastic exercise, and there are tons of local

parks and wildlife reserves that are close to our homes. Try a paddleboard yoga class if you're feeling adventurous. One of my favorite things to do is push my daughter in her jogger for a short run to the nearby park. I can work on the monkey bars, do some pushups, squats, crunches, all while she plays on the playground and we both get fresh air. It's a win-win.

**Q: I have a summer vacation coming up. Do you have any tips for squeezing in some exercise while I'm on vacation?**

**A:** Body weight exercises are great and can be done any-

where. One of my favorite parts of Beachbody is the extensive On Demand library they have available. Many programs are equipment-free. All I do is push play from my phone or iPad and I have a quick workout. But also check out what activities are in the area where you are vacationing. Take a surfing lesson and enjoy the sunshine.

**Q: I'll be eating out a lot on my vacation. Any ideas how to eat healthy when I'll be having a lot of meals at restaurants?**

**A:** Restaurants are so tricky.