



## Is This The Sexiest Boot Camp in Britain?

If you can pack the willpower, a luxury stay at NuBeginnings in Devon could herald the healthy new you. When I got a call from NuBeginnings Boutique Boot Camp suggesting I try a weeklong weight loss and healthy eating course I politely declined. I'm the kind of cliché gay desperado so obsessed with staying 'sample size' that at times my stomach seems so hungry it's eating itself. It's not big or clever I know, but at least I used my last 10 calories of energy to think of someone who definitely would benefit from a styled-up combo of hill-yomping, yoga and holistic therapy,

That someone was a pub-band musician friend, recently described in an otherwise glowingly illiterate gig blog as 'fat, middle-aged and sour.' A chain-smoking man who, unless drunk, moaned almost ceaselessly about his waistline, and listed all the things he was going to do about it tomorrow – before 12 pints of lager and a takeaway got there first. This man was called Adam, he had all the willpower of a coke addict in the Bolivian rain forest and he needed boot camp yesterday. If marooned in a luxury manor house on the north Devon coast with a strict healthy diet and an intensive daily exercise programme to adhere to, could he finally shift some stomach?

Sending Adam on an uber-diet wasn't a completely selfless act on my part – also I got to imagine the 'fit squad', or whatever they're called, feeling the full force of his lacerating cynicism on a 7am windswept bog crawl. But scanning the NuBeginnings website my inner Gollum started caressing the monitor and lisping 'precious.' The healthy living menus looked amazing, packed with local, organic produce while conforming to the Holford's low glycaemic load diet (that'll be low carbohydrate and balanced blood sugars). The pictures of the rooms in the grade-II listed mansion beckoned me to change the reservation – the results of a recent £300,000 renovation including crystal chandeliers, luxury beds and double showers stacked with spa toiletries. And, being a punishment glutton, activities such as eight-mile hikes through ripped and rugged scenery, plus gym and Pilates sessions, appealed even more. As I eyed up a typical day's itinerary, spotting things like 'hypnotherapy' and 'deep tissue massage', I almost phoned Adam to call it off. But then I thought of the karmic repercussions, and the next day, as promised, I waved him westwards from Paddington Station.

What grimaced back at me from that window seat was an overweight man who had managed to cram two fags into the 10 minutes before the train departed while fretting about the possibility of being forced to wear Lycra in a Lizzie Webb style stepexercise class. Then, without so much as a brave smile, the thunder ball of fury – hell-bent on proving his girth

unbreakable to the NuBeginnings staff – was hauled away by Pendolino. I didn't hope for much.

It would be an exaggeration to say that what came back a week later was unrecognisable, but it was an Adam I had never seen before. I'm talking a noticeably slimmer Adam, with a glowing, clear complexion, and bright eyes that zapped away the murky old 'fried eggs mashed with ketchup' ones I knew so well. Even more incredibly, he was smiling as he looked at himself in the mirror, saying things like "I'm a changed man!" and "this is the new me!" I was suspicious that this vision of ruddy-cheeked good health might be the result of a final day spent hogging the sauna, or worse the illusory glow of some form of exotic disco biscuit he'd managed to smuggle in. And then I looked in his fridge, crammed with organic, low GL foods. NuBeginnings had even given him a healthy eating picnic for the train journey home so he didn't buy chips at the station. This was the NuAdam, and he was listing every food he had now banned himself from eating, and the reasons why. He detailed the benefits of a range of super foods, which included things I had never heard of, let alone include in my fat-free gay hippy diet. I wanted to feel good for him, but actually my mind was wracked with jealous visions of the snake-hipped, yoga-beast that could have been me.

In the course of seven days Adam had learned how to maintain a healthy and delicious diet and been guided through a week of runs, walks and gym sessions by a really quite fit sounding ex-Royal Marine. And he now possessed the zealous, low-cal look of a man destined to be thinner than me within a fortnight.

It was when he told me that the hypnotherapy sessions had helped him quit smoking that I had to lean on, open, and swig the bottle of Baileys we'd nearly polished off at Christmas. That Adam had not smoked a cigarette for five days was an actual miracle. It was up there with the parting of the Red Sea and Ulrika's victory on Celeb Big Brother. "I don't even want a puff," said Adam. "I've re-wired the way I think about need." He went on to extol everything from the staff, to the yoga, to the meditation and the memory foam mattress in his "gorgeous" room. He'd even managed to get on with the other people on the course, including the guitarist from his least favourite 80s super-group. The only glimpse of Adam's sack-of-lemons former self was when he seethed about an afternoon spent walking a donkey up and down hills. Apparently it was a trick to make him forget he was exercising, but he clearly wanted to keep his boot camp a Blackpool Pleasure Beach-free zone.

It may not turn you into a donkey lover, but if you can pack some will power NuBeginnings could just be the start of your brand new life. And if losing weight and learning how to keep it off is a tad ambitious for the party monster in you, with stays starting at £1,695, it's at the very least a highly effective, if slightly pricey, way to get you looking super-hot. Just make sure your date is waiting for you at the station's champagne bar when your train comes in.

Prices start at £1,695 for seven days, full board, and include three deep tissue massages, three hypnotherapy sessions, lectures, hikes and classes. For more information go to [nubeginnings.co.uk](http://nubeginnings.co.uk) or call Victoria and Frank on 01271 862 792

[More from Matt Miles](#)

You must log in to add a comment. If you already have a GT account log in with your email address and password. If you're a customer of Prowler Direct or Expectations you can log in with those details.

### Log In

Email:  \*

Password:  \*

Remember me next time.

[Register](#)

[Forgot your password.](#)

### ARTICLE COMMENTS

