

NEWSWORTHY TRENDS

Ballroom Dancing Takes Center Stage

(NAPSA)—The next workout outfit you buy may look more like a tuxedo or gown than a sweat suit. That's because ballroom dancing is catching on across the U.S. as a way to burn calories and have fun.

How can dancing be good exercise? Experts say the muscle exertion and breathing rates of ballroom dancers performing in one dance competition are equivalent to those of Olympic-level cyclists, swimmers and runners. As the phenomenon continues to catch on, the dance style has become more accessible to people—with Americans across the country signing up for ballroom classes.

Fortunately, you can still learn about ballroom dancing, even if you have no room on your dance card for lessons. For instance, the television show on TLC called "Ballroom Bootcamp" teaches everyday people the ins and outs of ballroom dancing—but with a twist. Participants are pulled from their comfort zone and subjected to a scrupulous and intensive five-week training program in preparation for a face-off in a professionally judged competition.

Each week, viewers can watch and learn as master dance instructors Susannah Cuesta, Gocha Chertkoev and Christian Perry attempt to give the participants the physical, mental and social tools necessary for success. The dancers will learn five



Although anyone can learn ballroom dancing, training to compete professionally can be rigorous.

styles—the cha-cha, waltz, tango, jive and rumba. Then, each participant will pair up with a professional dancing counterpart to take training to the next level—and to show off his or her newly acquired skills.

Each participant must also juggle his or her personal life and career during this short-yet-intense training period. There will be emotional hurdles to overcome, conflicts to resolve, ballroom blunders to fix and lives to change. Michelle Yahn, one of the competitors, vents her frustration as she cries, "It's like trying to learn French in three weeks. It's impossible."

You can watch "Ballroom Bootcamp" on Fridays at 10 PM (ET/PT) on TLC. To learn more, visit www.tlc.com.