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REVIEW

Pilates, ballet and yoga work as one

The word "fusion" doesn't just apply to trendy cuisine. The fitness world has adopted it too, defining it as two or more disciplines combined into one workout. Pilates instructor Molly Weeks has fused ballet, Pilates and hatha yoga into BalleCore and outlines the exercise regimen in "The BalleCore Workout" (Ballantine Books, 2005). — JEANNINE STEIN

The BalleCore Workout: BalleCore grew out of Weeks' experimentation with ballet and yoga elements in her Pilates classes. Although the disciplines are unique, they all emphasize a strong core, flowing movements and being mentally attuned to the work. The book provides detailed instructions and copious photos for numerous exercises that work all parts of the body.

The Butterfly Curl-Ups with Port de Bras engage the arms while working the core. The Side-Lying Piqué works the hips and buttocks with controlled leg movements. And the Cobra With Pulses takes the traditional yoga cobra pose and adds pulses with the arms to strengthen the back.

Many exercises use props, such as a long wooden stick that enhances the workout and acts as a quasi ballet barre, and stretch bands. "The reason I combined these three is that they are very tried and true," says Weeks, whose Boston-based BalleCore method is taught around the country. "They all complement each other. You get the best of each discipline in less time." The workout, she adds, "really helps people connect and move much more efficiently and gracefully."

Price: \$17.95; available at bookstores.

