

# Glossy

Hardcore Group Fitness  
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To the **core**  
New **fitness program** goes after target areas

By Amy Gabriel

SPECIAL TO THE AMERICAN-STATESMAN

**T**ake one look at Mariesa Osterhaus and you'll realize why South Austin has experienced a recent influx of toned-body traffic. The local equivalent to a Hollywood "It Girl," this local "Fit Girl" and her self-created fitness system, Hardcore, are shaking Austinites to the core. Literally.

During a preview class at her minimalist yet inviting 1,200-square-foot studio, tucked away in a complex on the 2000 block of South First Street, the petite, toned Osterhaus, who has dropped a jean size since debuting Hardcore to the public, greets a visitor with a firm handshake and a friendly smile that seems to say, "Welcome! Now get ready to work."

Dressed comfortably in relaxed gray sweats and a form-fitting black tank, she has the kind of self-assured look of someone who was always picked first in gym class but would never make the person picked last feel awkward.

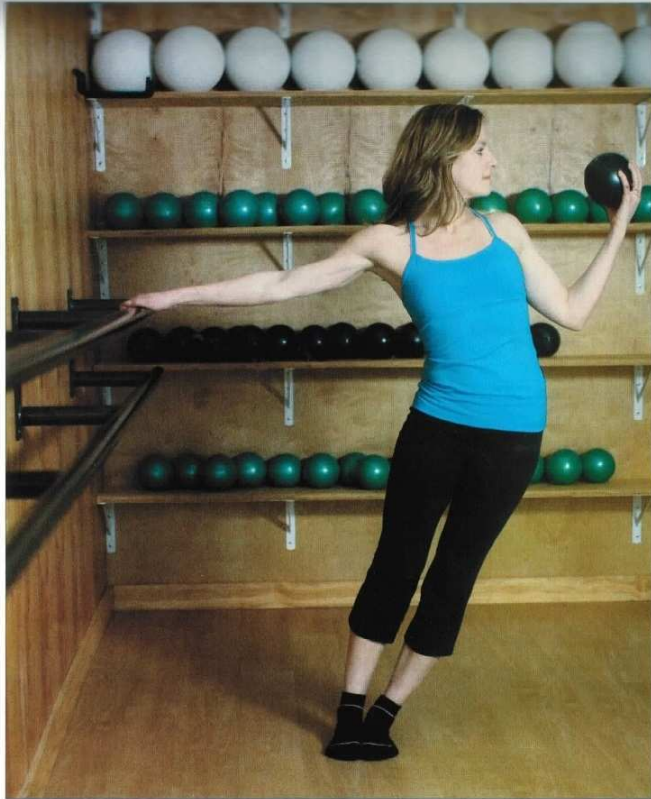
Osterhaus and the class then embark on an hourlong workout peppered with pliés, push-ups, abdominal work, squats and arm exercises, all to the pulsating beat of high-energy tunes. The time flies by under Osterhaus' watchful eye and easy-to-follow coaching and demos. But, just as Osterhaus, a trainer certified by National Academy of Sports Medicine, predicted, 24 hours later, her students realized why her method is called "hardcore" and how she looks so good in her sweatpants.

However, her path to creating and launching Hardcore, which has quickly become the reason many Austin women have started changing up their lunch routine to fit in a quick sweat session, was more a marathon than a sprint.

Having practiced ballet since age 2, and having been a cheerleader all throughout her teenage years, Osterhaus had always been enviably fit, eventually earning a bachelor's degree in kinesiology from Texas A&M University.

Osterhaus landed a fitness specialist position at JP Morgan right out of college. At an office building on Wall Street, complete with a view of the Statue of Liberty, she was equipped to pass along the fitness knowledge she had acquired and whip her New York City clients into shape. Unfortunately, there were no clients to whip. "We were on the 24th floor and no one used the gym," said Osterhaus. "The only thing that kept me occupied was refilling the water pitchers with ice every hour."

After several months of giving this job the old post-college try, Osterhaus opted to take a departure from her fitness career and found herself moving up the ranks in Abercrombie & Fitch, which took her around the country to Columbus, Boston, Syracuse,



Using a barre and one of the many fitness balls at her South First Street studio, Osterhaus shows off the arch, one of the moves that makes up her signature workout.

Houston, and finally, Austin.

It was during this final relocation that she met her future husband, Kevin Osterhaus, vice president of operations for Bunkhouse. "I actually turned him down for a date when we first met because I wasn't even finished unpacking my boxes from the move," she says, laughing.

On their first date at Enoteca Vespaio, her date professed his starry-eyed love for the Hotel San José, of which she was vaguely familiar. After the couple married four years later, and during a job limbo moment for Osterhaus, her husband's crush on the property came to fruition, and he received a job offer from hotel dynamo (and San Jose owner) Liz Lambert.

"Kevin was so excited to get the call from Liz. It was his dream job. It made the decision to make Austin our home very easy."

Since officially settling in Austin in 2007, Osterhaus has launched two businesses, Hardcore being the sequel to this 37-year-old entrepreneur's personal training business, Workshop Fitness. This private training studio, located next door to Hardcore, was a joint venture with the couple's mutual friend, Jason Miller, though he always knew that Osterhaus had her mind set on launching a concept business of her own.

"Hardcore is Mariesa's baby," said Miller. "She's always doing research and testing out ideas to try and bring the best concepts together."

The Hardcore regimen includes a class with dance elements, a sweat class that incorporates light weights, yin yoga and a stretch class. "This type of workout is all about core stabilization, focusing on key muscle groups, shortening, holding and



Yin yoga, including the half-butterfly, above, is another of Osterhaus' Hardcore components.

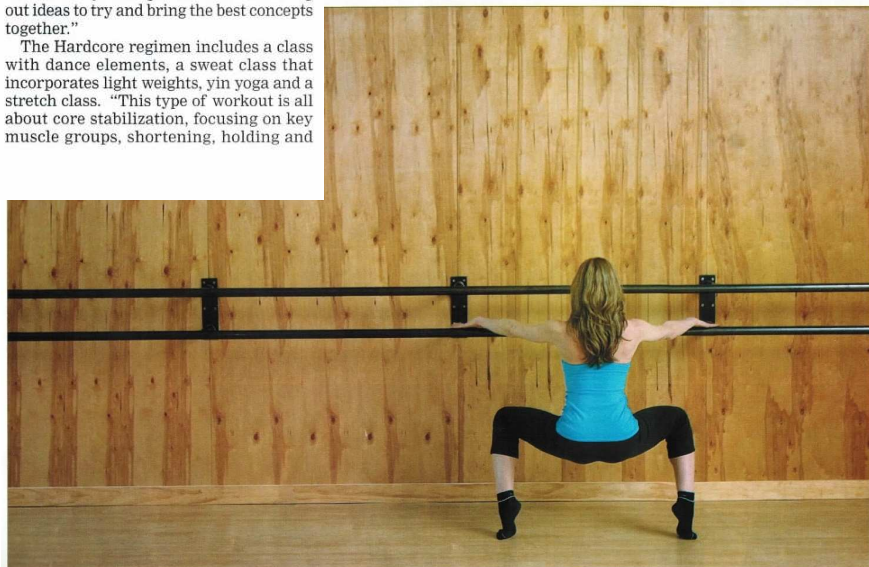
## HARDCORE

2210 S. First St. (next door to Workshop Fitness)

276-2722

[hardcoreaustin.com](http://hardcoreaustin.com)

Rates: Single classes are \$15; 1-month unlimited: \$150; 10-class pass: \$135; 3-month unlimited: \$375; 20-class pass: \$270; 6-month unlimited: \$600



Mariesa Osterhaus' Hardcore workout program targets the body's core muscle groups with movements such as this plié.

Kelly West photos AMERICAN-STATESMAN