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Hot new dance-workout craze Zumba melts away the calories

Zumba is so hot it's melting the ice in Montana. With great Latin music, lots of swinging hips and shimmering shoulders, continuous laughter and sweat it's the best party around. And even better, you burn between 500 and 800 calories an hour.

Zumba is the latest workout craze sweeping the nation. It's a combination aerobic class and dance party where you can let your hair down and have some fun, all while getting a great workout.

Zumba is great for toning the core muscles around the mid-section, an area where it's most dangerous to store fat because it creates extra work for your heart.

But the core muscles aren't the only ones getting toned in Zumba — it's a great whole-body workout.

Zumba classes also relieve stress. While you dance and laugh, your brain releases serotonin and dopamine, your body's natural feel good chemical fix. You'll leave class feeling relaxed and exhilarated.

Beto Perez of Colombia is Zumba's creator. He brought it to America in 1999, and by September 2006, there were 2,000 Zumba instructors worldwide.

Zumba uses Latin music in its original form. Some of the songs are fast, and some are slow. It can be done by young and old alike. All you need is to swing your hips and let yourself go.

The instructor provides the dance moves, including meringue, salsa and cumbia, and you add your own personality to the moves. You might not move like the instructor, but all that matters is that you are moving.

You might have heard the quote, "Dance like nobody's watching!" That's how you should approach a Zumba class.

If you are looking for a motivating, inspiring and effective workout then give Zumba a try.
