

# Business spotlight: Wild Rivers Pilates and Fitness

## Experience the 'Stretch beyond excellence'

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Kristen Williams cannot only help restore your health to a place where it may not have been for a long while, she's a bit of a walking miracle herself.

Trained as a classical ballet dancer, Williams attended the Alvin Ailey School of Dance in New York City. She went on to perform in many Broadway shows, and a pulled hamstring led to her introduction to Pilates as a means of rehabilitation, and she resumed her career.

In 1994 Williams was part of a Broadway show that required her to wear an elaborate mask and headdress. Because the production was rushed, the glue in Williams' headdress had not dried completely before she had to wear it. While dancing in the headdress she was



CCR photo by Lorraine Espinoza-Lowe

Kristen Williams is shown at Wild Rivers Pilates and Fitness.

# PILATES,

overcome by the fumes, passed out, and was rushed to the hospital. After being revived Williams experienced peculiar symptoms which the doctors could not explain. After many tests and examinations, it was determined that this young woman had suffered strokes in two different sections of her brain, caused by inhaling the caustic fumes. The doctors told her that her dance career was over.

Pilates had rescued her once before, so Kristen returned to it to restore both her physical and mental strength. Her life altering injury and recovery inspired her to teach others how Pilates could work to heal. Williams and her husband Matt moved to Santa Barbara, California and opened Creative Fitness in 1998. Creative Fitness moved locations and evolved into the Santa Barbara Pilates Studio in 2001.

Kristen and Matt loved the coast, and after four years of trips up to Southern Oregon and back to "find a place," they decided to relocate in Gold Beach in 2014. Wild Rivers Pilates and Fitness was born here.

Pilates is a physical fitness system developed in the early 20th century by Joseph Pilates. Pilates called his method "Contrology." It is practiced around the world. Kristen's primary Pilates instruction comes from The Pilates Studio New York under Bob Liekens and Romana Kryzanowska.

Kryzanowska was hand selected by Joseph Pilates to be his protégé and keep the Pilates fitness movement alive. Kristen's dance training and thorough understanding of the body have allowed her to share with her clients a unique perspective on recovering from athletic injury.

Wild Rivers Pilates mission statement reads, "Wild Rivers Pilates core mission is to provide the absolute best "one on one" fitness workout possible while maintaining the integrity set forth by Joseph H. Pilates, in a private, relaxing, calm and quiet state of the art fitness facility." Kristen currently coaches clients ages 15 to 98. She designs a unique program for each person based on a free 90-minute introductory session. Potential clients are guided through the use of the Pilates machines known as the "Reformer" and "Cadillac."

Kristen emphasizes that modifications are made based on an individual's current level of fitness. There is a starting point for someone who has been completely sedentary as well as for the well-toned athlete.

For the average person, the goal is to be injury free as we age. Kristen emphasizes that people should not be intimidated. "No matter where you start, I'm here to get you to the next level," she states. Pilates can be a compliment to any other form of exercise. Even the avid runner or cyclist will find benefit in adding Pilates training to his/her regimen.

Kristen stands out as unique in a field of personal trainers. Unlike a regular gym, the stretch so integral to Pilates extends to a stretch of the mind and consciousness while exercising. "Pilates is a very mindful activity. Form is extremely important and the mind becomes fully engaged in the body's movement," she says. Kristen derives great joy from seeing her clients progress. She has worked successfully with clients dealing with MS, Parkinsons, stroke, and other brain injury. "They get emotional. I get emotional," she says.

Wild Rivers Pilates and Fitness offers Pilates one on one or in small class sizes of four to six people, and makes available Gyrotonics, TRX training developed by the Navy Seals, and four-minute ROM workouts that satisfy your body's need for aerobic activity in a miniscule amount of time.

The Pilates studio also showcases a few select Green items from husband Matt Williams renewable energy enterprise such as rechargeable batteries. Items to provide more comfort during and after workouts include yoga sandals, toe socks, and the line of organic soaps used in wiping down the equipment. Beautiful artisan works from recycled glass are also available for purchase.

For more information on Wild Rivers Pilates and Fitness, go to the website [wrpilates.com](http://wrpilates.com), or call and speak to Kristen at 541-425-5161. Normal hours are Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. by appointment. Wild Rivers Pilates and Fitness is located on the south side of town at 29286 Ellensburg Avenue in Gold Beach. Sign up for your free 90-minute consultation and experience the "Stretch beyond excellence."