

HEALTH, DIET, FITNESS, LOOKS: FEEL 100% CONFIDENT!

Zest

JANUARY £3.30 www.zest.co.uk

FOR EVERY READER
FREE
VIRGIN ACTIVE
GYM PASS
FOR TWO
WORTH £30

LOSE 12LB THIS MONTH

LA's easiest ever diet
no hunger, no hassle

+ GOT 6 MINUTES?

The mini workout that gets results

ANXIETY REPORT

HOW TO LEAD A
WORRY-FREE LIFE

GET YOUR BUZZ BACK!

Everlasting energy
is just a day away

CURE YOUR COLD

Quick
natural
solutions

FIT KIT SPECIAL

**FOUND! YOUR
PERFECT
TRAINERS**

*Performance
footwear gets stylish*

75 WAYS TO GET FIT FOR FREE!

EXPERT TIPS TO BURN MORE FAT FOR LESS CASH
PLUS FREE GYM PASS WORTH £30 + POM SUPERJUICE DRINK WORTH £2.99

**'I was six months pregnant
and addicted to exercise'**



ZEST TESTS SKI WEEKENDS, SPORTS GLOVES, CANAPES, SKIN SOOTHERS

'I'm ready to embrace my new life down under'

After five high-pressure years living and working in London, Nicola Swankie, 27, is planning a new, healthier lifestyle in Australia. We asked four experts to help transform her from a stressed-out city girl into laid-back surf chick

WORDS LUCY DIMBYLOW
PHOTOGRAPHS LAURA ASHMAN

Nicola told us...

'For the past five years, I've worked in advertising – exciting, but with long hours and lots of stress. I eat on the run, drink too much and don't get enough sleep. I'm bloated and puffy, and am having problems with IBS. I exercise, particularly running, but I want to feel fitter. I want to lose a stone and try something new. In six months' time, I'm off to Australia, living with an old flatmate who's out there already. I'll take time off to unwind, then look for a new advertising job. I'm not sure how long I'll be there, but I want to prepare so I step off the plane in good shape.'



NICOLA BEFORE AND AFTER

| | Week 1 | Week 4 |
|-------------------|--------|----------|
| Weight | 11st | 10st 3lb |
| Hips | 38.5in | 38in |
| Waist | 31.5in | 29in |
| Upper thighs..... | 22.5in | 21.5in |
| Upper Arms | 11in | 10.5in |

THE PERSONAL TRAINER



Laura Thomas works for Inspirelife personal training www.inspirelifept.com.

'Nicola's main form of exercise is running. She does three to six miles, two or three times a week, but because her body is comfortable doing this, she's hit a plateau. I focused on Nicola's desire to tone up and lose weight, keeping her active throughout the day to stimulate her mind and body.'

LAURA'S EXERCISE-BOOSTING PLAN

1 Be everyday active

'At every opportunity, get moving. Rather than sit at her desk for hours, Nicola should get up every 30 minutes and take a walk to stretch herself out. When she is at her desk, she should sit tall and proud, doing sets of ten butt clenches. When commuting, she should walk up and down escalators. If she does this regularly, her bum will look and feel more firm.'

2 Speed things up

'Nicola's body has become so accustomed to her regular three-mile runs that she's no longer seeing positive changes in her shape. To spice up her routine and start seeing results, she should try an interval-training programme, where she varies her intensity and speed over the course of her run.'

3 Think functional

'Nicola's main goal is to have a flat tummy, as she'll be spending so much time in a bikini. To achieve this, her brain needs to start communicating with her stomach muscles. Try this – with your hands on your abdomen, contract your muscles so your hands move in an inch towards your belly button, and down an inch towards your toes. You should feel the muscles gently tighten.'

4 Do something different

'Nicola's stuck in a rut as far as fitness benefits are concerned. If you stick to the same workout for too long, it's common to stop losing weight. Whenever this starts happening, it's time to move on to something new. Alongside running, Nicola should try cycling once a week, to work her heart and lungs, while reducing the risk of impact injuries, plus a Pilates session.'

5 Challenge yourself

'To improve her fitness, rather than just maintaining it, Nicola should set herself a new challenge every four to six weeks in the run-up to emigrating, such as entering a race, aiming for a faster time on her next run or trying something completely different, like salsa. It'll be hard work, but the results will be worth it.'

THE NUTRITIONIST



Emma Wells is a nutritional therapist with Smart Nutrition, based in London and Brighton. Visit www.smartnutrition.co.uk.

'Nicola is lacking in energy, and also has problems with IBS and bloating. Her alcohol intake, which exceeds the weekly recommended limit, is aggravating her digestive problems and depleting her levels of B vitamins, leading to energy slumps. By changing her style of eating, she should soon see improvements in her digestion and energy levels.'

EMMA'S EAT-FOR-ENERGY TIPS

1 Pack in protein

'Afternoon fatigue, cravings and lack of concentration are often caused by unstable blood-sugar levels. To balance blood sugar and fill up, Nicola should ensure all her meals and snacks contain protein – yogurt, nuts, seeds, turkey, eggs, fish, meat, beans and lentils.'

2 Cut down on sugar

'Eating regularly will provide a steady energy supply, but some supposedly healthy snacks are full of hidden sugars and will upset your blood sugar. Instead of snacking on flapjacks, Nicola could have a sugar-free yogurt, an oatcake with peanut butter or some almonds.'

3 Cut back on booze

'Alcohol depletes B vitamins, which are needed for energy, and can aggravate sensitive digestion, so cutting back is essential. Nicola cut it out completely to assess its impact on her energy and digestion. If you can't do that, switch to clear spirits and make sure you have at least four alcohol-free nights a week.'

4 Be a speed cook

'Preparing meals in advance is useful for time-limited people like Nicola. She should prepare a batch of rice or quinoa once a week and freeze individual portions (make sure to cool the rice quickly before freezing). Then defrost one portion overnight, add a tin of mixed beans or fish, some salad leaves and chopped peppers in the morning for an instant healthy lunch.'

5 Snack smarter

'Nicola's work schedule is so hectic that she doesn't get time for set meals, but snacking on mini meals is much better than missing out altogether. It'll provide her body with a steady stream of energy. Nicola could try cottage cheese with oatcakes, a punnet of blueberries, a small tin of tuna with salsa on a couple of wholewheat crackers or some carrot sticks with hummus.' →



diary

Week 1

'Emma suggested avoiding wheat to see whether it affected my energy levels. I was worried about how I'd cope without bread, but I feel so much more energetic'

Week 2

'A busy week at work, but I pushed myself harder so I could leave at a reasonable hour.'





THE LIFE COACH



Nina Grunfeld founded the Life Clubs personal improvement network (www.lifeclubs.co.uk) and is author of *The Big Book Of Me* (Short Books, £12.99).

'Although Nicola is close to her family, she left home at 17 in search of the bright city lights. She's worried about her work/life balance and feels exhausted, stressed and resentful.

I explained these are classic signs of burnout, and showed her how to feel more in control.'

NINA'S NEW-OUTLOOK TIPS

1 Have a 20-year vision

'I asked Nicola to imagine looking back on her life in 20 years' time. This gave her perspective and made her realise how much fun she's having. It also helped her see she won't be working this hard for ever.'

2 Be happy on your own

'Nicola finds it hard to say no to invitations, and doesn't like to leave early in case she misses out. By filling her diary up with "dates for herself" (yoga, reading...), she'll soon enjoy her own company – a key skill when moving away.'

3 Realise we're all different

'Work/life balance is a hot topic, but what really matters is finding the balance that works for you. While Nicola feels it's wrong to work so hard, she actually enjoys her fast-paced lifestyle, so she should just *let* herself enjoy it.'

4 Take your time

'Nicola says she's worried about missing opportunities, but by appreciating how much she's already achieved, she might feel less likely to cram things in. I advised her to slow down and take stock.'

5 Keep up the good work

'Nicola wants to get back into advertising in Australia, but it's a good idea for her to take a break when she first arrives – by doing the things she loves, like surfing, she'll be more confident, and less likely to fall back into old habits.'

THE SKINCARE THERAPIST



Carmen Puig is a senior therapist at Spa Illuminata, London. Visit www.spailluminata.com.

'Nicola's skin is in pretty good condition. However, late nights and city living mean it's prone to dehydration and occasional breakouts. Some extra care will keep her skin looking young and fresh, especially in preparation for that long flight and hot climate.'

CARMEN'S REVIVE-YOUR-SKIN TIPS

1 Keep it clean

'A good cleansing routine is crucial, especially if you live in a city where there's lots of pollution. Nicola should use two different cleansers – a foam wash in the morning, to wake up your skin, and a milky cleanser at night, to deep clean the day's impurities.'

2 Quench your skin

'Dehydrated skin looks dull, hydrating products would give Nicola immediate radiance. Aromatherapy-based products are good because they sink into the deepest levels of your skin, allowing your moisturiser to act more intensively.'

3 Try a mini massage

'When applying cleansing or moisturising products, Nicola should take a few minutes to massage her skin. This helps drain toxins, boosts circulation and gives an instant lift.'

4 Make time for facials

'Nicola should give herself a weekly DIY facial and get into a routine of exfoliating her skin thoroughly to remove dead skin cells. She should apply a mask for ten to 15 minutes, too.'

5 Top up your water levels

'Keeping well hydrated is one of the best things you can do for your skin, especially if you drink a lot of alcohol, which has a dehydrating effect. Nicola should drink two litres of water or green tea every day to flush toxins from her body, leaving her skin clear.'

Week 3

'Some hard training sessions this week; I've felt really out of my comfort zone. But I'm starting to get great results. I've lost a good few inches around my waist and can fit back into a pair of jeans that I haven't been able to wear for over a year.'

Week 4

'Spent the weekend at a festival. Staying off the booze was tough, but I didn't touch a drop – I was very proud of myself. I still had fun, and lots of people told me how well I looked, which made me feel fantastic.'

AFTER 30 DAYS

NICOLA'S VERDICT...

'Before the challenge, I felt exhausted, lethargic and out of shape. I couldn't understand why, despite exercising hard, I still looked chubby. Now I realise how much my hectic lifestyle, convenience-food diet and stress levels have been impacting not just on my figure, but also my confidence and happiness. A month on from seeing the experts, I feel more energetic, alert and focused. My skin is glowing, my figure is toned and I'm more comfortable with myself, both at work and socially. I feel as though I've got a solid foundation on which to build my new, healthy lifestyle in Australia, and can't wait to run along the beach in the mornings or go surfing before work.' 