

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

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Food, drink and leisure are high priorities in our North Carolina retirement community, so after moving here 3 years ago, Cheryl and I found ourselves gaining weight and getting soft. Although I play a lot of golf, my weight had crept up by twenty pounds. We decided it was time to find a Fitness Spa.

We chose Hilton Head Health for several reasons:

- > We liked the schedule of activities. It had a great mix of classes and workouts.
- > Although each day's schedule was long (activities run from 7 AM to 7 PM), it was not like a boot camp.
- > The approach appeared to be a balance of healthy eating, exercise and the right mental approach to fitness.
- > The week promised to have a lot of social interaction with other guests and the staff.
- > It was a convenient drive from our home.

As it turned out we could not have made a better choice. Our week at Hilton Head Health not only met all of our expectations, it turned out to be one of our best vacations ever.

The staff was superb. The instructors were knowledgeable, college-trained, personable and sensitive to individual needs. There was a resident psychologist as well as diet and fitness experts.

During each hour, we had electives, so we could choose whichever activity interested us most. The work-outs were geared to be intense, but could be scaled back for individual needs. Meals and walks were plentiful. We never felt hungry or overly sore.

The lectures were entertaining, informative and based on research, not the pet theory of a founder. There were plenty of hand-outs and ideas that we could take home and implement.

Cheryl enjoyed the cooking classes and bought four cook books – one for herself and the others for family and friends. She has tried several of the recipes and even enlisted her brother-in-law to help cook a 5-course meal derived entirely from the cook book.





So we had a great time, but did we get results? While at the institute, I lost 7 pounds. But that's not the best part. We returned from Hilton Head Health two months ago. In those two months we have had 2 week-long vacations, two birthday parties and a wedding in addition to our normal social schedule. We continue to eat out about 7 times a week. In spite of all that, I have lost 15 more pounds and we both are fitting into smaller sizes. Even my golf scores are lower! (I picked up some golf-specific exercises from one of the instructors.)

What are the key secrets?

Portion control. In restaurants, we ask for food containers before starting our meals and take home what we don't eat.

Estimating caloric content and avoiding bad choices. Low fat and low sodium are keys.

Gaining the understanding of friends and family. Our enthusiasm for Hilton Head Health has made it easy to discuss what we are trying to accomplish and our friends are going along with our plan.

Regular walks and work-outs. Cheryl and I try to walk about 2-miles every other day. In between, I work out at a club for about an hour.

Ultimately, the real test will be whether we can continue our fitness routine. So far it has not seemed burdensome. We feel we have brought home life-changing attitudes. What we learned at Hilton Head Health has made a lot of sense and given us proven results. Encouraged by that, we think we can maintain the changes we have made in our lives.

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