

Hostess Claudel and guests sipping cocktails at her open-plan bungalow.

BAZAAR Entertains Summer Soiree

Pilates guru Claudel Kuek invites us into her bungalow home for a feel-good poolside luncheon. By Kim Reyes

THE GRACIOUS HOSTESS Svelte former dancer Claudel Kuek is also the owner of the exclusive Pilates studio PowerMoves, where she teaches private sessions and small group classes of all levels.

THE STYLISH GUESTS The guest list included lawyer Lee Pih Peng, Evelyn Lee, who works in the IT industry, as well as Claudel's friends and Pilates peers Catherine Teo, Tan Li Hong and Sharon Teh.

THE DRESS CODE "I told them it was 'luxe summer chic', which means bright colours, pretty dresses, and of course, that perfect summer accessory," said Claudel.

THE LUXE AFFAIR The day began at the intimate PowerMoves studio, located amongst the lush greenery of Aramsa Spa in Bishan Park. The ladies took part in an exclusive session with Pilates instructor Iduma Ortega, a former fitness trainer in her native Mexico City, who explained that the fundamental goal of

Pilates is to achieve wellness of the body and mind. It was a fitting theme for the day, from the light morning workout and lively conversation to the refreshing meal at Claudel's three-storey bungalow. The seamless outdoor and indoor living spaces, which give the house a "floating-on-water" effect, became the perfect setting for Claudel's healthy, feel-good lunch. Though the morning's rain shower prevented the group from mingling on the wooden patio deck, it lent a cooling fresh breeze to the open-plan interiors.

THE CONVERSATION Over the course of the morning and afternoon, the easygoing group learned they had more in common than just their mutual friend and hostess. All are happily married and all but one of them mothers. Li Hong's children are a pair of boys, while Evelyn's boy and girl are also twins. The rest of the group shared similar exercise regimes, having met at Claudel's Pilates studio.



SUMMER SCENTS what they wore...

CLAUDEL Pure White Linen by Estée Lauder. "It's light and fresh, like you just got out of a glorious shower."

SHARON Mademoiselle, with jasmine and rose, by Chanel.

EVELYN Douce Amère by Serge Lutens. "I love vanilla for summer. It has depth."

LI HONG Coco by Chanel. "It's refreshing and rejuvenating."

CATHERINE Pleasures by Estée Lauder. "It just reminds me of summer."

Healthy and refreshing fresh juice mocktails by the pool.

WHAT SHE SERVED By the infinity pool, the ladies sipped on a cooling mixed drink of pineapple, lettuce and celery juice. The detoxifying fresh juice was followed by a sumptuous four-course meal by Select Catering, inspired by the summer season and infused with tropical Asian flavours. Chef Patrick was on hand to explain the details of each course, plated on white dishes to bring out the vibrant hues of the fresh ingredients, and served by a team of waiters; a plush experience in every sense of the word. The meal ended on a high note with strawberry sorbet dessert served with fresh berries — a fitting finale to what was truly a feast for the senses.



Claudel kept it fresh and flowery with her settings.



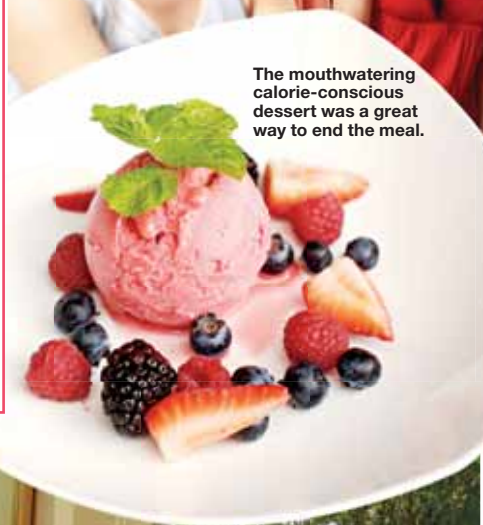
Scented candles helped set the mood.



Claudel's health-conscious friends talked Pilates.

ON THE MENU Provided by Select Catering Services

- REFRESHMENT** A healthy blend of pineapple, lettuce and celery juice
- STARTER** Thai Chicken Salad with pink grapefruit, avocado, green and red frisée, pine nuts and Thai chili jus
- SOUP** Mushroom Consommé with crabmeat dumplings, julienne vegetables and honshimeiji
- ENTRÉE** Grilled Ocean King Prawn with banana-flavoured sweet potato, Thai asparagus and mango salsa
- DESSERT** Strawberry Sorbet with blackberries, raspberries, blueberries and strawberries, topped with fresh mint leaves



The mouthwatering calorie-conscious dessert was a great way to end the meal.



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Lunch is served — fish, fruits and fresh juices.



Pre-lunch, the girls started out with a session conducted by native Mexican Pilates instructor, Iduma Ortega.



Former dancer Claudel tucks into her Thai Chicken Salad with grapefruit, avocado and pine nuts.



The girls get stuck into Harper's BAZAAR.



A cocktail of pineapple, lettuce and celery juice.

HIP PARTY ACCESSORY

- CLAUDEL** Oakley shades. "To look hot and cool at the same time."
- SHARON** Shell necklace. "It's a versatile piece that goes from day to night and instantly dresses up an outfit."
- EVELYN** Rattan handbag by Kate Spade. "It's eye-catching and spells summer."
- LI HONG** Ethnic sandals. "They're a priceless gift from my older sister."
- CATHERINE** Floral watch. "It's a timepiece that doubles as a bracelet."
- PIH PENG** Diamond ring. "The yellow diamonds remind me of the sun."

HOW TO BE A GOOD HOSTESS

- TIP 1** Set the right mood with music. Let different types of music determine the rhythm of the party and its progression. Claudel recommends: Smooth jazz, Sting, and George Michael.
- TIP 2** Candles and flowers for a cheerful ambience. Be careful the scents don't clash with the aroma of the food.
- TIP 3** Room fragrance makes a big difference. Opt for a scent that suits the event's theme. Think: intoxicating and intellectual, brash and breezy, or fresh and flirty.
- TIP 4** Good conversation never goes out of style. Find a way to connect with every guest. Leave them with wit and warmth that will linger long after the party is over.
- TIP 5** The winning accessory for every good hostess? A smile.