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Claudia Zapata

Claudia Zapata



- [E-mail](#)
- [Bio](#)
- [Index](#)

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Claudia Zapata: Six weeks to leaner, sleeker you

Web Posted: 05/27/2007 11:34 AM CDT

Express-News

Most of the time, fitness is a journey.

And then there are those occasions when you need to look good in a hurry — really good — and getting in shape becomes an all-out race.

Whether your short-term finish line is a class reunion or a bikini-baring trip to the coast, you can transform your body in relatively little time, providing of course you're willing to work hard — really hard.

Valerie Waters, one of Hollywood's top personal trainers, says a makeover can be only six weeks away. "It's absolutely possible. I've seen it over and over again," Waters says during a recent phone interview. "You can't lose 100 pounds, of course, but you can drop 10 to 15. And if you need to drop 30, you can make significant headway."

Waters has helped some of the industry's leading ladies, including Jennifer Garner, Jessica Biel and Kerry Washington, get fit in a flash. Their motivation may be an upcoming photo shoot, red carpet stroll, or television or movie role, (these are "big motivators," Waters says) but she warns the stars' road to glamour isn't a cakewalk.

"People have this perception that it's easy for celebrities (to get in shape) because of trainers, chefs or good genetics. But the reason they look so great is because they're willing to go the extra mile. They're going to get up at 4 a.m. for a workout. They're not going to have that piece of bread or glass of wine with dinner," she says.

Waters recently released "Red Carpet Ready" (\$39.95, [www.redcarpetready.com](#)), an e-book outlining her six-week plan for fitness and weight loss on a deadline. Couch potatoes need not apply. Waters says her workouts are designed for those who already exercise about 30 minutes a day several times a week and want to push it to another level.

"This isn't your grandmother's workout program. It's intense," Waters says. At the same time, the program is doable and doesn't take hours a day. She advises a solid 45- to 60-minute session per day, six days a week. The plan includes two cardiovascular workouts, one interval training session, and the fast-paced strength workouts that incorporate exercises like lunge kicks, "Bruce Lee Kicks," and forward and reverse lunges.

If you're in decent shape, the workouts are challenging but manageable. The e-book's second chapter, "Nutrition of the Stars," on the other hand, is not so easy. Waters soundly recommends "purposeful nutrition," eating all meals and snacks with goals. But, if your purpose is to drop weight quickly and get lean, you'll probably have to really clean up your diet. That means no sugar, no alcohol and a transition to getting carbohydrates from fruits and vegetables.

"I teach people to get off junk and go back to real foods," Waters says. But you won't have to starve yourself. Her plan calls for eating five times a day, allowing a once-a-week "cheat" meal that she says "is not a free-for-all, just a little more relaxed."

Waters is big on having a winning attitude and staying motivated. Incidentally, I

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tell her I've often used one of her mottoes to get myself moving. Years ago, I read a story in which actress Jennifer Garner revealed Waters' advice to her — "you are one workout away from a good mood," and it's motivated me ever since.

While short-term goals are great to kick-start fitness, continuing the health journey, albeit at a less intense pace, is the overall goal. "You don't just stop after six weeks," Waters says. "You make it part of your life."

Claudia Zapata's column appears Mondays in S.A. Life. E-mail her at claudiazapata@satx.rr.com.

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