

## Bikini-ready workouts

Good news. The skimpy, structure bathing suits that were so popular last season -- suits that were cut up to here and padded out to there and full of revealing, unflattering cutouts -- have been replaced this year with more modest fair. "We're back to being reasonable after a season of going crazy," says New York-based city stylist Amy Salinger (amysalinger.com). The bad news? "They're still bikinis, so you're still almost naked," she says. Luckily, there's plenty you can do -- from your diet to your beauty routine to your workout -- to get bikini-ready by spring break. "The butt is key," to making any bikini look good, says Salinger. For an ideal glute exercise, try the "Wax On/Wax Off." It's the trademark move of Latina magazine fitness consultant Phoenix Carnevale, NESM. Stand on a smooth floor (like hardwood or linoleum) and place a small hand towel under your right foot. Standing with your feet shoulder length apart, slide your right foot back, towel included, so that you're in a classic lunge. (Be sure your left knee isn't extended over your toe). Using strength from your left quad and thigh muscles, pull your right leg back into a standing position. The lack of friction from the towel "forces your lower hamstring to do all the work," says Carnevale. Repeat ten times on your right leg, then switch the towel to your left side. And after having to pull up at sliding bandeau tops last summer, straps and halters are making a comeback, says Salinger. They'll look best on a toned and strong upper body, and one of the best ways to get that is a Deadlift/Upright Row Combo: "Standing with feet hip width, hold a pair of dumbbells and hinge forward at the hips, keeping spine straight and knees bent," says Exercise TV trainer Jessica Smith. "Only go as far forward as you can, keeping your back straight. Then, bracing your abs into your lower back, slowly lift back up. As you come up to your start position, begin pulling elbows up high, rowing dumbbells up to just under the chin. Lower arms back down and repeat." And of course, don't forget those abs. "You can get a lot more bang for your buck by taking your ab workout off the floor," says Smith. "Standing ab exercises are great for two reasons: One, you recruit more muscle fibers in a standing position because you cannot rely on the stability of the floor to support your body, and two you are burning more calories overall because of the increased muscular demand and range of movement." She recommends the Wood Chop: Holding a light dumbbell with both hands, stand with feet wide. Bring arms up by your left shoulder, then in a 'chopping' motion, bring dumbbell across body towards the outside of the right knee, allowing your hips, feet and torso to rotate into the movement, keeping your core tight. Try for 10 reps to the left, and 10 to the right. Jessica and trainer Teri Ann have cooked up more bikini body moves available (TK WHEREVER VIDEO IS). In order to get your skin in shape for summer, be sure to start exfoliating once or twice a week. "Exfoliating the skin regularly allows for sunscreen to absorb more quickly and ensures more overall coverage. This will prevent skin from being highly susceptible to sun burn," says dermatologist Patricia Wexler, MD. For best results, "Brush with an exfoliating mitt or loofah that is designed specifically for that purpose." Then, wet the skin in the shower, repeat the process but add an exfoliating cleanser. When you're out of the shower, you can also use a lotion made with alpha or beta hydroxy acids. "These are mild enough to use frequently and will keep the upper layer of skin looking fresh," says Wexler. Finally, start drinking lots of water now - and don't stop until you're headed home from vacation. "This is ultra important when you're on the beach," note Tammy Lakatos Shames, RD, and Lyssie Lakatos, RD - also known as the Nutrition Twins. "The sun leads to dehydration that will make you look weathered and tired. Skimp on the water and you'll end up with circles under your eyes and lackluster skin and lips," The twins also discourage drinking soda. "Carbonated beverages can cause gas and bloating on the beach," they say. If you need a break from all that H2O, switch to green tea -the antioxidants can help prevent skin damage. "It will also relax you and fill your stomach, making you less hungry and less likely to overeat as you prepare your body for the beach," they say.

## About the Author

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