

ALONA

By Guo Yong'en

When it comes to exercising mind, body and soul, Beijingers turn to Alona Vostrikova, a Russian yoga and Pilates trainer. Alona has been based in Beijing for the past nine years and enjoys a relaxing, healthy and fashionable lifestyle. Her eponymous Pilates studio is located in the Westin Hotel.

Bus, taxi or subway?

Taxi, because I don't have access to the bus and subway where I live. But I would prefer riding a bike if the weather allows. I just think it's more convenient and I can avoid the traffic. I also like the breeze blowing in my face and hair.

Cheeseburger or rou jia mo (Beijing's local pancake breakfast)?

Definitely *rou jia mo*. I used to eat it every day when I was a student. I think it's fresh and healthy.

Hutong or high-rise buildings?

Hutong! Hutongs are so beautiful. There is a spirit about them.

I could imagine seeing a woman walking with small bound feet and a rich guy following after her. I always find that they are so mysterious and it makes you want to peek inside.

Sanlitun or Houhai?

Both. If it's on a date, I would go to Houhai because of the beautiful lakes and they have the best pizza place in Beijing. For convenience, I would go to Sanlitun because I can do my nails and go to Element Fresh there. It's hard to compare.

Enrique Iglesias or Josh Groban?

No jazz! And I definitely like Enrique because he's cute and

I like all Spanish music. Plus, I'm studying Spanish now.

Foot massage or manicure?

I love foot massages, very strong ones. But I always just get them both together. If it's for relaxation, I like to go to Oriental Taipan. For manicure only, I like to go to Lily Nails at 3.3.

Any fashion tips?

When I look at people, the first thing is to look at how they walk. I think what makes a person beautiful is not their clothes, earrings or make-up they wear, but it is their posture when they walk. A proper walking posture would mean keeping the back straight and keeping the shoulders wide open as one line while walking.

I also like wearing heels. I used to wear high heels every day but I wear sport shoes more often nowadays. When I wear high heels, the heels have to be rocm tall, no less, because that's what makes me feel like a sexy woman. But of course, stable and soft-padded high-heel shoes are the best choices.

Favorite bar or café?

Xiu Bar. It has a very good design and decoration. And there is a good combination of food. For example, you can have Chinese or Western food. I can also go outside or inside the bar, just to listen to the music or dance. It's not too smoky, unlike some other bars.

Favorite shops?

I would like to say the Shin Kong Place but shops there are just too expensive. I usually shop at 3.3 in Sanlitun or try to discover some smaller unknown places. But I do have a place I like to go for jeans, a place for shoes and a place for dresses. I also like to shop for house design products.

Favorite place to relax?

Definitely Oriental Taipan!

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