

THE SPACE



FOR FITNESS

As Warsaw's flirtation with fitness turns into a full-on fixation, a new venue in town has raised the bar to levels previously unheard of. Promising a premium, 24-carat experience, Quantum finds itself instantly installed as the cream-of-the-crop. Are you ready for the change?



The Place For Healing

Using first class, pioneering methods and technology, the Quantum Clinic surpasses the norms that Warsaw has become used to. For the full Hollywood treatment, restore and replenish the body at a luxury spa devised to enhance the body and mind. Wellness has never felt better..



As someone who lost their shape about three hundred years back, I derive as much pleasure from the gym as I do, say, doing my tax returns or being bitten by a viper. It's not so much a fear as it is a complete, outright phobia. It's not that I haven't tried, it's just that I've found Warsaw gyms go either of three ways: *Rocky*-style sweat dungeons packed with psychos training for their next forest battle with the lads from Lech Poznań, 'exclusive' places filled with preening girls more concerned about their makeup, or those depressing gyms for the masses whose single selling point is cost. Now though, there's another option. Quantum.

To me, the name alone conjures images of Bond. The truth, however, is a little more prosaic. "In physics a quantum," says the owner, Paweł, "is the smallest possible particle of a physical entity. When placed together correctly, several quanta create excellence." Quantum, I learn, is more than just a fitness club – it's a lifestyle choice built upon three pillars: a gym, wellness clinic and physio center. Each complement the other in a manner that's natural, cohesive but above all unique. "We're the only place of its kind in Poland," says Paweł, "even in America it's a concept you won't really find apart from in special facilities for professional athletes."

I mention Paweł not because I've made a particular effort to track him down, rather vice versa. More than just its owner, he is Quantum's all-seeing eye: an ever present driving force that glues the project together. Having made his bank advancing up the corporate ladder, he left the rat race for dust to follow his dream of opening a gym. "Fitness has always been a passion," he smiles, "when I was a kid I'd be the only person jogging around the town I grew up in – people would come out and laugh at me like I was mad." Whose laughing now?

To believe it is to see it. Snuck to the side of a glamorous slab of residential new build, Quantum takes the keep fit business to new levels. That's apparent just by the changing rooms alone. I shan't disparage my previous gym in public, but I'll say this for it: despite costing a fair whack, the dressing quarters were every bit as chaotic and fragrant as the engine room of a U-boat. The difference at Quantum couldn't be more pronounced. Just the spotless stone surfaces have a sense of quiet, understated luxury and the promise of perfection.

I'm here for an introductory training session, and as I emerge in my kit I'm introduced to Kasia, my trainer for the day. The first step involves assessing problem areas, determining targets and charting the client's body composition through the use of electronic gizmos. It feels as covert as a church confessional, but

if Kasia is appalled by my lifestyle then she does a kind job of hiding it. This isn't just a place in which to get sweaty, it's a place that finds answers and sets goals that don't inhibit the client. A qualified dietician, her advice is both pertinent and practicable, as are the exercises we embark on.

Despite early fears that I might become the first person to actually die in Quantum, I survive, thanks mainly to a session that both challenges and considers my limits. After, as I plop down in a wet heap, I experience an unlikely surge of positivity. "Getting fit isn't just about looking better," says Kasia, "it's a holistic thing: when people feel better they function better." It's an been an inspirational hour and I pant in agreement.

Having rebooted myself in the Finnish sauna, I check out the wellness clinic next. Open to non-members as well, this is the domain of Karolina, Paweł's wife and a cosmetologist for the last twenty years. "If you want to look ten, fifteen years younger," she says, "we can do that, and we can do that in a way that doesn't look fake." Like the gym, the attention to detail speaks of a venue that doesn't do shortcuts. There is no 'Made in China' equipment, everything is state-of-the-art from the U.S. and Israel. "We can do the lot," says Karolina, "from hair or tattoo removal to skin or scar treatments." Also like the gym, it's a place that plays

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the long game. "Of course we can design three or six-month treatments," she says, "but this place isn't about quick traffic, it's about writing personalized programs that will actually work – people pay for results, and here they'll get them." Aesthetic gynecology, skin tightening, firming and body slimming are just some of the areas that are expertly covered. Me though, I just want a massage.

Left, quite literally, in the hands of Martyna, I'm ushered to a plush private room where I'm pummeled and pulled before floating into space. It's an almost out-of-body experience that leaves me walking on air. After, I bump into Paul, the physio and an integral cog to the Quantum brand. "If we invested as much in our bodies as we do in our cars," he says, "we'd be a lot better off." It's an analogy worth dwelling on, for today I've been stripped down like a faulty motor before being reassembled in a manner that's correct. I feel new. Most of all though, I feel good.



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- SHAHID ‘SHIV’ SHIVJI

expectations. “It goes beyond just the machinery,” he says, “I like the fact that this is more of a ‘boutique gym’. It’s never crowded and you get more attention from the personnel – even if you’re not actually training with them, they’ll always come over ready to help or give you advice. Everything feels easy and designed for the customers’ comfort and, of course, as an expat it’s nice to find so many different nationalities here pursuing a common goal.”

SEBASTIAN SURY

“I love my job, but I’m very conscious of the need to balance out my professional life with other things.” A partner at a

law firm, punishing hours are *de rigeur* for Sebastian Sury. “After a big transaction you’re physically and mentally exhausted, so I use Quantum as a place to refresh my body and mind.” Surely, though, there’s other gyms that can fulfill that demand? “This gym has the right atmosphere,” responds Sebastian, “after working with people all day I need a gym that’s calm and relaxed. Quantum has space – customers aren’t on top of each other – yet at the same time it feels social, somewhere you can integrate.”

Convenience also plays a role. “I live and work close by,” he says, “but Quantum has other basic advantages as well. You see these gyms in the big city malls, but to actually reach them means going up and down different floors, taking escalators, etc. Here, as soon as you walk through the entrance you’re at the gym. Time is precious, there’s only 24-hours a day, so for me Quantum is a timesaver.”

And the equipment is none too shabby either. “In terms of quality it’s the best I’ve ever seen,” asserts Sebastian, “you can feel it. Frankly, it’s a standard that meets my own standards. And I love the coffee here – they’re even good in that respect!”

THE CLIENTS

SHAHID ‘SHIV’ SHIVJI

A native of Vancouver, Shiv is a short-term resident of Warsaw who expects to be moving again in the next couple of months. “I live close by and popped into Quantum to discuss their membership packages – Pawet jumped up straight away and took me on a tour. Soon enough I’m going to have to leave Warsaw, but he was able to accommodate me with a deal that matched my temporary needs: taken on its own, that’s made my life a whole lot easier.”

A pilot by profession, Shiv is aware more than most of the benefits of healthy living. “I think it’s something that the younger generation of pilots really pay attention to,” he says. “When you’re dealing with pressure changes, long hours of sitting and intense situations it’s good to have a healthy flight crew – more importantly, we take a medical once a year that we need to pass!”

Currently training to climb Mount Kilimanjaro with his girlfriend, Quantum has exceeded all of Shiv’s

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Half Mexican, half Polish, Katarzyna, a project coordinator, has worked in Vienna, Moscow and Madrid before returning to Warsaw at the start of the year.

“The first thing I looked for,” she says, “was a gym that met the standards I was used to. I was after something that was new, that still smelled fresh, that had the latest machines and interesting classes.” There were other criteria as well: “most of all, I didn’t want a hotel gym – come on, this isn’t 80s Poland where all expat life revolves around a few top hotels. I didn’t want to be exercising next to traveling businessmen or rotations of tourists.”

Neither did her mum. “I love going to the gym with her, so I needed a place that suited her needs as well – that meant none of these intimidating gyms you see packed with men with big muscles. It had to be a place in which we both felt comfortable.”

Quantum answered that call. “I found it by accident when I was on my way to the shops,” says Katarzyna, “but immediately I felt a connection with it. It’s almost like a community: everyone knows each other and you look forward to seeing likeminded people. It’s more than a gym, it’s where I hangout, it’s where I meet friends.”

The staff have helped foster that sense of belonging: “everyone knows my name, they know how I like my coffee. It’s not a gym that leaves you feeling like an anonymous number on their membership list.” This goes for the trainers, as well: “it’s as if they know what the client needs – they can read your body better than you do yourself. In fact, in a way the whole service aspect reminds me a bit of Mexico – there, the customer really counts; even in a five peso taxi you’re treated like a king. It’s the same attitude here.”



LEA KIMPELE

In her duties as a Global Customer Service Manager, Lea is no stranger to judging what constitutes strong people skills. “The service here is incredibly personalized,” she says, “and Pawet is very much part of that.” Having moved to Warsaw a year ago, Quantum has become an integral part of Lea’s lifestyle. “Honestly, it’s a second home for me,” she says. “to the point that the steam room feels like an extension to my apartment.” Visiting Quantum five to six times a week, the gym bug has left a lasting impression. “It’s my therapy,” she jokes, “a haven.” In terms of escapism, it’s easy to understand why it carries favor: “you never have to wait for machines, and there’s always a spot in the classes. There’s a mix of comfort and everyday luxury that makes it a great place to relax and hang out in, but at the same time, you can really work your ass off here.”



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