

A good habit

If you're keen to join a gym, but put off by the pumping nightclub-style fitness centres that dot the city, then Habit might be just what you've been waiting for. Words by **Susan Edmunds**; photos by **Nick Servian**

A brand new, state-of-the-art gym has opened in the bottom of the Vero tower on Shortland Street, and owner Steve Pugh describes it as a haven for those who don't like the idea of going to a gym to preen or look for dates. It is the kind of place, he tells me, where you drop in, do your workout and get on with your day. And all in comparative luxury.

The first thing I noticed on walking in was how quiet the gym was. I'm used to blaring music, shouting instructors and strutting patrons, but Habit has none of these. Its frosted glass door is a classy fit with the swirling décor.

Although the gym is surprisingly big, the atmosphere is unobtrusive, and with a limit of only 500 members there is never going to be a wait for the machines. "We have capacity for about 800 members, but the idea is to stay 20 percent away from that, to avoid the issues that come with an





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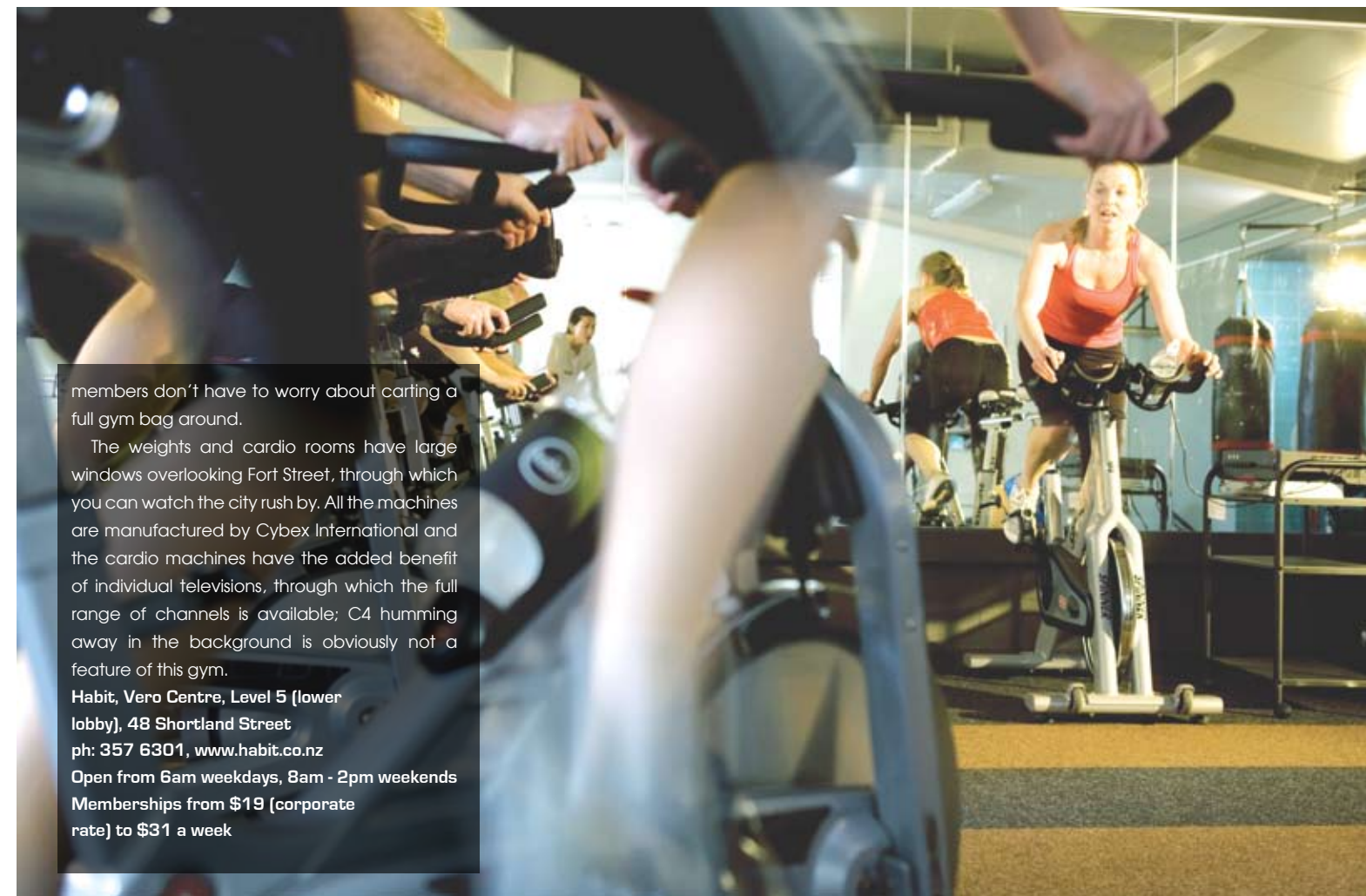
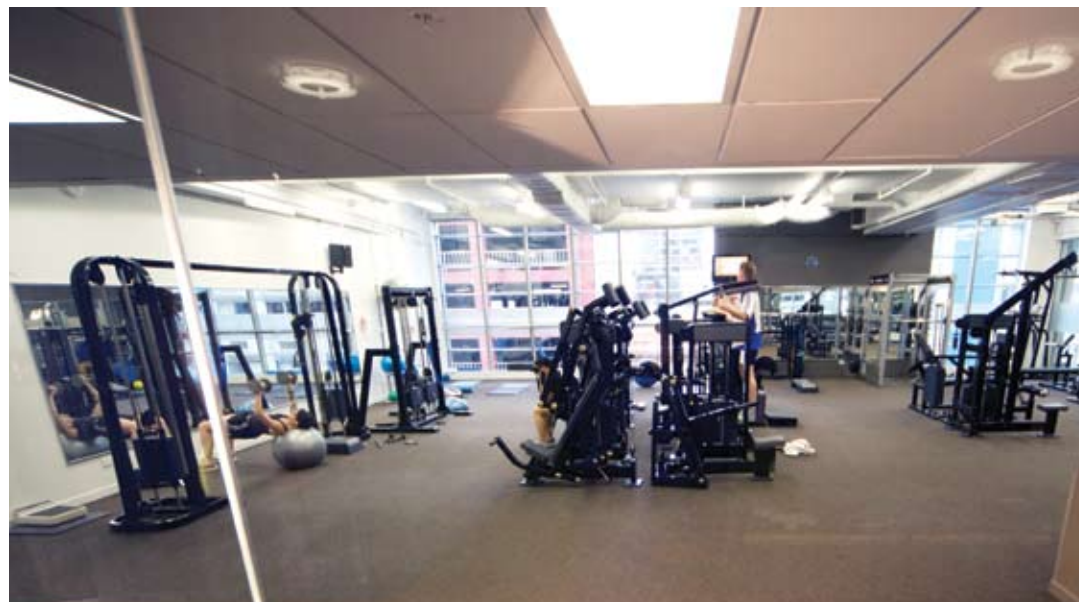


overcrowded gym," says Pugh.

Clients get an initial assessment on joining, and Pugh says a lot of minor niggles that affect most people at some point in their lives can be sorted out with simple physio treatments. The assessment also means each member is given a programme that is tailored to their needs and works towards their individual goals. Therapists are able to work on issues individual to their clients, whether it's fixing a muscle problem or just providing some stress relief. Personal trainers and nutrition consultants are also available to give an extra edge to the workout.

I always find it a little hard to stay motivated when training on my own, so it's in the interests of those like me that Habit runs a range of group classes. These cover boxing, Pilates, spinning and yoga.

Another notable difference at Habit is the extraordinary lengths they've gone to to get the showering and changing rooms up to a standard that wouldn't be out of place in an expensive hotel. There is even a membership option that includes towels, so



members don't have to worry about carting a full gym bag around.

The weights and cardio rooms have large windows overlooking Fort Street, through which you can watch the city rush by. All the machines are manufactured by Cybex International and the cardio machines have the added benefit of individual televisions, through which the full range of channels is available; C4 humming away in the background is obviously not a feature of this gym.

Habit, Vero Centre, Level 5 (lower lobby), 48 Shortland Street
 ph: 357 6301, www.habit.co.nz
 Open from 6am weekdays, 8am - 2pm weekends
 Memberships from \$19 (corporate rate) to \$31 a week