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*Author and philanthropist
Susan Fales-Hill*

Mind, Body and Soul

Alex Reznik of Complete Body & Spa strikes a perfect balance between quality and quantity

When you first meet Alex Reznik, founder and president of Complete Body & Spa, what you notice is, well, his physique: tall, sturdy, striking. With a clean, buzzed haircut and sharp features, not to mention a trace of Russian accent, he's a guy who clearly means business. When you first talk with Alex Reznik, what you realize is that his business is not just physical health, but also emotional wellbeing.

There are Complete Body & Spa locations in Paris, London, Moscow and New York, and a new one that just opened at 301 East 57th Street. At 17,000 square feet, it occupies the building's entire 5th floor and includes a 3,000-square-foot sun deck and indoor swimming pool with retractable roof. But impressive amenities are not all it has. Like Reznik's other facilities, the 57th Street location offers a unique blend of Eastern and Western fitness techniques and practices.

A former trainer with the Russian army, Reznik emigrated to the United States in the late 1980s. He continued his fitness educa-

tion here in New York, and quickly secured positions at several big gyms. "I soon realized I wanted to work for myself," Reznik recalls. "I was really, really busy, but I didn't like the corporate structure or the sales aspect. It was really about numbers, not what clients needed—so I left to start my own company."

Reznik developed the Six Essential ElementsSM training philosophy, which focuses on strength, aerobics, flexibility, nutrition, meditation and rest. "I see two groups in America, especially in New York," Reznik says. "One works out hard—weights, but not stretching or meditation. The other does yoga, but doesn't necessarily have strong cardiovascular abilities or muscular builds. I'm the bridge between these two groups; I took the best from both and created the complete body system."

Reznik's program is largely influenced by his own personal journey, which took an unexpected turn when he started experiencing heart palpitations. Despite the alarming symptom, doctors told him nothing was wrong. "I knew something wasn't right, so I went to India and discovered this other side

of wellbeing," Reznik says. He began working with Deepak Chopra and quickly became his personal trainer, then a lecturer and exercise instructor for numerous Chopra Center seminars.

"I realized it's not all about how many pushups you can do," Reznik continues. "It's about balance, about being complete. Everyone has their own idea of how to achieve that, but basically it's not just quantity but also *quality* of life. My training approach reflects that." In fact, a number of Complete Body & Spa services reflect that. One is Ayurveda, the ancient Indian holistic tradition focusing on the health of the mind, body and spirit through diet, exercise and lifestyle.

"You can't separate fitness from overall health," Reznik says. "For example, stress at work or home interferes with wellbeing, so we can provide clients with life coaches and services from our new Environmental Wellness Design Studio." The latter includes designing and building home and office gyms, spas, saunas, terraces, gardens and other projects, as well as evaluating and organizing clients' existing spaces.

From being at ease in their environments to feeling good about their exercise regimens, Reznik wants his clients to live healthily and happily. He reasons exercise should be enjoyable, and joy is good for you. "People say 'no pain, no gain,' but I'm really against that," Reznik admits. "I believe in 'no pain, more gain.' You don't want pain during your workout; you want a comfortable challenge."

For Reznik, the idea of being comfortably challenged goes beyond fitness. He lives his life according to reasonable expectations and the idea of self-improvement based on the potential of the individual, not conformity to some universal ideal. "It's impossible to be perfect," Reznik says. "At Complete Body & Spa, we help our clients to be better, to be their best." ♦



Alex Reznik, founder and president of Complete Body & Spa