

SWEAT IT OUT IN STYLE...

IF YOU'VE already abandoned your New Year resolution to tone up, what you need is a short, sharp shock treatment. If you can combine it with a holiday, it needn't be painful.

ROYAL FLUSH

LOVE wild scenery and relish the thought of royal links? Then running The Highlands, in Scotland's majestic eastern Cairngorms, is for you.

Trained guides lead you on tailored runs through the wilderness of the Balmoral estate.

You can set your own distance (from three miles upwards) or join group runs. Other activities include biking, walking and swimming. Local restaurants are good, too, and the scenery is gorgeous.

FITNESS LEVEL: A hearty challenge.

NEED TO KNOW: Two nights' B&B with three guided runs costs from £200pp, 08451 577 422, runningthehighlands.com

MAKE A SPLASH

CORNWALL'S chic Scarlet Hotel takes exercise a brave step further with wild swimming breaks. Dive into the sea with an instructor, explore caves, and spot seals and dolphins.

You're backed up by rescue boards, with towels and hot toddies on stand-by, but this is for those who love the sea. Ayurvedic spa treatments are part of the package.

FITNESS LEVEL: Not for faint hearts.

NEED TO KNOW: A three-night break including B&B, two dinners, an hour's wild swimming and a 60-minute spa costs £490pp (based on two sharing), 01637 861800, scarlethotel.co.uk

HARD WALKING

PITCHED between the pain of running and the fun of strolling, Nordic



walking is like turbo-charging a pedestrian. Punting yourself along with specially made walking sticks means you cover ground faster and more energetically.

HF Holidays has three nights in a Sussex country house this August that will see guided groups whizzing over the South Downs; while in October, a four-night holiday is scheduled for the Derbyshire Dales. All equipment provided.

FITNESS LEVEL: A walk in the park.

NEED TO KNOW: Three nights' full-board in Sussex costs £289pp; four nights in Derbyshire is £349, 0845 470 7558, hfholidays.co.uk

PADDLE POWER

TEST yourself to the extreme in Sweden's Dalsland Canoe Marathon. The 35-mile route slices along rivers and lakes towards a crayfish party at the finishing line.

Top-level kayakers complete the scenic August race in four-and-a-half hours; slowcoaches take 12.

FITNESS LEVEL: Tough going.

NEED TO KNOW: A four-day break costs £178pp based on two sharing, including canoe hire, entry, transport, accommodation and party. Flights to Gothenburg can be arranged from £120pp; rail travel from Gothenburg to Bengtsfors costs from £25, 01929 463774, canoemarathon.co.uk