

Style memo:
tulle is so S/S 11

3. *Extend the barre*

This is turbo ballet. Pumped up with power pilates. Importing the Xtend Barre Workout that's going nuts in the US, Sydney trainer Emma Jory has me, and a room of enthusiasts, working plies, tendus and second-position arms (outstretched to the sides) with weights attached. For ages.

There's also the plank. Thankfully, there's dance music pumping and the hour passes quickly – except for when deeeep in a plie, heels raised (Emma cheerfully calls it the “challenge point”), my legs begin shaking in uncontrollable revolt. Hold...Hold...

I visualise the pain factor stretching, slenderising my thighs, lifting tight, high ballerina buns...I look to a classmate for inspiration. She executes the position with poise. She's got the lissom dancer's silhouette I came for. She's even sweating gracefully!

After class, I ask whether she's a professional on a day off. She's not; she's one of the other class instructors. That's it. Sign. Me. Up.

Emergy Pilates Lounge in Sydney's Rushcutters Bay runs Xtend Barre Workouts for \$33 per class, \$270 for 10. Visit www.emergypilates.com.au

THE DANCER'S DIET

None of us can be doing with neurotic Nina's on-screen diet of one poached egg and a halved grapefruit.

I call Lana Jones, principal artist at the Australian Ballet, between rehearsals. She opens *Madame Butterfly* in February and is eating for athletic fuel, strength and the slimspirational, elongated shape. Discipline, yes. But deprivation?

“Oh, no way,” she explains. “We have nutritionists on board... if you don't eat carbs and protein your muscles can't rehabilitate.”

She's all about a toasted sandwich for lunch and steak and veg for dinner. Good. Me too.

Natalie Portman told Grazia she spent a year prepping her body into prima ballerina shape for the film. Long and lean doesn't come easy! “As well as ballet, I did swimming and dance choreography for five to eight hours a day,” she says. “I was so tired at the end of it.”