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Does this new fitness studio have the coolest workout toys in New York City?



Running with a harness on is a total heart-pounding blast. (Photo Credit: Simon McDermott-Johnson for Tone House)

New York's newest fitness studio, [Tone House](#), opened in Union Square on March 22, in the former Bija Yoga space on 17th Street. And its athlete-fitness model owner, Alonzo Wilson, transformed the space adorned with candles and offerings into a black AstroTurf playing field outfitted with sports conditioning props—most of which are super cool workout toys you might not have seen before.

Wilson played college football, worked as a private trainer for models and athletes like the Harlem Magic Masters entertainment basketball team, and trained clients at New York Sports Club before creating Tone House.

His class is “a 60-minute intense sports conditioning workout,” where everyday fitness folks like us get access to the functional training tools used by elite athletes for strength, agility, and endurance. It’s a hot (and sweaty) concept that’s becoming more and more popular in small studios across the city, from Body Space Fitness to Soho Strength Lab.



Owner Alonzo Wilson with a Rip Trainer. (Photo Credit: Simon McDermott-Johnson for Tone House)

The playing field

Back to those toys. In addition to TRX systems, gliders, and sand bags for lifting, Tone House also has Rip Trainers, which are essentially long bars attached to the wall via resistance bands, and Training Ropes, which Wilson says are more efficient than traditional battling ropes because of

their shorter length. And, the coolest toys of all: harnesses that pull you back towards the wall with 77 pounds of resistance, as you sprint and bear crawl forward.

During a class last week, I used almost every one of the props in different intervals, plus lots of running, jumping, and core strength drills. “You’re going to move in here,” Wilson says, and you should understand that that’s the understatement of the century.



Inside The Studio, lit in red hues. (Photo: Simon McDermott-Johnson for Tone House)

Team spirit

And while Tone House’s classes (which currently max out at 10 people) will push you to an uncomfortable point of exhaustion, the novelty and variety provided by the props isn’t the only thing that will keep you going when it hurts. “This isn’t a boot camp, it’s a team atmosphere,” Wilson says.

I didn’t totally believe him, until I started to collapse during plank walks and a fellow class goer—who’d already finished his set—came back and dropped down next to me, saying, “You got this. I’ll do them with you.”

—*Lisa Elaine Held*