

# How to be Viking fit in six weeks

You've got to be tough to train like an Icelandic warrior. **Vicki-Marie Cossar** positively leapt at the opportunity

**T**HERE were lots of things I wanted to be when I was growing up (an RAF pilot topped the list). But a Viking was not one of them. And yet today I have become one. It means I have something in common with Nicole Scherzinger and Suki Waterhouse. They are Vikings too, you see.

## WHAT IS IT?

OK, let me explain... the Viking Method is a training programme based on the mentality of Iceland's ancestors. 'Surviving isolation, cold volcanic eruptions, Icelanders try toughness within their genes,' says the Viking Method founder Svava Sigbertsdottir. 'And this is why in their mentality today when it comes to fitness. Like their ancestors, they push themselves and never give up.'

Svava, originally from Reykjavik, is making advertisement for this – a lean and powerful. It's no wonder the likes of Nicole and Suki are embracing over themselves (quite literally) to train with her at £120 a session. But Svava wanted to make her method available to everyone without a celebrity endorsement, so she has launched information on her website. The same information is on the same bottle of water. She is on the same page as me. I have to get my hands on it.

Svava

with

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

There are 600 hormones in the body. Six of these are fat-burning hormones and three are fat-storing. They cannot be activated together. When you are on the Viking Method, you train and eat to switch these fat-storing hormones off.

'When you eat sugar and carbs, your fat-storing hormone insulin gets activated,' says Svava. 'Therefore you don't eat sugar or carbs for 90 minutes before training – a banana before you train is a definite no. And carbs should only be consumed straight after a training session, as this is the only time you will have depleted all the energy in your muscles and they need refuelling.'

The Viking Method also focuses on your fast-twitch muscle fibres, which generate explosive movements such as punching and kicking. These are very powerful but can't last long and using them forces you to use more energy, therefore burning more calories. Both of these processes are activated during HIIT (High Intensity Interval

Training), so expect to push yourself.

'This type of training raises your metabolic rate and means you'll burn fat long after you've finished,' says Svava. 'And to keep this metabolic rate up, you should never go longer than 48 hours between sessions.'

Hence the reason you train six times a week, with each session involving three circuits



Leap to it: Svava puts Vicki-Marie through her paces in a London park



there's a huge focus on your core. 'Improving your core will improve your performance in every way,' says Svava. 'You'll run faster, jump higher and your posture will change.' But forget sit-ups ('useless,' says Svava) – planking is the name of the game, as this activates more of your core muscles.

## THE EXPERIENCE

of sweat. But training sessions last an hour and are lots of fun. The programmes are online so you can download them on your phone or laptop and work out any time of day. Moves include burpees, paired with boxing, crawling, leapfrogs (Nicole's favourite, apparently) and kicking. There are online videos so you can watch Svava demonstrate the moves

by Friday nights, I was gagging for wine. On a Saturday I'd stick to gin and slimline tonic and felt hard done by when everyone else was down drinks (but I felt smug on Sunday). My diet also lacked structure at the weekend (luckily you're allowed cheat meal a week) and the odd packet of fizzy cola laces also cut