

Dianne LaFrite -

A Model of Inner and Outer Health

By Scott D. Jones

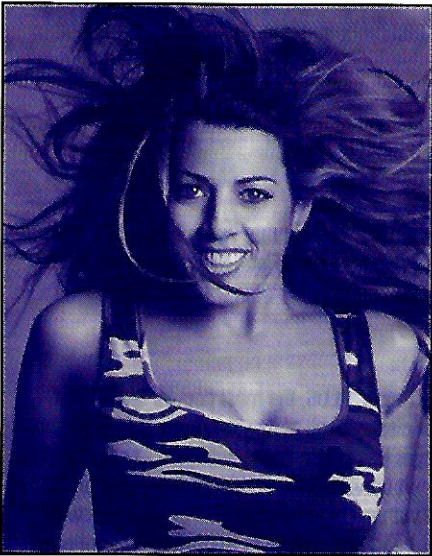


PHOTO BY: KAL YEE

She's not shy about being around a camera. After all, Dianne LaFrite has appeared on more than 25 posters, dozens of magazine covers and has even been included in 10 calendars. But this vibrant lady has taken her celebrity status and used it to move in a new direction - helping women become fit both inside and out.

"It's important that women today not only have a healthy body, but a healthy mind as well," the well-known model and actress said. "Actually, being healthy is all about a positive state of mind."

LaFrite is being given an opportunity to combine both mind and body with the new "Yo! Yoga" fitness program, which is

being developed by Ms. Fitness Editor, Greta Blackburn and other well-known fitness pros. The new program, for the first time, combines elements of Yoga, hip-hop dance and aerobic training for a new approach to fitness training. LaFrite, who is working behind the scene on the introductory "Yo! Yoga" video, is excited about the concept and where it could lead.

"I found that I sometimes got bored with yoga," she admits. "But I never get bored dancing, especially hip-hop. This mix of the two provides the best of both worlds and let's people know that it's OK to do both when you train." Certainly "Yo Yoga" with its unique hip-hop style and non-stop movements is far from boring. "It's going to open the minds of people who were closed to yoga in the past," she predicts.

Hip-hop dance is something LaFrite is very familiar with, having danced with rock artist Prince and appearing in a number of dance-oriented commercials. "I've been dancing my whole life and it's something that I love to do." The active brunette was spotted by the artist "formerly known as Prince" back in the 1980s when she was dancing at a local nightclub. "He liked what he saw and asked me if I wanted to be part of his act. We toured all around the world for several years."

She's since become good friends with former Baywatch-beauty and fellow "Prince alumna" Carmen Electra. Opportunities grew as she was asked to appear as a regular in the HBO series, "First and Ten" and had roles in "The Running Man" and "Point Break."

LaFrite's wholesome, fit look caught the attention of Mel Rich of Pinnacle Brands, a distributor of nutrition products including health supplements. "She encompasses it all. Dianne's going to work with us to not only develop a new discipline (Yo! Yoga), but she also brings a different edge

to our marketing efforts," he said.

Rich first worked with LaFrite during a Pinnacle calendar shoot last year. He was impressed. "She is a fit and confident woman who we feel will grow with us."

LaFrite has embraced her role as spokeswoman for Pinnacle. "They make a fantastic line of products and I know from first-hand experience that it's effective." She pointed out that often women don't replenish their bodies with nutrients after working out. "I want to get the word out to women who are in their 30's like myself that our bodies change. We need our nutrients and it's important not to forget as we all tend to do."

Being a celebrity who is frequently asked to pose for photo and video shoots, LaFrite knows how much pressure there is to maintain her figure. She hopes that her involvement in the fitness industry through Pinnacle and "Yo! Yoga" will provide her with a platform to address women's fitness issues.

"So many people try and lose weight the wrong way," she observes. "Young girls try diet pills, drugs or become bulimic and don't eat at all. That's wrong. While it's important to keep fit and stay fit, everyone has to know what's right for their particular body type."

LaFrite sees herself as an "active example for the 30-something woman." She looks forward to spreading a positive message. "It's not about what you weigh. It's about being healthy. A lot of women beat themselves down, but not every woman needs to weigh 106 pounds. Women can be sexy in all shapes and sizes," she says.

Look for Pinnacle Products online at www.pinnaclebody.com. For more info on Yo!Yoga check out next month's issue of Ms. Fitness, which will feature a behind-the-scenes look at the making of the video, as well as a preview of this unique new fitness hybrid.