

Dreaming of a guilt-free Christmas? Dream on

By North Shore Outlook

Published: **December 19, 2012 08:00 AM**

Updated: **December 19, 2012 08:318 AM**

Nearly two-thirds of North Vancouver residents expect to suffer some guilt after overeating this holiday season, with the same 62 per cent — surprise, surprise — already planning to fight back with a gut-busting New Year's resolution.

That's according to an [Ipsos Reid poll](#) released Tuesday asking 900 Metro Vancouver residents about their holiday exercise habits and overall physical fitness.

Of the seven municipal areas studied, North Vancouver ranked second behind Vancouver for the highest percentage of adults who self-reported as physically fit and active.

Sixty-four per cent of North Van residents who responded to the poll declared themselves fit, compared with 70 per cent in Vancouver, 58 per cent in Richmond, 54 per cent in Burnaby, 52 per cent in the Tri-Cities, 51 per cent in Surrey and just 43 per cent in Langley.

Overall, far more Metro Vancouver men self-described as fit — 65 per cent — compared with just 58.5 per cent of women. There were disparities too in how different age groups rated their health, with 60 per cent of respondents aged 35-54 declaring themselves fit, while 59 per cent of those over 55 claimed the same. Just over half of 18-34 year olds — 55 per cent — thought themselves fit.

The poll was commissioned by exercise equipment retailer Fitness Town, as both a marketing research tool and a means of studying people's perceptions of their own health and fitness levels.

"As a personal trainer, this is typically done every time I'd have an intake session with a new client," Fitness Town COO Dai Manuel told The Outlook in a phone interview about the findings. "You end up asking people a lot of personal questions to find out what motivates them and what it is that they're truly looking to change from a fitness and health standpoint."

The 62-question survey featured several built-in redundancies, which Manuel said weeded out as much of the self-reporting bias inherent in this type of poll as possible. According to Ipsos Reid, the poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.3 per cent.

But some biases may run deeper than others, particularly when there is testosterone involved.

"In particular, men 35 to 50 years old, their picture of themselves is still of that guy that played a collegiate sport," Manuel said when asked, however anecdotally, whether Metro Vancouver men really are more fit than women.

"Typically guys have maintained the same eating habits that they had when they were training and being athletes," he said.

"So they still think of themselves as very fit, while it doesn't take long for them to realize very quickly that they're not."

Women tend to be more honest and open with where they are at with their fitness level and lifestyle, Manuel said.

"They say they had kids, got in an accident, got an injury or put on weight," he added.

Perhaps not surprisingly, given North Vancouver's proximity to wilderness and tendency towards wealth and leisure, the community posted the highest rate of respondents claiming they exercise daily or otherwise regularly with 52.5 per cent, compared with 46 per cent region-wide.

tcoyne@northshoreoutlook.com
twitter.com/toddcoyne

Find this article at:

<http://www.northshoreoutlook.com/news/184111861.html>