

Ella Guru

Natural Moves

She laces up her boots and goes

Name: Maria Grazia Swan

Age: 65

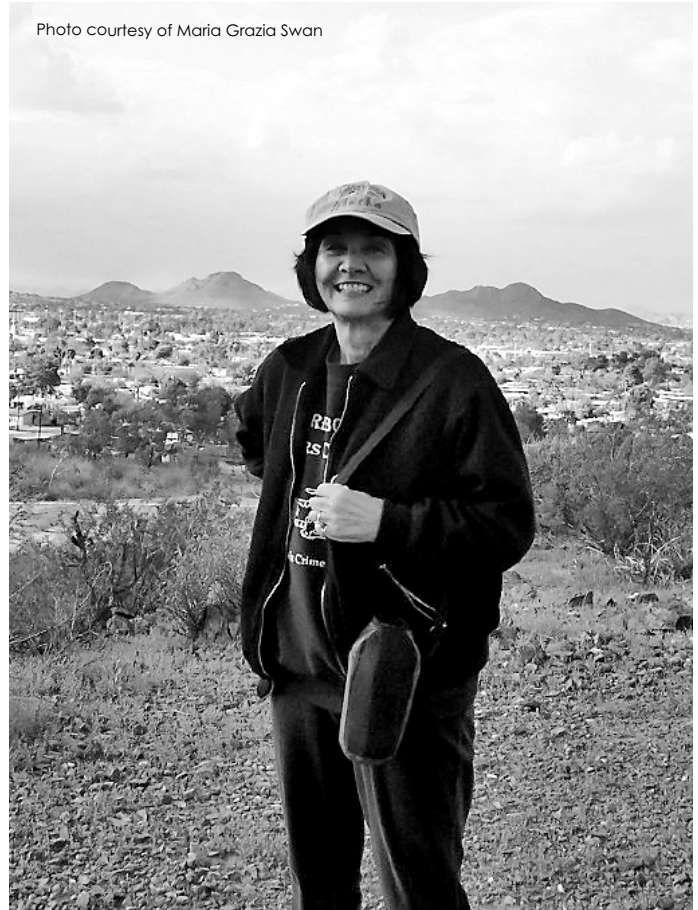
Resides: Phoenix

Quote: "Inactivity is death."
— Benito Mussolini

Background: Maria Grazia Swan grew up in a small Italian town surrounded by the Dolomites, which made it easy for her to stay active and develop her love of the outdoors. She hiked daily, and has no childhood memories of cars as transportation, only bicycles and trains. She spent her summers swimming in the river that crossed town and there was plenty of snow in the winter for skiing and sledding. Some of her fondest memories of Italy are the long walks she took with her grandfather.

When She's Working Out: In her 40s, she worked out 12 to 14 hours a week doing aerobics and lifting weights. Now, in her 60s, she does more yoga than aerobics, but still lifts weights. One exercise she has continuously done is hike. "I try to live close to mountain trails, so in the morning I'm lucky enough to get my boots on and go," she says.

When She's Not Working Out: Swan loves to travel and spends part of her summer in Italy. She enjoys walking around the places she visits. "Walking is the best way to get to know a place I really like," she says. "I remember walking for hours in The Valley of The Kings, with the guide amazed by my stamina, he had no idea the weather is like Arizona's."



Staying Motivated: Swan has a lot of energy, which she enjoys passing on to others to help inspire them. She recently began a Facebook page to inspire women all over the world to become more active. "I turned my energy and creativity to help get people away from the computer, off the couch and to reconnect face-to-face with the world," she says. "With that in mind I have a Facebook page called Get Off The Couch Tuesdays."

At Meal Time: "I have been lucky with my weight and my health and while I don't diet or count calories, I make it a point of eating home-cooked meals I prepare daily," she says of her eating habit. "And yes, I drink wine, hey, I'm Italian, remember?"

Goals: Swan's goals are simple. "As I approach retirement age, I dream of keeping my life on track with my hikes, balanced nutrition and my writing," she says.

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