

TIFFANY IRELAND, 39, from Kent, became a bootcamp bride when she attended a week-long fitness course to help her shape up for her wedding

'Terry and I had been together for 12 years when he proposed in 2009. We set the date for May 2010, which gave me a year to get into shape. Being a size 16 and weighing 11st 10lbs, I wanted to drop a dress size and feel confident walking down the aisle. I belonged to a gym but was just going through the motions. I knew I needed a fast way to get fit.

'I took time off from running my own business and signed up for a week-long military fitness break with GI Jane in May 2009. It was harder than I'd expected, and for the first three days I didn't think I'd make it - at times I cried, screamed and begged for it to stop. At 6am, it was circuit training. After porridge, we'd go for a 5k walk/run, followed by boxing and games like British bulldog or rounders. After a healthy lunch was another run and more cardio work, then I'd collapse into bed at 9pm each night. Bonding with the others on the course kept me going - that and the thought of Terry's face when he saw me in my beautiful wedding dress.

'It was worth the agony. In a week, I'd lost 11lbs - and 2ins from each upper arm, 4ins from my waist and 3ins from my bust. When I had my first fitting for my wedding dress, I was able to ask for the strapless, hourglass design I'd dreamed of - with a big split to show my legs, my best feature!

'Inspired by the bootcamp, I gave up my gym membership and ran around the park instead, using benches to do tricep dips, press-ups and lunges. I didn't lose any more weight but I felt firmer and, at each fitting, my dress was taken in further.

'On my wedding day, I was a size 14 and so excited that I was ready two hours early. My dress is loose now, as fitness has become part of my life, not just a chore to tick off my to-do list. I go for a run or fast walk every day, even if it's only 10 minutes, and do tricep dips as I watch TV. I've found the exercise that works for me - and have beautiful photos of me in my wedding dress to prove it! ■

For more information about GI Jane Bootcamp, log onto www.gijanebootcamp.co.uk.

...my wedding dress