Maratona di San Valentino, Italy

Every February the city of Terni gives a warm welcome to visitors from all over the world. They come to visit Saint Valentine’s Church, to pray at the tomb of the patron saint of the city and to run by the Marmore Waterfall with its impressive 165m drop.

The Saint Valentine Marathon (also offering a half marathon and a 5km race) takes place as part of the Saint Valentine’s Festival when people celebrate the Patron Saint of Terni who has come to stand for eternal love all around the world. Among the shows, exhibitions and concerts organized during the Festival “Cioccolentino” is famous for its stands full of products made with chocolate in original shapes and flavours.

Terni is located in the region of Umbria, only 100km from Rome, and draws many tourists. This year 20 nations were represented by runners from Finland, Poland, Russia, Ukraine, USA, Germany, the Netherlands, Israel, Morocco, Greece, Peru, etc.

A free hop-on hop-off sightseeing bus was arranged to facilitate the sightseeing programme, picking up at all the hotels, to visit the spectacular medieval villages of Narni, Arrone, Ferentillo and Montefranco and the Marmore Waterfalls.

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26 Distance Running | 2015 Edition 2
The Festival started on Saturday 14 February with the opening of the Marathon Expo at Circolo Lavoratori Terni. A miniature train brought runners and their families to Saint Valentine’s Church, the streets were lined with stands, medieval parades were enacted and the Pasta Party took place with typical local foods including lasagne, local ham, parmesan and Carnival candies.

The race started at 09.00 on Sunday from the centre of the city with 2600 runners bursting through a huge heart-shaped arch. After a kilometre they passed in front of St Valentine’s Church and could observe the medieval parade.

Two kilometres later runners continued along Valnerina, the valley known as the ‘green heart of Umbria’ and crossed the Nera river.

The Marmore Waterfall lies at the 10km point of the course in an area of wonderful scenic trails. Faced with the sight many runners forgot the clock and stopped to take pictures of the falls.

According to legend a very beautiful nymph, Nera, daughter of the God of the Appenine Mountains, fell in love with a young shepherd, Velino. But during a feast Juno discovered this profane love and decided to punish the nymph, transforming her into a river, the Nera River, on the top of Mount Vettore. She flowed downstream, like tears, reaching the cliff where she had first met Velino. He, ignorant of Nera’s fate, consulted the sybil and discovered the truth. He threw himself off the cliff in anguish and in order to be united with his beloved. That plunge is today known as the Marmore Waterfalls, symbolising eternal love all over the world.

At 15km runners pass through the medieval village of Arrone, with stone houses and portals, picturesque alleys and ancient monuments. The remains of San Giovanni Battista’s Church and Saint Mary’s Church are located here.

At 22km the course passes through the village of Ferentillo, one of the most evocative locations along the Valnerina, with a narrow gorge close by. Inside the crypt of Santo Stefano’s Church (XV century) there is Museum of Mummies.

Throughout the race both adults and children encouraged runners with whistles and bells, and bands played in some places.

After Ferentillo the course is downhill and runners who have reserved their strength during the first part of the race are now able to speed up. The gentle slope approaching the falls, lasting about 3km, is the best chance to recover energy and relax the muscles before passing by the Steel Factory and starting the final 2km sprint to the finish line in Piazza Europa.

The new route, with a double transit of Marmore Waterfalls, was very much appreciated: there were a lot of positive comments and many people promised to return next year.

One of the main features of the Saint Valentine Marathon is that participants can enter as couples, a man and a woman running as race partners. Many of these entries were rewarded with free entries for other marathons such as Brussels, Dusseldorf, Rome, Venice and Milan.

Runners liked the unique design of the medal, with a heart within a heart, blessed in Saint Valentine’s church and featuring an effigy of the Saint, the race logo and Montefranco’s square and church. Along with the medal came a technical New Balance T-shirt, a bracelet, a home-made chocolate Malù heart and a panpepato, a typical sweet from Terni.

We await you for the 6th edition of the marathon: visit Umbria, the green heart of Italy and run for love in the native land of Saint Valentine.

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Result

MEN:  
1 Carmine BUCCELLI ITA 2:18:51  
2 Mohamed HAJJIY MAR 2:19:58  
3 Youness ZITOUNI MAR 2:20:31  
4 Abdelhadi TYAR MAR 2:21:34  
5 Antonello PETREI ITA 2:35:17  
6 Claudio CICOTELLI ITA 2:36:19  
7 Marco BOFFO ITA 2:37:03  
8 Alessandro GALIZZI ITA 2:40:52  
9 Fabio VOLZONE ITA 2:42:43  
10 Fadil EI SOUFYANE MAR 2:42:56

WOMEN:  
1 Marija VRACIC CRO 2:55:21  
2 Paola SALVATORE ITA 2:57:53  
3 Monica CARLIN ITA 3:00:41  
4 Cecilia TIRELLI ITA 3:05:24  
5 Sara CARDUCCI ITA 3:06:38  
6 Federica POESINI ITA 3:09:35  
7 Christine MAYONNADE FRA 3:11:28  
8 Cristina IMBUCATURA ITA 3:19:42  
9 Elide DEL SINDACO ITA 3:20:26  
10 Lorena PIASTRA ITA 3:24:59

Maratona di San Valentino

The race will be run again on 21 February 2016.

For event information visit www.maratonadisanvalentino.it
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