Every year on the first Sunday of October the race is flagged off from Independence Square in the heart of the Sri Lankan capital.

Runners proceed towards Negombo Beach Park via the bustling towns of Borella, Dematagoda, Peliyagoda, Wattala and after passing the Hamilton Canal from there onwards to Pamunuwama, Thalahena, Pitipana and Doowa.

In 2015 participation reached over 6400 out of which almost 200 participants were representing 39 foreign nations. The race is an arena where friendships are made and memories are treasured.

Introduced by Lanka Sportreizen (LSR) the marathon has become a global sports event that attracts runners from around the world. In 1998 the LSR International Marathon was held in Galle. Since then it has been held in Negombo, Kandy, Dambulla and finally in Colombo, attracting more and more runners with every passing year.

After the first five editions the name was changed to what it is today – The LSR Colombo Marathon, with SriLankan Airlines as the official airline partner.

The Marathon has been always been about boosting the image of Sri Lanka as a recreational destination, giving visiting athletes the opportunity to immerse themselves in the unique Sri Lankan culture and enjoy Sri Lanka’s warmth and hospitality. At a domestic level it was aimed at encouraging Sri Lankan youth and school children to take part in events where they could run alongside international runners.

Colombo Marathon was also the vehicle by which the “fun running” culture was introduced to Lankan society and used to promote the concept of ‘healthy society’.

The event has 14 categories; male and female senior and veteran categories in the Marathon and half marathon (over 18 for the Marathon, over 17 for the half Marathon) and men, women and schoolchildren (over 15 boys and girls) in the 10km and 5km fun runs.

The next event is on Sun 2 October 2016

For more information visit: www.srilankamarathon.org
Colombo Marathon does not attract athletes for its competition alone. The athletes who arrive in the island take time to enjoy its beauty, either prior to or after the marathon. Some may proceed to the breathtaking interior of the island. From the wildlife parks in the South and the North that are famed for the highest leopard density in Asia to the thickets where enormous elephants roam freely, Sri Lanka offers a wildlife experience that cannot be matched by any other terrain.

The country is also home to many ancient kingdoms that continue to hold visitors spellbound. One cannot help but be awed by the unspoilt sophistication of the architectural masterpieces in the Anuradhapura Kingdom. Gigantic stupas that reach for the sky; intricate stone carvings; ancient irrigation systems; the Sigirya and Dambulla Rock paintings — one an ancient fortress dubbed the eighth wonder of the world with frescos still preserved and the other a temple with the most elaborate paintings of the lifetime of the Buddha, both situated in the Central province within close proximity of each other.

The Central Hills are also home to the country’s most venerated place of worship among Buddhists — The Temple of the Tooth Relic of the Buddha. Alongside lies the picturesque Kandy Lake overlooking the Udawattekele bird sanctuary.

When in Sri Lanka it is impossible for someone to escape the charms of the Indian Ocean that surrounds the island. Whale and dolphin watching hotspots in Kalpitiya, Trincomalee and Mirissa on the Southern Coast of Sri Lanka have become much sought-after stopovers.

For the more adventurous Sri Lanka also offers chances for white-water rafting, kite-surfing, hot air ballooning and the surfing hotspot of Arugambay which knows no time or season.

From the widest smiles that adorn the faces of Sri Lankans to the rustic three-wheeler and train rides through tea gardens, anyone who arrives for the Marathon will not return without having experienced the ebb and flow of the island’s life.

There is the striking sight of local runners running barefoot, competing alongside those sporting the latest running shoes. For all of them there is an endless line of people who throng the pavements and encourage runners all the way from Colombo to Negombo. This good cheer does not come with labels. A sense of encouragement flows freely and easily for anyone in search of a push from the crowd.

This is the story of the Colombo Marathon.