

13th edition from 3 to 7 October 2024

MORE THAN A TRAIL RACE, IT'S ABOUT SHARING AND TRAVELLING!
June 2024

For the last 15 years, the Atlas Quest team (formerly UTAT - the Ultra Trail Atlas Toubkal) has been delighted to organise this event, which brings together hundreds of trail runners from all over the world in the High Atlas, in the heart of the Toubkal massif with its imposing and unusual landscapes.

But it's not just a trail race. Its organisation actively contributes to the development of the region, in close collaboration with local partners. When Cyrille Sismondini discovered the Atlas Mountains in 2007, he not only fell in love with this fabulous region, but also dreamt of making it better known.

The aim in creating this trail was to make a different kind of sporting event, with a worldwide reputation, and to introduce trail runners from all over the world to a massif of rare beauty. The race takes place at altitudes of between 1,700 m and 3,700 m, on paths where competitors share a sporting experience alongside the people who live there.

Along all the race routes of Atlas Quest our team logistics and emergency services meet the requirements of ITRA standards, yet are provided entirely by mules and their muleteers. It's a trail event intimately linked to local life.

Atlas Quest is all about running, but it's also about discovering a culture, meeting shepherds and locals, a chance to unwind and get away from it all!

COVID 19 AND EARTHQUAKE IN 2023 : CHALLENGES AND CONCRETE ACTIONS

The area has faced many challenges, and Atlas Quest has always demonstrated its commitment to the Moroccan community.

In 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic deprived the inhabitants of their main source of income, linked in particular to tourism, the organisation launched an 'emergency basket' solidarity initiative via Hello Asso, delivering food and hygiene products directly to the affected families.

In 2023, the devastating earthquake of September 8th hit even harder, leaving many villages in the High Atlas in ruins. Buildings collapsed like a house of cards, and those still standing showed serious signs of weakness, creating a critical situation.

In the days following the earthquake, the Atlas Quest team delivered to the local people all the tents, mattresses and generators it had available for the organisation of its event - 120 tents, providing temporary accommodation for

500 people. It also set up several temporary elementary schools in the villages affected by the earthquake, using large tents.

A drop in the ocean compared to the immensity of the needs...

Once again with Hello Asso and in partnership with the Solidarité Marathon des Sables association and its emblematic creator, Patrick Bauer, a new campaign was launched to collect donations to supply tents, mattresses and duvets to households in the valleys used by the race. The emergency campaign raised €51,200 to finance 100 additional 4/5-seater tents.

AND THE 2023 EDITION HAD TO BE CANCELLED.

In the spring of 2024, the Atlas Quest team once again took action to provide more permanent aid to the inhabitants of the High Atlas. The aim was to fund emergency shelters - lightweight but sturdier structures to protect the inhabitants of Iabassen, one of the most isolated villages in the High Atlas, from falling rocks, a danger that has increased since the earthquake.

Each emergency shelter consists of a 9m² metal structure, cement, bricks, bamboo panels, a door and a plexiglass window, at a cost of €875 each. This new campaign has raised €35,000 to fund 40 shelters: 10 by the Marathon des Sables Solidarity Foundation and 30 thanks to the efforts of Marathon des Sables 2024 runners, volunteers, UTAT runners and numerous anonymous donors.

According to Cyrille Sismondi, President and founder of Atlas Quest: "We're delighted to be able to help this region with our modest means. From the outset, trail running has embodied the values of sharing, discovering mountainous regions and building solidarity between runners and the communities who live there. As human beings, with a passion for the mountains, the trail and the natural environment, and through the shared history we've been writing with the region and its inhabitants over the past 15 years, we can't ignore the challenges facing the people living in the villages crossed by the race routes. »

A TRAIL RACE AND A CULTURAL IMMERSION

The 13th edition Atlas Quest 2024 confirms this desire to share and exchange with residents.

A few hours before the races on Friday 4 October 2024, Atlas Quest is inviting runners to a unique experience, a classical music concert at the race site in Oukaimeden, in partnership with the Institut Français de Marrakech. A magical evening of music is planned, featuring artists from the Paris Opera - a classical singer and a string quartet.

Finally, to round off the event in style, there will be an exclusive concert by the Moroccan musician Jubantouja on Sunday 6 October at 5pm in the Atlas Quest village, who combines Amazigh melancholy with his passion for running.

As a major player in this region, Atlas Quest must set an example in terms of sustainability.

This responsible approach is part of a real desire to preserve its own environment, the home of the locals and the playground of the runners, the Toubkal National Park.

Anything brought into the area is disposed of or recycled. An entire waste management system has been put in place, including cleaning up the Oukaïmeden site, collecting and sorting waste at checkpoints along the route and finally removing it by mule for recycling in Marrakech.

Through this approach, and at every stage, each player involved is a link in the chain that is essential to the smooth running of the project.

ATLAS QUEST BRINGS TOGETHER THE 3 PILLARS OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Economic :

- 596 working days for local participants for a 4-day event
- 75% of the organisation's budget injected into the region
- 40 race places offered to local talent (including race inscription + medical check-up + equipment)

Social :

- First aid training for mountain guides

Environmental :

- Exchange of empty bottles for full ones
- Reusable cutlery for meals
- Maintenance of damaged paths

- Heritage discovery and guided tours

2024 registrations <https://trail-atlasquest.com/fr/inscription/>

information on <https://trail-atlasquest.com/fr/>

Photos available here with compulsory photocredit :

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/
162QyAkaHMagB5g9fPJbL8qE9SLAsEEg](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/162QyAkaHMagB5g9fPJbL8qE9SLAsEEg)

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