



500 athletes discover the Atlas mountains

September 2024

Nearly 500 athletes from over 20 countries will be at the start of the 13th Atlas Quest by Utat from 4 to 6 October.

The Oukaïmeden plateau, situated at an altitude of 2,620 m in the heart of the High Atlas, wild and authentic, will once again be the focal point of the 4 races that have forged the soul and reputation of the event.

After the cancellation of 2023 due to the earthquake, all the indicators are green this year for the event to regain its grandeur and splendour.

All the favourites lined up for a great duel

This 13th edition promises to be thrilling on the ground, with some great duels in store.

On the main event, the Atlas Toubkal Ultra Trail, we'll find the outgoing winner **Guillaume Beauxis**, recently 35th in the UTMB, 5th in the TDS 2022 and a lover of this wild, technical terrain.

He will be up against **Lambert Santelli**, record-holder of the GR 20 in 30h25', winner of the Restonica trail by UTMB 2024 and 4th in the Grand Raid de la Réunion and winner of the MIUT in 2023; he will certainly find a terrain where he can express his climbing skills and his talents as a descender in rocky environments.

The Haut Savoyard **Stefen Roux** will also be in contention for a place on the podium, 5th in the 100km Restonica Trail 2023 and 2nd in the 76km Montreux Trail Festival 2024.

Morocco's **Jamal Ait Ifraden**, winner of the High Atlas Ultra Trail 2023 and 2024 over 120km, will be a leading outsider and could also feature on the podium.

In the women's category, the favourite is XXL ultra-trail runner **Claire Bannwarth**, aka the Duracell rabbit, who has a string of races under her belt and has just finished the Tor des Géants in 3rd place after taking 18th place in the UTMB.

In the Atlas challenge (marathon + Ikkis tour), 2 athletes will be discovering this region and are among the favourites: Corsican **Noël Giordano**, very comfortable on technical 40km formats, 3rd in the THP and winner of the Trail Gravona 2024 and **Matis Leray**, 32nd in the UTMB, 2nd in the Frison Roche and 7th in the Eiger over 50km this season.

In the women's race, Drôme's **Amandine Ferrato**, runner-up in the 2017 World Championship and a regular scratch podium finisher in local races, will be the favourite along with Morocco's **Aziza Raji**, three-time winner of the High Atlas Ultra trail and 2nd in the 2024 Marathon des Sables after winning it in 2021, as well as Astrid Renet and Julia Redoutey.

We can also count on the Moroccan athletes, who will be showcasing their qualities as runners and their ability to adapt to the heat and altitude. They will be present in large numbers and come every year to compete against the European runners.

4 races and 1 challenge

Distances ranging from 12 km to 105 km, altitudes from 1,700 m to 3,700 m, with an average of around 2,500 m, temperatures ranging from 0°C to +25°C, landscapes as grandiose as

they are austere, steep paths, authentic villages, looks and smiles... these are the ingredients that will accompany the competitors in the various events.

ULTRA-TRAIL ATLAS TOUBKAL

105km / 8000 m D+

The race requires a high level of self-sufficiency and the trails are technical. One section of the race, from km 40 to km 80, crosses one of the most remote and isolated parts of the High Atlas, with no roads and no mobile phone coverage.

There are 19 medical checkpoints along the route, including 6 with refreshments.

Start: Friday 4 October at midnight - max time: 40h

Winner: around 18h (Record: 17h36'13 - 2022 Guillaume Beauxis)

MARATHON DE L'ATLAS

42km / 2600 m D+

The race starts in Oukaïmeden at an altitude of 2,620m, with the highest point on the route at 3,180m and the lowest at 1,950m.

The organisers have set up 2 refreshment stands and 5 checkpoints.

The Atlas Marathon is a demanding route, with the fastest runners finishing in around 4 hours 30 minutes.

Start: Saturday 5 October at 6.00 am - maximum time: 12 hours

Winner: around 4h30 (Record: 4h33'28 - 2014 Rachid Elmorabity)

La VIRÉE D'IKKISS

26km / 1400 m D+

An unforgettable journey through the High Atlas!

The race starts in Oukaïmeden at an altitude of 2,620 m, with the highest point of the route at 2,950 m and the lowest at 1,830 m.

The Virée d'Ikkiss is a short race with a maximum of thrills in the heart of the green valleys and dry environments of high altitude.

1 feed station and 4 checkpoints

Start: Sunday 6 October at 9.00 am - maximum time: 8 hours

Winner: around 2h30 (current record 02h23'20 - 2016 Rachid Elmorabity)

CHALLENGE DE L'ATLAS

42km + 26km / 4000 m D+ cumulative

Le Challenge est une combinaison du Marathon de l'Atlas (42 kms & 2600 D+) le samedi et de la Virée d'Ikkiss (26 kms & 1400 D+) le lendemain. Le classement établi est basé sur la somme des temps réalisés lors de chaque course. Deux courses en deux jours. Un véritable défi, avec au total 68 km et 4 000 mètres de dénivelé.

L'AMAZIGH TRAIL

12 km/ 600m D+

A quick and accessible excursion to discover the beauty of the Oukaïmeden trails, a real mountain trail!

The essence of mountain running. A route close to Oukaïmeden, with climbs and descents and breathtaking views!

Start: Sunday 6 October at 10 a.m.

ABOUT THE ATLAS QUEST

The Atlas Quest was created in 2009 and will celebrate its 13th edition in 2024.

It was the brainchild of Cyrille Sismondini, who discovered the Atlas in 2007 and not only fell in love with this fabulous region but also dreamt of making it better known.

The organisation actively contributes to the development of the region, working closely with local players.

The aim of creating this event was to make it 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. A race that takes place at altitudes of between 1,700 m and 3,700 m, on Moroccan paths where competitors share a sporting experience on the land of the people who live there.

A COMMITTED EVENT

As a major player in the Moroccan mountains, Atlas Quest has a duty to 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 riders, the Toubkal National Park.

Everything 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 transporting it by mule to be recycled in Marrakech.

In this way, at every stage, everyone involved is a link in the chain that is vital to the success of the project.

THE ATLAS QUEST PRESENTS 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

Social :

- 40 participations offered to local talent (race numbers / medical check-up / equipment)
- 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

Photos available here with photo credit required :

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/162QyAkahMagB5-q9fPJbL8qE9SLAsEEq>

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