

VVX VOLVIC— 21st - 23rd VOLCANIC MAY EXPERIENCE 2020

Back to the basic essence of Trail Running

AT THE HEART OF THE REGIONAL NATURAL PARK OF AUVERGNE'S VOLCANOES

AN ATHLETIC, FESTIVE AND CULTURAL PROGRAM
FOR A FULL-ON EXPERIENCE RATHER THAN A SIMPLE RACE



PRESS PACK 2020

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THE CONCEPT IN 5 POINTS

3 DAYS ...

At the heart of an extraordinary, pristine, and yet still sometimes unknown landscape, the VVX invites both athletes and visitors to partake in this adventurous getaway!

3 THEMES ...

The three 100%-compatible themes of sports, discovery, and fun make this event so unique. Both participants and spectators are invited to explore the region in all its diversity.

5 RACES & 2 HIKES

You can choose from 15 to 220 km race formats for all levels of trail runners, whether simple enthusiasts or international elite athletes. For those wanting a slower pace, the customized-format hike will appeal to all nature lovers. And for those wanting to mix nature exploration with an introduction to Auvergne's culinary traditions, the gourmet hike that takes place the following day is open to all. Enjoy an exploration of its iconic landmarks and local craftsmanship with a festive atmosphere!

3 ICONIC ELEMENTS SPECIAL TO THE AUVERGNE REGION ...

Reigning over the whole region, volcanoes, stone, and water are also the common thread to the various competitions. They reveal their secrets and riches throughout the event's various entertainment, presentations, and educational workshops, making this trip to Volvic a great opportunity to learn more about the region.

1 EVENT ...

Unique.
The VVX offers an innovative and decidedly distinct concept!



WHY IS THE « VVX »

MUCH MORE THAN A TRADITIONAL TRAIL RACE



→ ***Because it offers a unique personal experience***

Since its conception in 2017, the Volvic Volcanic Experience (VVX) has forged itself according to one mantra: to offer more than an ordinary athletic experience to its visitors. By registering for a race bib, you also benefit from the unique discovery of a whole territory and its local residents, as well as of their culture and traditions.



→ ***Because it invites you to an athletic immersion into an exceptional, renowned and preserved landscape***

The Chaîne des Puys – Faily de Limagne is the only natural site in continental France to be designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site (since July 2018). It's a volcanic excursion at the heart of the Regional Natural Park of Auvergne's volcanoes.



→ ***Because it's a full-fledged odyssey of the senses***

Throughout the entire event, participants are in contact with the surrounding pristine natural landscape, an adventure carried along by the common thread of volcanoes, stone, and water. Completely immersed into this living and vibrant environment, all adventurers, young and old, will experience a riot of the senses – observing, smelling, touching, hearing, and even tasting the various elements.



→ ***Because it's first and foremost a people-oriented experience thanks to the proud and generous inhabitants of Auvergne***

Particularly attached to their land and traditions, the Auvergnats invest in this event in order to allow everyone to get a «taste» (in every sense of the word) of their homeland. If you share the same values of authenticity and camaraderie, then you will immediately be swept away by the ambiance at this event... and feel at home among the welcoming people of this region.

WHAT'S YOUR AVERAGE PROGRAM WHEN ATTENDING THE VVX ?

Christine's schedule (39 years old, amateur trail runner and mother of 2)

THURSDAY

4 PM : arrive and settle into apartment

5 PM : pick up my race bib for the next day and prep my trail running backpack

7 PM : VVX's inaugural dinner and festivities at the church square (don't let the music sweep me away: spare my legs for the upcoming race)

FRIDAY

9 AM : start of the Volvic Catchment Trail Experience (43 km / 1700 m elevation gain)

11 AM : Sylvain and the kids can try out the slackline, spiderline, geocaching and electric scooters

1 PM : Biathlon challenge for Emma and archery for Baptiste

3 PM : Sylvain and the kids will greet me at the finish line (if all is well) Before heading over to the evening festivities, go check out CITEO's «Ouitri» stand to better understand the importance and impact of recycling, whether during the event or once back home!

7:30 PM : a well-deserved shower and we're off again to the concert and dinner event at the Goulet site, a chance to root for the last trail runners of the 220 and 110 km races.

SATURDAY

10:30 AM : a regenerating hike with the whole family on the «gourmet hike» (remember to not eat too big of a breakfast before the hike!)

2 PM : storytelling and nap for the kids in the town center

3 PM : visit the local blacksmith's forge and the lava stone carver's workshop

5 PM : composting and/or making your very own zero waste cleaning products workshops

7:30 PM : closing ceremony and outdoor concert at the Goulet site (remember to take a small sweater to cover up as summer evenings can get chilly in Auvergne)

SUNDAY

2 PM : pick up some of Auvergne's blue cheese and 'Salers' cheese to take home for grandma and grandpa

3 PM : head home (and check if we can already sign up for 2021!)

THE GENESIS

RETURN TO TRAIL RUNNING'S AUTHENTIC VALUES



Trail running has become more and more popular over the past few years, currently counting some 900,000 enthusiasts. Today there are approximately 2500 – 3000 trail running events in France to meet the increasing demand and desire for nature running. But in the midst of this booming development, how many of these events still promote trail running's initial values? How many of them aim at perpetuating the original motivations of the very first competitions?

A question to be asked... Beyond the pure athletic and competitive aspect, trail running is most importantly based on the love of nature in all its fascinating aspects. More than a «personal best» to beat, an elevation gain to surpass, or a finish line to cross, trail running should be motivated by the desire to explore new landscapes and to fully immerse in the preserved natural environment. The sport also aspires to highlight and involve all trail runners in different cultures by meeting new people – whether an event's organizers, volunteers, or participants – throughout the experience.

THE FOUR FRIENDS FROM DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS AT THE START OF THE PROJECT

How did the project first see light? The genesis of the VVX was four friends with very different work profiles, but all driven by a common passion, the love of their region. First, it started with an unlikely duo: Jean Michel Chopin, former Head of Evian Volvic World Operations and President of the Volvic Water company; and Thierry Courtadon, world-renowned sculptor and ambassador for local craftsmanship, who carves the black lava stone «like no one else». Next to join in the adventure, and in the process providing additional experience and enthusiasm, were Bernard Echaliér, a close friend and expert of the Chaîne des Puys, and Mohand Hamoumou, the mayor of Volvic. Beyond the close friendship they all shared, the four of them were also strongly bound by a common desire: building together an event aimed at bringing people together and having them discover and share the hidden treasures of Auvergne.

THE ROOTS OF THIS EVENT HAVE GROWN IN THE SEARCH FOR AUTHENTICITY AND THE WISH TO VALUE A TERRITORY

Has this quest and need for authenticity become secondary to the trail running organizers and participants themselves, all caught up in the whirlwind of an exponentially successful sport? The concept of an innovative and unique event germinated precisely out of this reflection, consideration and reassessment... the VVX was born!

Build, stone after stone (lava stones, obviously), an attractive and perfectly-suited, and environmentally-conscious event in order to highlight and value the environment in which it takes place.

Build, a whole athletic program that incorporates the exploration of natural landscapes, the local residents, cuisine, craftsmanship, and culture.

Build, an organization whose DNA is rooted in the foundational values of trail running: authenticity, camaraderie, sharing, and environmental responsibility...

BUILD, ULTIMATELY, A GENUINE EXPERIENCE.

THE 6 STRONG AND SAFEGUARDED ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENTS

Even if the VVX's first priority is to return to the origins of trail running, sustainable development isn't any the less one of its fundamental priorities. Almost all sporting events have to take this into account nowadays. But, when one organizes an outdoor sporting, cultural, and fun event at the heart of a remarkable environment – renowned for its special geography and biodiversity, and recently designated a UNESCO World Heritage site – the conservation of the environment and its resources must be a strong commitment. It even has to be one of the project's fundamentals. Sustainable development, a limited ecological footprint, short supply chains, and social cohesion are all at the heart of the VVX's spirit.

A DEDICATED ENVIRONMENTAL TEAM ENSURES THE GIVEN COMMITMENTS ARE FOLLOWED AND ACHIEVED, EVEN IN THE SMALLEST DETAILS.

DELIBERATELY LIMIT THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS, DESPITE THE OBVIOUS CALL NOT TO DO SO

1

Contrary to numerous other events that seek the largest number of participants, the VVX deliberately restrains the number of runners to no more than 600 per race, thereby preventing the overrunning of the environment, fauna and flora. By doing so, the event is assured to have a convivial atmosphere between participants and volunteers and encourages a sense of belonging towards the environment as well as fellow participants.

PRIORITIZE DETAILS IN THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

2

While the elimination of unnecessary packaging and the implementation of recycling during events such as these seem to be obvious choices, the VVX's organization takes it even further, for example, with the use of sustainable and of reusable signage (removed after the last runners pass through) and of recycled furnishings (benches and other items built by a local association with recycled pallets)...

ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

3

In order to improve each upcoming year and fine-tune the routing of the various running and hiking trails, the organization systematically consults the territory's acting administrators (Bird Conservation League, Regional Natural Park...etc.). This important procedure allows the re-routing of trails according to the needs and habits of the local fauna and flora (blooming of a specific plant, reproduction sites, arrival of new species...). Among the other significant initiatives: a portion of the fee of each race bib purchased is redistributed to the PNRVA (Regional Natural Park of Auvergne's Volcanoes), annual eco-events are regularly organized in order to maintain and protect the natural landscape and increase environmental awareness.

DRASTICALLY LIMIT CO² EMISSIONS

4

To drastically limit the use of high impact transportation caused by the event, organizers are implementing the use of free shuttle services, encouraging carpooling, and providing electric bikes for all volunteers and local service providers.

PROMOTE THE LOCAL AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

5

The process is just as crucial as it is fastidious! The organization favors collaborations with local and/or organic suppliers for all of the event's meals and refreshment stands. In practical terms, at least 70 % of all produce on offer is locally produced and 50 % is organic. Overall, this approach aims at the promoting of local craftsmanship, skills, and entrepreneurship during the various cultural activities.

FOSTER SOCIAL COHESION

6

Closely related to any idea of environmental responsibility, the VVX is proud to create social links by prioritizing the involvement of local residents and associations (see the involvement of the CeClerc association or Avenir). This social cohesion is also promoted by offering event content open to all. To do so, they have developed activities for all age groups and offer a large panel of free activities...

A LITTLE MORE EVERY YEAR

Because genuinely environment-friendly management also requires constant reflection and improvement, VVX's environmental team incorporates impartial means of measurement of each commitment, hence ensuring the definition and quantification of possible improvements for the following year.

All of the VVX's various committees make the environment a key part of their strategies. For example, the Entertainment Committee will offer shows and various entertainment on the environment.



TEAMING UP WITH «QUITRI» AND CITEO

Quitri is a free service offered by Citeo, an organization that offers companies the best-suited approaches to reducing the environmental impact of their paper and packaging wastes. The VVX has signed on to Citeo's Quitri environmental commitments. Quitri orients event organization committees towards possible partners in charge of waste collection and recycling. Currently, 68 % of all packaging and 57 % of all paper is recycled in France.

The VVX is very involved in environmental conservation. Beyond the event's content highlighting the region's natural heritage, the event's organization has also implemented extensive efforts in the area of sustainable development.

After the assessment of each of the previous 3 annual events, the VVX committed to an even more extensive strategies for progress, audits, and measurements by registering all their commitments in an ecological charter. In 2020, their goal is to pursue all environmental efforts in a sustainable manner. The collaboration with Citeo's «Quitri» is one of the components.

For further information:

www.quitri.com/comment-ca-marche/la-charte-d-engagement

www.volvic-vvx.com/en/acting-for-the-environment/



ENCOURAGING VISITORS TO GET INVOLVED

Everyone has a role to play! In order to build awareness and encourage visitors to adopt environment-friendly habits, whether during sporting events or at home, various educational workshops are organized for the whole family throughout the event: composting, vermicomposting and the making of zero-waste cleaning products...

By implementing this ecological charter the VVX's organization is firmly committed to a sustainable management of the extraordinary natural environment in which the event takes place and implementation of long-term performance indicators.

INVITATION N°1 :

EXPERIENCE THE VVX'S FIRST MANTRA «MOVE»

AND WHAT BETTER LOCATION IS THERE IN WHICH TO «MOVE» THAN AUVERGNE'S VOLCANOES AND THE CHAÎNE DES PUYS? THIS EXTRAORDINARY ENVIRONMENT INVITES ALL FAMILY MEMBERS TO CHOOSE AMONG THE VARIOUS PROPOSED ACTIVITIES AND TO EXPERIENCE AN ACTIVE AND FUN WEEKEND BETWEEN TRAIL RUNNING, HIKING, AND BEING INTRODUCED TO MULTI-SPORT ACTIVITIES. THE ONLY THING LEFT TO DO IS DETERMINE WHAT YOUR OWN PROGRAM WILL INCLUDE!

PARTICIPATE IN A PARTICULAR TRAIL RUNNING EXPERIENCE

Since its first year in 2017, the VVX has become a prominent trail running race, both internationally and inter-generationally. This unique race is acclaimed by a growing number of participants each year. And this aura has largely surpassed the French borders since in 2019, no less than 17 nationalities were represented. Nonetheless, for environmental reasons the organization will not compromise on its fundamental values and will continue to limit its races to a maximum of 600 participants.

NEW - THE VOLVIC VOLCANIC EXPERIENCE JOINS THE INTERNATIONAL ULTRA TRAIL WORLD TOUR CIRCUIT!

If you value authenticity, diversity of experiences, and trail running's original core values, the world will stand up and take notice! After only 3 years and despite strong international competition, the Chaîne des Puys – Faille de Limagne Trail Experience, VVX's 110 km race, has set itself apart and will join the prestigious UTWT international circuit in 2020! The UTWT circuit includes approximately 20 iconic races worldwide, all carefully chosen. Standing for races that defend common values such as ethics, equality, respect for oneself as well as others, and the environment, the UTWT also chooses the all-around multi-skilled female and male winners at the end of each season.

EVALUATED BY THE UTWT IN 2019, CHOSEN IN 2020

Since Chaîne des Puys – Faille de Limagne (110 km race) shares these same values, it was evaluated by the UTWT representatives during the previous 2019 event. Their goal: ensure that the very selective requirements were being met by the VVX: trail running race of at least 100 km; presence of an iconic landscape; popular and collective races; an event of international magnitude; and at least two previous events completed... The event's organizational quality, the original and innovative concept, the event's environmental achievements, and the general ambiance of the races and additional activities (cultural, musical and historical) – all of which are the very foundation of the VVX – were no doubt also determining qualifications. ITRA certified and UTMB®-qualifying race: 4 points (solo race)

In 2020, all the UTWT® circuit races will not only grant points, but also grant Running Stones (1 running stone per point, for a total of 4 stones).

«The reward for a truly unique concept»

Jean-Michel Chopin,
founder of the VVX

«Joining the very selective UTWT circuit is quite rewarding for the tight-knit team behind the VVX, carried out by the enthusiasm of 650 volunteers. It also highlights a unique concept that tends towards getting off the beaten track by offering a multi-faceted event that explores Auvergne's natural heritage, listed amongst UNESCO World Heritage sites.»



«An authentic candidacy that differentiated itself from the others»

Marie Sammons,
Executive Director of the UTWT®

«The VVX particularly attracted our attention because the candidacy was quite solid but also because it differentiated itself from the other applications. Truly unique, the VVX goes beyond the mandatory selection criteria. The event's authenticity is innovative in itself. It's the only race that offers trail running as well as a sequel of nature-oriented experiences to share with friends and family. Participants come to enjoy the full 3 days, not only to partake in the competition!»

**« THE VVX AND THE UTMB® ARE THE ONLY TWO UTWT® EVENTS
TO TAKE PLACE IN FRANCE IN 2020! »**

THE ATHLETES

THE 2019 WINNERS

• 220 km (8110 m elevation gain) « XGTV »

Ludovic Martin (France) in 36:45 hours and Claire Raimbaut (France), the only woman participating in the race, in 53:37 hours, 7th in the overall rankings

• 110 km (3 500 m elevation gain)

Sange Sherpa (Nepal) in 10:45 hours and Sarah Verguet Moniz (Portugal) in 12:27 hours

• 43 km (1 700 m elevation gain)

Pedro Jose Hernandez Sanchez (Spain) in 3:24 hours and Virginie Pailloux (France) 4:34 hours

• 25 km (1000 m elevation gain)

Fabien Demure (France) in 2:07 hours and Marine Place (France) in 2:30 hours

• 15 km (450 m elevation gain)

Yoan Meudec (France) in 1:04 hours and Corinne Rougerie (France) in 1:30 hours

THE WINNER OF BOTH THE UTWT AND UTMB WILL BE RACING IN THE NEXT VVX!

The Chaîne des Puys - Faille de Limagne Trail Experience - 110 km solo, duo or trio race, will count in 2020 towards the Ultra Trail® World Tour rankings, therefore attracting more and more renowned athletes.

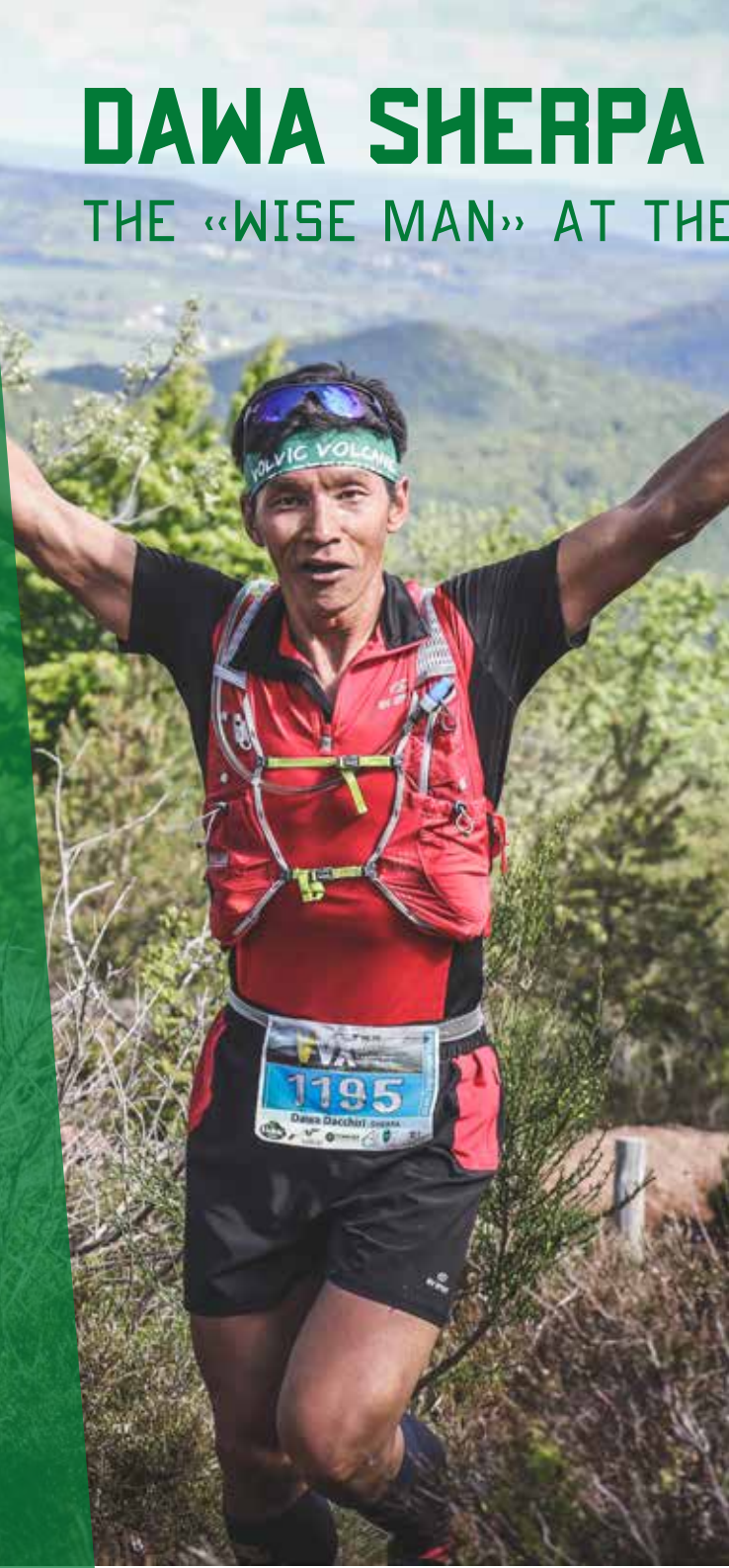
The 2020 is already poised to be exceptional with the presence of the UTWT® and UTMB® 2019 women's champion: the American Courtney Dauwalter.

It's sure to be a good show!



DAWA SHERPA

THE «WISE MAN» AT THE HEART OF AUVERGNE'S VOLCANOES



Dawa Sherpa was born in the Himalayas, in the mountains surrounding Mount Everest, at 2700 m altitude. At the age of 6, he was sent off to join a monastery where he learned the art of Buddhism, martial arts and meditation. He then ran his first race at the age of 25 and very quickly became one of the world's best runners, winning some of the most difficult trail race events. The ease and technical skill with which he seems to accomplish long-distance races has quickly made him a standout among other world-renowned runners. He's also known and appreciated for his amazing kindness and sportsmanship.

Dawa has since shown his smile and kindness on the biggest races worldwide. In his career, he has won more than 100 races including, but not limited to, the Annapurna Mandala Trail, the Tchimbé Raid, the Grand Raid du Mercantour, and the 6000 D. In 2010, he landed an impressive 5th place on the Grand Raid de la Réunion. He was also the very first winner of the UTMB® in 2003. Now living in Switzerland, he has even represented Nepal on three different Olympiads in cross-country skiing. He's also very committed to his organization which provides schooling for the most deprived Nepalese children. At age 50, Dawa is still passionate about trail running. He chooses to partake in races that share his values. This was the case for the VVX in 2019. Impressed by the event, Dawa Sherpa would like to come back in 2020 (if he's not in Tibet...).

«I chose to take part in the 43 km race and I don't regret it at all! It's the perfect race for the start of the trail running season since it's a demanding and yet not too technical route that crosses through changing landscapes. For me, it was also a real surprise. This event is truly different. I appreciated the warm welcome, the friendly and easy-going atmosphere, the volunteers and the event's organization committee. And I especially appreciated the gourmet hike that I took part in the following day with friends and family!»

CLAIRE RAIMBAUT

« THE ONLY ONE »



She will go down in the VVX's history as being the first woman to run the XGTV. Mother of three and physical education teacher, she was, in fact, the only women to participate in the 1st edition of the XGTV® (220 km – 8110 m elevation gain), the VVX's ultra long-distance race. She was the only woman in the race, but what a win – since she ranked 7th in the overall final rankings! She will certainly remember the XGTV adventure despite her being used to long-distance races (UTMB®, Diagonale des Fous...). She teared up as she passed the VVX's finish line after 53:37 hours of racing. «It was great to know there were that many people rooting for me. That carried me through the hardest parts of the race through to the finish line. The volunteers were also very kind and of great support.»



TRAIL RUNNING, HIKING AND VARIOUS OTHER SPORTING ACTIVITIES

an intensely athletic VVX

IS THIS A TRAIL RUNNING EVENT TO WHICH YOU COME SIMPLY TO PIN YOUR RACE NUMBER ONTO YOUR BIB AND THEN TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY AFTER HAVING COMPLETED THE RACE? ON THE CONTRARY, THE CONCEPT DEVELOPED BY THE VVX STRIVES TO BE A FRIENDLY, FAMILY-ORIENTED EVENT THAT UNITES ALL SORTS OF PEOPLE IN WHICH EVERYONE SHARES A SLICE OF THE ADVENTURE. WITH 5 TRAIL RUNNING ROUTES, ONE TRAIL RUNNING RACE ESPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR CHILDREN, TWO HIKES, AND NUMEROUS OTHER POSSIBILITIES TO TEST VARIOUS OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, THIS EVENT PROGRAM HAS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE !

TRAIL RUNNING : 5 PRESTIGIOUS AND SINGULAR ROUTES

5 COURSES, FROM 15 TO 220 KM, ALL WITH THE SAME THEME: UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES FOR ALL TRAIL RUNNERS

Thomas Prud'homme
Photographie



THE «XGTV®», THE GREAT VOLCANIC CROSSING EXPERIENCE
220 KM / 8110 ELEVATION GAIN, 8780 ELEVATION LOSS, SOLO OR IN
TEAMS OF TWO [INSEPARABLE AND INTERDEPENDENT]

The big «adventure» format

This is a genuinely different race, initiated in 2019. Solely equipped with GPX-track road books, runners will follow GR trails (official 'Grande Randonnée' red and white markings) 95 % of the time. This requires a good sense of direction, both on and off designated trails.

The route: participants undertake a long 220 km crossing of Auvergne's volcanoes, along the region's most remarkable GR trails: monts Dômes, monts Dore, massif du Cézallier, massif du Cantal, and the plateau de l'Artense. It's a wonderful adventure, some would even say introspective, for those who undertake the journey. Runners are semi-autonomous and therefore have to use their physical and psychological resources more than ever as well as their sense of adventure and solidarity.

What we like most... This epic race is only open to a very limited number of participants (30 teams of 2 and 30 solo runners). This isn't done to make the race even more elitist, but rather to guarantee the participants' safety and to ensure they benefit from an optimized organization in a unique atmosphere, while protecting the surrounding natural landscapes.

**START ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 20TH AT 10 AM IN
LIDRAN AND FINISH ON FRIDAY, MAY 22ND IN VOLVIC**

Solo race or in teams of 2, limited to 30 teams of 2 (inseparable) and 30 solo runners
ITRA certified and UTMB® qualifying race: 6 points



**THE CHAÎNE DES PUYS -
FAILLE DE LIMAGNE TRAIL EXPERIENCE**
110 KM SOLO, OR IN TEAMS OF 2 OR 3 - 3,500 M ELEVATION GAIN

The iconic ultra-trail race

Sharing the same name with a Unesco world heritage site is an honor in itself... But the Chaîne des Puys – Faille de Limagne Trail Experience went even further and became even more prestigious by joining the Ultra Trail World Tour circuit.

The route: embracing the whole of the Chaîne des Puys (the northern part was added on in 2019), this race offers an special exploration of the region thanks to a balanced route and numerous ascents, one of which is the famous Puy-de-Dôme. The last 30 km unite with the Volvic Catchment Trail Experience, thus completing this beautiful volcanic journey.

What we like most... The fact that the Runners reach the summit of the legendary Puy de Dôme (1465 m altitude) at sunrise is a magical moment for both participants and spectators!

START ON FRIDAY, MAY 22ND AT 4 AM

Solo race or in relay format (in teams of 2 or 3), limited to 600 participants
ITRA certified and UTMB® qualifying race: 4 points

For maps and details: <https://tracedetrail.com/fr/trace/trace/67673>



THE VOLVIC CATCHMENT TRAIL EXPERIENCE

43 KM - 1 700 M ELEVATION GAIN

The most acclaimed race

This marathon-formatted race was acclaimed since its first year. Since then, it's been more and more sought after. The 600 bibs available in 2020 were rapidly sold out. Nonetheless, the number of participants wasn't increased in the slightest in order to preserve the race's appeal and ambiance due to its smooth route.

The route: it leads through the northern part of the Regional Natural Park of Auvergne's volcanoes, and all around the Volvic catchment area, a protected natural area from which originates Volvic's world-renowned mineral water.

What we like most... you'll be stunned by the magnificent views of the Chaîne des Puys and over 30 km towards the south, with the Faille de Limagne, valleys, plateaus and domes, as well as Volvic's catchment area.

START ON FRIDAY, MAY 22ND AT 9 AM

Solo race, limited to 600 participants

ITRA certified and UTMB® qualifying race: 2 points

For maps and details: www.tracedettrail.com/fr/trace/trace/68578



25KM

THE VOLCANIC TRAIL EXPERIENCE

25 KM - 1000 M ELEVATION GAIN

The ultimate mainstream format

Its smooth course makes it one of the most accessible and widely-popular races of the VVX!

The route: part of the course is shared with the Chaîne des Puys – Faille de Limagne Trail Experience, which allows runners to explore some of the region's most iconic volcanoes such as Puy de la Nugère, Puy de Jumes, and Puy de la Coquille. Bonus perk to this route: the exceptional views from the Puy des Gouttes and other summits.

What we like most... this race offers a people-friendly and welcoming ambiance, not to mention the fact that the route passes through two active volcanic rock quarries.

START ON FRIDAY, MAY 22ND AT 9:45 AM

Solo race, limited to 600 participants

ITRA certified and UTMB® qualifying race: 1 point

For maps and details: www.tracedettrail.com/fr/trace/trace/68577



THE LAVA STONE EXPERIENCE

15 KM - 450 M ELEVATION GAIN

A small format but a big experience!

This short and accessible format, thanks to a very limited elevation gain, is all the more worth the experience. It allows you to get an overall sense of the region without exhausting yourself on a longer race so you can then take time to participate in other visits and activities.

The route: between Volvic and neighboring villages, it offers beautiful panoramas of the Chaîne des Puys.

What we like most... the route includes the exploration of an extraction area of Volvic's famous lava stone as well as several of the region's most renowned quarries.

START ON FRIDAY, MAY 22ND AT 10 AM

Solo race, limited to 600 participants

For maps and details: <http://www.tracedetrail.com/fr/trace/trace/68579>



THE VVX KIDS

A TRAIL EXPERIENCE ESPECIALLY DESIGNED
FOR KIDS BETWEEN 6 AND 14

Since part of the VVX's success is due to it being a family-oriented and unifying experience, the event should definitely be shared with family and friends. Consequently, the organizers included a trail running race especially for kids, along which their friends and family can cheer them on!

The route: there are three formats to choose from, going from 500, 700 to 1100 m, each of which include various elevation gains. Each child can complete as many rounds as they wish during the allotted 30 minutes of the race.

What we like most... it's not just a little «extra»... it's a real race in which the children start from the VVX's famous arch, just like their parents, in small groups of 20 to spread out the groups.

Open to children born between 2006 and 2014, they will be divided into 3 categories:

Red course: 500 m / 10 m elevation gain: open to kids born in 2014, 2013, and 2012

Blue course: 700 m / 15 m elevation gain: open to kids born in 2011, 2010, and 2009

Yellow course: 1100 m / 20 m elevation gain: open to kids born in 2008, 2007, and 2006

START ON FRIDAY, MAY 22ND AT 10:30 AM

Race only open to children, limited to 250 participants

THE HIKES

2 FUN HIKES TO SAMPLE THE EVENT'S AMBIANCE

Even if the VVX built its reputation on its trail running races, nothing should keep you from participating in the event and discovering the region at a slower pace.

20



16 OR 25KM

THE CATCHMENT AREA HIKE EXPERIENCE

16 KM & 450 M ELEVATION GAIN [FROM THE AGE OF 8]

25 KM & 550 M ELEVATION GAIN [FROM THE AGE OF 16]

The personalized hike experience

In Auvergne, they have a taste for all things good. In fact, they know well how hard it is to estimate your appetite as soon as you sit down at the dinner table. The Catchment Area Hike Experience was therefore built based on that principle. It starts off by offering a first 16 km route that follows a large part of the 15 km Lava Stone Trail Experience, which lets you cheer on fellow trail runners along the way. Once in the Pagnat stone quarry, hikers can either choose to head back or, if they still have enough room for a «desert», continue for an additional 9 km. What could be better than a personalized menu?

START ON FRIDAY, MAY 22ND AT 10:15 AM



13KM

THE GOURMET HIKE

A GOURMET ITINERARY TO BETTER SAVOR THE REGION

Clearly one of the VVX's highlights, this gourmet hike is organized on Saturday, the day after traditional hike and other trail running races. It's a pleasant mix of physical activity, culture, and gourmet pleasures – allowing for an authentic gourmet experience. The participants are invited to hike from village to village, from one oven to another, tasting Auvergne's hearty cuisine and gourmet specialties. This hike is an homage to the local cuisine and the region's ancestral gourmet traditions. It's such an unforgettable experience that even elite athletes such as Sange and Dawa Sherpa participated in 2019!

START ON SATURDAY, MAY 23RD AT 10:30 AM

Hike open to all, adults and children of at least 6 years old, limited to 250 participants

NEW

THE VOLVIC CHAMINA EXPÉRIENCE

100 KM & 3700 M ELEVATION GAIN

The trekking version of the XGTV

Who said that the crossing of Auvergne's volcanoes should only be available to trail runners? The VVX's most epic trail running adventure (the XGTV®) is back again this year in an all new incarnation, designed for experienced hikers this time. Following the same route as the XGTV for the most part, this trek crosses the Sancy and Chaîne des Puys mountains through to Volvic. This 3-day hike covers a total of 100 km and a 3700 elevation gain during which participants will explore some of Auvergne's hidden gems: lakes, summits, ridges, and vast wild landscapes... It's an utterly epic adventure!

**START ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 20TH AT 6:30 AM
AND RETURN ON FRIDAY, MAY 22ND**

This is a demanding and technical hike, open to experienced hikers.





VARIOUS OTHER SPORTING ACTIVITIES AND ENTERTAINMENT

ARE JUST THE «CHERRY ON TOP»

It's in the VVX's very DNA to offer an event in which friends and family could join together during a long weekend. Each and every group member should feel like they enjoyed the spectacular natural environment through athletic and cultural activities. So while some are participating in one of the trail running races and/or hikes – or perhaps after having finished the race – everyone is invited to take part in the various outdoor activities on offer: slackline, spiderline, geocaching, electrical scooter riding, quadbike... Everyone can try out these new, trending outdoor activities. Various traditional activities such as archery, tree-climbing and biathlon challenge will also be on offer. And, new in 2020, families will be able to share the pleasures of a variety of giant wooden games .

VOLVIC & KILIAN JORNET

A NATURAL COMBO !

Kilian Jornet, the trail running legend and ambassador for Volvic

Determination, authenticity, a profound commitment to the environment, and an environment-friendly lifestyle are all values shared by both Kilian Jornet and the Volvic brand. One of the VVX's eminent partners from the beginning, Kilian Jornet has also been ambassador for Volvic's natural mineral water since 2018. He perfectly embodies Volvic's belief that volcanoes are a source of both vitality and energy. Kilian Jornet, world-renowned trail running legend, clearly left a strong impression on the VVX of 2018 and 2019 thanks to his presence and availability. By officially kicking off the VVX trail races and rooting on the runners along the route, he was definitely an additional motivation-booster for all trail runners.

«The VVX really isn't an ordinary race! It's not just an athletic competition, but rather, as its name suggests, a genuine experience. Inviting the runners to retrace their footsteps on the second day in order to explore the territory in another manner is a great idea. When you run in the mountains and/or in nature, it should bespecifically to explore its environment. Here in Volvic, I think they found the perfect way to implement this!»

Partnered together, Volvic and the VVX, can move... volcanoes!

The Volvic company has been very supportive of the Volvic Volcanic Experience from the very start of the project, not only because they share the same natural environment but also because they share common values and commitments.

The natural environment, as strong and yet fragile as it is, is among Volvic's main concerns. The brand, which owes its sole existence to the nature that surrounds it, has nurtured a profound sense of respect for the natural world and strives daily towards its preservation.

An actor in the collegial approach to the catchment area's preservation

In 2006, the Société des Eaux de Volvic (Volvic's water company) founded the CEPIV (Environmental Committee for the Protection of the Volvic Catchment Area) in collaboration with local districts. The CEPIV also relies on the expertise of local NGO's such as the French League for the Protection of Birds (LPO), the French National Forestry Office (ONF), and the Auvergne Nature Reserve Conservation Office (CENA). Its main aim is to develop a collaborative approach to the environmental preservation of the catchment area. This strong local involvement does not keep Volvic from also engaging in international projects such as enabling access to drinking water worldwide. This Auvergne-based brand has been partnered with UNICEF since 2006 to help improve access to drinking water in Niger and Madagascar.

INVITATION N°2 :

"DISCOVER" AND EXPLORE A WORLD-RENOWNED NATURAL SITE

WHEN PARTICIPATING IN THE VVX, YOU EMBARK ON A MULTI-SENSORY EXPLORATION OF A WHOLE REGION AND THE THREE ICONIC ELEMENTS THAT ARE AT THE FOUNDATION OF IT ALL : VOLCANOES, STONE, AND WATER. THE EVENT IS ALSO A WAY FOR PARTICIPANTS TO MEET NEW PEOPLE AND PARTICIPATE IN NEW CULTURAL EXPERIENCES. IT'S SIMPLY A UNIQUE JOURNEY THROUGHOUT.

AUVERGNE, LAND OF HISTORY AND HOSPITALITY


With over 2600 years worth of history, Auvergne is not only one of France's most ancient regions but also one of its best-recognized regions. Isn't France just «Auvergne with land around it», as an old local proverb states it! Although, on a more serious note, Auvergne is a diverse and relatively-unexplored destination that appeals to a growing number of tourists – all tempted by the 100% natural profile of a trip through the iconic Chaîne des Puys – Faille de Limagne area, which was recently designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

AN INTENSELY NATURAL EXPERIENCE

The VVX's natural setting cannot be represented by a single symbol of any kind but rather by three distinctive emblems that depict its multiple assets... all of which will be experienced during the event.

CHARACTER, PRESTIGE & ELEVATION

THE STRIKING VOLCANOES

The background image shows a series of volcanic hills under a hazy, misty sky. The central peak is the most prominent, with a small structure or antenna on its summit. The hills are covered in green vegetation, and the mist creates a layered, atmospheric effect between the ridges.

The Chaîne des Puys – Faille de Limagne is the only natural site in continental France to be designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Beyond the prestige of this worldwide recognition, both the alignment of the Chaîne des Puys volcanoes and the immensity of the Limagne fault display the natural phenomenon that shaped the earth we now call home: continental drifting. The impressive landscapes are a beautiful display of this geological heritage, its extraordinary panoramas suggesting to the most imaginative visitors what could once have been an ancient ocean.

Geological forces chose otherwise and are responsible for shaping what are now not only the volcanoes of the Regional Natural Park of Auvergne's Volcanoes, the biggest regional natural park in France at 395,068 hectares, but also one of the oldest ones, founded in 1977. Nestled in the heart of the Auvergne region, the territory covers two French departments (Puy-de-Dôme and Cantal) and five natural expanses, among them the famous 80 perfectly-aligned volcanoes of the Monts Dôme, in the northern part of the park, and the ridge-shaped volcanoes of the Monts Dore.

CHRISTINE MONTOLLOY,

CHAÎNE DES PUYS/FAILLE DE LIMAGNE UNIT MANAGER, PARK OF AUVERGNE'S VOLCANOES

ZOOM ON... THE PUY DE DÔME

The Puy de Dôme, at 1465 m elevation, is the highest peak in the Chaîne des Puys. Accessible year-round via numerous hiking trails or by a modern cable car, it offers one of the best views of the 80 perfectly-aligned volcanoes.

The VVX's insider tip: The beautiful view point offered by the Puy de Dôme is one of the highlights for the runners of the VVX's 110 km race, who for the most part arrive at the summit for sunrise!

Just like many others, Christine Montolloy has an undying love for her region. Consequently, at only age 22, she decided to make a career out of her passion and joined the Regional Natural Park of Auvergne's Volcanoes. Thanks to her extensive knowledge of volcanoes, she quickly joined the Chaîne des Puys team of project managers. Her role is to protect, develop, increase awareness, and monitor... She took part in different projects such as the one that aimed at getting official classification for the Chaîne des Puys (obtained in September 2000) and then, ultimately, in the UNESCO World Heritage candidacy, a long-term project which took 11 years to complete.

Aware that in order to protect and preserve, Christine and fellow park representatives need to rally people to their cause and therefore regularly get involved in regional events that share their values, such as the VVX. By doing so, the Park staff hopes to increase awareness and get people involved by inviting them to actively participate in their preservation efforts. And for the VVX, this is the perfect way to ensure an environmentally-friendly and culturally-intact event.

In order to obtain both, Christine has numerous roles and she gets involved in all aspects of the VVX, before, during and after the event. She is an adviser in the first preparatory stages of the event planning, but she then also hosts various booths during the event and, once the event is over, she ensures that all environmental commitments are met (for example: ensuring that all signage is taken down, etc.).

VOLCANOES, A NATURAL PLAYGROUND FOR ADVENTUROUS TRAVELERS

27

The volcanoes of Auvergne have numerous hiking trails so whatever your preferred means of transportation may be – foot, bike, or mule – and whatever the chosen length and difficulty of your route, the best way to discover the volcanoes is by an itinerant journey.

OUR FAVORITE ITINERARIES :

THE GR 441

From Volvic to the Servières lake, this trail offers a 113 km loop through the Chaîne des Puys in 6 days. This average-to-difficult route offers numerous view points and exceptional panoramas of the surrounding landscape.

THE GTMC, GRANDE TRAVERSÉE DU MASSIF CENTRALE [CROSSING OF THE MASSIF CENTRALE]

This iconic bicycling itinerary crosses a large part of France from Avallon, in Yonne (central France), to Cap d'Agde, on the Mediterranean seaside, and was renovated in 2018. It passes through many of France's top destinations such as the Millau Viaduct, Autun, the Settons Lake, and, of course, the various summits of the Puy de Dôme.



Each as iconic as the other, the VULCANIA Exploration Park and the LEMPTÉGY VOLCANO complement each other well. Vulcania, a kind of volcano-themed educational amusement park, strives to combine knowledge and fun. Suited for both children and adults, it explains the earth's natural phenomena, whereas the Lemptégy Volcano invites visitors inside a real volcano. Historically used as a pozzolan extraction quarry, it now offers an exceptional inside peek into the Chaîne des Puys's geological history.

VULCANIA



www.vulcania.com

THE LEMPTÉGY VOLCANO



www.auvergne-volcan.com

STURDY, STRONG AND LONG-LASTING

THE ETERNAL LAVA STONE

The lava that burst out of the earth 11,000 years ago when the Nugère volcano erupted, has since petrified due to the forces of nature, and is now what give's Volvic's lava stone its strength and robustness. Thanks to the three elements that made it – earth, air, and fire – this stone has unique properties: both density and uniformity, and it also has the feature of not breaking when frozen, therefore showing incredible durability. Here, among Auvergne's volcanoes, they call it the «eternal stone».

It is therefore no surprise that, for this reason, this local ancient stone was used for the construction of many prominent buildings. From the Puy-de-Dôme region, all the way to Paris, this stone was used for architectural buildings, cultural edifices, decorative purposes...etc. Keep an eye open when visiting Auvergne and you'll be able to admire this stone in the Clermont-Ferrand cathedral, the Saint-Amable basilica in Riom, and numerous private hotels. In various towns such as Volvic, public fountains, various sculptures, and especially the local cemeteries, are an extraordinary showcase of the local sculptors' craftsmanship.

ZOOM ON... RIOM, «TOWN OF ART AND HISTORY»

This lava stone has since become one of Auvergne's emblems. It is especially displayed in the historical center of Riom - certified «Town of Art and History» by the Ministry of Culture in 2005 due to its architectural heritage. Situated at the entrance to the Chaîne des Puys region, this town is chock-full of historical monuments, all a testimony to this architectural heritage from Auvergne: Saint-Amable basilica, the Clock Tower, the Town Hall, the Guymoneau Hotel... and many more! A simple walk around town is a great way to get a feel for this unique beauty!

→ Coming soon!

From July 4th to October 4th Salvador Dali will be featured during a special exposition in Riom dedicated to contemporary art. Over 200 of the legendary Spanish artist's works of art will be displayed as well as artwork from other famous artists such as Cesar, Philippe Starck, and Arman. This is a major cultural event not to be missed! For more information on the Salvador Dali exposition and Riom, «Town of Art and History»:

www.terravolcana.com

ZOOM ON... VOLVIC, HISTORICAL BIRTHPLACE TO THE TOWN'S EPONYMOUS STONE

Volvic is historically linked to the use of this ancient volcanic stone. Situated at the very heart of all stone-working trades, Volvic is home to numerous quarrymen, sculptors, and lava stone enamellers (a decorative trade). Proud of this heritage, Volvic is happy to tell its story both during the VVX as well as via the various tourist sites that proudly display this heritage all year round.

ZOOM ON... THE VOLVIC ROCK GALLERY

For an immersive exploration of Auvergne's volcanoes, Volvic is a must! The Volvic Rock Gallery is literally situated inside a lava flow that resulted from the eruption of the Nugère volcano 11,000 years ago. Historically used for mining, these galleries have since been transformed into an interactive museum showcasing the history of Volvic's stone. The museum also features Jean Legay Chevallier, one of Volvic's principal quarrymen but who was also the first to discover Volvic's now-famous mineral water.

www.maisondelapierre-volvic.fr



THIERRY COURTADON

THIERRY COURTADON, STONE SCULPTOR WITH A «HEART OF LAVA»



The VVX's insider tip: the trophies given out to winners of the VVX are carved in Volvic's noble lava stone by the expert hands of Thierry Courtadon, who is both an ambassador for regional art and who is additionally a talented sculptor known for his beautiful nuanced creations in the black lava stone.

Thierry's unusual lava stone sculptures have been showcased as far away as the gardens of the Palais Royale in Paris, numerous palaces in Paris such as the Bristol and the Cryon, in Australia, in Japan, and even in the Queen of England's bathroom! Nuturing a real passion for this iconic stone, Thierry is also one of the VVX's four founding founders. «My role in the event's organization committee is to take into account all artistic, cultural, and conceptual aspects», explains the artist.

Thierry Courtadon devotes his days to creative work with the lava stone of Volvic. For him, it's a way to glorify his region's treasures and to perpetuate the tradition of stone carving that now has been part of his family for the past three generations. Historically used only for the construction of cathedrals and burial memorials, this lava stone, also called Trachy-Andésite, now has a modern, more contemporary use.

«To be able to carve this stone for decorative purposes was unimaginable in my grandfather's time», admits Thierry.

Recently his artistic endeavors have ended up both in prestigious palaces and, interestingly, on some of Paris's best gourmet restaurant tables! Thierry uses his own technique which is called «stone lacework». His carvings are fine and delicate and offer the possibility of optical illusions by playing around with overlapping levels and light. This meticulous work is only possible thanks to the particular properties of this unique material.


ARTICLE IDEA

VOLVIC'S FORGE IS REIGNITED DURING THE VVX THANKS TO THE DAUGHTER OF THE LAST BLACKSMITH

All of Volvic's stone carvers, sculptors, and quarrymen used to have their various tools forged: scissors, chisels, blades, hammers... And, likewise, local farmers needed axes, spades and billhooks.

In the 20th century, blacksmiths, wheelwrights and farriers were therefore essential to the life of all rural villages. But in Volvic, the forge closed 40 years ago after the passing away of the last blacksmith, Antonin Boissy. Since then, the VVX has been the perfect occasion to reignite the forge and resurrect the unique craftsmanship that goes with it. «Reigniting the forge rekindles old memories, sensations, and smells that seem to vanish over time...», explains Marie-Claude Boismenu, daughter of Antonin, who is present, along with her grandchildren, to guide visitors through the forge and share her memories and photos.

CLEAR, PURE, VIBRANT AND VITAL : WATER



Most know more of Volvic's water than of the town itself. This reputation goes well beyond Auvergne's regional and France's national borders! Volvic's natural mineral water, whose composition is unique, draws its distinct properties from the natural route it follows in Volvic's underground hydro-ecological area. Over time, several volcanic eruptions have overlaid Volvic's catchment area with numerous layers of lava that now serve as a natural filter. And because water only filters very slowly through these layers, Volvic's natural mineral water is pure and slightly mineralized. The exceptional natural environment from which this mineral water springs is what confers its bold and generous substance.

WHERE EVERYTHING STARTS: THE CATCHMENT AREA

Volvic's catchment area is in fact a 38 km² parcel covered primarily by forest and moors through which rain water filters in order to, in time, give what is known as Volvic's Natural Mineral Water. Volvic's water filters through numerous layers of lava and slag of more than 100 meters deep. This long journey through this immense natural filter over 5 years time is what gives Volvic's Natural Mineral Water its unique properties. Consequently, a large variety of managed operations are carried out in order to preserve and sustain this remarkable natural environment.



«SNEAK PEEK» INTO VOLVIC'S BOTTLING SITE

You'll experience a step-by-step walk-through of the bottling process: the choice of the bottle design, the packaging, the preparation for shipping, and finally, the shipping itself... an unveiling of some of the bottling factory's secrets!



LITTLE KNOWN FACT

AUVERGNE, HOME TO MANY SPA RESORTS

Auvergne's remarkable geological features also make it an exceptional destination for balneotherapy and thermal baths. There are no less than 11 spa resorts in 3 of Auvergne Rhone Alpes departments: Puy de Dôme, Cantal and Allier. Five of those are situated in the Puy-de-Dôme (63). Maybe the trip out to explore the VVX is also the perfect time to discover one of the various spa resorts!

ZOOM ON... CHÂTEL-GUYON'S THERMAL BATHS



Well-known for its balneotherapy properties for many years, the thermal baths of Châtel-Guyon's resort are being upgraded and moved into a brand new building, as well as taking on an unprecedented new concept. Welcome to Aïga Resort! This all-new spa resort opening on April 27th 2020 will offer 15,000 m² dedicated to general health and well-being. It's meant to be one of France's pilot resorts for intestinal microbiota treatments (nutrition and digestive well-being). Particularly rich in magnesium, silicon, lithium, and various oligo-elements, the thermal water in Châtel-Guyon's spa has been known for years to benefit intestinal functions to reduce pain, stress, and fatigue. This new spa resort is designed to offer a modern, cutting-edge facility dedicated to intestinal microbiota. With a 4-star hotel, a nutritional gourmet restaurant, thermal baths with lava-colored water, and a top-notch treatment facility research center, Aïga Resort is a genuine spa destination situated at the entrance to Auvergne's volcanoes.

www.aiga-resort.com

→ Coming soon

In addition to this new spa resort, Châtel-Guyon will also become one of the Tour de France's main departure towns. The 13th leg of the race, also known as the «volcanic segment» is the stretch with the most elevation variation. It will depart from Châtel-Guyon on July 10th. Event entertainment will start before the race and continue throughout the event. To highlight this, the Terra Volcana Tourist Office in Riom will welcome a special exposition dedicated to the Tour de France during the month of May!

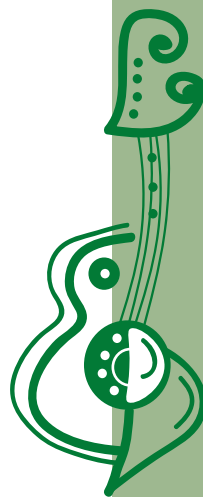
www.terravolcana.com

ARTICLE IDEA

TRAIL & CULTURE / EXERCISING YOUR LEGS ONE DAY... AND YOUR BRAIN THE NEXT!

Running... and then learning...

Follow a family throughout the event. First, follow their participation in various race formats on Friday, and then through the different workshops they chose to participate in on Saturday: visit the Regional Natural Park of Auvergne's Volcanoes and discover its fauna and flora, explore the blacksmith's forge and the town's stone-related heritage, admire the stone carvers' talents, roam the Volvic catchment area and peek into the bottling factory...





ANOTHER ASPECT OF THE VVX TO EXPLORE: A FESTIVE AND MUSICAL EXPERIENCE

Here is a multi-faceted event with, on one side, a solid athletic aspect and, on the other side, a genuine immersion into cultural heritage including the locals' love of festivities and hospitality. The event's organizers are as meticulous in organizing the musical and cultural program as in organizing the athletic races.

Every day of the three-day event includes festive highlights such as banquets, parties, concerts, and entertaining shows in both Volvic's town center and the Goulet site. To stay true to their values, the organizers of the event once again strive to promote local and regional talent when choosing artists, performers, or musicians.

Festive cocktails and dinners, lively refreshment booths, musical evenings, and various shows will bring all participants together in a friendly atmosphere.



The opening ceremony

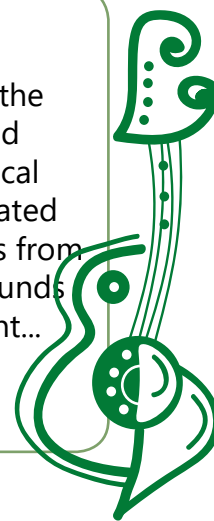
A thrilling evening full of surprises!

Musical evenings

Whether in the town center or at the race sites themselves, the weekend activities will include various musical atmospheres. Meals will be animated by concerts and various musicians from a wide variety of musical backgrounds will entertain throughout the event...

Shows

A large variety of high-quality shows will be free to enjoy throughout the town. Children and adults will enjoy a wide choice of performances in a friendly atmosphere: humor, fantasy, gags, gymnastics, poetry...



For those who wish to prolong the experience: for a few days after the VVX, Châtel-Guyon will welcome a unique dancing jazz festival, called «Jazz aux Sources», from May 28th to June 1st. For further information: www.jazz-aux-sources.com



INVITATION TO ENCOUNTER : A PROFOUNDLY PEOPLE-ORIENTED EXPERIENCE

Pierre Soissons

If the VVX has become one of the leading international trail race competitions, renowned for its particular format, identity and ambiance, it is primarily due to the endeavors of men and women who selflessly share their love of their region. A big thank-you is due to the local residents, craftsmen, suppliers, representatives and administrators... but also 600 enthusiastic volunteers whose remarkable help and involvement is what makes this event possible. And what they all have in common is a deep passion for their land and culture, which they proudly want to share.



JEAN-MICHEL CHOPIN

«GET PEOPLE TO WALK AND RUN 'INTELLIGENTLY' IN ORDER TO CREATE STRONG BONDS»

Ex-President of the Volvic Water company, co-founder and current President of the Volvic Volcanic Association in charge of the VVX's organization, and passionate trail runner.

Jean-Michel knows all of the VVX's routes in detail. This comes as no surprise when you realize he is a passionate trail runner who has been running all of the region's routes for as long as he can remember. When Jean-Michel is running, if you see him take a break, it is not because he's out of breath or his legs are tired but rather because he's stopped to exchange stories and anecdotes with visitors, other locals or tourists. Sharing his love for the area is a motto that VVX's co-founder truly lives by.

Jean-Michel, why is the VVX's common thread that of sharing?

The VVX's original and innovative goal wasn't to create an additional race on trail running's annual calendar. It's in the event's DNA to invite people to run and/or walk «intelligently», in order to create strong bonds with nature and between people.

What do you mean by that?

When creating social bonds, people's perception of things evolve. Sharing this activity then takes on a whole new meaning because it brings thousands of people together hoping to find the same thing : simplicity, beauty and authenticity.

Why is this event so inclusive even among local populations?

Because, once again, VVX encourages all local actors who share the commitments made by the Volvic Company, town, and the Echaliér company to take part in a sustainable and environmentally-friendly approach. This event is meant to be a friendly and respectful event for others as well as the environment.



QUESTION BONUS

> WHY RUN THE XGTV, WHICH IS A CONSIDERABLE CHALLENGE ?

We had to wait two years before being able to offer the Great Volcanic Crossing Experience (XGTV). It was therefore only in May of 2019 that we finally launched it for the first time during the VVX... but what a success!

When you attend this sort of incredible adventure, you're obviously happy for those taking part in the race, but as a trail runner myself, I was also somewhat frustrated, maybe even envious, of those participating... So, for my 60th birthday, I decided to challenge myself with a personal version of the XGTV.

Once the excitement of the decision wore off, I rapidly discovered the harsh reality of the related physical training.

The 4 very intense months of training make you wonder if you're going to survive it... In my case, I implemented my training schedule thanks to the personalized performance tests that I did with Gregory D from Perf Trail (in Font Romeu) and Jérôme's muscular preparation. Then come the several difficult months of training.

The start of my adventure : October 11th 2019

It was 3 days of pure wonder: beautiful rocky landscapes in the Cantal region, vast plains as far as you can see, The Puy-de-Dôme's gorgeous scenery, vibrant autumn colors and 2 beautiful sun rises...

My admiration for the natural environment had me forget the time, the fatigue and the stopwatch... or, at least, up until the 140th kilometer, at 2 am when I started to hallucinate. Then it was thanks to the kindness of friends, a family who had come to encourage me along the way, and to even run parts of the route with me, that I was able to keep going and surpass myself.

My advice ?

First, there's no secret. Sufficient training is necessary: VA, VMA, 3 day blocks of 7 hours / 7 hours / 4 hours.

Secondly, don't forget to study the map in detail. And, lastly, catnaps are essential so don't hesitate to take as many as you like.



IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Whether homeless, refugees, victims of violence or those who are socially cut-off from society, they too are participating in the VVX's weekend of cohesion and sharing. The partnership between the VVX and the CeClerc Association (professional association for social insertion and those in difficulty), allows 40 young members to partake in designated parts of the event's organization (meals, logistics, monitoring, cleaning...). This is a gratifying experience for those socially adrift and an enlightening way to share with fellow volunteers and participants.

«Team work, following directions, the responsibility of managing a position, taking part in the logistics of an event organization – these are all tasks that enable them to reintegrate into society», explains Dominique Charmeil, Director of the CeClerc Association, marathon runner herself, native to Volvic, managing director of all refreshment stands during the event, and initiator of this special partnership. The CeClerc Association consists of 90 employees, 30 volunteers and 8 establishments in the Puy de Dôme.



www.volvic-vvx.com

Press room : www.volvic-vvx.com/en/2020-press-room/
2019 edition photos : <https://www.volvic-vvx.com/en/press/>
User name : pressevvx20
Password : VVExperience20!

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