



Press release - Chamonix (France), Tuesday 4 June 2024

Countdown to UTMB World Series European Major at HOKA Val d'Aran by UTMB

The anticipation builds for the second UTMB® World Series Major of the year, as **6,200 participants** prepare to take to the start line in the heart of the Pyrenees for **HOKA Val d'Aran by UTMB® on 3-7 July**. Attracting a 50-50 split between Spanish and international entrants, the event promises runners from around the world the chance to **discover the wild valleys, high peaks, abandoned mines and the largest lake cirque in the Pyrenees**.

As the European Major, the first ten men and first ten women across the line in the 100M, 100K and 50K categories will automatically qualify for the corresponding race at the UTMB World Series Finals. Age-group category winners will also be granted direct access, while double Running Stones are on offer for all finishers.



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Elite Runners

A who's-who of talented professional athletes plan to take on HOKA Val d'Aran by UTMB. **In the VDA (100M)**, names to note include Wenfei Xie (CHN, [UTMB Index 688](#)) and Santos Gabriel Rueda (ARG, [UTMB Index 849](#)), both having secured impressive UTMB World Series wins already in 2024. Elisabeth Rios Peredo (BOL, [UTMB Index 685](#)) shifts her focus to the queen-stage, having finished second over the 100K in 2023.

In the CDH (100K), defending champion Azara García de los Salmenes (ESP, [UTMB Index 781](#)) is amongst the favourites in the Women's race, while Andreu Simon Aymerich (ESP, [UTMB Index 899](#)) will also be looking to reclaim his title from 2022 in the Men's race.

The stacked field continues throughout the remaining distances with ones to watch including Kim Schreiber (GER, [UTMB Index 728](#)) **in the PDA (50K)**, Gediminas Grinius (LTU, [UTMB Index 853](#)) **in the EXP (50K)** plus one of the UTMB Legends, Pau Capell (ESP, [UTMB Index 890](#)) and previous HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc OCC winner, Sheila Aviles Castano (ESP, [UTMB Index 765](#)) **in the SKY - Baqueira Beret (20K)**.



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Distances and support for all

Alongside elite runners, an inspiring field of amateur runners will also face up to the challenge, including young talent taking on the **SKY 15K Promesas**, Paralympian Pol Makuri Redolad and Women in Trail runners from the HOKA Val d'Aran by UTMB programme.

Having been part of the **Women in Trail Programme** since it began, **Maldito Running Founder, Erica Sánchez** said, "In 2022, we held the first edition of the programme and more than a dozen women put aside their fears to line up to the Sky-Baqueira Beret (20K). For many of them it was their first time on the trail. This year, we have doubled the number of participants and will return for the third consecutive time to promote, give confidence and support the female sector that continues to grow in the world of trail running."

Paralympic Cross-Country skiing athlete and mountain runner, Pol Makuri Redolad-Garcia is also ready to make more special memories in the mountains of Val d'Aran. He said, "I competed for the first time in cross-country skiing in Marxa Beret and it holds very special memories. Now to be able to compete here and share it with the people of the valley, athletes and volunteers makes it even more special and magical. As a mountain runner, this event also gives me the chance to enter the UTMB World Series circuit and try to gain a place for the 2024 UTMB World Series Finals."

Nineteen runners will also be running under Charity Bibs, supporting projects in the fields of solidarity, health, inclusion and the environment. For this edition of HOKA Val d'Aran by UTMB, runners will be **supporting two local non-profit organisations: the Aran Association for the Disabled (ADDA) and Càritas D'Urgell - Centre Val d'Aran**. Find out more about the chosen charities [here](#) and how the support from runners will help them.



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Watch Live

As one of UTMB World Series European Major, HOKA Val d'Aran by UTMB will be broadcast LIVE, giving the fans the opportunity to get closer to the action than ever before. Follow the live stream and get all the race updates and key statistics on [UTMB Live](#). You can also watch the live broadcast on: L'Équipe, Outside, DAZN, IQIYI.

Note to editors

About UTMB® World Series

UTMB® World Series is the world's ultimate trail-running circuit that unites the sport's biggest stars and passionate runners through the best, leading international events in the most stunning locations. Built on a passion for the mountains with sustainability at its heart, UTMB® World Series gives all trail runners the chance to experience the UTMB® adventure across the world, with events taking place across Asia, Oceania, Europe, Africa, and the Americas. It is the only place where runners can begin their quest to HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc, where the prestigious UTMB® World Series Finals will be held. Launched in May 2021 through the collaboration between the UTMB Group and The IRONMAN Group, the UTMB World Series circuit brings together many of the best international trail-running events on the planet. For more information, visit <https://utmb.world>.

About UTMB Group

Since the creation of HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc in 2003 by a group of passionate friends, UTMB Group has been the driving force behind the development of trail running. The HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc is the sports pinnacle event, and every year, 10,000 runners earn their place on the start line. UTMB Group also pioneered the LiveTrail® technology, an innovative digital service that supports the management of endurance races. Revered by hundreds of thousands of athletes, UTMB® has become a global, premium, and leading brand. In May 2021, UTMB Group partnered with The IRONMAN Group to launch the UTMB® World Series, which brings together many of the best international events on the planet to provide exclusive access to the sport's pinnacle event, HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc. The UTMB® World Series is built on the founding principles of HOKA UTMB® Mont-Blanc: surpassing oneself; fair-play; respect for people and the environment; and solidarity. Find out more at <https://utmb.world>.

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