

Press release - Chamonix (France), Tuesday 5 November 2024

UTMB World Series closes out 2024 on ultimate high at Asia Pacific Major, HOKA Chiang Mai Thailand by UTMB



Over **6,000 participants** gear up for **HOKA Chiang Mai Thailand by UTMB®**, the **pinnacle event on the Asia-Pacific trail running calendar**. Taking place between **5-8 December**, the event celebrates its third year as a **UTMB® World Series Major**.

All finishers will earn **double Running Stones**, while also vying for automatic qualification to the **UTMB World Series Finals**. This opportunity is available to **210 runners**, including age-group category winners and the top 10 male and female runners in the 100M, 100K and 50K categories.

UTMB® WORLD SERIES		RACE INFORMATION		UTMB® WORLD SERIES	
RACE	START DATE	RACE	START DATE	RACE	START DATE
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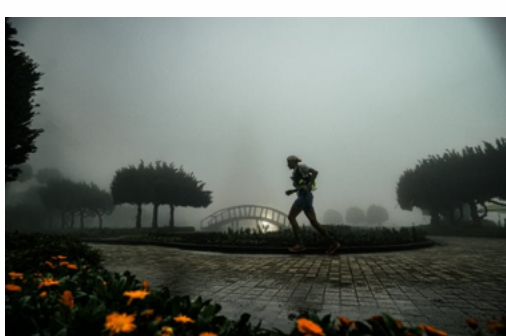
[Download race information](#)

Set against the breath-taking backdrop of **Doi Inthanon National Park** - nicknamed the **‘rooftop of Thailand’** - this unforgettable event features the **highest mountain in Thailand** at 2,656 meters, the **iconic Royal Twin pagodas** perched above a sea of clouds, plus lush jungles and waterfalls which make Doi Inthanon National Park one of the most popular in Thailand.

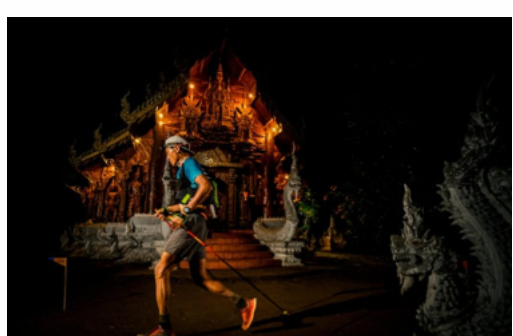
With Thailand also known as **‘the Land of Smiles’**, runners will also get to experience the local way of life, including **Hmong, Pga-Gan-Yaw and Karenic tribes**. Alongside their rich cultural heritage, these communities also embody a spirit of **hospitality, peace and a unique connection to nature** that will leave a lasting mark on all runners.

Runners are equally dedicated to leaving their mark in a positive and sustainable way to protect and preserve our natural resources. More than **2,000 runners** have **donated** to **support the three national parks featured along the race route**, providing vital funds to help **combat haze and forest fires**. Nearly **1,000 participants** also engaged in the **‘Reduce Race Day Waste, Repurpose Your Gear’** initiative, and **over 700 runners** opted to **exchange their medals and finisher shirts for shirts to support wildfire fighting efforts**.

This edition of the race also celebrates a **surge in female participation**, rising from 22% to 35%, highlighting the growing inclusivity and appeal of trail running both locally and worldwide.



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Elite runners

The event buzzes with a unique atmosphere, made even better by the thrilling competition. In 2024, a stacked field of talented runners is set to make the event another unforgettable edition.

A challenging **point-to-point** race lies ahead in the **Trans-Int 160 (100M)**. Two previous champions - **Ji Duo** (CHN, [UTMB Index 888](#)) and **Jiaju Zhao** (CHN, [UTMB Index 883](#)) are ready to battle for glory in the men's race. Finishing third in 2023, **Beñat Marmissolle** (FRA, [UTMB Index 869](#)) also features in a long list of top contenders to watch in the men's race.

Defending champion in the women's race and 4th at **UTMB®**, **Lin Chen** (CHN, [UTMB Index 741](#)) will be tough to beat. Finishing just six minutes behind her in 2023, **Anna Li** (CHN, [UTMB Index 737](#)) will be ready to fight for the top step, while **UTMB Legend** and 2018 winner of the UTMB, **Francesca Canepa** (ITA, [UTMB Index 651](#)) will also be one to watch as she makes her debut at this event.

"I'm very excited and grateful to have the opportunity to be back to Thailand. Although I know that it will be extremely challenging because we are not used to the jungle here at home, I love challenges and I felt in love with the amazing nature in Thailand.

As every 100 miles is every time a jump in the unknown, my only goal is to try to manage myself as well as possible and do my best, because the journey itself will be my reward." said Francesca Canepa.



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In the **Elephant 100 (100K)** - named after the **Mae Sa Elephant Camp** which it passes by as part of the route - **Jose Angel Fernandez Jimenez** (ESP, [UTMB Index 885](#)), **Canhua Luo** (CHN, [UTMB Index 858](#)) and **Daniel Jung** (ITA, [UTMB Index 856](#)) head into the men's race as the top-ranked. **Sunmaya Budha** (NPL, [UTMB Index 774](#)) is the pre-race favorite in the women's race, but the likes of **Yuri Yoshizumi** (JPN, [UTMB Index 746](#)) and **Simone Brick** (NZL, [UTMB Index 697](#)) could certainly feature at the head of the race.

The **Hmong50 (50K)** - which takes in the **culture, art and lifestyle of the Hmong tribes** - is one of the most hotly contested races. This is especially apparent in the women's race, with a close battle expected between **Fuzhao Xiang** (CHN, [UTMB Index 798](#)) and **Miao Yao** (CHN, [UTMB Index 796](#)). American runner, **Allie McLaughlin** (USA, [UTMB Index 773](#)) will also be one to watch, and could find the extra speed when it counts over this course.

In the men's race, **Guangfu Meng** (CHN, [UTMB Index 901](#)) heads into the race as the out and out favorite, having already **taken the title in the 100K race in 2023**. He will face talented athletes, **Huohua Zhang** (CHN, [UTMB Index 881](#)) and **Meikael Beaudoin Rousseau** (USA, [UTMB Index 877](#)) in the battle for glory.

With two more race distances to choose from - **SUTHEP 20 (20K)** and **CHEDI 10 (12km)**, the event offers a race distance and opportunity for all levels as they prepare to enjoy the last **UTMB World Series event of 2024** in one of the **most iconic trail running locations in the world**.

Watch Live

As the **UTMB World Series Asia-Pacific Major, HOKA Chiang Mai Thailand** 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**.

Upcoming events on UTMB World Series international circuit:

- 7 - 9 November: Puerto Vallarta México by UTMB® - Mexico
- 8 - 10 November: TransLantau by UTMB® - Hong Kong
- 15 - 17 November: Malaysia Ultra-Trail™ by UTMB® - Malaysia
- 28 - 30 November: Ultra-Trail Kosciuszko™ by UTMB® - Australia
- 5 - 8 December: HOKA Chiang Mai Thailand by UTMB®, UTMB World Series Asia-Pacific Major - Thailand

More information can be found at the [UTMB World Series website](#).

Images

UTMB World Series images can be downloaded [here](#).

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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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