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Oh Meu Deus by UTMB joins the UTMB World Series in 2026, celebrating sport, community and recovery in Portugal's Serra da Estrela

UTMB® World Series and Oh Meu Deus by UTMB® are proud to announce the arrival of the circuit in Portugal, bringing the UTMB World Series experience to one of the country's most popular and respected trail running events.

Set amid the dramatic landscapes of Portugal's **Serra da Estrela mountains**, this new event is deeply rooted in the region's identity and community spirit, standing as a symbol of **endurance, connection, and renewal** for a land and its people recovering from recent devastating wildfires.



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A new UTMB World Series adventure through Portugal's peaks and schist villages

From its base in Seia, at the gateway to Portugal's highest peaks, Oh Meu Deus by UTMB will offer **20K, 50K, 100K** and **100M** race distances, traversing the **Serra da Estrela Natural Park**, and into the Serra do Açor and Serra da Lousã mountains. Along the way, runners pass through the region's famous **Schist villages** – clusters of old stone settlements built from surrounding rocks – as well as mountain towns and landscapes which have been shaped by ancestral traditions and local shepherds, artisans and farmers.

Its name, meaning **'Oh My God'**, reflects the sense of awe felt by those who experience the Serra de Estrela Mountains. A feeling runners will experience for themselves as they climb to Torre, mainland Portugal's highest peak (1,993m), and pass through glacial valleys and high-altitude lakes such as Lagoa Comprida.

Pedro Pontes, Director of the Strategy, Planning and Promotion Department of Turismo Centro de Portugal, spoke of the importance of the event and the significance of seeing it join the UTMB World Series:

"This trail running experience is one that transcends competition, becoming an emotional and physical journey that connects runners to nature and personal challenge, while evoking a feeling of deep introspection and connection with the environment. The support of local communities is essential and inspiring, reinforcing a sense of unity between athletes and residents who share an enthusiasm and love for the event. The economic and cultural impact of "Oh Meu Deus" will be remarkable. It will bring visibility and promote sustainable tourism over a very long period of time."



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Running with purpose: authenticity, resilience and community in every step

As the Serra da Estrela region continues to recover from severe wildfires that reshaped its landscape and communities, the event team and partners at Oh Meu Deus by UTMB, led by **Race Director Paulo Garcia**, have committed to using the UTMB World Series platform as a force for visibility, connection and solidarity but also sustainable recovery, in partnership with local associations. There will also be collaboration with rural hosts, artisans and farmers to strengthen local tourism and economic activity.

Oh Meu Deus by UTMB stands as a tribute to resilience, an event that honours those who bring this land to life and a collective effort to move forward together and with community and nature at its core.

"Having a UTMB World Series race here in the heart of central Portugal is more than just another race. It's a moment that transforms our land. For us, who live among mountains and villages with soul, seeing athletes running on our trails is incredible. Because they don't just come to run... they come to feel what we feel. They come to smell the earth, the silence of the mountains, the sound of the rivers, the warmth and welcome of the people." **said Bruno Santos – resident in Seia.**

Célia Gonçalves - Executive Secretary of the Mountain Villages Network added:

"The inclusion of Oh Meu Deus in the UTMB World Series circuit is a huge achievement for the region and has a direct impact on the visibility and revitalisation of the mountain villages of Serra da Estrela. This event not only attracts thousands of athletes and their companions, promoting sustainable and quality nature tourism, but also strengthens the pride and identity of local communities, enhancing the value of their natural and cultural heritage. It is an extraordinary opportunity to demonstrate the hospitality and excellence of the tourist offer of the entire region, consolidating our destination as a benchmark for sport, leisure and quality of life."

Oh Meu Deus by UTMB will **authentically contribute to maintaining clean and well-kept trails**, with partners such as **Lousitãnea, Picos do Açor**, and **Lousa Mountain Club** promoting responsible practices and protecting nature. The event will also **champion inclusion within the sport**, encouraging first-timers, adaptive athletes and women to be part of this unforgettable experience, as they share the trails and stand alongside professional trail runners.



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A new experience meeting local expectations

Portugal is one of Europe's fastest-growing trail-running communities, with over 20,000 Portuguese runners currently holding a UTMB Index. In 2026, runners will have the opportunity to earn Running Stones and qualify for the UTMB World Series Finals on home soil, while international athletes will uncover one of Europe's most authentic and striking trail destinations. In previous editions, 80.9% of participants were from Portugal (the other most represented nationality being Spain) a reflection of the event's strong local following and the growing appetite for trail running in the region.

"We are thrilled to be working hand in hand with Oh me Deus to bring this iconic Portuguese event into the UTMB World Series adventure. Our shared goal is to build a lasting partnership, building on the legacy of an event that has already left its mark on the sport with a clear mission: supporting local communities and their lands. This collaboration will not only strengthen the trail running community but also support a meaningful social project that helps sustain the isolated villages of the Portuguese highlands. We look forward to the 2026 edition." **said Florian Lamblin, UTMB International Executive Director.**

Registrations open on 4 November 2025

[Register Here](#)

Note to editors

About UTMB® World Series

The UTMB® World Series is the trail running circuit that brings together the best athletes in the sport and amateur runners in top international events held in some of the most beautiful places on the planet. The UTMB® World Series is rooted in a passion for the mountains and respect for the environment and offers trail running enthusiasts the chance to experience the UTMB® adventure across the globe, with events taking place in Asia, Oceania, Europe, Africa and the Americas. This is the way for everyone to start their quest towards the HOKA UTMB® MontBlanc, where the UTMB® World Series finals take place. Launched in May 2021 with the collaboration of UTMB Group and The IRONMAN Group, the UTMB® World Series circuit brings together 50 events in 28 countries. For more information, visit <https://utmb.world>.

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UTMB® WORLD SERIES PARTNERS

