

ROAD BOOK TARTUFO RUNNING® 2023

16th edition – 1 October 2023

(In black: technical Road Book-In green: cultural/historic information)

The routes of the TARTUFO RUNNING® are part of the area in the Emilian-Tuscan Apennines certified by UNESCO on 9 June 2015 as a MAB (“Man and the Biosphere”) Reserve, an important recognition of the nature of the area that seeks to promote and sustain a balanced relationship between Man and the Biosphere in the town and ecosystems of this area.

The Tartufo Running® winds through an area full of the the “tuber uncinatum Chaten”, better known as the Black Fragno Truffle, or the winter truffle. This particular type of truffle has been recognised by the European Union and the Italian Ministry of the Environment, which stipulates the area of production as the Baganza Valley, the Taro Valley and the Parma Monte Valley. Your invitation to participate in the TartufoTrail is also therefore an opportunity to experience our unique country paths which you will see along the route, and to taste typical local dishes made with the Black Fragno Truffle in the excellent restaurants of the area.

TARTUFO RUNNING® takes place in the natural environment, in conditions of complete food auto-sufficiency, on paths of various types, which in places are set deep in the local natural environment. There are five distances available: **9km (D + 460 m)**, **17km (D+ 930 m)**, **28,4km (D+ 1,273m)**, **43,7km (2,150m)** and **67,8km(3,490m)**. These are difficult tracks, and includes stretches along mountain paths classified Type E (excursionist level): the weather conditions can be very difficult (wind, fog, cold, rain and snow), and the temperatures can vary from -5C to 20C. Therefore, a good physical preparation is essential, as is a good training programme, genuine personal autonomy, a knowledge of mountains and mountain running, and care and attention at all times. Runners are strongly advised to have already participated in less challenging races before entering this event. All the routes are sign-posted with 12cm-wide triangles and reflective yellow directional arrows. There will be one Control Point (CP) on the 17km route; three CPs on the 28km route, five CPS on the 43,7 km and 6 CPs on the 67,8km routes. All the CPs will be manned by personnel of the race organisation. To certify that they have passed each CP, runners are required to have their documents stamped at each.

In the event that a runner retires from the race, s/he must communicate this to any CP and return their race bib to the personnel manning it.

Sunday 1 October 2023

- 07.00 - Start 67,8 km - in Piazza Europa - Calestano (PR)

- 08.00 - Start 17km, 28,4 and 43,7 in Piazza Europa Calestano (PR)

- 09.00 - Start 9 km at Baita Alpini - Calestano (PR)

The arrival for all distances is at the Baita Alpini (Alpine Hut) a few hundred meters away at the start

Departure point and check for the first kilometre along the old streets of Borgo di Calestano.

If you are not already absorbed in your running, you can admire the medieval streets and buildings of the area. The old buildings, probably built on the ruins of older buildings now disappeared, are partly hidden by the subsequent development of the area. The main axis of the town runs East-West (Borgo Manone) and is on a slope. Where the main road, via Mazzini, lies today is where once was located the Rio di Sant'agata, built in the first half of the 19th century. You can still see some traditional "closed courts" in the lower part of the town, such as Corte Rignani and Corte Ortalli, with its cobbled courtyard overlooked by a low building with a portico and low brick arches, and Palazzo Barbieri, which once overlooked a courtyard that has now been turned into a small square. In the church of San Lorenzo, you can see a marble baptismal font dating from the second half of the 16th century; there is a painting from the Parmesan school from 1600 (entitled "Gloria del Paradiso"), and some attractive pictures from the 17th century; there are also two watercolours from 1605 and in the third chapel on the right, extremely rich railings dating from 1677, plus the wooden choir loft from the 18th century.

The route takes you to the edge of town, where you immediately make your way down the first steep slope, followed by a brief plateau to reach Borsano. Here you turn right into a constant upwards slope in the midst of oaks and hornbeams.

Above all on the southern side, you can see wild area of pines (*Pinus sylvestris*), what is left of huge areas of vegetation from the post-ice age era when the local climate was notably continental. The presence of this type of pine in our parts of the Appenines today marks one of the southern-most limits of the area of these indigenous species in Italy, giving it an extraordinary importance in botanical terms which, according to certain experts, represents a ecological typology in itself compared to the pine regions of the Alps.

The track takes you first to Cà Masano, and then onto the small ridge of Chiastre della Rondinella, where you can enjoy incredible views of the Baganza Valley. Be careful: come down first on the left, in a steep decline that is first earthy and then stony and therefore dangerous. After 300m, turn right onto the steep path that leads to Ronzano, which you will leave on your left (at 5 km). Continue, descending right, onto the gravelled path down that goes to Ramiano. Here you will find [two fountains](#) before passing the Church of Saint Gervaso and Protasio (which is surrounded by old urban developments typical of the small towns of this area; inside there is ashovel from the 17th century with its original carved frame, and an engraved silver cross, again from from the 17th century)

In front of the Church, there is [another fountain](#), whose basin is made from the trunk of a hundred-year old oak tree. After 7km, a brief but steep rise brings the runners onto a gravelled gently-inclining road that leads to Predarezzo.

FOR RUNNERS WHO HAVE CHOSEN THE 17 KM RACE

Shortly after 7km, take the path on the right, where a steep slope will take you to the mountain hut at the base of Monte Sporno: here you will join the other Tartufo routes.

FOR RUNNERS WHO HAVE CHOSEN THE OTHER RACES (28,4KM - 43,7KM - 67,8KM)

Near Predarezzo on your right, you can see plots of land with low fences: these are the truffle beds.

Around the 9km mark, near the fences of one of these truffle beds, carry on straight on, leaving the gravelled road for a path that takes you through woods of white oak and hornbeam to the Costa dei Merli. Once you rejoin the tarmaced road (at 11,4km), turn right for Vallerano (the 12,5km mark)

where you will find interesting buildings in the areas of Torre. Arbinella, Fabiola and Casa Bianca. The church of San Giacomo was originally medieval but was rebuilt in the 18th century.

In front of the cemetery, there is [a fountain](#) and in the centre of the town, you will find the first refreshment point. Continue along the road once you are refreshed: now the real slope starts. In the courtyard of Casa Belletti, turn left, and after about one km, at the 14km mark, you will reach the first Control Point (CP): make sure you have your documents stamped. When wet, the path can be muddy and heavy. The next section features alternating rising slopes, and plateaux where you can catch your breath. Close to Monte Milano, come down the path on your left for a brief period, and then after 500m turn right: here a steep path will take you to the ridge of Mount Basso, where you can enjoy the spectacular views.

If you are lucky, you will see royal eagles circling here. In fact, a pair of these eagles have recently set up a nest and hatched eaglets not far from here, at Casarola.

As you come down from the right (the 17km mark), first there is an undulating section, and then a section in decline on the carriageway that takes you on a challenging rise of 320m that leads to Mount Sporno (at 21km). [It is likely that you will see deer, foxes and badgers in this area.](#) The last section is extremely challenging, where the rapid descent on the stones starts. Once you reach the top, where you can see the monument to the Alpini, take a moment to admire the whole Padana plain (which stretches to the Alps) from the splendid terrace, and remember to get your stamp at CP n.2 (at 21km).

After this steep slope, again on the stones, (which become especially slippery and dangerous in wet or snowy conditions), you will reach the mountain shelter.

WHERE THE RUNNERS ON THE 17KM RACE REJOIN THE REST

Turn left, and after 1.8km, you will reach CP n.3

Refreshment point n.2, and the TIME LIMIT POINT (at 23 km). Last call for runners on 67.8km routes is at 10:40a.m. and for runner on 43.7km is at 11:40a.m. Runner who arrive before the TIME LIMIT can choose whether to continue along the incline on the left for the 67.8km and 43.7km races (if registered for either of those races), or to take the downwards slope on the right for the 28km race. Anyone arriving after 10.40a.m. or 11:40a.m. is required to join the shorter race and will be classified without penalty on 28.4 km . All runners on the 17km and 28.4km race turn right at this point.

FOR RUNNERS WHO TURN RIGHT FOR THE 28.4 KM and 17KM RACES

You have done the hard part by now: another brief incline, and then it is all downhill; first, there is the gravelled track at Costa del Castellaro (with its beautiful views of the Moneglia valley below), and then once you reach the junction on the gravelled track, turn right and continue along the (sometimes earthy, sometimes rocky) carriageway to Oratorio di Iano, probably built in 1630, where a sacred building had stood from 1230. With elegant lines and squared stones on its corners, it has a central rose window and a square bell-tower with four single arched windows. Nearby, there is also an interesting tower and other buildings of historic significance.

Be careful on the road crossing at 25km, where the road is open to traffic (please follow the indications of the race organisers): once you are down into the river-bed of the Moneglia, follow it, and cross it, carrying on until you reach the fences of the first houses of Calestano. Take the carriageway on the left, which goes down alongside first the fences and then the asphalt. Continue for 150m, then turn left at the final paved area that will take you right under the "Victory Arch" in front of the Baita del Alpini. And now you can stop, you have finished!

Congratulations and well done!

(RUNNERS WHO LEAVE THE RACE MUST ADVISE A RACE ORGANISER AND RETURN THEIR BIB).

FOR RUNNERS WHO TURN LEFT FOR THE 43.7-KM and 67.8 KM RACES

(Only for runners who reach CP n.3 before 10:40am (67.8 km) or before 11:40am (43.7km) and who are registered for either of these races)

Follow the incline dirt track and leave the broad-leaved woods behind you; now you will find yourself in a conifer wood, but you are not in the Alps, you are still in the Apennines!

It is common to see families of wild boar in these areas: you will be able to see the scratches they make in the ground with their paws in search of food.

As you continue downwards, you will reach Passo Fragno (26km) – be careful on the road, which is open to traffic – and then continue straight on the carriageway, where you can admire the Parma Valley on your left, and the High Baganza Valley on your right. Once you reach Case Lombatti, on the tarmac road, first take the left, and then after 200m, come off the road, and turn onto the carriageway on the right (on the right, you can see [the mountain spring of the Signatico](#), with its excellent clean fresh water).

At 31 km you will find a junction properly marked; turning left you continue on the path of 67.8 km, while continuing straight you take the path of 43,7 km that joins the longest route at the Refreshment in Ginepro.

FOR RUNNERS WHO HAVE CHOSEN THE 67.8KM

you will arrive at the resort "Il Corno" (at 32km) – here you will see an old reconstructed stone building. Now the path becomes genuinely beautiful, made of fine gravel: follow it for 500m, then turn left, and follow the path that will take you to the base of the Montagnana. Once you have passed the gates, you have only the last stage to complete to arrive at Cappelletta, the highest point of the race (at 1305m) where you will find refreshment point n.3 and CP n.4 (get your stamp, please) at 34km. If the weather is bad, the conditions in this area can be difficult, with the danger of high winds, cold, fog, rain and snow. Now you zig-zag downwards into the magnificent and varied beech woods, until you reach Costa Avana (36km). Here there is a series of uniquely-beautiful paths, full of history and importance. After a slightly undulating and fast section, immediately after the stone houses of Casarola, you enter into a tight valley. A steady incline will take you to the ridge half-way between Monte Montagnana and Monte Cavalcalupo Turn right, and after 600m on a slight incline, turn right again following the path which takes you into a magnificent wood of turkey oaks, beech trees and hornbeams. Continuing along the path, various CAI routes will take you first to Piovolo and then to Colnello, where the landscape was transformed by a large landslide in 2013. After a long and fast decline, you will pass alongside a vertical rock formation known as the "Dente del Gigante" (the Giant's Tooth).

Here the "[Via degli Scalpellini](#)" starts, which connect the two sides of the Baganza Valley, following the tracks used up to the 1950s by local stone chisellers to reach the extraction sites along the spine of the valley.

Immediately after, enter the small village of Chiastre, which you pass through to reach the road below (at 45km).

When you leave Chiastre, be very careful at the road crossing, as the road is open to traffic

Immediately afterwards, you will find [a fountain](#) – continue along the main gravelled path, always downhill, and you will pass alongside the "[Salti del Diavolo](#)" (the Devil's Jump) (a spectacular sedimentary formation from the Cretacian era (80 – 82 million years ago). This is a range of rocky overhangs and needles which suddenly and without warning jut out tens of metres over the ground below) until you reach the river-bed of the Baganza at the 47km, that you will cross on the new "Ponte del Diavolo" ("Devil's Bridge") recently rebuilt after the 2014 flood that destroyed it.

After a steep incline, near the town of Cassio, turn right where the "[Via degli Scalpellini](#)" meets "[Via Francigena](#)" (an excursionist route of European importance that follows the road of the same name that was used by French and English pilgrims travelling to Rome).

Continue along **Via Francigena** (but without ever crossing onto the CISA state road, which carries an immediate disqualification) until you reach the village of “**La Villa**” around the area of [the fountain](#), now turn right and remember to stamp at CP n.5 (50km) where you will also find refreshment point n.4. This is the start of a magnificent round-paved path - where you can still in certain sections see the central canal chiselled into the stones to gather water - which was used by local farmers to carry their grain to the old Ravarano Mill, located on the bank of the Baganza.

This is a uniquely-beautiful but unused path, marked off in large sections by walls made of stones, assembled and polished in a manner that shows the quality of the master stone-masons of the area.

When you reach the river-bed of the Baganza, the forded river rises towards the small town of Ravarano, overlooked by the castle of the same name

This fortress, whose original core was built around 1000AD, dominates the whole valley.

Leaving Ravarano, be careful on the road, since it is open to traffic.

Shortly before the road crossing (at 54km), you will find **the second TIME LIMIT POINT (9 hours 30 minutes from the start point) – THIS CLOSES AT 4.30pm**. Runners who pass this point after this time must leave the race, and return their bib to a race organiser. A free shuttle service will take such runners back to the Finish Point at Calestano, in front of the Baita degli Alpini.

Continuing along the difficult and constant incline, when you will now start to feel tired, you will reach the point Margolese

Take the tarmaced road for 500m, and turn right, after about 1 km leave the road and turn left, after about 500 meters a steep climb will take you to Ginepro. The incline is slight and continues until the "Ginepro".

WHERE ROUTES 43.7 AND 67.8 JOIN (34 km. for the runners of 43.7 or 56.3 km. for the runners of 67.8)

where you will find Refreshment Point n.4 (for runners on the 43,7 km race) or n.5 (for 67.8 km runners)

In front on the other side of the valley, you will see Canesano, which you will reach following the path, passing first under the Fonte of San Giovanni and then through the Brugnara area, where the numerous mountain springs mean there is always a certain amount of mud. When wet, the ground is particularly slippery and heavy. 1km before Canesano (44km, or 60km), you will find a [water tap](#) on the side of a well on your right, and then [another fountain](#) in the village.

Leaving the gravelled carriageway at Canesano (remember to stamp at Control Point n.6 at 39.9km - for runners of 43.7 or 62km - for runners of 67.8km),

Here is the last TIME LIMIT POINT, 11.00 hours from the start point – this closes at 06.00pm. Runners who pass this point after this time must leave the race, and return their bib to a race organiser. A free shuttle service will take such runners back to the Finish Point at Calestano, in front of the Baita degli Alpini.

turn first right and then after two bends, at the Chiesetta (little church), take the carriageway on the left that takes you to Piana del Lago (don't look for the lake, it does not exist!). The section on the incline is now finished. If your legs can still carry you, you can enjoy the long slope along the ridge above the Moneglia.

Once you are down into the river-bed of the Moneglia, follow it and cross it, carrying on until you reach the fences of the first houses of Calestano. Take the carriageway on the left, which goes down alongside first the fences and then the asphalt. Continue for 150m, and then turn left at the final paved area that will take you to the "Victory Arch" in front of the Baita del Alpini. You can stop now, you have arrived.

Congratulations and well done!

RUNNERS WHO DECIDE TO WITHDRAW FROM THE RACE ARE REQUIRED TO INFORM RACE PERSONNEL AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND RETURN THEIR RACE BIB. ANY COSTS INCURRED BY THE ORGANISERS IN SEARCHING FOR A COMPETITOR WHO HAS FAILED TO COMMUNICATE THEIR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE RACE WILL BE CHARGED TO THE COMPETITOR IN QUESTION.