

PRESS INFORMATION

Mountains in the DNA: Tour of the Alps keeps pointing higher

Restarting after a major success. The 2018 **Tour of the Alps**, concluded in Innsbruck six months ago with Frenchman **Thibaut Pinot** on the highest step of the podium has further established the race organized by **GS Alto Garda** among the standout fixtures of the international cycling calendar. A success in many different ways: participation, with a number of star contenders putting on a show in **Tyrol, Südtirol and Trentino**, audience (both on the roads and in front of a screen) and among the stakeholders. Now, it's time for the organizers to take in the most demanding of challenges: repeating, and raising the bar.

The first pedal stroke of the 2019 Tour of the Alps has been taken on **Wednesday November 21st** in **Milan**, at the **Sala Buzzati**, institutional venue of RCS and La Gazzetta dello Sport: the presentation reaffirmed the ambitions of the Euro-regional stage race that took the baton from **Giro del Trentino** in 2017, whose **43rd edition** will be held **from April 22nd to 26th, 2019**. Backing up the Tour of the Alps project is the stable alliance of Tyrol, Südtirol and Trentino, under the aegis of the **Euregio**, that has found a shiny and winning expression in the key dress rehearsal ahead of the **Giro d'Italia**.

The upcoming Tour of the Alps will have another legacy to pick up: the one of the **World Championships in Innsbruck**, that took place in Tyrol in September, ending on the same finish line of 2018 Tour of the Alps' stage 5. Following the success collected by the Worlds, and the enthusiasm by the Tyrolean audience, it's now up to the Euro-Regional race to fix the crave for top-end cycling from a land that is historically bound to the cycle-sport, and is now becoming more and more fond of cycling at the highest level.

Telling a lifestyle through a race

The technical identity of the Tour of the Alps made its fortunes towards the riders and the stakeholders, but it's hardly the only integral part and "soul" of the project. The main motivation of Euregio Tyrol-Südtirol-Trentino to create and develop the Tour of the Alps was to drive a set of **common values** shared by the three regions, that lay the basis of a tourism system strongly characterized by the two-wheels.

The Tour of the Alps is a hard and spectacular race, thanks to the beauty of its routes, the level of its participants, and the wonder of the landscapes that provide a stunning and unique background to the riders' feats. Nevertheless, the deepest meaning of a race that crosses all the three regions in five days is the sharing of the project between their respective populations, enhancing their excellences and peculiarity, but also - and mostly - the common values that blend them together: **sustainable mobility, top-end hospitality, the love for sports and outdoor life, the respect for the nature while enjoying the experience of "living" the Alps**.

In particular, **environmental awareness** will be one of the key themes of the 2019 Tour of the Alps: the goal will be to reduce the environmental impact of the race to the minimum, but also bringing a message and a factual contribution to the landscapes' safeguard.

A successful formula

A race with no downtimes, no long waits before the much anticipated move, in which the most expected riders always fight for success, every day: this might be the identikit of the Tour of the Alps. On the back of Giro del Trentino's forty-year tradition, the #TotA doesn't stand with merely being a key dress rehearsal ahead of the Giro d'Italia - though it is more and more considered to be an unmissable preparation stage - but wanted to affirm its own point of view on **how cycling races should be from a technical point of view**.

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The climbs of course – many and tough, but avoiding extreme altitudes – and fairly reduced stage distances: that’s the policy chose and implemented by GS Alto Garda in the first two edition of the Tour of the Alps, eloquently rewarded by the feedbacks of the riders and teams, as well as from the audience that followed the feats of Thibaut Pinot, Chris Froome, Miguel Angel Lopez and more from over **100 Countries all over the World**.

In addition to this, the Tour of the Alps commits to reduce pre and post-race transfers to the minimum, while providing top-level hospitality (an undisputed excellence of the Euro-regional regions) on a daily basis. After the intense effort, the riders have time to recover, to rest, and possibly take a look around: there’s no shortage of beauty to see.

At the Tour of the Alps in 2017, **Geraint Thomas** showed to the World (and to himself) that he could edge the pack even on uphill finishes: a crucial stage in the build up to the 2018 **Tour de France** glory.

In the 2018 season, **Thibaut Pinot** conquered the fuchsia jersey ahead of another Giro d’Italia assault: only sickness on the penultimate day could hold him from finishing on the podium. On the other hand, he made up for it by winning a Vuelta a Espana stage and the “**Il Lombardia**”, establishing among the top riders of his generation. Fighting with him on the Euroregional roads was also **Chris Froome**: at the Tour of the Alps, the Team Sky leader tuned up the condition that would lead him to clinch the triple crown by winning the **Giro d’Italia**.

One thing is for sure: not any rider can win the Tour of the Alps. Also in 2019, a top-level participation is expected: the official teams’ list will be published in January 2019.

Start from Tyrol, finish in Südtirol: from Kufstein to Bozen/Bolzano

After the 2018 grand finale in Innsbruck, prestigious prelude to the Austrian World Championships, in 2019 Tyrol will give the start to the Tour of the Alps. After staging the start of the Men’s Elite World Championship won by Alejandro Valverde, **Kufstein** is now ready to inaugurate the year 3 of the Euroregional project.

It won’t be the first time though. The most Northern municipality of Tyrol had welcomed the start of the historical first stage of the debut Tour of the Alps, in 2017. On that April 17th 2017, the finish in Innsbruck/Hungerburg after 142,3 km was conquered by the unforgettable **Michele Scarponi**. Again this year, the “**Team Up**” award will be dedicated to the unlucky Italian rider to reward the team showing the best collective spirit in the stage. The winning team will be called on the stage at the start on the following day, to give a small contribution from the Tour of the Alps to a charity association based on the territory.

After the eve of Sunday April 21st, Kufstein will be both start and finish of Tour of the Alps’ **stage 1**, on Monday April 22nd: **144 km** without extensively long climbs, but featuring a lumpy profile from start to finish, leaving it open to a spectacular and unpredictable finale.

The **second day**, Tuesday April 23rd, will feature the longest and, arguably, the hardest stage of the 2019 TotA. The start will be given in Tyrol, from **Reith im Alpbachtal**, to finish in **Schenna/Scena**, in Südtirol, after **179 km** and over 3.000 meters of elevation gain. The biggest obstacle on the riders’ way will be the **Passo Giovo** ascent (2094 mt, 15,1 km, 7,5% average gradient), but watch out also for the final 5 km, all on the uphill.

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Day 3, third region. On Wednesday April 24th, the race will resume from Südtirol for the shorter stage of the edition, **106 km** with start from **Salurn/Salorno** and finish in **Baselga di Pinè**, Trentino. It will be an intense effort, with practically no flat sections and open to different interpretations: the decisive showdown is expected to happen on the **Montagnaga** climb, but the strongest might come to the fore already on the **Lago Santa Colomba** ascent, peaking at 26 km to go.

The **fourth stage**, on Thursday April 25th, will be run entirely in Trentino, **134 km** from **Baselga di Pinè** to **Cles**, the main town of the Valle di Non where cycling has deep roots. Indeed, Cles was the home of the Trofeo Melinda for many years, then stage city of Giro del Trentino and Tour of the Alps in several occasion, and it gave birth to a big name of Italian cycling – **Maurizio Fondriest** – and two more who might be remembered as such in a few years: **Gianni Moscon** and **Letizia Paternoster**. **Forcella di Brez** and **Passo Predaia** are expected to make a selection, but with all chances it will be the “**Puntara**” ascent, with 5 km to go, to have the final say on the stage.

The grand finale of the 2019 TotA will take place in Südtirol with the **5th stage**: from **Kaltern/Caldaro** to **Bozen/Bolzano** through **148 km**. Those hoping to win the Tour of the Alps will definitely have to earn such honor until the final meter. The **Klobenstein/Collalbo** climb will wear down the legs of the riders before the **Jenesien/San Genesio** ascent, final categorized climb of the race, ending with 25 km to go. From there, it will be only descent and flat all the way to downtown Bozen/Bolzano, where a new champion will proudly wear the iconic fuchsia jersey.

Five stages, 13.000 mt elevation gain

Here is the program of the 2019 Tour of the Alps: **711 km** to be ridden over 5 stages, with **10 categorized climbs** and an **overall elevation gain of 13.630 meters**.

Monday April 22nd, 2019

Stage 1: Kufstein – Kufstein

144,0 km, 2.100 mt elevation gain

Difficulty: **

Tuesday April 23rd, 2019

Stage 2: Reith im Alpbachtal – Schenna/Scena

178,7 km, 3.050 mt elevation gain

Difficulty: *****

Wednesday April 24th, 2019

Stage 3: Salurn/Salorno – Baselga di Pinè

106,3 km, 2.650 mt elevation gain

Difficulty: ***

Thursday April 25th, 2019

Stage 4: Baselga di Pinè – Cles

134,0 km, 2.730 mt elevation gain

Difficulty: ***

Friday April 26th, 2019

Stage 5: Kaltern/Caldaro – Bozen/Bolzano

147,8 km, 3.100 mt elevation gain

Difficulty: ***

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Confirmed partners and new travel companions

For a project that has grown to the international scale, carrying a significant marketing potential, the Tour of the Alps is working to build a partners' network to create strategical, long-term relationships. The panel of partner entities and companies is still shaping up, and will be completed by early 2019.

Along with the three territorial boards, main backers of the Euroregional project – **IDM Sudtirol, Tirol Werbung e Trentino Marketing** – the 2019 edition already relies on **Melinda**, the Apples' consortium of the Val di Non, whose brand will remain on the overall leader's jersey, confirming and extending its 30-year-long relationship with the cycling world.

Northwave, the innovative Italian cycling shoe and apparel brand, has renewed its partnership with the Tour of the Alps, and will manufacture all the race leaders' jerseys. The race also welcomes a new entry, **Vittoria**, a World-leading Italian tire manufacturer. Vittoria will also provide the neutral service in the race, with a specialized team of former professionals.

Also extending to 2019 is the partnership between Tour of the Alps and the **Brennero Highway**, the main viability infrastructure through the three areas, that will bring in the race its commitment for big themes like sustainable mobility and road safety.

Gazzetta dello Sport remains media partner of the Tour of the Alps, a key setup fixture to the Giro d'Italia, organized by Gazzetta's editorial holding RCS. **PMG Sport** will once again produce the "live" TV coverage of the event and its distribution in Italy and abroad, within the framework of the "**Ciclismo Cup**" project by the **Lega Ciclismo Professionistico**, including the most important Italian professional cycling races.

Categorized as **2.HC** in the UCI calendar, the Tour of the Alps also positively interacts and collaborates with the Italian Cycling Federation: in 2019, Italy's Technical Director **Davide Cassani** will be back to the Euroregional roads with an Italian national selection.

Twenty teams will line up at the start of the Tour of the Alps, and the race organizers expect to receive significant interest from World Tour teams, many of which already expressed appreciation for the event's quality and its technical formula.

Milan (Italy), November 21st 2018



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