

People from Across the Globe Join the Sahara Desert Race in April

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. Tough (Adjective) /tʌf/ difficult and needing a lot of effort
Example: We're short on staff this week, so it's going to be a tough few days.
2. Provide (Verb) /prəˈvaɪd/ to equip, supply or make available for use
Example: The charity provided food and shelter for those affected by the disaster.
3. sign up (Phrasal Verb) /saɪn ʌp/ to agree to become involved in an organization, event, etc.
Example: I've decided to sign up for an online course to improve my Spanish language skills.
4. sell out (Phrasal Verb) /sɛl aʊt/ to sell all available items, tickets, etc.
Example: Tickets for the concert sold out within hours of going on sale.
5. Participant (noun) /pɑːrˈtɪsəpənt/ someone who participates in an activity or event
Example: Less than half of the participants finished the marathon.
6. Organizer (Noun) /ˈɔːrgənaɪzər/ a person or group that arranges something
Example: In her role as the event's organizer, Katie is responsible for finding a venue for the conference.



Sand as far as the eye can see, sunny weather, a few cold drinks — it could be the perfect holiday. Or it could be the Marathon des Sables: a 250-kilometer foot race through the Sahara desert. Sables is French for "sands." Marathon des Sables returns for a 37th year in April 2023, when over 1,000 people from across the world will spend seven days running and walking through the Moroccan desert in temperatures of 50 degrees Celsius.

The race — which costs over \$3,000 to enter — calls itself the world's toughest footrace, and it's easy to see why. Participants have to carry all their equipment and food on their backs,

before sleeping in tents provided by the organizers at the end of each day. Participants are only given a certain amount of water, which they have to use to wash as well as drink.

The event was started by Patrick Bauer, who, when he was 28, decided to walk 12 days across the Sahara with only the bag on his back. Two years later, in 1986, the first Marathon des Sables took place. Participants run or walk for different distances each day. These can change every year, but day four is usually the longest — it can be more than 80 kilometers long, and it's followed by a day of rest.

Not everyone completes the race — usually between 5% and 10% don't get to the end. But in 2021, when temperatures were even hotter than normal, only about half of the 753 participants finished, and one even died. However, that hasn't stopped people from signing up for the 2023 race. It's already sold out!

DISCUSSION

1. What are your thoughts on the Marathon des Sables?
2. What do you imagine running through the Sahara would be like?
3. Do you enjoy running? What was the longest distance you ever ran?
4. What is the first thing you'd do after finishing a seven-day footrace?
5. Would you rather take part in a race somewhere very hot or very cold?