International Marathon - go for it!

A superb seaview route, enthusiastic crowds and world-class runners... For the last 25 years, the New Caledonia International Marathon has been a resounding success. The 26th Marathon takes place on Sunday 24 August.

The New Caledonia International Marathon was founded in 1983, in collaboration with the Japanese town of Tachikawa (in the Tokyo suburbs), and has developed over the years into a key New Caledonian sporting calendar event. An ever-growing band of regular return year after year to take part in the race, which also attracts an increasing number of world-class runners, who come from Europe, Africa, the South Pacific countries and islands and Japan to take part in this prestigious sporting event.

A delightful setting
A dozen Japanese and Australian runners will be competing in this year’s marathon, invited by the COMINC (New Caledonia International Marathon Organising Committee), ‘not to mention the tourists who register for the race’, commented Committee President Bruno Dumet. ‘Indeed, last year’s winner was a Japanese tourist.’

The marathon’s popular success is not surprising, with its delightful lagoon-side setting enlivened by plenty of sideshows, music and dancing. And although some of the competitors have serious athletic aims in mind, they all unite in saying how much they enjoy taking part in the race. The marathon will set off on Sunday 24 August at 7 a.m. and covers a distance of 42 km. The 100 to 130 competitors will run two return laps of the route between Baie des Citrons and the Prony roundabout (a few metres from Magenta beach).

5 km Fun Race
A semi-marathon will also be held, with around 500 people competing, and the popular “Fun Race” will take place mid-morning. This friendly family race for individual and team competitors (men, women and children aged 14 and over) run over a distance of 5 km between Henry Milliard Racetrack and Baie des Citrons, has proved to be a great favourite.

- Noumea International Marathon (42 km). Departs 7 a.m.
- Semi-marathon (21 km). Departs 7 a.m.
- Fun Race (5 km). Departs 9.30 a.m.

Tel. 28 10 57
Move it

Nature reserves and visitor areas

11,680 acres of land in the Southern Province are protected by nature parks or reserves.

The stakes are high. How to make New Caledonia’s exceptional environmental heritage accessible to tourists, whilst protecting it at the same time? The most sensitive area within these sanctuaries for New Caledonian flora and fauna is closed to the public (Réserve Intégrale de la Montagne des Sources). Other sites such as the Chutes de la Madeleine and the Bois du Sud have been developed to make visitors welcome while safeguarding the environment.

A fragile environment

This site was damaged as a result of too much human activity and has been restored by the South Province authorities. More than 10,000 endemic plant species have been planted and, since 1998, visitors may only walk around the site and may not stop to picnic or camp. This measure has helped to protect the site and visitors are still free to picnic, camp or swim 2 km from the Chutes de la Madeleine, at the site in Netcha which is equipped with all amenities.

Réserve des Chutes de la Madeleine. Open daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Entry: children free, adults 400F, reduced rate 200F
Tel 95 94 41
Site de loisirs de Netcha, open 24/24, admissions from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Tel 46 92 47

Shoppers

Lifou comes to Noumea

Every Thursday, Downtown Noumea
Association organises a festive theme or regional evening at Place des Cocotiers.

This week is your chance to get away from it all for a few hours and explore the heady delights of beautiful Lifou. The theme for the evening is ‘cooking and recipes: past, present and future’, so you’ll be able to sample specialities from such as the Chutes de la Madeleine and the Bois du Sud have been developed to make visitors welcome while safeguarding the environment.

Festive atmosphere

There will also be plenty of stalls displaying superbly crafted items made by local craftsmen and women, including woven articles and sculptures. A fashion parade is scheduled for 6.10 p.m. at the bandstand and Place des Cocotiers will resound to the bewitching beat of songs, tales and dances performed by musicians and dancers from the little island of Tiga, a close neighbour of Lifou, who will be in Noumea especially for the event.

Place des Cocotiers
5 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Downtown Noumea, tel. 28 02 07

Wining & Dining

Le Bed

Bed supperbars: the concept was created in Amsterdam, developed in Bangkok and taken even further in Noumea...

There are currently a dozen Bed bars in the world’s hottest clubbing cities and when Le Bed arrived in Noumea a year ago, the city joined the world Bed Club. If you’re into designer comfort and ultra cool atmosphere, you’ll love Le Bed. White is the key note, with white sofas and tables and serving staff dressed in white. In the evening, the bar is bathed in a subtle play of soft lighting. A cool lounge atmosphere reigns until 11 p.m. when the bar becomes a night club. The bar is also open in the afternoon and serves a selection of pastries and exotic fresh fruit juices. Drop in and relax on one of the inviting sofas while you sip a refreshing drink.

Le Bed is open 4 p.m. to 3 a.m. weekdays and until 4 a.m. at weekends. It is located in the trendy Baie de Citrons, where the local hip crowd comes to chill out in the many bars, restaurants, night clubs and concert venues.
Tel. 26 37 63

Where to stay

Parc Hotels Complex

Ideally located opposite the magnificent Anse Vata beach, the complex includes three hotels built around a luxurious 3,000 m² swimming pool. The perfect place for rest and relaxation in a tropical atmosphere. The Parc Hotels Complex offers guests over 300, 2 star, 3 star and 4 star luxury rooms, in the three hotel wings, ‘le Pacifique’, ‘le Nouvata’ and ‘le Parc’. The poolside ‘Le Parc’ restaurant serves exquisite French cuisine. It also offers a regular Friday theme evening featuring a scrumptious seafood buffet and a Tahitian dance and music show. Nearby, you will find a wide range of shops, restaurants and tourist sights. Night owls will only need to stroll a short distance to visit the lively bars and night clubs in Baie des Citrons, just round the corner.

resa@nchotels.nc
www.nchotels.nc
Tel. 26 22 00
This week 22 August to 28 August

**North Province**

**Fri. 22 August**

**Theme evening**  —  Traditional music and dance show with seafood buffet at Le Surf hotel-restaurant, from 7 p.m.  F6,200.

Tel. 28 03 05

**Theme evening**  —  Tahitian show and seafood buffet at Parc Hotels Complex from 7 p.m., F6,200.

Tel. 26 22 00

**Fri. 22** and **Sat. 23 August**

**Dance**  —  ‘Popines’ by R. Digoué traces the story of Kanak women through the history of the Mother Hubbard dress, Museum of New Caledonia 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.  Adults: F9,000, over 60s: F4,500, children, F300.

Tel. 27 23 42

**South Province**

**Sat. 23 August**

**Horseracing**  —  South Province Territorial Grand Prix and 20 years Harness Racing for Trotters Grand Prix, Bouleparis Race Track 10.15 a.m. to 4.15 p.m.

Tel. 25 47 11 / 25 47 29

**Sat. 23** and **Sun. 24 August**

**Kayak and whale watching excursion**  —  Exploring the coast in kayaks, camping and whale watching from Cap N’doua, which affords a panoramic view over the whole southern lagoon.  Qualified guide.  Aventure Pulsion, F10,000 for 2 days.

Tel. 26 27 48

**Sun. 24 August**

**Kayak**  —  Take to a seagoing kayak at South Prony to explore Carénnage Bay and the hot water springs. Wide open spaces, picnic and bathing.  Aventure Pulsion, F5,750.

Tel. 26 27 48

**Kayak**  —  Great 2½ to 3 hr kayak trail incl. barbecue, via the mangroves in the Tontouta estuary to the Tomo boat launch.  Terraventure, F5,870.

Tel. 77 88 19

**Thu. 28 August**

**Art**  —  Downtown Noumea and the Latin Quarter transformed into a vast art gallery, 30 artists showing work in 43 exhibition spaces.

Tel. 28 02 07

**Till 12 October**

**Exhibition**  —  ‘Latitudes - Terres du monde’, an art event promoting works created by contemporary artists from all France’s overseas departments and territories, Tjibaou Cultural Centre, Komé and Kativina Rooms.

Tel. 41 45 45

**Till the end of the year**

**Exhibition**  —  ‘Sou les lagons, le réel’, an exhibition dedicated to coral reefs, one of the world’s most precious natural heritages. Noumea Aquarium, Tue. to Sun. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Fri. until 9 p.m.  Feed the fish at 1 p.m.

Tel. 26 27 31

**Till 15 February**

**Exhibition**  —  ‘habillage’ is an exhibition with a practical theme, jointly organised by several New Caledonian cultural bodies: The Bernheim Library courtyard is the backdrop for the prow of a pirate ship and the Maritime History Museum is hosting an exhibition tracing the history of pirates and privateers.  Tue. to Sun. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Tel. 26 34 43 / 28 68 21

**Loyalty Islands**

**Ouvea**

**Wed. 27 August**

**Market**  —  Hnyinëhë market by the sea (between Banout and Wardiala), 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Maré**

**Fri. 22 and Tues. 26 August**

**Market**  —  In the direction opposite the Town Hall Shelter, 6 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Lifou**

**Fri. 22** and **Weds. 27 August**

**Market**  —  In We, 6 a.m. to 11 a.m.

**Wed. 27 August**

**Dance**  —  ‘Sweet Hôn’ Hip hop dance show, featuring Soufiane Karmi and DJ SE, with the theme of journeys and meetings.

Le Chapitîl, Lifou, 8 p.m.

Tel. 27 56 36 / 84 01 05

**Later**

**Sat 30 August to end September**

**Culture**  —  Throughout September, New Caledonia will be holding events to celebrate her cultural heritage.  The theme will be ‘Rediscovered Gestures’.  Tel. 25 81 22

12 and **13 September**

**Annual Sound and Light show – Fort Teremba**  —  An unforgettable evening watching the past brought to life in a breathtaking setting.  Find out more about New Caledonia’s history.

Tel. 44 32 71

13 to **19 September**

**Sailing**  —  Groupama Race, 1st Round New Caledonia Yacht Race.

Tel. 26 27 27

**From 30 September to 6 October**

**Festival**  —  Femmes Funk festival.  International and local musicians meet to offer the public a unique melting pot of concerts.

Tel. 41 45 45

**History**

**A touch of Japan**

New Caledonia’s population is a melting pot of different ethnic communities.  The well-integrated Japanese community adds its own distinctive touch to the atmosphere of cultural diversity.

The first Japanese settlers arrived in New Caledonia in 1892.  Many came to work as miners, farmers or small traders.  At the start of World War II, New Caledonia expected to be crushed by the might of the Japanese armed forces.  Many of New Caledonia’s Japanese inhabitants were arrested and shipped off to Australia before being repatriated to Japan.  However, as we now know, it was the Americans who arrived first and claimed New Caledonia as an allied base.  New Caledonia and Japan never clashed in battle.

New Caledonia now has a community of around 8,000 Japanese residents, living in perfect harmony with all the country’s other cultures.  Many Japanese visitors flock to New Caledonia in search of sun, exotic surroundings and the beauties of unspoilt nature.  Some even come here specially to get married!
Caledonian taste

Ginger it up!

Ginger is a tropical plant with strongly perfumed leaves whose roots are used in numerous dishes around the world for their exceptional and unique aromatic properties.

Recipe idea:

Chilled mango and ginger drink: 200g pineapple juice, 200g mango, 110g orange juice, 3.5g ginger, 20g vanilla. Squeeze oranges and grate skins. Peel and cut up mango. Mix orange and pineapple juice, pieces of mango, peeled fresh ginger and vanilla. Serve very chilled.

Warm sashimi with ginger sauce: 150g fresh salmon fillet, 150g fresh tuna, juice of half a lemon, 3 tbsp. olive oil, 2 tbsp. soy sauce and 10g grated ginger.

Slice fresh fish into thin strips and roll into little tubes. Mix soy sauce, ginger, lemon juice and olive oil in a pan. Heat gently for 2 mins, stirring well. Pour sauce over fish. Serve warm.

Experience

A milk shake from heaven

If you take the road to the South, you’ll find a delightful gourmet treat just 10kms from Noumea. The Saint Louis farm stands at the entrance to the tribal village of Saint Louis, which takes its name from the charming missionary church built in 1860. On the road, you’ll probably come across a few cows from the farm going for a gentle jaunt around the environs. Make sure you stop and sample some of the delicious farm products: fresh fruit, jams, yoghurt, cakes… And whatever you do, don’t miss the house specialty; fresh milkshakes whipped together with chocolate, caramel, passionfruit, coconut… just take your pick!

Tel. 43 54 82

Useful numbers

NC country code: +687

NC Tourist office: 05 75 80 (free call) 28 75 80
Australian Consulate - General: 27 24 14
New Zealand Consulate - General: 27 25 43

Air Caledonia (domestic flights): 25 21 77
Airport: 26 56 00
Qantas: 28 65 46
Air New Zealand: 28 66 77
Police: 17
Fire brigade: 18
Emergencies: SOS Medical service: 15
Directory enquiries: 1012

Noumea weather

Cloudy

Monday 21
25°

Friday 25
20°

Tuesday 26
22°

Saturday 23
22°

Sunday 24
23°

Monday 25
22°

Wednesday 27
22°

Cloudy

Rainy

Rainy

Rainy

Rainy

Mostly Cloudy

Mostly Cloudy

Mostly Cloudy

Mostly Cloudy

Passport

Urban stewards

There are six urban stewards in Noumea, they are former athletes, who speak reasonable English and are trained to help and assist members of the public. In their beige uniforms, they have a number of tasks and duties to perform. They give directions and assistance to shopkeepers, inhabitants and passers-by in downtown Noumea and provide backup for organisers of public events and entertainments. They work in teams, patrolling the streets on foot or on bikes, providing a community service by replying to queries and requests for help. Visitors may also ask Noumea’s red-uniformed information stewards for help and directions. Their brief is to welcome boats and tourists and provide assistance, advice and information.

Urban Stewards: 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Mondays to Fridays and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays
Tel. 94 00 64

Travel Kit

Money

(Exchange rates on 21st August 2008)

1 AUD = 70.67 XPF
1 NZD = 55.69 XPF
1 USD = 80.97 XPF

Automatic teller machines (ATMs) are available throughout the territory. Have your pin code handy, so as to be able to use your credit card. Banks are generally open 8 a.m. to 3.30 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Take a bus

Kara Lua buses (red buses): the Blue Line goes to the Tjibaou Cultural Centre from Place des Cocotiers in the centre of town. The Green Line follows the beach roads.

Fares: adults, F200 one way. Tickets can be bought on board the bus or over the counter at the Place des Cocotiers. Buses run approximately every 20 minutes during the day and every 30 minutes at weekends.

Tel. 28 54 54 or www.gietcn.nc

Alpha Bus Pass (Noumea tour, hop on - hop off): Tuesday to Sunday with 3 buses a day. Day pass Adult, F1,000, children (aged 2-12) F500, buy tickets on the bus, Tel. 27 19 80 or www.arcanvel-voyages.nc

Take a taxi

Taxis, Central rank - Place des Cocotiers, Fare from city centre to beaches, F1,000. Tel. 28 35 12

Contact us

We would like to hear any comments regarding The New Caledonia Weekly, please write to us at: weekly@onenparle.nc

Inside story

During its 40 year run, 1934 to 1974, Walkabout, Australia’s answer to the U.S. National Geographic Magazine, featured many articles covering South Pacific destinations including New Caledonia. These early records by travel writers are now being translated into French for inclusion in the quarterly New Caledonia Historical Society Bulletin. The first translation appeared in Bulletin N° 156 and was written by Stephen Henty for the 1st November 1935 Walkabout issue. It is fascinating to read how Noumea was perceived by a travel writer 70 years ago, how he discovered the strangeness of this remote French outpost, yet so close to Australia. How Australian visitors could enjoy meeting our kaleidoscopic population mix, enjoy practising their French and enjoy the local variety of French regional cuisine. Fortunately, 50 odd years later, we are still the case and frequent air services from Brisbane & Sydney provide easy access to our ‘Land of Eternal Spring’.

Max Shekleton
Honorary British Consul - Nouméa