

REVVING UP FOR RALLY RACES



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By Genevieve Northup

Drifting through hairpin turns while spewing mud on a dirt road during a heavy downpour ... leaving tire tracks and the competition behind. This is the world of rally racing, where endurance, speed and ability are tested in timed stages on closed sections of challenging municipal roadways.

Watch Rally Races

The FIA Federation International de l'Automobile is the governing organization that oversees European (ERC) and World Rally Championships (WRC). ERC's annual races are 200- to 230-kilometer routes over pavement and dangerous terrain, like dirt, gravel and slush. This year's destinations include Greece, Portugal, Belgium and the Czech Republic. For the detailed schedule, visit www.fiaerc.com.

World Rally Championships span five continents, with several races in Europe. Portugal, Italy, Poland, Finland, Germany and Spain are on the 2016 agenda; go to www.wrc.com for dates.

Additional qualifying and recreational rallies are organized

across Europe year round, listed at www.rallytheworld.com, <http://msabrc.com>, www.fia.com/rallies and www.endurorally.com. Conduct a country-specific Internet search if you want to go to a race while on vacation (or schedule vacation around a race).

Ready to watch the races? Book a hotel now, and head to the rally's official website for spectator information, such as detailed directions and maps to staging locations. Some rallies are free, while advance tickets are required for others and can usually be purchased online.

Time to Rally

For more action, recruit a few friends and join an amateur rally to tackle some of Europe's highest mountain passes and smoothest highways. Events are untimed and held on open roads where participating teams must follow national speed and safety laws. Beware that vehicle specs; license, insurance and vehicle registration; passport and visa requirements; and fees vary. ■

Don't have a nice car? No problem! Most of these rallies are all about pushing clunkers to their max:

Monte Carlo or Bust Banger Driving Adventure, Operation Black Forest Gateau

<http://montecarloorbustrally.com>

Date: June 2-6, 2016

Route: BE, DE, CH, MC, FR

Vehicle Requirements: Junker under £250

Cost: £200 per car with two drivers; £25 per extra person; all ladies team (up to four) £150

Wacky Rallies, www.wackyrally.co.uk

Date: June 24-27, 2016

Route: Rockin' to Rimini; FR, BE, LU, DE, CH, IT

Date: July 8-11, 2016

Route: Barmy to Barcelona; FR, BE, LU, DE, CH, IT, FR, ES

Vehicle Requirement: Junker (£300 or less) or own car (must be elaborately decorated)

Cost: £300 per car with two occupants, plus £50 per additional occupant

Great European Rally, www.thegreatrally.com

Date: Aug. 20-27, 2016

Route: BE, DE, CH, AT, SK, HU

Vehicle Requirement: Street legal car, motorcycle or van

Cost: £395 pp camping or £995 pp with hotel; registration closes four weeks prior, and each team must have at least two people

Crumball Rally, www.crumballrally.com

Date: July 8-10, 2016

Route: Mission Impossible; FR, CH, DE, CZ

Date: Sept. 2-4, 2016

Route: Thundercrawl; FR, CH, IT

Vehicle Requirements: Two-seater convertible with engine size under 2.5 liters (any age and any value allowed) or junker under £200

Cost: £295 per car with two drivers; £65 per extra person

European Superlative Adventure Club (S.A.C.)

<http://european.superlative-adventure.com>

Date: Sept. 10-20, 2016

Route: DE, AT, CH, IT, FR MC, AD, ES, PT

Vehicle Requirements: At least 20 years old
Cost: €850 per team of two, plus €250 for additional members; you must also raise €500 for charity before the event

Munich Ramshackle Rally,

www.ramshacklerally.com

Date: Sept. 15-20, 2016

Route: FR, CH, IT, AT, SI, DE

Vehicle Requirements: Junker under £250

Cost: £270 for two drivers; £50 for third and fourth; £80 for fifth; all ladies team (up to five) £199

Also check www.thetrial.nl, www.heroevents.eu, www.fireballrally.co.uk and <http://purerally.co.uk> for rallies held throughout the year.

Consider extra expenses like accommodations, gas, tolls, repair kits, spare parts, meals and transportation costs from home to start and finish to home. Also review age requirements; often all passengers must be at least 18 years old.