

## 02 Route of the flame in France and overseas territories

The Torch Relay has become an unmissable tradition, a reference to the roots of the Olympic Games.

Set alight for the first time at the opening ceremony of the Amsterdam Games in 1928, the lighting of the torch in Olympia and the tracing of a route for the torch became ritualized from 1936 onwards, for the Berlin Games, organized by Nazi Germany.

The historical reference is the "lampadédromie", torch races that took place in Athens and at night-time festivals in ancient times.

The first torch of the Paris 2024 Olympic Torch Relay was lit on 16 April 2024, during a ceremony in the sanctuary of Olympia, Greece, where the ancient Games were held.

According to protocol, the ceremony is officiated by women acting as priestesses to the goddess Hera, the wife of Zeus. They were dressed in tunics like those worn by Greek women.

The celebrations take place several months before the start of the Games, in the ruins of the temple of Hera. The flame is lit using an ancient method: the sun's rays are concentrated by a parabolic mirror on the ignition point.

As a precaution, in case there is no sun on the day of this official ceremony, some time before, the priestesses gather around the altar, invoke Apollo, the god of light and the arts, and light a fire. This sacred flame is then placed in a ceramic urn and taken to the ancient stadium at Olympia.

The procession passes a wild olive tree from which the branches are cut. They are offered to the victors as a reward and a symbol of peace. The high priestess then lights the torch and hands it to the first torchbearer.

Several other torchbearers carry it to the Panathenaic Stadium in Athens, the stadium that hosted the first modern Olympic Games in 1896.

Then, from the Peloponnese, the Olympic flame embarked aboard the "Belém", a magnificent 19th-century three-masted ship, to cross the Mediterranean Sea. On 8 May 2024, it will arrive in Marseilles to begin its journey on French soil.

For 68 days, more than 10,000 runners will relay the Olympic torch over 200 to 400 meters, covering more than 12,000 kilometers.

Each participant is selected based on his or her "personal reputation" or contribution to local life.

He or she carries the Olympic torch on foot and hands it over to another torchbearer. The passing of this Olympic torch takes place in a theatrical and festive setting, imbued with the emotion and energy of the Olympic Games, to popular acclaim.

At the end of this special moment, a huge crowd gathers around a cauldron that the last torchbearer sets alight at the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games.

Traditionally, the last torchbearer, a champion or young athlete from the host country, lights a monumental cauldron in a spectacular and original way. This burns for the duration of the Games. The choice of the last torchbearer is kept secret until the last minute.

The flame is extinguished at the end of the closing ceremony.

Flame, torch, course and vasque also enliven the Paralympic relay. From the historic birthplace of Stoke Mandeville in England, the route arrives in Calais, France, on 25 August. The flame then multiplies into twelve torches, to be relayed by 1,000 torchbearers in over fifty towns and

cities across France. On 28 August 2024, on the Place de la Concorde in Paris, the large cauldron is lit.

Torche and vasque are objects born of the same futuristic inspiration, imagined by French designer Mathieu Lehanneur.

The streamlined shape of the basin is matched by the gentle curves of the Torch, in the same luminous champagne hue, with a glossy finish on the lower sections and a matt finish on the upper. The effects of waves and ripples on both the Torch and the base of the vasque symbolize the importance of water in the Torch Relay: crossing the Mediterranean and the oceans, then arriving on the Seine, itself the scene of the opening ceremony and competition venue of the Paris 2024 Games.

The torch is 70 centimeters high, with a diameter of 3.5 centimeters at the ends and 10 centimeters in the center. It weighs 1.5 kilos and is made from recycled steel with a thickness of 0.7 millimeters.

The ring and sides of the base are 1.5 meters in diameter. It is accessible to wheelchair users at a height of 1.15 meters. It weighs 95 kg and is made from alloy steel, stainless steel for the ring and aluminum for the base. The bowl ring has 260 holes to create a spectacular circular blaze.

Paris 2024 wanted to offer a gift to the 11,000 torchbearers. In the middle of the Torch, a ring joins the upper and lower parts. On the surface of this ring are engraved the words "CARRIER OF THE FLAME", "GAMES SPELLER" and "PARIS 2024". Each torchbearer will be able to keep and proudly display this ring as an elegant reminder of a unique moment.

Number 2 is at the top left of the page.

The image shows the position of the French territories in the world linked by the route of the Olympic flame. The earth is a sphere presented flat, and therefore distorted on the map.

The cartographic projection used here is known as BERTIN and enables all the continents and oceans to be located with the least distortion of the territories represented.

This flat image of the world, enlarged at the bottom, shows Antarctica at the bottom of the page. The South Pole is split in two, marked by 2 semi-circles on either side of the southern edge of this planisphere. The Pacific Ocean and Tahiti (tah), in French Polynesia where the surfing events take place, are thus on the right and left of this map.

At the top center of the page is the North Pole (circle marked p), with a dotted line running vertically from the Paris meridian to the South Pole. Its curve, at the bottom of the page on the left, represents its projection from a globe.

Similarly, the equator, with its more widely spaced dotted lines, has a curved shape, perpendicular to the meridian, in the lower quarter of the page. The African continent lies at the intersection of these two virtual lines.

Nearby, at the bottom of Africa, on the right, you will find the island of Madagascar and the department of Réunion (point réu).

The flame and a host of sporting events will take place in the eight towns crossed between Sainte-Rose and Saint-Denis on 12 June.

To the north of Africa, the Red Sea and the Mediterranean rub shoulders. Greece and Olympia, near Athens, are marked by the (at) signs, and a raised cross marks the stages of the torch relay.

From Athens, the historic three-masted sailing ship "Belem" carried the flame to Marseille (m). From there, it will travel through several departments and towns in the south of France.

In Brest (br), Armêl Le Cléac'h's maxi trimaran, one of the fastest sailing boats in the world, will embark on an ocean relay to escort the flame to the West Indies, Martinique (mar), Guadeloupe (gua), Guyana (gui) South America, and Tahiti (tah) in French Polynesia.

It will return to France on 18 June 2024, in Nice, where the football event will take place at the end of July.

The flame continues its journey through the east and north of France, arriving in Paris (Pa) on 26 July for the Opening Ceremony.

Additional geographical references

The South Pole is located on the continent of Antarctica, but the North Pole can be found in the Arctic Ocean.

It joins the Pacific Ocean to the north via the Bering Strait.

The Arctic Ocean is bordered to the east, on the right, mainly by Russia. The coasts of Finland, Sweden and Norway, on the other hand, occupy only the northern part of the Scandinavian peninsula, which is also surrounded by the northern Atlantic Ocean and the Baltic Sea.

To the left of the North Pole, the western shore of the Arctic Ocean runs alongside Alaska (an American state) and then northern Canada, where the circular Hudson Bay can be seen.

The large island of Greenland borders Baffin Island to the west and Iceland to the south.

There are also the British Isles, bordered by the North Sea to the north-east and separated from France by the English Channel.

Further south, the Caribbean Sea, bordering Central and South America, contains the chain of islands of the West Indies, of which only a few are mentioned to the west of Guadeloupe, Cuba points towards the Florida peninsula in the extreme south of the United States, and Dominica, home to the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

To the south-west of Martinique is the island of Saint-Vincent in the Grenadines archipelago.

Further east, through the Strait of Gibraltar, the Mediterranean Sea joins the Suez Canal, the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, which borders the Arabian Peninsula to the east.

The Arabian Sea covers the north-western part of the Indian Ocean and opens onto the triangular-shaped Persian Gulf to the north-east of the Arabian Peninsula.

It borders Pakistan and the west coast of India to the east.

Sri Lanka is in the Indian Ocean, at the entrance to the Bay of Bengal, which runs along the eastern coasts of India, Bangladesh, Burma and the islands of Melanesia.

The 3 islands around the south-east of the Asian continent are part of the Philippine archipelago; the other 3 belong to the Indonesian archipelago, including Papua New Guinea to the north of Australia (Aus).

The 2 islands to the east of Australia are New Zealand and Tasmania, further south.

Tahiti, shown above, is in Polynesia.

Heading up the east coast of the Asian continent, towards the Philippines, follow the coasts of China and the Korean peninsula.

Opposite, in the North Pacific, you find the Japanese archipelago, then Russia as far as the Bering Strait.