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[www.NewOrleansOnline.com](http://www.NewOrleansOnline.com) - The City of New Orleans' Official Tourism Web Site

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## ROCK 'N' ROLL MARDI GRAS MARATHON

### *Run or walk 26.2 miles through New Orleans' most beautiful neighborhoods*

New Orleans, LA – Becoming part of the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon series in 2010, the Mardi Gras Marathon is one of the Big Easy's most popular athletic events. First-timers and professionals alike complete a 13.1- mile or 26.2-mile course that takes them past some of the city's most popular landmarks and attractions.

Started in 1965, the Mardi Gras Marathon is one of the oldest marathons in the nation and only Boston, Yonkers, Atlanta and St. Louis have older races. The 26.2-mile route changed a few times over the years taking runners all around the city. For a while, it even went across the Causeway, the longest bridge in the world.

In 2010, the event became part of the Rock 'n' Roll Marathon series and its popularity grew even further. That year, 16,000 people took to the streets to conquer either the full marathon or half-marathon. The full and half marathon course leads participants through the Garden District, Audubon Park, French Quarter, City Park and down St. Charles Avenue, Decatur Street and Esplanade Avenue. The flat and easy course combined with the excitement of New Orleans makes it a great event for first time and experienced marathoners.

Marathon weekend usually starts off with a two-day Health & Fitness Expo at the Morial Convention Center where participants pick up their race packets. The expo features more than 100 running and fitness retailers, exhibits and interactive clinics. Marathon and half marathon participants receive a t-shirt and finisher's medal along with a goody bag of other items and discounts for athletic gear. There are live bands stationed on stages at every mile and a huge post-race concert afterwards in City Park.

The Rock 'n' Roll Marathon series was founded in 1998. It brings a party atmosphere to marathons with live music at every mile, a cheerleading spirit competition and a big post-race party that usually features nationally-known musical acts. Rock 'n' Roll Marathon events are in 16 cities including San Diego, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Antonio.

The event usually takes place in February and can sell out. Participants should register and book their travel plans well in advance. Web site: <http://mardi-gras.competitor.com>.

The New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation promotes the city as a leisure tourism destination throughout the year. NOTMC's annual marketing campaigns include strategic print, broadcast, and Internet advertising and public relations. Web sites: [www.NewOrleansOnline.com](http://www.NewOrleansOnline.com); [www.NewOrleansMuseums.com](http://www.NewOrleansMuseums.com); [www.HearNewOrleansMusic.com](http://www.HearNewOrleansMusic.com).

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