



# It's in the fuel

There is an old motto that says fuel, rather than blood, flows through the veins of the people who come from Brescia. Such is the anticipation around the 36th re-enactment of 'the most beautiful race in the world' – Italy's spectacular motor rally Mille Miglia

**W**hen the first racecar rolled into Brescian territory during the 1899 Verona-Mantua-Brescia-Verona race, the region fell in love – the Italian way. Within seven months, Brescia – in the foothills of the Alps – had its own six kilometre speed race and 223km rally on successive days.

It is no coincidence that six automobile manufacturers were founded in Brescia in the early twentieth century.

The Mille Miglia itself first took place in 1927, with an estimated five million Italians lining the 1000 miles (1600 kilometres) of breathtaking road.

When Benito Mussolini heard of its grand success, he sensed the extraordinary propaganda opportunity and sent a note on

presidential paper that simply read 'Do it again!'

The last race may have been in 1957, but it was a golden age in motorsport and the Mille Miglia attracted all the big names: Stirling Moss, Juan Fangio,

**Above: Former F1 driver David Coulthard in a Mercedes Benz 300 SLR (1955) at Mille Miglia**

Tazio Nuvolari – driving Ferraris, Maseratis, Jaguars and gullwing Mercedes – to name a few.



"Mille Miglia is an essential heritage of history and tradition," said 1000 Miglia S.r.l. General Manager, Mrs Francesca Parolin.

"It represents a symbol of Italian excellence in the world."

Today, the re-enactment of Mille Miglia combines tradition with innovation to celebrate the Italian way of living and, of course, it attracts the highest of glitterati.

Yasmin Le Bon and David Gandy, Jeremy Irons, Jay Leno, Sir Chris Hoy, Jim Gianopoulos, Daniel Day-Lewis and Bruno Senna are among the celebrities who have participated in previous editions of the Mille Miglia.

In 2004, and then again in 2011, Two-time Formula One World Champion Mika Hakkinen has entered twice – firstly with his wife as co-pilot and then alongside Juan Miguel Fangio II.

As with most high-end Italian events, glamour and fashion have played integral parts over the 91 years since the very first Mille Miglia.

Count Giannino Marzotto (the 'Mille Miglia minstrel') famously won the 1950 edition in an impeccable double-breasted ▶



suit and tie – and then again in 1953 donning a cashmere sweater and tie.

The suit – along with myriad artefacts – can be seen in the Mille Miglia Museum just outside of Brescia, where cars, motorbikes, signage, petrol pumps and garage are framed within a historical, social and political context with period costumes, literature and cinema featured in a monastic complex that dates back to 1008. ([museomillemiglia.it](http://museomillemiglia.it))

“In all these years the historical values of the event, inherited by its founders, remained unchanged,” said Parolin.

“A love for sports, fair play, safety and responsibility, history and tradition merged with

**Above: A supercharged 4.5L ‘Blower’ Bentley draws a crowd with other vintage cars at Mille Miglia in 2015 Below: A Porsche 356 in the 90th anniversary edition last year**



innovation to compound the meaning of Mille Miglia.”

With respect to tradition, a return to the classic route in 2018 will move through Cervia-Milano Marittima, Rome and Parma, including time trials at the Autodromo Nazionale di Monza, before returning to Brescia one week before the Monaco Grand Prix.

Four hundred and forty vehicles built between 1927 and 1957 will be selected to race by a special commission – the pool is commonly three times oversubscribed.

Starting outside the Nuovo Duomo in Brescia, the Freccia Rossa (Red Arrow – the convoy) will head down to the east coast at Ferrara, south to Rome, then back up through the Po Valley via Florence and Siena, travelling through famous food regions and spellbinding countryside.

An the ancient road – the passage to Lucca – along Versilia has been restored to allow the route to travel between Sarzana and the spectacular

mountain pass Passo della Cisa for the first time since 1949.

After the night parade in Rome, the final – and most glamorous – award ceremony will take place in the Piazza della Loggia in Brescia before celebrations head into the night. ■

#### THE ROUTE

##### Wednesday 16 May:

Brescia – Desenzano – Sirmione – Parco Sigurtà di Valeggio Sul – Mantova – Ferrara – Comacchio – Cervia-Milano Marittima

##### Thursday 17 May:

Cervia-Milano Marittima – Pesaro – San Marino – Arezzo – Cortona – Orvieto – Rome

##### Friday 18 May:

Rome – Lago di Vico – Siena – Lucca – Sarzana – Passo della Cisa – Parma

##### Saturday 19 May:

Parma – Lodi – Autodromo Nazionale di Monza – Bergamo – Brescia  
[1000miglia.eu](http://1000miglia.eu)