

Giro d'Italia Brings a Piece of Cycling History to the City

Maya Paula (April 30, 2013)



The TD Five Boro Bike Tour is just around the corner, and it's cruising in Italian style -right in time for the Year of Italian Culture in the United States. This year, the tour has partnered with Gran Fondo Giro d'Italia to offer the thousands of cyclists preparing for this weekend tour with a taste of the century-old Italian race.

Anyone who has recently passed through Times Square is surely familiar with the bubble-gum pink "Giro d'Italia" logo on the world's largest video screen. A similar image must be projected in the minds of thousands of cyclists awaiting the annual [TD Five Boro Bike Tour](#) [2], scheduled to take place this weekend on Sunday, May 5th. This year New York's cycling tour has joined efforts with Italy's famous [Gran Fondo Giro d'Italia](#) [3], to stage a fully authentic Italian-style cycling experience for its participants.

Ask any Italian what their favorite sport is and no doubt their answer will be cycling - after soccer, that is. After all, the Giro d'Italia is a significant part of Italy's history, having been around for over a century. The first tour was organized after the country's major sports newspaper, [La Gazzetta dello Sport](#) [4], had successfully held an automobile race. Inspired by the Tour de France, the Giro d'Italia was born in 1909, and has been running annually with the exception of the years during World Wars I and II.



More than a decade after the first completely Italian tour, “the Giro’s” route deviated into Switzerland, marking the event’s first cross-over into another country. Now that the spirit of the Giro d’Italia has finally crossed the Atlantic, it has made a great impression on the Gran Fondo phenomenon that has been sweeping the United States in the past years.

The idea of the Gran Fondo has become more popular in recent years, and while the Giro d’Italia is reserved for professional cyclists, with a specific route and race format that is adjusted yearly, bike races in the United States have been adapting their formats to resemble a typical Gran Fondo structure. This year, Giro d’Italia’s influence will be felt most strongly in the organization of four distinct Gran Fondo tours. Besides the TD Five Boro Bike Tour in New York, “the Giro” has already animated Monterey, CA at the Sea Otter Classic in April, and will eventually arrive at the Los Angeles-Pasadena Gran Fondo on June 2nd, and in Miami’s Coral Gables on November 10th.

While the Giro d’Italia is a three-week event that covers a distance of 3405 km, or about 2116 miles, Gran Fondos are usually defined as a combination of recreational cycling and competition, covering a fairly long distance. Each of these four tours determines their individual format, with the route of New York’s Five Boro Tour spanning around forty miles. The distance was set to accommodate riders of all ages and difficulty levels, including children.

The Five Boro Bike Tour, first organized in February of 1977, is influenced by its renowned Italian partner in more than just its name. 32,000 cyclists will ride in this weekend’s event, 2,000 of which have registered as VIP members and will enjoy a variety of Italian-themed perks.

All participants will have the exciting and one of a kind opportunity to ride alongside [Gianni Bugno](#) [5], first-place cyclist in the Giro d’Italia in 1990 and the [UCI World Champion](#) [6] in both 1991 and 1992. Bugno will be available for photos and autographs at the biking Expo, held at Pier 36, Basketball City on May 3rd and 4th, as well as at the VIP area at the finish line on the day of the tour.

VIP cyclists will tour the city as the Italians do by enjoying a, starting off with a delicious breakfast to power them through the day, and finishing their journey with an indulgent massage. At the finish line, VIP riders will enjoy live music, as well as tasty Sicilian pasta dish at the Italian-style party in Staten Island, the final destination of the tour. Other incentives include a personalized bike registration number, goodie bag and an official Five Boro cycling jersey by Santini, which has a time chip that measures the climb of the Verrazano Narrows Bridge.

The bike tour will commence in downtown Manhattan, and continue north along the city’s most famous sites, including the Flatiron building, the site of the Freedom Tower, Central Park and Radio City Music Hall. Moving through Harlem and the Bronx, cyclists will enjoy the breeze along the East River before taking the Ed Koch bridge to Brooklyn. They will finish by crossing the Verrazano Narrows bridge to Staten Island.

The event is proudly sponsored by Vittoria, Selle Italia, Limar, Santini, Bianchi, Bicycling Magazine, La Gazzetta dello Sport and Interbike. Not only is it a great way to explore the city and meet fellow passionate cyclists, it is a perfect way of getting in touch with Italian culture in America, right in time for the [Year of Italian Culture in the United States](#) [7].

Event Date: Sunday, May 5th, 2013

Start Line: Intersection of Franklin Street and Church Street

VIP Entry Point: Canal Street and Church Street (This is also the entry point for the breakfast.)

Breakfast: Begins at 6am

7:30 – Intro & Announcements

7:45 – Start 1

8:20 – Intro & Announcements

8:30 – Start 2



9:05 - Intro & Announcements

9:15 - Start 3

Finish Festival at Fort Wadsworth (Staten Island)

Expo (where and opening time)

May 3 10am - 8pm

May 4 9am - 7pm

Location: Basketball City Pier

36 299 South Street

More info [>>>](#) [8]

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Links

[1] <http://ftp.iitaly.org/files/fiveboro1367378325jpg>

[2] <http://www.bikenewyork.org/ride/five-boro-bike-tour/>

[3] <http://www.granfondogiroditalia.com>

[4] <http://www.gazzetta.it>

[5] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gianni_Bugno

[6] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/UCI_World_Championships

[7] <http://www.italyinus2013.org/en>

[8] <http://www.granfondogiroditalia.com/fiveboro/>