

10 BEST URBAN RACES

This was a tough category in which to pick a winner. Urban races are logistical nightmares. Dropping a triathlon in the middle of a big city creates plenty of problems and we have yet to hear of an event that's done it perfectly. We decided to pick a winner that best handles the chaos of metropolitan triathlon while still treating athletes to a one-of-a-kind tour of a remarkable city. With these as our criteria, the Los Angeles Triathlon stood out from some worthy competition. Putting on an Olympic-distance triathlon smack in the middle of the mess that is downtown L.A. should be impossible, but for a decade, the L.A. Tri has been one of the best races in the country. Rocketing your bike down an empty Hollywood Boulevard is an experience no triathlete should miss.

Kaiser Permanente Los Angeles Triathlon

Location: Los Angeles

2010 Date: Oct. 3

Distance: 1.5K swim, 40K bike, 10K run/.4-mile swim, 14.1-mile bike, 3.3-mile run

Website: Latriathlon.com

★ Editor's Choice

Subaru Vancouver International Triathlon

Location: Vancouver, B.C., Canada

2010 Date: July 4

Distance: 1.2-mile swim, 56-mile bike, 13.1-mile run/500m swim, 26K bike, 5K run

Website: Triseries.ca

Pittsburgh Triathlon

Location: Pittsburgh

2010 Date: Aug. 1

Distance: 1.5K swim, 40K bike, 10K run

Website: FriendsOfTheRiverfront.org

Aviva Ironman 70.3 Singapore

Location: Singapore

2010 Date: March 21

Distance: 1.2-mile run, 56-mile bike, 13.1-mile run

Website: Ironman703singapore.com

Lifetime Fitness Triathlon

Location: Minneapolis

2010 Date: July 10

Distance: 1.5K swim, 40K bike, 10K run

Website: Ltftriathlon.com

Miami International Triathlon

Location: Miami

2010 Date: March 14

Distance: 1.5K swim, 40K bike, 10K run

Website: Mitriathlon.com

The Nation's Triathlon

Location: Washington, D.C.

2010 Date: Sept. 12

Distance: 1.5K swim, 40K bike, 10K run

Website: Thenationstriathlon.com

Escape from Alcatraz

Location: San Francisco

2010 Date: May 2

Distance: 1.5-mile swim, 18-mile bike, 8-mile run

Website: Escapefromalcatraztriathlon.com

London Triathlon

Location: London

2010 Date: Aug. 8

Distance: 1.5K swim, 40K bike, 10K run

Website: Thelondontriathlon.com

Chicago Triathlon

Location: Chicago

2010 Date: Aug. 27-29

Distance: 1.5K swim, 40K bike, 10K run/.75K swim, 22K bike, 5K run

Website: Chicagotriathlon.com

BEST 140.6-MILE RACES

Call it Ironman, iron-distance, Ironman-distance, 140.6-mile distance, call it whatever you'd like. We call it awesome and we don't care whose logo is on the medal because finishing a race of this distance makes any triathlete worthy of a few beers in our book. By any name, the Hawaii Ironman is the best there is. Our editors are asked all the time if the Hawaii Ironman is the greatest race on Earth or if it's



Rich Cruse

all just hoopla. Our answer: There's no hoopla in Kona. The Hawaii Ironman is the greatest, most inspiring, most torturous race on this planet and that will never change.

Ford Ironman World Championship

Location: Kona, Hawaii

2010 Date: Oct. 9

Distance: 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 26.2-mile run

Website: Ironman.com/worldchampionship

★ **Editor's Choice**

Frankfurter Sparkasse Ironman European Championship

Location: Frankfurt, Germany

2010 Date: July 4

Distance: 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 26.2-mile run

Website: Ironman.de

Quelle Challenge Roth

Location: Roth, Germany

2010 Date: July 18

Distance: 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 26.2-mile run

Website: Challenge-roth.de

Subaru Ironman Canada

Location: Penticton, B.C., Canada

2010 Date: Aug. 29

Distance: 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 26.2-mile run

Website: Ironman.ca

Beach2Battleship Triathlon

Location: Wilmington, N.C.

2010 Date: Nov. 13

Distance: 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 26.2-mile run

Website: Beach2Battleship.com

Full Vineman Triathlon

Location: Guerneville, Calif.

2010 Date: July 31

Distance: 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 26.2-mile run

Website: Vineman.com

Israman

Location: Eilat, Israel

2010 Date: Jan. 29

Distance: 2.6-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 26.2-mile run

Website: Israman.co.il

Elbaman

Location: Elba, Italy

2010 Date: Sept. 26

Distance: 2.6-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 26.2-mile run

Website: Elbaman.it



Chesapeakeman

Location: Cambridge, Md.

2010 Date: Sept. 25

Distance: 2.6-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 26.2-mile run

Website: Tricolumbia.org

Iron Punta del Este

Location: Punta del Este, Uruguay

2010 Date: Dec. 5

Distance: 2.6-mile swim, 114-mile bike, 26.2-mile run

Website: Ironpunta.com

10 BEST EXCUSES FOR A VACATION

Some places are so spectacular that the location ultimately becomes more memorable than the race no matter how well you did. Nowhere is this more true than at the Ironman 70.3 Asia-Pacific Championship, previously known as the Laguna Phuket Triathlon. Phuket, Thailand, sets the stage for one of the most tranquil tris on Earth and it's one hell of a place to unwind post-race. And yes, the winners get to run down the finishing chute with a little elephant. Regardless of what PETA thinks, miniature elephants are awesome.

Ironman 70.3 Asia-Pacific Championship

Location: Laguna Phuket, Thailand

2010 Date: Dec. 5

Distance: 1.2-mile swim, 56-mile bike, 13.1-mile run

Website: Ironman.com

★ **Editor's Choice**

Rose Hall Triathlon

Location: St. James, Jamaica

2010 Date: Oct. 23

Distance: 1.5K swim, 40K bike, 10K run/.75K swim, 23K bike, 5K run

Website: Rosehalltriathlon.com

Bali Triathlon

Location: Jimbaran Bay, Bali

2010 Date: June 20

Distance: 1.5K swim, 40K bike, 10K run

Website: BaliTriathlon.com

Ironman France

Location: Nice, France

2010 Date: June 27

Distance: 2.4-mile swim, 56-mile bike, 26.2-mile run

Website: Ironmanfrance.com

Honolulu Triathlon

Location: Oahu, Hawaii

2010 Date: May 16

Distance: 1.5K swim, 40K bike, 10K run/.75K swim, 20K bike, 5K run

Website: Honolulutriathlon.com

Tahiti Nui Triathlon Series

Location: Tahiti and Raiatea, French Polynesia

2010 Date: April 9-12

Distance: 1.5K swim, 40K bike, 10K run/.75K swim, 20K bike, 5K run

Website: Tahitinuitriathlonseries.com

Ironman China/Ironman 70.3 China

Location: Haikou, Hainan, China

2010 Date: March 14

Distance: 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 26.2-mile run/1.2-mile swim, 56-mile bike, 13.1-mile run

Website: Ironmanchina.com

Ford Ironman Cozumel

Location: Cozumel, Quintana Roo, Mexico

2010 Date: Nov. 28

Distance: 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 13.1-mile run

Website: Ironmancozumel.com

Bonita Ironman New Zealand

Location: Taupo, New Zealand

2010 Date: March 6

Distance: 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike, 26.2-mile run

Website: Ironman.co.nz



Colin Dunjohn



Spec-Savers Ironman 70.3 South Africa

Location: Buffalo City, South Africa

2010 Date: Jan. 17

Distance: 1.2-mile swim, 56-mile bike, 13.1-mile run

Website: Ironman703.co.za

5 BEST OFF-ROAD RACES

For some athletes, no matter the destination, roads simply won't cut it. When it comes to taking tris to the trails, the Xterra Series runs the show, and you can find an Xterra race just about anywhere there's a trail. There are some breathtaking courses around the world,