

## Honoring George Hirsch at the Italy Run 2019 Kick-Off

Roberta Cutillo (March 19, 2019)



Magazine publisher, runner, Italian “cultural ambassador”, and much more, George Hirsch was awarded with the Recognition of the Republic of Italy “Ufficiale dell’Ordine della Stella d’Italia” at the Italian Consulate in occasion of the announcement of the upcoming “Italy Run 2019 by Nutella Cafe.”

[Consul General Francesco Genuardi](#) [2]officially announced that the “Italy Run”, an initiative first launched last year on June 2nd to celebrate the “Festa della Repubblica” in partnership with the New York Road Runners organization, will be coming back this year. This 5 mile run through Central Park “is a way to show what Italy is today and the love of Italy for NY and, I think, the love of New York towards Italy” the Consul said.



Michael Capiraso, the CEO and President of New York Road Runners, remarked on the “great involvement” witnessed last year. “As an Italian growing up in Jersey City and coming to NY I always dreamed of having an Italy Run” he said. And eventually, he turned to George Hirsch, magazine publisher, runner, Italy lover, and “passionate supporter of the Italian community in New York” as Consul Genuardi said, to make it happen.

In conferring to him the official title of “Ufficiale dell’Ordine della Stella d’Italia”, the consul explains how beyond having played a central role in “attracting runners from all over the world not only to the New York Marathon but to the world of marathons in general”, Mr. Hirsch has been instrumental in the creation and organization of the Italy Run, and an overall “Ambassador of Italy and Italian culture.”

George Hirsch’s love for Italy is in fact apparent from the moment he begins his speech, which he makes in Italian. He defines himself as “A New Yorker (born 10 minutes walking from here) but with an Italian heart.” He recounts how he fell in love with the country during his very first time there, and has always gone back since “for work and for vacation, many vacations, in every part of Italy.”

George contributed greatly to the promotion of Italy in the United States. Notably, he was the chairman and publisher of the English language edition of “La Cucina Italiana”, Italy’s oldest and largest food and cooking magazine. He also recalls having participated in the founding of the Italian magazine Panorama back in the ‘60s.

The greatest memory he shares though is perhaps one from a recent visit to Naples, where he lived the first time he was in Italy as a young US Marine. “I found the house where I lived the first time, in 1959.” He recognized the house, even his very apartment. In the one next door there was a woman - “making pizza, what else?” he jokes - who invited him in for “a pleasant and nostalgic visit.”

“It’s not surprising that I always feel at home in Italy” he concludes, warmly and sincerely thanking the consulate and everyone in it for his well-deserved award.

And thanks to people like Mr. Hirsch, who through his work at numerous publications such as “The Runner” and “Runner’s World”, promoted running and turned it into the global sensation it is today, many people are expected to participate in this year’s “Italy Run”. In fact, though this may come as a surprise to some, Italians, especially those living in New York, love to run. According to the Consul “Italians are a significant part of the New York Marathon and the number of Italian runners keeps growing every year. Italy is the second most represented country in the marathon, after the United States.”

“Italy Run” is also an occasion to show a healthy Italian lifestyle, as was emphasized by Aldo Uvo, CEO of Ferrero and a runner himself. In his video message, the latter talked about Nutella Cafe, the event’s main sponsor, as a “piazza” that wishes to bring together energy and passion, the two main ingredients of Nutella, but also “the same ingredients of a great country, Italy, and a great city.”

There will be a festival after the race, with other Italian brands, such as Colavita, Luxottica, and Clemente Italian Bakery from New Jersey, “a new entry representing a lot of Italian Americans in NJ.” The event will also be linked to a charity organization, “The Friends of San Patrignano”, who help those suffering from drug and alcohol dependency. It will be an occasion to bring people together and show the world the healthier side of Italian life.

If you want to participate you can register online [>>](#) [3]

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