

Round The World 2008 Volvo Yachting Race

This year's 2008-2009 Volvo Ocean Race begins in Spain this October, with participants sailing the world and testing their skill against the most challenging conditions in sailing. Formerly known as the Whitbread Round the World Race, the Volvo Ocean Race is now sponsored by Volvo, which has organized the event since they took over the 2001-2002 race. Upon Volvo's involvement, three additional stopovers were added to the race in Sweden, France and Germany. Not surprisingly, these are Volvo's three biggest markets for car sales on the European mainland. Additional changes in the point system were made to ensure that the race maintained a level of competitiveness throughout all legs. Traditionally the Volvo Ocean Race has departed from a location in Europe some time in September. This year, however, the planned departure date is October 11, 2008, starting from Alicante, on Spain's Costa Blanca. This is one of two major changes that have occurred for the upcoming race. The yachts had always departed from somewhere in the United Kingdom up until the last race, which was the first to begin the race from elsewhere in Europe. Secondly, a new yacht design was introduced. The Volvo 70 is a lighter boat design with more sail area. Until the 2008-2009 Volvo Ocean Race, the event had traditionally been scheduled every four years. This year's race will begin after a break of only three years. The route has changed many times and in various ways since the beginning of the race over thirty years ago. Beginning in Spain, the customary path heads south through the Atlantic, down around the southern tip of Africa, around the Southern ocean and back to England. Brand new additions will be a stopover in India at the major port of Kochi, and, also for the first time in Asia, at a port in Singapore where the second in-port event will be held. The race route will include one stop in North America in Boston, Massachusetts. The race will finish off in St. Petersburg, Russia. Despite the many changes, a central objective remains at the heart of this and other sailing competitions: a matchless adventure and an exercise in sailing skill against the odds of nature. Ericsson Racing Team, which has two yachts enlisted as challengers in the Volvo Ocean Race, has transported their boats and sailing crew to the Canary Islands. The crew have trained in Puerto Calero, on the island of Lanzarote, which offers ideal sailing conditions. Lanzarote maintains relatively constant temperatures and sees low annual rainfall. Few days are lost to weather related problems due to this environment, which offers the premium atmosphere for technical improvements and beneficial training. In addition to these benefits, the winds are good and steady in the Canary Islands due to the north-east trade winds, which also bring cooler air in the summers to Lanzarote. Atmospheric benefits are not the only plusses of Puerto Calero for the sailing crews. The marina has good [Lanzarote hotels](#) within strolling distance for the crews. Like Volvo's addition of certain ports within their sales arena, Ericsson's presence in the race is similar, to improve sales and reach customers around the world. Ericsson is a communications company based in Sweden, providing technology and support for a variety of telecommunication and data communication systems. New stops added along the route will allow these and all involved companies to expand their customer bases in the Middle East, China, India and other parts of Asia.

About the Author

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