

2018 Mille Miglia: Second Stage

- Yesterday, the caravan threaded its way down the Italian peninsula from Milano Marittima to Rome
- The excitement of the race mingled with the beauty of the landscapes, making a truly thrilling day
- At Pesaro, two and four wheels met in a warm embrace, as the town also welcomed the 12th stage of the Giro d'Italia, for which Alfa Romeo is the official car
- After San Marino and lunch at Arezzo, the views of the Val di Chiana and Lake Trasimeno were followed by an evening parade along Via Veneto in Rome
- The "[Alfa Romeo: the Mille Miglia in 90 places](#)" project, retracing the most significant stages in the brand's history at the Mille Miglia 90 years after its first victory, is now online

May 18, 2018, Rome - The overnight stay at Milano Marittima was a short one and the caravan was on the move again at first light. The rain, which had been very testing for the crews, especially in Ferrara, had given way to hazy sunshine and was greeted with pleasure by the drivers and navigators. The second stage was long and demanding, leading to the turnaround point in Rome. The distance was not particularly long considering the number of hours at the wheel, but the average speeds set were low and the race passed through many town centers, where the competitors received an enthusiastic welcome from fans. Leaving the centre of Milano Marittima behind, the route led across the Salina Park in Cervia before joining the Via Romea Sud, while the sun rose over the Adriatic and Cesenatico, Bellaria, Rimini and Riccione slipped by along the coast.

At Pesaro, the changing of the guard between the Mille Miglia and Giro d'Italia

The caravan traveled from Gabicce Mare to Gabicce Monte, with a time trial on the Via Panoramica, followed by another at Casteldimezzo. The cars then crossed the Monte San Bartolo Natural Park to Pesaro, known as "Bicycle City" because of the vast network of cycle tracks that criss-cross the surrounding area. But this passion for two wheels shared space with cars, and the arrival of the "Red Arrow" was welcomed by a crowd in celebratory mood on Piazza del Popolo on a very special day for Pesaro: yesterday it also welcomed the passage of the 12th stage of the Giro d'Italia, another event in which Alfa Romeo plays a major role.

In fact, Giulia and Stelvio are the official cars of the pink-jersey race, in a partnership that unites two world-famous symbols of Italian identity. Cycle bells replied to the ringing car horns and the caravan proceeded north with the ascent to San Marino. Here, it gave the compulsory salute to the tiny Republic perched on Monte Titano and San Marino replied with its customary warmth, amply rewarding the climb and the many bends.

Sansepolcro and Arezzo, where past and future meet

It was almost lunchtime as the cars approached the streets of Arezzo, passing through Sansepolcro, famously known as the birthplace of Piero della Francesca. His wonderful works offer an admirable blend of art and geometry and seem to mediate between tradition and modernity. This alchemy is also very much present in the motoring world and the Mille Miglia is a fine example: along the 47 historic official and privately owned historic cars taking part, Alfa Romeo has also lined up the best of current production as Official Cars for the event. Watching the passage of the "Red Arrow" is therefore an ideal way of getting first-hand experience of the brand's DNA, steeped in history and competition and with the vigour of a legendary past. For an enthralling look back over the brand's successes 90 years after its first victory, the "[Alfa Romeo: the Mille Miglia in 90 places](#)" project is now online.

From small fortified towns to the Eternal City

After the break in Arezzo, it was time to be off again: this was the halfway point and now the route headed for Rome. The shores of Lake Trasimeno led to Castiglione del Lago, one of Italy's loveliest historic towns. Then came the

streets of Orvieto, before heading for the open country. Umbrian specialties were to the fore in Orvieto and also at Baschi, where there was a new time trial. Through their car windows, drivers could see green countryside and hear a silence only broken by the gentle rustle of vegetation and the roar of engines. Time-keeping was a constant, but did not prevent participants from enjoying the views and appreciating the beauties of the landscape.

The first crews reached Via Veneto in Rome at 8.25 p.m. This is the city of the "dolce vita" and in spite of the long hours at the wheel, the excitement of the crowd took the drivers back in spirit to the 1950s, when beauty was everything and love of the good life reigned supreme. It seemed that the paparazzi's cameras should start flashing at any moment, and it was no coincidence that the 1954 Alfa Romeo 1900 Sport Spider and 1956 Super Sprint were very much at home in this setting, as befits timeless divas.

Alfa Romeo

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