

Coca-Cola® And The Olympic Torch Relay



The Coca-Cola Company first became formally involved with the Olympic Torch Relay in 1992 and for the sixth time will be a presenter of this majestic event when the round-the-world Beijing 2008 Olympic Torch Relay begins in late March.

Coca-Cola previously presented the Olympic Torch Relay for the Olympic Games of Atlanta 1996, Nagano 1998, Salt Lake 2002, Athens 2004 and Torino 2006. Our alliance with the Olympic Torch Relay began taking shape with landmark Relay programs for the Barcelona 1992 Olympic Games and Lillehammer 1994 Olympic Winter Games.

Our sponsorship in recent years typically has included a commitment of personnel and event expertise, financial resources, beverage products, support equipment and creative marketing and community programs to connect consumers with the wonder and magic of the Olympic Torch Relay, the centerpiece activity leading up to each Olympic Games.

Together with our bottling partners, our goal is to create innovative programs that help each Olympic Torch Relay touch consumers individually and leave lasting, cherished memories of this unique Olympic Games experience. We also have worked closely with the Olympic Family in the selection of thousands of inspirational torchbearers from communities around the world.

Origins of the Modern Olympic Torch Relay

Reviving a tradition from ancient Greece, the first appearance of an Olympic Flame in modern times took place at the Amsterdam 1928 Olympic Games. A cauldron was ignited when an employee of the municipal electric company threw a burning match into the bowl of the Amsterdam Olympic Stadium's famous Marathon Tower. The Olympic Games that year in the Netherlands also included the first appearance of Coca-Cola at this global event. As the longest continuous corporate supporter of the Olympic Games, Coca-Cola has been involved with every edition of the Games – for both summer and winter sports – since then.



Coca-Cola first became involved with the Olympic Torch Relay in conjunction with the Barcelona 1992 Olympic Games.



For the Berlin 1936 Olympic Games, another modern tradition was born: the Olympic Torch Relay. The Olympic Flame in July that year was kindled in ancient Olympia, Greece – birthplace of the first Olympic Games centuries ago – and carried through Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Austria and Czechoslovakia before arriving in Germany for the commencement of the Games of the XI Olympiad.

Sixteen years later, the first Olympic Torch Relay for an Olympic Winter Games unfolded when a flame was lighted in Morgedal, Norway, and taken around the host country in advance of the Oslo 1952 Olympic Winter Games. The Olympic Torch Relay has since become legend as one of the Olympic Movement's – and the world's – most engaging and inspiring phenomena and the single-most-anticipated event before the Olympic Games are declared open.

The Torch Relay also has grown from a spectacle largely focused in the host country of the Olympic Games into a worldwide celebration that has drawn hundreds of millions more people into the glow of the Olympic Flame, enabling them to share a first-hand experience of the Olympic Spirit.

The following summaries provide details of the role of Coca-Cola in various presentations of the Olympic Torch Relay since 1992.

Barcelona 1992

The Barcelona 1992 Olympic Games marked the debut of the International Olympic Torchbearers Program, Sponsored by Coca-Cola. The breakthrough program – developed in cooperation with the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Barcelona Olympic Organizing Committee and various National Olympic Committees – was a turning point in modern-day Torch Relay tradition. Previously, participants from the Games' host country were typically involved in relaying the Olympic Flame within its borders to the Opening Ceremony. But Barcelona 1992 marked the first time people from other nations were invited to also carry the flame in the host country during the Olympic Torch Relay.

On the 1992 Relay days of July 7, 12, 13 and 19, the international torchbearers invited by Coca-Cola participated hand-in-hand with torchbearers from Spain, near the Spanish cities of Segovia, Seville and Alicante. Each torchbearer carried the flame approximately 500 meters, a distance that has become roughly the standard for each participant in the Torch Relays of recent Olympiads.

For the event in Spain, Coca-Cola selected 150 torchbearers from more than 50 countries – representing nearly every major region of the world – plus more than 100 Spanish torchbearers who took part in our international program.



The members of this multicultural group were chosen through a variety of national selection processes, such as community athletic events, citizen nominations of deserving individuals, and local promotions. Coca-Cola has turned nearly every Olympic Torch Relay since then into an international affair by including torchbearers from other countries.

Nations with torchbearers participating in the Barcelona 1992 Olympic Torch Relay through Coca-Cola programs: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Chinese Taipei, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Guatemala, Honduras, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Martinique, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Namibia, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United States, Uruguay, Zimbabwe.



Lillehammer 1994

Our International Olympic Torchbearers Program, Sponsored by Coca-Cola, was implemented for the first time at an Olympic Winter Games in 1994, through a joint effort with the Lillehammer Olympic Organizing Committee and more than a dozen National Olympic Committees. Overall, approximately 7,000 citizens from Norway, the host country, participated in the 78-day Relay that lasted from November 27, 1993, to February 12, 1994, and covered 8,000 kilometers (4,971 miles) throughout the Scandinavian nation. Coca-Cola invited 30 participants from 13 countries to carry the Olympic Flame – alternately passing it to Norwegian torchbearers – on February 5 through parts of Oslo, during the Relay's final journey to Lillehammer, the host city of the Games.

Countries with torchbearers participating in the Lillehammer 1994 Olympic Torch Relay through Coca-Cola programs: Austria, China, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Hungary, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Sweden, United States.

Atlanta 1996

For the Atlanta 1996 Centennial Olympic Games, Coca-Cola served for the first time as exclusive presenter of the entire Olympic Torch Relay, and our Company selected approximately 2,500 of the event's 10,000 torchbearers through programs around the world. Within those totals, an all-time high of 500 torchbearers from approximately 70 countries was selected through the International Olympic Torchbearers Program, Sponsored by Coca-Cola.

A Coca-Cola "Share the Spirit" program, created in cooperation with the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, was our primary vehicle for selecting torchbearers both in the United States and from abroad.



The Coca-Cola Company

The “Who Would You Choose?” theme allowed people in their local communities to select someone special in their lives to carry the Olympic Flame. The result was a cadre of torchbearers from all walks of life, not just athletes or national heroes.

Coca-Cola also recruited all 2,500 of the Relay’s escort runners, who serve as guardians of the Olympic Flame and provide assistance, if needed, to torchbearers when they are carrying the flame. The escort runners in 1996 were high school students selected by Coca-Cola for their athleticism, character and leadership qualities.

In conjunction with the Relay, we produced a variety of companion consumer promotions, offering trips to travel with the Olympic Flame and the opportunity to receive official merchandise from the 1996 Olympic Torch Relay Presented by Coca-Cola.

The 1996 Relay event was the most ambitious and logistically challenging Olympic Torch Relay up to that time. It began April 17 in Los Angeles and concluded July 19 in Atlanta, covering a record 15,000 miles (24,140 kilometers) and crossing into 42 of America’s 50 states. Along with torchbearers carrying the flame on foot or by wheelchair, the Relay incorporated alternative forms of transportation for the flame, such as bicycle, horseback, canoe, steamboat, train, seaplane and helicopter.



The Atlanta 1996 Olympic Torch Relay Presented by Coca-Cola covered 15,000 miles and crossed into 42 American states.

Coca-Cola, as the presenter, was a key partner in the Relay’s success by assisting the organizing committee with worldwide promotions and public relations, logistical and technical support.

We also had a major hand in the thrice-daily city celebrations for fans all along the epic, cross-country route. Since Atlanta 1996, the local rallies in each city and town welcoming the Olympic Flame have grown in size and dimension, drawing avid fans of all ages from each region on or near the flame’s path. There is no way to accurately estimate the crowds that have turned out for Coca-Cola sponsored festivities heralding the arrival of the Olympic Flame. Conservatively, the cumulative attendance over the years has been well into the millions.

Countries with torchbearers participating in the Atlanta 1996 Olympic Torch Relay through Coca-Cola programs: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Chinese Taipei, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Northern Ireland, Norway, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Romania, Russia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sri Lanka, Surinam, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United States, Uruguay.





Our GEORGIA® Coffee brand presented the Olympic Torch Relay along three Japanese routes for Nagano 1998.

Nagano 1998

As exclusive presenter of the Nagano 1998 Olympic Torch Relay, Coca-Cola implemented programs to select more than half of the 1,150 torchbearers and 50 percent of the 5,750 escort and support runners who took part in yet another logistically complex event. The numbers included approximately 50 torchbearers chosen by Coca-Cola from 10 countries outside Japan.

Coca-Cola partnered with the Nagano Olympic Organizing Committee to host the Relay, which took place from January 6 to February 7, 1998. We selected torchbearers and escort runners, provided technical assistance, organized celebrations and promoted the Relay worldwide. The challenge was amplified by Japanese organizers' inventive approach to sharing the flame throughout the host nation's islands. The Olympic Flame was divided and carried along three simultaneous routes: an Eastern Japan course that started in Hokkaido; a Pacific Ocean course, starting in Kagoshima; and a Sea of Japan course that began in Okinawa.

In Japan, The Coca-Cola Company selected torchbearers through consumer promotions sponsored by our GEORGIA® Coffee brand, an official beverage of the Nagano 1998 Olympic Winter Games. Support runners were recruited from Japanese high schools through promotions sponsored by Aquarius®, the Official Sports Drink of the 1998 Games. Both brands are trademarks of The Coca-Cola Company. GEORGIA® Coffee, Japan's No. 1 canned coffee, was available only in that country. Internationally, brand Coca-Cola® was used in promotions to select torchbearers from other nations to carry the Olympic Flame in Japan.

In an effort to share the Olympic Flame with as many Japanese citizens as possible, The Coca-Cola Company and our bottling partners each day hosted "after-hours" celebrations that took place on all three Relay routes and enabled people who may have missed the Torch Relay to experience the flame's magic. We also hosted "night before" reception parties for the next day's Relay participants, bringing together all torchbearers, escort runners and support runners for the first time.

Countries with torchbearers participating in the Nagano 1998 Olympic Torch Relay through Coca-Cola programs: China, Czech Republic, Great Britain, Japan, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Russia, Slovak Republic, Taiwan, Ukraine, United States.



Through our brands, excitement for the arrival of the Olympic Flame reaches millions around the world.



Salt Lake 2002

The Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Torch Relay was co-presented by Coca-Cola and Chevrolet, both long-time Olympic Games sponsors. The Relay, which began December 4, 2001, in Atlanta, traveled more than 13,500 miles (21,726 kilometers) through 46 American states, making it the largest Olympic Torch Relay for an Olympic Winter Games. For the first time, the Olympic Flame visited Alaska and also traveled through all U.S. cities that previously hosted the Olympic Games: Atlanta; Lake Placid, New York; St. Louis, Missouri; Los Angeles; and Squaw Valley, California. The Olympic Cauldron was lighted February 8, 2002, in Salt Lake City.

Coca-Cola, along with the Salt Lake Organizing Committee and Chevrolet, collaborated on finding the most inspirational people to carry the Olympic Flame. Our Company alone collected more than 125,000 "hometown hero" torchbearer nominations (in the form of 50-to-100-word essays) – 14 times the number of nominations received for the 1996 Olympic Torch Relay.

By Relay's end, Coca-Cola had placed in excess of 3,500 torchbearers in the procession. And from among all 11,500 people who carried the Olympic Flame in 2001-2002, the powerful stories of 67 torchbearers selected by Coca-Cola were individually featured in 30-second, prime-time profiles telecast nightly on NBC-TV, an official broadcaster of the Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Winter Games.



Through our international torchbearers program, Coca-Cola brought 45 citizens from nine countries to join in the Salt Lake Relay. They all carried the Olympic Flame in the Southern California area. We also recruited more than 2,100 of the Relay's 4,300 support runners.

Just before each arrival of the Olympic Flame at city celebrations along the 2002 Olympic Torch Relay route, artworks created by local teens were unveiled as part of a national "Coca-Cola Community Canvas" program in which youth depicted their interpretations of the Relay theme of "inspiration." We invited more than 120 Boys and Girls Clubs and youth groups in cities along the route to participate. The Company then commissioned world-renowned artist Peter Max to paint a mosaic mural featuring the Community Canvas artworks collected from the 67-day Relay. His masterpiece was exhibited during the Games and subsequently donated to Salt Lake City.

Through a partnership with Keep America Beautiful and other local environmental groups, Coca-Cola organized "green teams" at key public gathering places along the nationwide Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Torch Relay route. The teams were responsible for recycling bottles and cleaning up the environment following public celebrations of the Olympic Flame.



The Coca-Cola Company

Countries with torchbearers participating in the Salt Lake 2002 Olympic Torch Relay through Coca-Cola programs: Austria, Canada, China, Denmark, France, Norway, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden, United States.

Athens 2004: The Relay Goes Global

Our Company helped take global participation to a new level through its major role in the Athens 2004 Olympic Torch Relay Presented by Coca-Cola and Samsung, the most-far-reaching Relay to date. This truly unique Olympic Torch Relay – themed, “Pass the flame, unite the world” – began and ended in Greece and, during one stretch, visited 27 countries in a period of 36 days. It became the first relay of the Olympic Flame to circle the earth.

The precedent-setting Olympic Torch Relay in 2004 brought the Olympic Flame for the first time to Africa and South America and included all five land masses represented by the Olympic Rings – Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania.



The Athens 2004 Olympic Torch Relay Presented by Coca-Cola was the first Torch Relay to circle the earth.



The massive 2004 Torch Relay event brought people together in 27 countries around the globe.

The Olympic Flame was ignited in March 2004 in ancient Olympia, Greece, and resided for several weeks at Athens' historic Panathenaic Stadium – home of the first modern Olympic Games in 1896 – before beginning its worldwide journey. The impressive, global Torch Relay route encompassed every city that had hosted the summer edition of the Olympic Games, as well as Beijing, China (the 2008 Olympic Games host). Other cities with sporting, historical or cultural significance also were part of the intercontinental route: Brussels, Belgium; Cairo, Egypt; Cape Town, South Africa; Geneva, Switzerland; Istanbul, Turkey; Kiev, Ukraine; Lausanne, Switzerland (home of the International Olympic Committee); New Delhi, India; New York, United States; Nicosia, Cyprus; Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; and Sofia, Bulgaria. In all, more than 30 major cities outside of Greece were included on the international portion of the Olympic Torch Relay.

The final key segment of the Olympic Torch Relay took the Olympic Flame on a five-week, nationwide journey of Greece before the August 13 cauldron lighting at the Opening Ceremony of the Athens 2004 Olympic Games.

Coca-Cola and the Athens 2004 Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games worked together to create selection programs that ensured the vast majority of torchbearer slots were made available to the public. The organizing committee estimated that more than 11,000 torchbearers helped carry the Olympic Flame on its momentous, round-the-world journey: more than 3,600 torchbearers during international sections outside of Greece and more than 7,700 within Greece.





Athens 2004: The Coca-Cola caravan entertains Torch Relay fans on the streets of Rome.

Coca-Cola had a hand in the selection of a share of the torchbearers and escort runners for every segment and city included in the 2004 Relay – both internationally and domestically in Greece – through local programs developed by our worldwide system. As part of our overall focus on young people, we invited Greek youth to nominate their peers to be torchbearers in the host country. Meanwhile, some of the escort runners who accompanied torchbearers along the Greek Olympic Torch Relay route were selected through Powerade® programs coordinated with youth athletic organizations.

During its trek around the world and throughout Greece, the Olympic Flame reached a population of more than 250 million people. In every international city on the Olympic Torch Relay map, local Coca-Cola operations helped residents welcome the Olympic Flame with fan festivities along the route, plus live entertainment and specially produced videos at nightly city celebrations. During the 36 days of the international Relay segment, Coca-Cola caravan crews handed out free beverage products and a total of more than one million celebration flags, customized by Relay city and date. During the Greek legs, we also ran a colorful, lively caravan and created social activities for the public in cities where the Olympic Flame stopped overnight.

Countries included on the route of the Athens 2004 Olympic Torch Relay Presented by Coca-Cola and Samsung: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Cyprus, Egypt, England, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Russia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United States. The list of countries with torchbearers participating in the Athens 2004 Olympic Torch Relay through Coca-Cola programs is identical.

Torino 2006

For the Olympic Torch Relay-Torino 2006 Presented by Coca-Cola, our Italian division and bottling partners developed programs to help select some of the more-than 10,000 torchbearers who carried the Olympic Flame throughout Italy and also into parts of France, Switzerland, Austria and Slovenia. The 65-day Relay, which passed through 140 cities and 107 provinces, covered approximately 11,000 kilometers (6,835 miles) and lasted from December 8, 2005, to the Opening Ceremony of the Torino 2006 Olympic Winter Games on February 10.



As part of our global Active Living initiative, Coca-Cola Italy promoted *Scuole in Movimento* (“Schools in Motion”) – in partnership with the Torino Organizing Committee, the Ministry of Education and the Italian National Olympic Committee – to select 412 teachers, students and parents around the country as torchbearers. The anti-obesity project was launched to raise in-school awareness of the importance of healthy eating and exercise and of the connection between sport and physical well-being.



In addition, a Coca-Cola "Choose Your Local Hero" program brought the Olympic Winter Games closer to local communities through the selection of 150 distinguished Italian citizens as torchbearers. These Relay participants were chosen by public voting through 25 newspaper partnerships in a corresponding number of cities. Another 300-plus torchbearers were selected through Coca-Cola retail promotions across Italy.



Torino 2006: Our support of the Olympic Torch Relay continues to bridge cultures from around the world.

communities all along the route welcome the flame and the return of the Games to Italy, which hosted the 1956 Olympic Winter Games and the 1960 Olympic Games.

During the actual Torino 2006 Olympic Winter Games, we provided residents and visitors in the host city a taste of several entertainment elements from our traveling Olympic Torch Relay modules, including sports simulators (bobsleigh, slalom and snowboard); video games featuring Olympic sports; a kiosk for having photos of individuals holding an Olympic Torch set in a special lapel pin; a customized e-mail postcard booth; memorabilia displays; commemorative products; and special appearances by the popular Coca-Cola Polar Bear.

Countries included on the route of the Olympic Torch Relay-Torino 2006 Presented by Coca-Cola: Greece, Italy, Austria, France, Slovenia, Switzerland. Nations with torchbearers participating in the Olympic Torch Relay-Torino 2006 through Coca-Cola selection activities: China, Greece, Italy, Switzerland, United States.

Beijing 2008

In 1936, the first Olympic Torch Relay for the modern Olympic Games lasted less than two weeks, when the Olympic Flame was delivered from Greece through parts of eastern Europe to host city Berlin.

Meanwhile, in Switzerland, promising young athletes from a "Ski Valais" program sponsored by Coca-Cola were invited to participate in the Olympic Torch Relay-Torino 2006 and keep diaries of their once-in-a-lifetime experiences. And Coca-Cola Italy Web pages dedicated to the Olympic Winter Games provided daily updates of torchbearer stories and route activities.

A companion Coca-Cola road show – the interactive "Torch Exhibition Tour" – featured torches from previous Olympic Games and brought the spirit of the Olympic Winter Games to major Italian cities. During the Relay, our nightly city celebration entertainment helped





Local anticipation for the Olympic Flame stirs unmatched community passion and celebration all along the Torch Relay route.

In 2008, the Olympic Torch Relay will span more than four months and touch five continents, as well as the highest point on earth. Officials say the Beijing 2008 Olympic Torch Relay – “The Journey of Harmony” – will traverse the longest distance, cover the greatest area and include the largest number of people in the history of this time-honored event.

Coca-Cola returns in our familiar role as presenting partner of the Olympic Torch Relay when the iconic flame again makes its way around the world, in the prelude to the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games.

Visitors to Atlanta can view a collection of authentic Olympic Torches and various sets of valuable Olympic pins at the New World of Coca-Cola attraction, downtown at Pemberton Place (www.worldofcoca-cola.com).

