

8 essential tips for BC's bucket list wine-fuelled Half Corked Marathon

Hanna McLean | Jul 25 2024, 3:10 pm



Aaron Hagen

Drinking wine and distance running isn't a combo you think about doing together often, but once a year, the time is ripe, and the perfect event comes around to do just that: The Half Corked Marathon.

My second sprint/stroll around the gorgeous vineyards and winding roads of Oliver Osoyoos wine country proved slightly more difficult than the first thanks to a bout of inclement weather, but there's so much one can do to prepare for this epic event ahead, during, and after the race.

After wrapping up the second round of wine-fuelled jogging, I've certainly got some tips for those who are running — or aspiring to run — the half marathon for the very first time.

To read about my full experience during my first run, [check out this feature](#). But for an essential list of news-you-can-use-type tips, read on!

Also, be sure to mark your calendar as [2025 Skip The Lottery Tickets](#) go on sale on August 1 at 10 am PT for a limited time. The general ticket lottery will be offered in the fall.

Pre-Race Planning



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1. Go Hard Costume-Wise or Go Right By the Judging Table

If you didn't know that costumes were highly encouraged at this event, then you do now.

While all costumes are good costumes in my books, some of the getups at this race are truly outstanding. I'm talking arts and crafts on steroids type of things, so much so that even the host of *Art Attack* would be impressed.

Regretfully I will admit I have never fallen in the "outstanding" category with my running garb, but I certainly aspire to one day. See, these costumes clearly take months of planning, prep, and construction. For instance, this year there was a full-on *Flintstones* family group complete with homemade Flintmobile.

2. Bring a Speaker and Let the Music Play

While certain wineries might have music playing at their pour stations, there are tons of legs where all you hear is the heavy breathing and/or laughing of your group and nearby runners.

I'd suggest creating a playlist that'll push you from one winery to the next and playing it on your phone or a small, light speaker throughout the run. Filling up that time with sound will help it go by faster during a running stint, and singing along is always fun.

3. Fuel Yourself the Morning Of

Chances are, unless you live in or around the area, you're staying outside of your home to attend the race. Whatever your accommodation is, it's important to make sure you have a solid breakfast bite, as you're not guaranteed time to eat once you leave ahead of the race.

I like to stick to a banana and Gatorade combo pre-race. Something heavier isn't 100% necessary, as there's a mid-point stop for lunch. Yes, really. More on that later.

During The Festivities



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4. The Night-Before Wine Temptation Is Real

For anyone who's a fan of wine, touching down in such an iconic winemaking destination as Oliver Osoyoos means the temptation to start sipping comes right away.

It can be incredibly easy to get overzealous at the Primavera Party, which takes place the night before the race and requires an additional ticket purchase (we highly recommend it if it's an option for you). This long table shindig typically features a family-style feast, a cornucopia of wines from the area, and live music.

There is transportation to and from key spots/resorts in Oliver and Osoyoos for this, making indulging pre-race even harder to resist, but take it from me, a couple of glasses and you're golden. Race times can start early, and we promise you'll get your fill during — and after — the race.

5. There IS such a Thing as a Free Lunch

It was a first for me when it comes to organized runs, and it'll likely be a first for you, too, if it's your entry into this event: free lunch mid-route.

At a certain point you might think "Do I smell sausage?" and the answer is yes. One winery sets up an epic spread of cheese, sausage, fruit, bread, pastries, and of course, more wine around the halfway mark.

If you're like me, you'll be hesitant to dig in at first, but it'll be fine. Chow down on a moderate amount and take a beat. Running post-lunch isn't as bad as it sounds, as the nibbles are just that — nibbles!

6. Don't Feel Bad For Riding The Bus

There is a vehicle that you can hop on for a handful of kilometres, fondly referred to as the Sag Wagon.

This option is tops for most people, and I was happy to plop on it both times I ran the route. Typically, buses will come in rounds and safely transport folks down a stretch of relatively normal highway with no winery stops, but tons of people run right on through too.

It's totally up to individuals here, and both options are great. One just gets you to the next wine station faster.

Post-Race Celebrations



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7. But first, water (and stretch)

It's not often you're faced with wine tastings just steps away from your half-marathon finish line, but I was certainly not complaining when I spotted those.

Before you head to grab some pours, I recommend grabbing your lunch, hydrating, and stretching. Don't be like me on the latter. Do it for future you because if you don't, come 9 pm, you'll be feeling real stiff and, if all goes to plan, tipsy, which is not the best combo.

8. Stay an Extra Day or Two

I'd be lying if I said waking up the day after the race and the long table Dinner at the Farm (another additional ticket buy I'd recommend) was an easy thing. Race day comes and goes so quickly, if you can, stay a day or two longer to enjoy the area.

It's pretty hilarious to experience a regular standing or seated tasting after you've been guzzling wine in the sun, on the run, for most of the day before.

Buying bottles is not possible during the half marathon, so this extra time gives you a bit of wiggle room to bring some of the magic from this incredible winemaking region home.