



The French Riviera & Monaco

POP 2.90 MILLION

Includes ➔

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|----------------------|-----|
| Nice..... | 821 |
| Cannes..... | 833 |
| Grasse..... | 845 |
| St-Paul de Vence ... | 848 |
| St-Tropez..... | 851 |
| The Three | |
| Corniches..... | 860 |
| Monaco..... | 862 |

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Café de la Fontaine (p862)
- ➔ Le Mirazur (p870)
- ➔ Le Bistrot d'Antoine (p830)
- ➔ Bobo Bistro (p837)
- ➔ Philcat (p837)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Nice Excelsior (p829)
- ➔ Les Rosées (p844)
- ➔ Les Cabanes d'Orion (p848)
- ➔ Hôtel Le Canberra (p837)
- ➔ La Maison du Frère (p847)

Why Go?

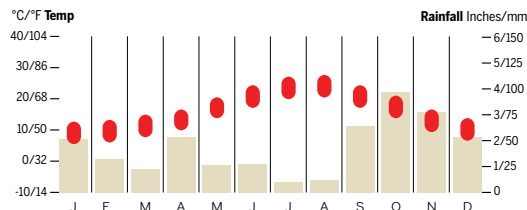
With its glistening seas, idyllic beaches and fabulous weather, the Riviera (known as Côte d'Azur to the French) encapsulates many people's idea of the good life. The beauty is that there is so much more to do than just going to the beach – although the Riviera does take beach-going very seriously: from nudist beach to secluded cove or exclusive club, there is something for everyone.

Culture vultures will revel in the region's thriving art scene: the Riviera has some fine museums, including world-class modern art, and a rich history to explore in Roman ruins, WWII memorials and excellent museums.

Foodies for their part will rejoice at the prospect of lingering in fruit and veg markets, touring vineyards and feasting on some of France's best cuisines, while outdoor enthusiasts will be spoilt for choice with coastal paths to explore, and snorkelling and swimming galore.

When to Go

Monaco



Feb Carnival season, with two weeks of festivities in Nice and Menton.

May Jet-setters descend on the Riviera for Monaco's Grand Prix and the Cannes Film Festival.

Jul Fireworks on 14 July, jazz festival in Antibes, and perfect beach weather.

Nice

POP 343,000

With its mix of real-city grit, old-world opulence, year-round sunshine and stunning seaside location, Nice is the unofficial capital of the Côte d'Azur, and a must-see for every visitor. A magnet for sunseekers and high-rollers since the 19th century, this bewitching coastal city has so much going for it, it's almost embarrassing – fabulous markets, an enticing old town, glorious architecture and a wealth of super restaurants. It's far from perfect – it's scruffy in spots, the traffic's horrendous and the beach is made entirely of pebbles – but if you really want to soak up the Riviera vibe, there's really no better place to do it.

Orientation

Av Jean Médecin runs south from near the main train station to place Masséna, close to the beach and old town. The bus station is two blocks east of place Masséna.

From the airport, 6km west, promenade des Anglais runs along the curving beachfront (Baie des Anges), becoming quai des États-Unis near the old town. Vieux Nice (Old Nice) is crunched into a 500-sq-metre area enclosed by bd Jean Jaurès, quai des États-Unis and the hill known as Colline du Château. The increasingly trendy Port Lympia area lies to the east of Colline du Château. The wealthy residential neighbourhood of Cimiez, home to some outstanding museums and belle-époque architecture, is north of the centre.

Sights

All museums in the city are free, with the exception of Musée Chagall.

★ **Vieux Nice** HISTORIC SITE
Getting lost among the dark, narrow, winding alleyways of Nice's old town is a highlight. The layout has barely changed since the 1700s, and it's now packed with delis, restaurants, boutiques and bars, but the centrepiece remains **cours Saleya**: a massive market square that's permanently thronging in summer. The **food market** (cours Saleya; ☉ 6am-1.30pm Tue-Sun) is perfect for fresh produce and foodie souvenirs, while the flower market is worth visiting just for the colours and fragrances. A **flea market** (cours Saleya; ☉ 8am-5pm Mon) is held on Monday.

Baroque aficionados will adore architectural gems **Cathédrale Ste-Réparate** (place

FAST FACTS

Area 10,272 sq km

Local industry Services, technology, tourism

Signature drink Rosé

Rossetti), honouring the city's patron saint; exuberant 16th-century **Chapelle de la Miséricorde** (cours Saleya); and 17th-century **Palais Lascaris** (☎ 04 93 62 72 40; 15 rue Droite; guided visit €6; ☉ 10am-6pm Wed-Mon) **FREE**, a frescoed riot of Flemish tapestries, faience (tin-glazed earthenware), gloomy religious paintings and 18th-century pharmacy.

There's also a lively – and very smelly – fish market (p832) on place St-François.

★ **Parc du Château** GARDENS
(☉ 8.30am-8pm Apr-Sep, to 6pm Oct-Mar) **FREE**

For the best views over Nice's red-tiled rooftops, climb the winding staircases up to this wooded outcrop on the eastern edge of the old town. It's been occupied since ancient times; archaeological digs have revealed Celtic and Roman remains, and the site was later occupied by a medieval castle that was razed by Louis XIV in 1706 (only the 16th-century Tour Bellanda remains). There are various entrances, including one beside the tower, or you can cheat and ride the free **lift** (Ascenseur du Château; rue des Ponchettes; ☉ 9am-8pm Jun-Aug, 9am-7pm Apr, May & Sep, 10am-6pm Oct-Mar).

★ **Promenade des Anglais** ARCHITECTURE

The most famous stretch of seafront in Nice – if not France – is this vast paved promenade, which gets its name from the English expat patrons who paid for it in 1822. It runs for the whole 4km sweep of the Baie des Anges with a dedicated lane for cyclists and skaters; if you fancy joining them, you can rent skates, scooters and bikes from Roller Station (p825).

★ **Musée Masséna** MUSEUM

(☎ 04 93 91 19 10; 65 rue de France; adult/child €6/free; ☉ 10am-6pm Wed-Mon) Originally built as a holiday home for Prince Victor d'Essling (the grandson of one of Napoleon's favourite generals, Maréchal Masséna), this lavish belle-époque building is another of the city's iconic architectural landmarks. Built between 1898 and 1901 in grand neoclassical style with an Italianate twist, it's now a