



CANNES AREA

3 PERFECT DAYS

♥ DAY 1 // STARSTRUCK

No stay on the Riviera would be complete without a stroll along Cannes' La Croisette (opposite) gawping at the palaces and scanning the beach for celebrities. If you'd like to indulge in creature comforts, plump yourself on the immaculate lounges of Z Plage (p244), the beach of Hôtel Martinez. Or if you'd like a more active approach, head to Cap d'Antibes where a walk around the headland (p251) will reveal row upon row of millionaires' villas.

♥ DAY 2 // ART TRAIL

Retrace the steps of famous 20th-century artists. Start with a tour of the Musée Picasso in Antibes (p250), before driving to Renoir's cherished home (p254) in Cagnes-sur-Mer. Head to La Colombe d'Or for lunch in St-Paul de Vence, where impoverished artists once paid for their meals with works of art. Digest amongst Miró sculptures and Chagall mosaics at the brilliant Fondation Maeght (p257), and finish the day with a visit to Matisse's masterpiece, the Chapelle du Rosaire (p256) in Vence.

♥ DAY 3 // NATURAL WONDER

Spend a day exploring the stunning and unspoilt Massif de l'Estérel (p269). Active types should opt for the Sentier du Littoral (p216), or tackle the red spires of Cap Roux (p270) and feast on picnic and panoramic views at the summit. Beach bums will have the chance to seek out their own secret cove and snorkel the afternoon away in crystal-clear waters. Crown the day with a Provençal meal fit for a king at Villa Matuzia (p270).

CANNES TO NICE

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CANNES

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Walking along the couture shops and palaces of La Croisette, you'd be forgiven for thinking that the economic recession of the late noughties was all media hype. There is as much wealth and glamour as ever and admiring Ferraris and Porsches, or celebrity-spotting on the liner-sized yachts are still favourite pastimes.

For those who aren't seduced by Cannes' hedonistic air, there's enough natural beauty to make a trip worthwhile: the harbour, the bay, the clutch of islands off the coast and the old quarter, Le Suquet, all spring into life on a sunny day.

As for the world-famous eponymous film festival (see the boxed text, p245), it is unfortunately not the most visitor-friendly event: think stratospheric prices and insider-only attendance. It is however, celebrity-spotting at its very best!

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

EMERGENCIES // **SOS Médecins** (☎ 08 25 00 50 04; 📞 24hr) Emergency doctor service.

TOURIST OFFICES // **Cannes Tourist Office** (www.cannes.fr); Main tourist office (☎ 04 92 99 84 22; bd de la Croisette; 🕒 9am-8pm Jul & Aug, 9am-7pm Sep-Jun) On the ground floor of Palais des Festivals; Train station annexe (☎ 04 93 99 19 77; rue Jean Jaurès; 🕒 9am-1pm & 2-6pm Mon-Sat Sep-Jun, 9am-7pm Jul & Aug).

ORIENTATION

Don't expect glitz'n'glamour the second you hop off the train: things don't glam up until rue d'Antibes, the main shopping street a couple of blocks south. A

couple more blocks south again is Palais des Festivals, east of Vieux Port at the start of Cannes' famous promenade, bd de la Croisette, which follows the shore eastwards along Baie de Cannes to Pointe de la Croisette.

Perched on a hill just to the west of Vieux Port and of the bus station is the old quarter of Cannes: the quaint, pedestrianised Le Suquet.

EXPLORING CANNES

♥ LA CROISETTE // STROLL ALONG THE WORLD-FAMOUS PROMENADE

The multi-starred hotels and couture shops that line the famous **bd de la Croisette** (aka La Croisette) may be the preserve of the rich and famous, but anyone can enjoy the palm-shaded promenade and take in the atmosphere. In fact, it's a favourite even amongst Cannois (natives of Cannes). The views of the bay and nearby Estérel mountains are beautiful, as is the art-deco architecture of the seafront palaces, such as the **Martinez** (see p394) or the legendary **Carlton InterContinental**; its twin cupolas were modelled on the breasts of the courtesan La Belle Otéro, infamous for her string of lovers – Tsar Nicholas II and Britain's King Edward VII among them.

Not so elegant but imposing nonetheless is the **Palais des Festivals** (Festival Palace; ☎ 04 93 39 01 01; bd de la Croisette) at the western end of the prom, an ugly concrete beast and unlikely host of the world's most glamorous film festival (see the boxed text, p245). Climb the red carpet, walk down the auditorium, tread the stage and learn about cinema's most glamorous event and its numerous anecdotes on a **Palais des Festivals guided**

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