

Nice, France

Overview

Nice is a vibrant city on the French Riviera in southeastern France. Known for its stunning Mediterranean coastline, rich history, and artistic heritage, it is a popular destination for travelers seeking both relaxation and cultural experiences. The city is the capital of the Alpes-Maritimes department and the fifth-largest city in France.

Nice has a Mediterranean climate with mild winters and warm summers. Due to the movement of winds, winter months are generally characterized by chilly, sunny days alternating with periods of milder, cloudy weather.

Understand

History

Nice has a history dating back over 2,000 years. See [🌐 Timeline of Nice](#). Founded by the Greeks, it later became a Roman colony. The city flourished during the Middle Ages and became a favorite destination for European aristocrats in the 18th and 19th centuries, thanks to its mild climate and picturesque setting.

In 1860, Nice officially became part of France through the Treaty of Turin.

Architecture

“Nice is a city you can read like a book — every building tells part of its story.” ¹⁾

Our guide traces the full arc from the Roman ruins of Cemenelum on Cimiez Hill, through the Italian Baroque of the Old Town, the Belle Époque palaces along the Promenade, and the Art Deco buildings of the interwar period.

See our comprehensive guide to the [Architecture of Nice](#)

People of Nice, Past & Present

- [People of Ancient Nice](#): humans have lived in the area for about 400,000 years. Here is their short story.
- [Celebrities of Nice and the Côte d'Azur](#): Perhaps no other area in the world hosts as many celebrities as Nice and the Cote d'Azur.

- [Russians of Nice](#): the coast of Nice has drawn thousands of Russians for many years. Here is their story.
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Best Season to Visit

- **Spring** (April to June) and **Autumn** (September to October) are ideal times to visit for pleasant weather and fewer crowds.
 - **Summer** (July and August) is popular for beachgoers but can be crowded and hot.
 - **Winter** (December through February): Nice has long been a famous host of wintering Europeans. See [Winter is the Best Season to Visit Nice](#), video.
 - **Rainy Season** (October and November): The region is typically cloud-covered with frequent heavy rain. If you have flexibility, try to plan around this period — late October through into December is generally the least favorable time to visit.
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Arrive

Nice is well-connected and thus there are many options from which to choose.

For arrival in Nice, refer to this detailed guide: [Arrive and Go in Nice](#)

Get Around

Nice has a well-connected and efficient transportation system, offering multiple options for navigating the city and surrounding areas, including safety tips and how to avoid fines.

[Get Around Nice](#)

Do

[What to Do in Nice](#)

- [Official Nice city website](#) — many useful links
- [Intro to Nice & the Côte d'Azur for English speakers](#), video
- [Excitement of Things to Do in Nice](#), video

Walking in Nice

Nice is one of the great walking cities of the Mediterranean — compact enough to cross on foot in under an hour, yet endlessly varied in its neighborhoods, gradients, and sensory textures.

See our guide to [Walking in Nice](#)

Promenade des Anglais

[Promenade des Anglais](#) is an iconic seaside promenade stretching 7 kilometers along the Baie des Anges (Bay of Angels). It is perfect for a leisurely stroll, cycling, or simply enjoying the views of the turquoise sea.

Vieille Ville (Old Town)

A charming maze of narrow streets, colorful buildings, and bustling squares. More details: [Nice Vieille Ville](#). Highlights include:

- **Cours Saleya:** A vibrant market square known for its flower market and local produce. [Market 'Cours Saleya'](#), video
- **Cathédrale Sainte-Réparate:** A baroque cathedral in Place Rossetti.
- **Colline du Château (Castle Hill):** Although the castle itself no longer exists, this hill offers panoramic views of Nice, the sea, and the Alps — a great spot for a picnic or a peaceful escape from the city.

Orthodox Russian Churches in Nice

[Three Russian Orthodox Churches](#) or places of worship in Nice — a church, a chapel, and a cathedral — are each linked to a successive generation of Tsarinas and together trace the arc of the Russian imperial presence in the city.

Place Masséna

[Place Massena](#) is the main square of Nice, featuring striking red buildings, fountains, and modern art installations.

Nice Port (Port Lympia)

A picturesque harbor lined with colorful boats and waterside restaurants.

Beaches

Nice is famous for its pebbly beaches. Public and private beach options are available along the [Promenade des Anglais](#). Popular spots include Plage Beau Rivage and Plage Opéra. Beach clubs typically offer loungers and parasols for a fee.

Museums

Musée Matisse

Located in a beautiful villa on Cimiez Hill, this museum showcases the works of Henri Matisse, who lived in Nice for much of his life. Review the official site of [Musée Matisse](#)

Marc Chagall National Museum

Dedicated to the works of Chagall, particularly his biblical-themed paintings. [Marc Chagall National Museum](#), video

Events

Nice Carnival

One of the largest and most famous carnivals in the world, held every February with parades, floats, and festivities. [Nice Carnival](#), video

Jazz Festival

A summer event that attracts renowned jazz musicians from around the globe.

Itineraries

[Planned Itineraries for Nice](#)

Eat & Drink

Regional Cuisine

Nice cuisine is renowned for its Provençal and Mediterranean flavors. Signature dishes include:

- [Salade Niçoise](#): A refreshing salad with tuna, olives, eggs, and vegetables.
- [Socca](#): A savory chickpea pancake, often sold at street markets.
- [Ratatouille Niçoise](#): A vegetable stew made with zucchini, eggplant, and tomatoes.
- [Pissaladière](#): A tart topped with caramelized onions, anchovies, and olives.
- [Wines & Beverages of Southern France](#): Pair your meal with wines from nearby Provence.

The Restaurant Scene

Nice is renowned for its vibrant and innovative restaurants — from Michelin-mentioned wine bars to internationally recognized, Michelin-starred establishments. Mediterranean cuisine predominates, but unique restaurants draw Hollywood stars and locals alike.

Find 'Your' Place to Eat in Nice

- [Top Restaurants in Nice \(but expensive\)](#)
- [Affordable Gastronomique Restaurants](#)
- [Quirky & Quick Local Restaurants](#)
- [Nice Takeout & Delivery](#)
- [Nice Grocery Shopping](#)
- [Nice Street Food Tour](#), video

Rooftop Bars

- [Rooftop Bars](#) this site
- [Ten Rooftop Bars](#), new video blog by [Riviera Go!](#)
- [Best Rooftop Bars in Nice](#) — one of the finest video blogs covering Nice: [Riviera Go!](#)

After Nice

Day Trips

The best day trips from Nice include Villefranche-sur-Mer (10 minutes by train), Eze (medieval village with the Jardin Exotique), and Monaco (20 minutes by train, featuring the Prince's Palace and Monte Carlo Casino). Other top destinations are Menton (known as the "Pearl of France" near the Italian border), Cannes (famous for its film festival and Lérins Islands), and Saint-Tropez (best accessed by boat or car).

Travelers can also visit Antibes (home to the Picasso Museum and Provençal market), Saint-Paul-de-Vence (a picturesque hilltop art village), Grasse (the world's perfume capital), and Cap-Ferrat (featuring the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild). For nature lovers, Saint-Marguerite Island (accessible via ferry from Cannes) offers forest trails and secluded coves, while Marseille is a viable option for a full-day trip by train (approx. 3 hours).

Guided tours and transport options are widely available for these destinations, including:

Half-day trips to Eze, Monaco, and Monte-Carlo. Full-day tours covering the French Riviera, Provence wine regions, and the Gorges of Verdon. Boat trips to Saint-Tropez and brunch cruises to Villefranche-sur-Mer and Cap-Ferrat. Train routes (TER) connecting Nice to Menton, Cannes, Antibes, and Monaco.

- [Monaco](#): A luxurious principality just 20 kilometers away, known for its casinos and Formula 1 Grand Prix.
 - [Èze](#): A medieval hilltop village with breathtaking views and the Jardin Exotique.
 - [Antibes](#): Famous for its marina and the [Picasso Museum](#).
 - [Cannes](#): Known for its film festival and upscale boutiques.
 - [Menton](#): A charming coastal town on the Italian border in the Alpes-Maritimes.
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Stay in Nice

Accommodations

Are you staying in Nice? Here are a few thoughts on where to stay.

Visiting Friends

If you are invited to visit friends at 4 bis Blvd Dubouchage, please see [4dubou](#).

Remain in Nice

Have you thought about **remaining in Nice**? Here is an overview of making the move: [Remain in Nice, France](#)

References

- [Nice, France — WikiVoyage](#): A detailed wiki guide created by locals, visitors, and experts.
- [Best of Nice Blog, and yes it is a Great Blog](#): An excellent reference by a long-time English-speaking Nice resident.

Nice combines the charm of a historic city with the allure of the Mediterranean — a must-visit destination on the French Riviera.

1)

Biss Tours, *Architecture in Nice: A City Built from Light and History*, 2025. <https://www.bisstours.com>

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