



Tour Information



Christmas in Nice





Travel

Passports

Please ensure your 10-year British Passport is not out of date and is valid for a full six months beyond the duration of your visit. EU, Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco, San Marino or Switzerland valid national identification cards are also acceptable for travel to France.

Visas

British and EU passport holders are not required to have a visa.

For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

French consulate: PO Box 57, 6A Cromwell Place, London SW7 2E

Tel (020) 7838 2000/1.

Information Service:

Tel (0891) 887 733,

Fax: (020) 7838 2046.

Opening hours: 0900-1130 (and 1600-1630 for visa collection only) Mon-Fri (except British and French national holidays).



Tickets

You will be issued with a return train ticket.

Please take care not to lose your tickets and please check that the details on your tickets are accurate. Your ticket is non-transferable and non-refundable. No refund can be given for non-used portions.

A light meal will be served to passengers travelling Standard Premier on Eurostar. Standard class Eurostar tickets do not include any food or drink on board, although there is a buffet car serving drinks and snacks.

TGV tickets do not include any food or drink on board, although a buffet car is available.

Train Seats

On all legs of the journey you have reserved seat and carriage numbers which are shown clearly on your ticket.



Baggage

As with most trains, passengers are responsible for carrying baggage onto and off the train. Baggage can be stored on overhead shelves or at the entrance to the carriages. Trolleys are available at St Pancras and Lille, but bags do need to be carried on to the platform. Porters are sometimes but not always available at St Pancras.

Travel Editions recommends a luggage delivery service called **thebaggageman**, where your suitcase can be picked up from your home before departure and delivered straight to your hotel; therefore removing the worry about carrying your cases onto and off the trains.

For further information:

<http://www.thebaggageman.com>

Labels

Please use the luggage labels provided. It is useful to have your home address located inside your suitcase should the label go astray.

Transfers

On arrival, transfer by coach to the Hotel Brice Garden (approx. 10 mins) for your 7-night stay.

Special Requests

If you haven't already, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.



Accommodation

Hotel Brice Garden

Located in the heart of Nice, the three-star Hotel Brice Garden is beautifully decorated in a contemporary style, close to the beach and the pedestrianised streets lined with shops and restaurants. Hotel facilities include a lounge bar, serving hot and cold drinks, refreshments, cocktails and more. Bedrooms all have private bathroom facilities, air-conditioning, TV, minibar, safe, free wi-fi. Although the hotel does not have a restaurant there are plenty of local restaurants nearby.

For more information visit their website

<https://www.hotelbricegarden.com/en/#index>



Food

Colourful red and yellow peppers, glorious tomatoes, aubergines, fresh fish, Provençal herbs (basil, thyme, rosemary, sage, marjoram...), olives and olive oil, and citrus fruits ripened in the Mediterranean sunshine form the basis of the French Riviera *cuisine*. Traditional dishes of the Côte d'Azur include *Ratatouille* (stew of courgettes, tomatoes, red and green peppers and aubergines braised with garlic, olive oil and *Herbes de Provence*), *Bouillabaisse* (fish soup), *Soupe au Pistou* (vegetable and bean soup with fresh basil), *Pissaladière* (golden onion, anchovy and olive pizza), *Daube Provençale* (classic French beef stew), *Salade Niçoise* (made with fresh tuna, olives, green beans, anchovies, new potatoes and boiled egg), *Aïoli* (garlic mayonnaise generally accompanies fish, vegetables or crusty bread) and *tapenade* (luscious Provençal paste made with olives, olive oil, anchovies, capers and garlic).

Enjoy the traditional Côte d'Azur sweets, such as the *Tarte Tropezienne* (rich tart filled with crème pâtissière), the *Tourte de Blettes* (sweet-savoury Swiss chard, raisin and pine nut tart, eaten as a starter or a dessert) and *Nougat*. Coffee is served after the meal and will be black, in small cups, unless a *café au lait* (or *crème*) is requested.

Almost all restaurants offer two types of meals: *a la carte* (extensive choice for each course, generally more expensive) and *le menu* (a set meal at a fixed price). The bill (*l'addition*) will not be presented

until it is asked for, even if clients sit and talk for half an hour after finishing their meal. Usually, a discretionary service charge is added to your bill in restaurants and bars, and no further tipping is required.

Generally speaking, mealtimes in France are strictly observed. Lunch is as a rule served from noon to 1330, dinner usually from 2000-2130, but the larger the city, the later the dining hour.



Drink

Wine is by far the most popular alcoholic beverage in France, and the choice will vary according to region. Provence is best known for its rosé wine; the pink wines of Massalia (today's Marseille) are famous since Roman times. Côtes de Provence AOC is the main wine region, producing about 75% of all wine in Provence, principally a fine rosé. The local Côtes du Rhône wines are an excellent accompaniment to the regional cuisine and the Niçois Bellet wines are also worth discovering. *Pastis* (such as *Ricard*), the local anise-flavoured liqueur, is diluted with water to make a refreshing and hugely popular aperitif.

In elegant restaurants the wine list will be separate from the main menu, but in less opulent establishments will be printed on the back or along the side of the *carte*. The waiter will usually be glad to advise an appropriate choice. If in doubt, try the house wine; this will usually be less expensive and will always be the owner's pride.

Meals included in the price of your holiday are:

Breakfast – daily

Dinner – Cold plate on arrival and special Christmas Eve dinner and Christmas Day lunch at a local restaurant.



Destination

As well as enjoying the festive atmosphere and Mediterranean warmth, explore part of the French Riviera, renowned for both its beautiful coastal scenery and artistic heritage. The Côte d'Azur has long had an irresistible draw. From the aristocrats of the 19th century to the artists and writers of the early 20th, this spectacular stretch of coastline was, and still is, the ultimate playground and vacation spot of the elite.

Places of interest included in the tour:

Nice

Capital of the Riviera, Nice is a buzzing city full of culture, excellent restaurants and good shopping. France's fifth largest city, for some 150 years Nice has been a popular destination of the rich and famous, including Queen Victoria. It is a wonderful city to explore, with its distinct districts – the medieval quarter, the Italianate quarter that belies Nice's past as part of Italy, and plenty of rich mansions that show past pedigree as one of the most fashionable resorts in Europe. There are excellent museums to discover, including the *Chagall*, *Matisse*, *Modern Art* and *Beaux-Arts*, a characterful flower market area to enjoy, the lovely port and famed *Promenade des Anglais* to stroll along, the 17th century *Palais Lascaris* and the *Russian Church* to visit, and much more.

For more information about Nice, please visit:

<http://en.nicetourisme.com>

Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild, Cap Ferrat

Completed in 1912 and designed by architect Jacques-Marcel Auburtin for the enormously wealthy Beatrice de Rothschild, this pink, treasure-filled palace sits atop the promontory surrounded by its own lush gardens.

For more information about the Villa Ephrussi, please visit:

<http://www.villa-ephrussi.com/en/home>

Villefranche-sur-Mer

Villefranche-sur-Mer adjoins the city of Nice to the east along Mont Boron, Mont Alban and Mont Vinaigrier, and 6.2 mi south west of Monaco. The bay of Villefranche is one of the deepest natural harbours of any port in the Mediterranean Sea and

provides safe anchorage for large ships from easterly winds. The city limits extend to the hills surrounding the bay climbing from sea level to an altitude of 1,893 ft, the highest point of Mont-Leuze, reflecting on land the features found offshore. The three "Corniches" or main roads linking Nice to Italy pass through Villefranche. On sunny days, the old town of Villefranche-sur-Mer, with narrow and colourful streets, attracts numerous walkers and comes alive with its café terraces and its restaurants offering local specialities. The Saint-Pierre chapel, near the fishing port, was decorated by Jean Cocteau in 1957. The citadel, built in the 16th century to protect the natural harbour, hosts museums and temporary exhibitions.

For more information about Villefranche-sur-Mer, please visit:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Villefranche-sur-Mer>

Antibes & Cap d'Antibes

Cap d'Antibes, with its sumptuous villas in their lush grounds, has been a symbol of luxury life on the Riviera since the 1920s heyday when it was frequented by the likes of F Scott Fitzgerald. Sights include the sailors' chapel of *La Garoupe* and the *Jardin Thuret*.

The lively resort of Antibes has a lovely old town with a 15th century fort and one of the world's best Picasso collections in the old seafront *Château Grimaldi*, where the painter worked in 1946 and donated his entire output of 150 paintings from that period.

For more information about Antibes, please visit:

<http://www.antibesjuanlespins.com/en>

Vence & St-Paul-de-Vence

Today's group of destinations offer a wonderful combination of artistic and architectural sights. A hilltop town full of charm, *Vence* is interlaced by narrow streets and dotted with lovely squares. Thanks to its excellent light, it was popular with painters, including Picasso, and it was here that Matisse was involved in the architectural design and decoration of the *Chapelle du Rosaire*.

The hugely popular hill village of *St-Paul-de-Vence* has been a magnet for artists throughout the 20th

century and the village is dominated by studios and galleries. Its lovely medieval streets are perfect for a leisurely stroll to take in some of the sights including the 12th century *Église Collégiale*, ramparts, the pretty *Rue Grande* and *Grand Fountain*. The village attracted some of art's most renowned names, most notably to the famed *Colombe d'Or* restaurant where artists such as Picasso traded paintings for meals and accommodation. The village also houses the *Fondation Maeght* museum of modern art.

For more information about Vence, please visit:

<http://www.vence-tourisme.com/en>

For more information about St-Paul-de-Vence, please visit:

<http://www.saint-pauldevence.com/en>

Christmas

It is traditional in France for families to have their main Christmas dinner on Christmas Eve. Most shops will be closed on Christmas Day although there will be a limited selection of bars and restaurants open. Your tour manager will have details of opening times and Christmas services.

Tour manager

Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operated according to plan. If you have any problems or questions please see him or her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and do everything to help you enjoy your holiday.

Travel books to read

Graham Robb, *The Discovery of France*.

A general introduction to French culture, landscape and history, it also features an excellent insight into the distinctive character of France's regions.

Bernard Levin, *From the Camargue to the Alps: A Walk Across France in Hannibal's footsteps*.

As the title suggests, English journalist Bernard Levin follows the Carthaginian military commander's path across France to Italy, describing history, landscape and culture on his way.

F Scott Fitzgerald, *Tender is the Night*.

Fitzgerald's famous novel is set in the glamour and extravagance of the 1920s French Riviera.



The Basics

Climate – The weather on the Cote d’Azur at this time of year is likely to be mild with temperatures around 10C (55F) with a chance of the odd shower. Our best advice is to come prepared.

Time – GMT +2 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 1 (Standard time Nov-Mar).

Language – French.

Religion – Roman Catholic.

National holidays – New Year’s day (01 Jan); Easter Monday; Labour day (01 May); Victory in Europe day (08 May); Ascension day; Whit Sunday; Whit Monday; National day (14 Jul); Assumption of Mary (15 Aug); All Saints’ day (01 Nov); Armistice day (11 Nov); Christmas day (25 Dec).

Currency – Euro. €1 = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

Banks – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are located in all towns and cities, as well as airports, major train stations and other spots. They usually offer an attractive exchange rate. Those banks that still exchange foreign currencies into local money will always charge a transaction fee, so withdrawing money from an ATM usually represents the most logical means of obtaining euros.

Credit cards – American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted across the country. If you’re eating at a restaurant, check prior to the meal that your card will be an acceptable form of payment. Even in cities, it’s advisable to carry a supply of cash with you at all times. Varying amounts of commission can be charged.

Electricity – 220 volt, two-pin continental plug.

Drinking water – Tap water is safe to drink. (Although you’ll find a huge amount of bottled water for sale too)

Shops and museums – Lyon has a wide variety of shops. Smaller towns will have quaint boutiques and beautiful markets.

Department stores are open 0900-1830 Monday to Saturday. Most shops are closed between 1200-1430. Some food shops (particularly bakers) are open Sunday mornings, in which case they will probably close Monday. Many shops close all day or half-day Monday.

Please note that most museums close on Mondays.

Clothes & Shoes –You may like to bring a warm sweater for cool evenings. Light rain wear for the occasional storm and good grip/flat walking shoes are recommended.

Camera – bring plenty of memory cards/film and any spare camera batteries as these are not always available. Please check with your guide before photographing people.

Bath plugs – The hotel has plugs for basins, but it is useful to carry a ‘universal’ one with you.

Telephones/mobiles – You should be able to use your mobile phone in France, depending on your operator and contract.

Tipping –To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services, but for your guidance about £2-3 per person per day for the tour manager is the norm. We would like to reiterate that tipping is an entirely optional payment and this information is given purely to answer any questions you may have about it.



Health

Doctor/Dentist/Chemist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a doctor.

Keep receipts for insurance claims.



Hospital

Your tour manager/hotel reception will arrange hospital transport.

Keep receipts for insurance claims.

General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit For Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

Inoculations

You should check with your own doctor and take their advice as to which inoculations are required for the country you are visiting, as only they know your medical history and recommendations are liable to change at short notice.



Insurance

To be covered under your Travel Insurance Policy, if you become ill, it is essential that you contact a local doctor and also telephone the emergency number of your insurance company. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of medical attention.

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

The EHIC replaced the old E111 in 2006. Valid in all EEA countries, the card lets you get state healthcare at a reduced cost or sometimes for free. It will cover you for treatment that is needed to allow you to continue your stay until your planned return. It also covers the treatment of pre-existing medical conditions.

Please note that the EHIC **is not** an alternative to travel insurance. It will not cover any private medical healthcare or costs such as being flown back to the UK, or lost or stolen property. Therefore, it is important to have both an EHIC and a valid private travel insurance policy. It is also important to note that each country's healthcare system is slightly different, so the EHIC might not cover everything that would be generally free on the NHS.

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad.

For more information about the EHIC please visit:
<https://www.ehic.org.uk>



Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:
00 44 20 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 0900-1700), telephone our emergency staff on:
00 44 7841 023807

PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday:

British Consulate Marseille
24 avenue du Prado
13006 Marseille
France
+33 (0)4 91 15 72 10
Marseilleconsular.marseille@fco.gov.uk

Mon, Wed and Fri: 0900 to 1230. Outside these hours a consular Emergency Service is in operation and can be contacted on +33 (0)4 91 15 72 10

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