



**T**he French Riviera, characterised by exceptional weather and an extravagant lifestyle, has always been the popular destination for jetsetters who go there to relax and enjoy the summer sun. Stretching over Nice, Cannes and St Tropez, the French Riviera became a fashionable resort and a playground for the rich and famous in the late 19th and 20th centuries. Originally a winter getaway, it has fast become a summer destination accommodating famous residents notably Brigitte Bardot, the French siren who is based in Saint Tropez. Boasting some of the most lavish hotels, restaurants and private beaches, the French Riviera is our exclusive summer getaway this month.

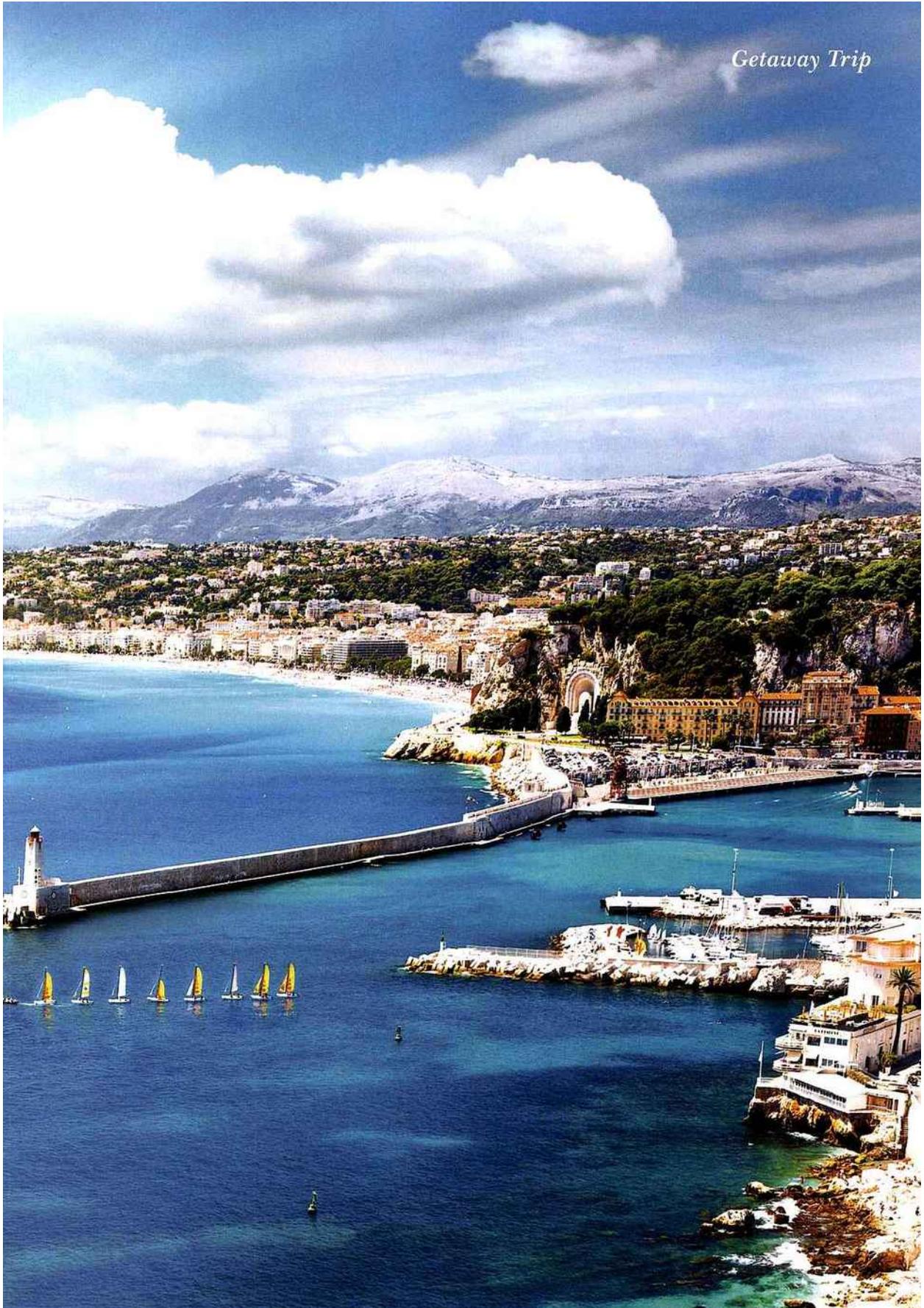
Nice is, in a word, picturesque. There is nothing like watching the outlines of its shores from your seat on your flight to Nice, as you feel as though its waters are opening their arms to you. Instantly greeted by palm trees without even leaving the plane, you instantly switch into holiday mode. Located on the Mediterranean coast between Marseille and Genoa, Nice is a major tourist attraction on the French Riviera with the Promenade des Anglais being its celebrated esplanade with its pebble beach stretching for miles. Stroll along the promenade and

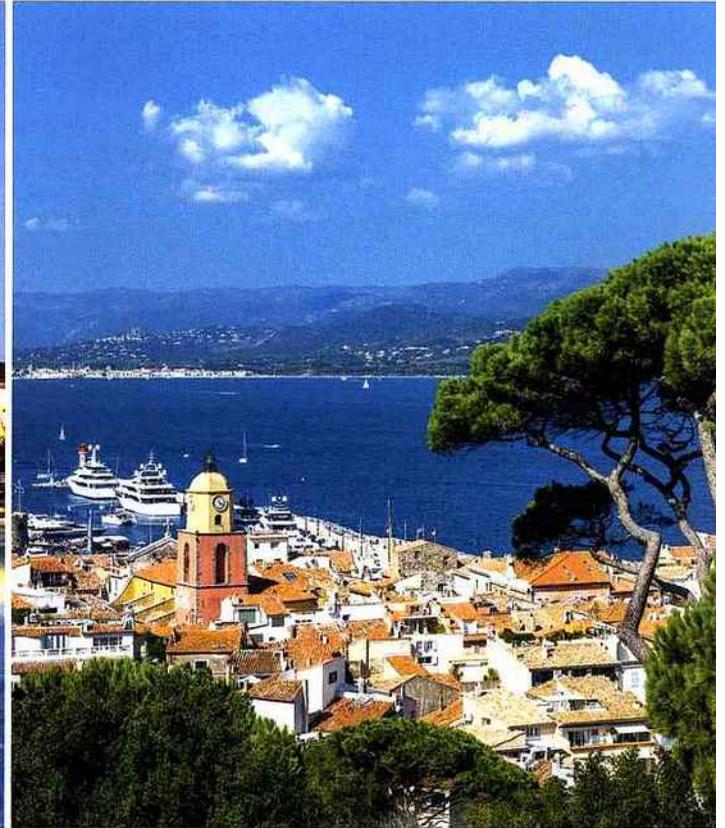
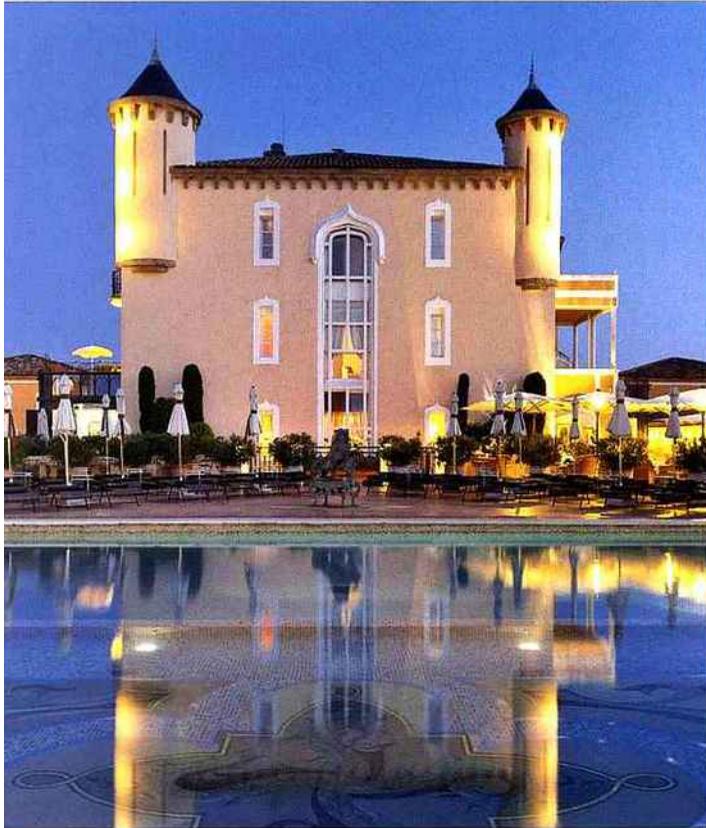
make your way down to the Baie des Anges and have a drink at the terrace of Hôtel Le Negresco, the palatial hotel that was first opened in 1913, overlooking the gorgeous bay. While in Nice make sure you make time to visit the Russian orthodox cathedral, Saint Nicolas's cathedral was constructed at the beginning of the 20th century and is possibly the most beautiful edifice of its type outside Russia and is the most perfect representation of Russian religious art abroad. Discover the city's beauty further and walk through the old outdoor market, Marché aux Fleurs, where you will find flowers, accessories, fruit, and vegetables. Then stop at La Petite Maison restaurant, the famous table known for its authentic southern cuisine. The restaurant boasts a colourful menu featuring traditional dishes including a niçoise ratatouille, grilled red and yellow peppers and its signature dish, stuffed vegetables (Les Petits Farcis).

Famous for its Boulevard de la Croisette, Cannes offers one of the most beautiful tourist settings in the world. With luxury hotels and designer labels aligning the boulevard it is the vision we all have of this glitz-filled city. Being home to one of the most major events for the film industry world, the Cannes Film Festival, Cannes is accustomed

to playing host to the world's most talented. International stars and Hollywood big players have all sashayed along the red carpet. Experience the glitz and glam and head to the Martinez Hotel or Intercontinental Carlton Hotel, two of the most prestigious locations along the Croisette, where many a motion picture deals have been made. The star-studded hotels give you an old-world feel, both with their architectural beauty and extravagant elegance. Enjoy a sea-side cocktail on their private beaches before heading off to do a spot of shopping and giving your credit cards a workout at Louis Vuitton or Bottega Veneta before enjoying a walk through the Le Suquet area, Cannes' old city. Le Suquet is made up of narrow streets that wind around, giving you a hint of a medieval flavour.

Set on the waters of the Golfe de Saint-Tropez, Saint-Tropez is mostly famous for the luxury yachts aligning its harbour and the effortless pastime of people watching and star spotting. During the summer, with the abundance of private parties held in many of the lavish villas, it is not too difficult to spot the swarm of international stars who moor their extravagant yachts and get set to party all night. It's easy to understand the attraction of St Tropez while sitting in one of the





**Previous Page:** View of the French Riviera from Nice. **This Page (Left to Right):** Château de la Messardière and Saint-Tropez

many café terraces located around the port and sipping on a cocktail, the most famous café being Sénéquier, taking in the sun and the beautiful people. It is at this famous café that, what feels like, everyone heads to for a lazy breakfast or brunch either to recover from a late night or to enjoy a casual coffee and their famous nougat.

Making Saint-Tropez such an attractive destination spot is the coast in the Baie de Pampelonne, offering different beaches along its five-kilometre shore where chic spills onto the beaches and where the tanned and toned are most welcomed. One of the popular private beaches you must visit is Tropicana Beach. Turquoise waters and soft sand here have been welcoming holidaymakers since the 50s and it is still the place to be.

After a day spent sunbathing, head to Place des Lices where the open-market is held and where the square is divided into arcades created by the plane trees, overlapping and discreetly sheltering you and slipping through just enough rays of sunlight. The narrow streets off the Place are also home to beach-chic boutiques including Rondini, the house famous for locally handmade leather sandals. Another treasure originating from Saint-Tropez is La Tarte Tropicaine, a cream-filled brioche created

by Alexandre Micka, which was inspired by one of his grandmother's recipes. The creamy delight, savoured by every jet-setting visitor to the town, is a culinary icon with a recipe that is still to this day a well-kept secret. You can taste the tart famously filled with two different creams while strolling through the streets of the city.

For a fine dining experience while in Saint-Tropez you will be hard pressed to find a more elegant table than Château de la Messardière's L'Acacia restaurant. Serving a Mediterranean cuisine, chef Pierrick Berthier works with only the freshest produce, creating mouth-watering dishes including asparagus garnished with summer truffles, John Dory served with baked squid and octopus served with a yellow wine sauce, and pigeon marinated in argan oil.

The restaurant is found on the grounds of the Château de la Messardière hotel, resembling a lavish French chateau, it boasts 57 suites and 60 rooms, all featuring a private terrace or a private garden. Perched on a hill, the hotel also features a breath-taking park sprawled over 10 hectares, which guests are invited to walk through and take in both the fresh air and the gorgeous view. Throughout the grounds sculptures made by Jean-Philippe Richard are elegantly exhibited, with

a couple showcased in the L'Acacia restaurant. Further cementing its love of the arts, the hotel is welcoming sculptures by Salvador Dali this summer. Through to the 21st of August, guests can take in some of the artist's most famous pieces including the Profile of Time bronze sculpture, which are exhibited in the hotel's Salon Patio.

#### Your address book to the French Riviera

##### LA PETITE MAISON

11 Rue Saint Francois de Paule,  
06300 Nice, 04 93 92 59 59

##### SENEQUIER

Quai Jean Jaurès, 83990 Saint-Tropez,  
04 94 97 20 20

##### RONDINI

18 Rue Georges Clemenceau,  
83990 Saint-Tropez, 04 94 97 19 55

##### LA TARTE TROPEZIENNE

13 ave Général Leclerc,  
83990 Saint-Tropez, 04 94 97 46 99

##### CHATEAU DE LA MESSARDIERE

2 route de Tahiti, 83990 Saint-Tropez,  
04 94 56 76 00