



MONACO

Words by Andy Mossack

THINGS TO DO

TUCKED BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND ITALIAN RIVIERAS, Monaco may be the second smallest country in the world, but it more than makes up for a lack of size with style, glitz, and glamour.

It seemed I was in luck today. Standing there, on the promontory high up in Monaco's fabled Moneghetti Gardens, the crystal-clear view below was breathtaking. The famous Monte Carlo Casino; the sweeping harbour of **La Condamine** with its luxury yachts – more familiar as the home straight of the Monaco Grand Prix; the towering luxury apartments of Monte Carlo's super rich; and of course the rugged limestone peninsula of The Rock, home of the **Grimaldi** family's stunning royal palace dating back to AD 1200: an absolute must-see. All of this, framed by the dramatic embrace of the Mediterranean endlessly stretching out behind. There's

elegance and beauty everywhere you look, from the chic cafés and designer shops in town, to the sleek lines of the super yachts in the marina. Let's face it: it's not every day you see a shopping mall made from Italian marble and crystal chandeliers!

The wonderful **Moneghetti Gardens** contain over 7,000 different species of exotic plant life, but buried 60m below them lie the immense illuminated chambers and limestone stalactites and stalagmites of the prehistoric Observatory Caves. Visit the **Cathedrale de Monaco** and view the last resting place of the legendary Grace Kelly, the former Hollywood star-turned-

Princess of Monaco; and then on to the famous **Hotel de Paris** adjacent to the **Casino**, where gamblers always rub the knee of Louis XIV's statue for luck.

Locals start the day at **La Condamine market**. Take breakfast or coffee at a table in the shade there and simply people-watch and enjoy the sounds and smells of the market.

After dark, the legendary **Monte Carlo Bar** (MCB), 1 Avenue Prince Pierre, is an unpretentious and great-value eatery, unchanged since the 70s, where you might bump into a famous face or two. 🍷

Every May sees Monaco transformed into a complex system of guard rails and temporary structures for two legendary races. Classic racing cars from the 1920s to the 70s take part in the Historic Grand Prix; then two weeks later, the famous World Championship F1 race (you can tour the road circuit as part of a bus tour or just take a taxi around the track).

A top tip for local food is Barbajuan, Italian-influenced triangular-shaped fried ravioli stuffed with chard or red squash, ground meat, eggs, cheese, and rice. The terrace of the Port Palace Hotel offers quite simply the quintessential view of the Côte d'Azur; glittering lights at night, sleek yachts of the harbour by day. The fare on offer in the Michelin-starred Mandarin restaurant more than matches the view.

Connect Nice, France → Distance: 4,488 km → Flight Time: 9 hours → Frequency: 3 flights a week via Milan