

my monaco

LANIE GOODMAN

There may be nowhere else on earth where you'll find polite, white-gloved gendarmes, over forty banks and almost five hundred sophisticated 24 hour surveillance cameras within a 2 square kilometre radius, but Monaco is shifting up a gear, reports Lanie Goodman.

BEST RESTAURANTS...

Nothing compares with the annual high-octane excitement of Formula One, but all year round Monaco now rivals the most cosmopolitan European cities, with a surge of hip new contemporary-style restaurants, nightspots and spas.

There is culture too. Don't miss the cutting-edge exhibitions at the Villa Paloma (www.nmm.mc), the Principality's new contemporary art museum housed in a dusty-pink villa, perched on a cliff beside the botanical gardens. On the horizon, the soon-to-be transformed Yacht Club - an 1800 square metre futuristic glass multi-level complex designed by Sir Norman Foster, confirms the dawning of what is undeniably Monaco's New Era.



For a once-in-a-lifetime meal that transcends Mediterranean cooking, book a table at gastronomic landmark, **Louis XV***, headed by Alain Ducasse, who has maintained his holy trinity of Michelin stars year after year. It's hard to keep your eyes on your food (served on crystal and gold flatware), since the gilded jewel-box dining room is a *belle époque* extravaganza of frescoed ceilings. Unforgettable highlights include a "cookpot" of tender baby vegetables, prawns with caviar, milk-fed lamb *en cocotte*, and a warm hazelnut soufflé or edible gold leafed pastries for dessert.

WWW.ALAIN-DUCASSE.COM

Across Casino Square, inside the sumptuous Jacques Garcia-designed Hotel Metropole is **Joël Robuchon***, presiding chef Christophe Cussac whips up a feast of dishes in the open-plan kitchen, where dozens of chefs slice and chop. Don't miss the lobster à la plancha with spinach and wasabi or order up a storm of mouth-watering tasting portion tapas, from foie gras with cherries *confites* and almonds to delicate sweetbreads and stuffed Swiss chard.

WWW.METROPOLE.COM

Fusion foodies should head straight for the **Blue Bay***, at the Monte-Carlo Bay Hotel and Resort where Martinique-born chef, Marcel Ravin, dishes up his flavourful wildly creative cuisine (hamburgers stuffed with foie gras, John Dory with chorizo, poached pear with caramel and Tonka beans) in an elegant laid-back atmosphere. Check out the splendiferous Sunday champagne brunch.

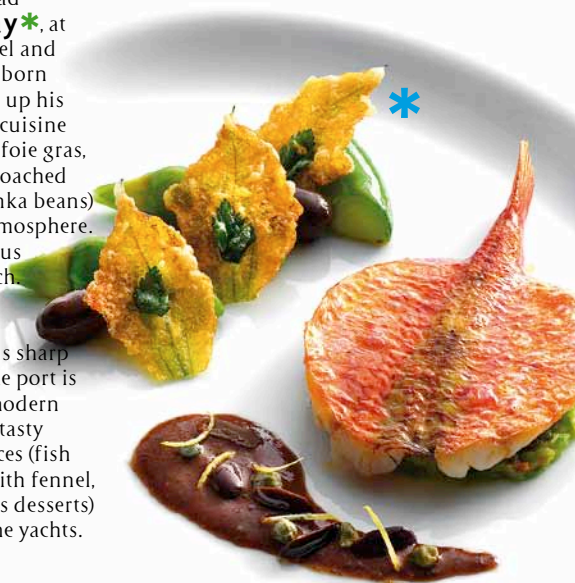
WWW.MONTECARLOBAY.COM

Tucked away in the famous sharp "Formula One curve" of the port is **Le Virage***, an ultramodern all-white lounge bar with tasty Mediterranean-style choices (fish soup, octopus carpaccio with fennel, and feather-light sugarless desserts) and a front-row view of the yachts.

WWW.VIRAGE.MC

To escape the crowds, head to **A'trego*** in Cap d'Ail, twenty metres past Monaco's coastal border with France. Both a restaurant and an evening "members only" lounge, this glam 3-storey Starck-designed eatery with a waterfront nautical deck terrace offers up an eclectic range of fancy snack fare, from lobster and royal caviar to gourmet pizza.

WWW.RESTAURANTATREGO.COM





BEST SPAS...

Built into the cliff above the shimmering sea, the **Thermes Marins Monte-Carlo*** is a sprawling multi-levelled pink marble, wood and glass palace with a spa concept all its own. Call it all-inclusive: hydrotherapy, beauty treatments galore, a heated indoor seawater pool, a hammam and sauna, a state-of-the-art fitness centre, and a cuisine minceur restaurant. Splurge on the extravagant 'Monte-Carlo Diamond' experience, a massage and scrub with genuine diamond powder and essential rose oils.

WWW.MONTECARLOSPA.COM



Forget royal treatment, think divinity. Now Hotel Metropole's **ESPA*** is catering to your inner mythological god or goddess, with a VIP Eros experience especially designed for couples that includes a chromotherapy bath and 3 hour programme of synchronised soothing and stimulating scrubs and rubs. Afterwards, chill at the newly revamped indoor pool, lined with Karl Lagerfeld's engraved-in-glass photos themed around Ulysses' Mediterranean Odyssey.

WWW.METROPOLE.COM

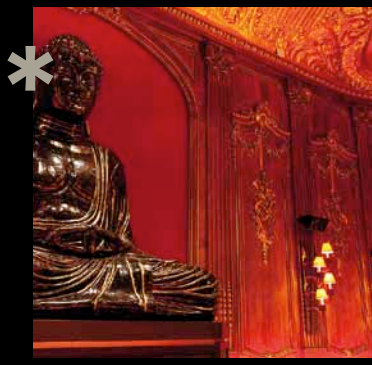


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BEST BARS & LOUNGES...

Next door to the Monte-Carlo Casino, the recently-opened swanky Monegasque **Buddha Bar*** is set in a stunning décor of original Garnier architecture painted scarlet and gold, but the real draw is the split-level lounge and restaurant where mini-skirted fashionistas and Gucci-loafered execs graze on exquisitely prepared platters of sushi. WWW.BUDDHABARMONTECARLO.COM



For a more exuberant party atmosphere, check out the stylishly revamped black and white-striped **Sea Lounge*** at the Monte-Carlo Beach Hotel on the easternmost strip of the Larvotto beaches, where the beau monde sip creative cocktails to a throbbing electro beat. Newly arrived Italian chef, Paolo Rossi dreamed up a glitzy snacking menu, from Barbagiuau (delicious Monegasque finger food with spinach, rice, cheese and leeks) to champagne sorbet. WWW.MONTE-CARLO-BEACH.COM

For top-notch jazz in an intimate setting, head down the road to the beachside **Note Bleue*** WWW.LANOTEBLEUE.MC then stroll to the ultimate new late night hotspot, **The Billionaire Club***, Flavio Briatore's seasonal club, where visiting mega-stars like Madonna hold their after-parties until the wee hours. The ephemeral headquarters begin at the Fairmont Monte-Carlo during the Grand Prix and shift to the seafront next to the Grimaldi Forum until the end of August. WWW.BILLIONAIRELIFE.COM

SO NEXT TIME YOU ARE IN TOWN, LOOK BEYOND THE IMMACULATE COUTURIER-GLUTTED STREETS AND GLEAMING FERRARIS PARKED ON CASINO SQUARE. MONACO IS FINALLY OUTGROWING ITS HIGH-ROLLING, TAX-HAVEN STEREOTYPE.

ENJOY.

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Burgess in Monaco

When Nigel Burgess moved his eponymous firm from London to Monaco in 1979, it was amongst the very first yacht brokerages to establish itself in the Principality. Ever since those early days, the company has enjoyed a strong presence at the heart of the superyacht world.

Today, the Burgess offices overlook Monaco's Port Hercule and are staffed by an international team specialising in worldwide sales and charters, new construction projects and yacht management. English, French, Italian and Russian are all spoken here, and clients can benefit from the team's extensive global superyacht knowledge and a vast network of essential contacts, both locally and beyond.

Additionally, we are in the perfect location at the heart of the Mediterranean to meet and greet charter guests, to arrange yacht viewings, valuations and surveys, to offer hospitality at events like the Monaco Yacht Show and F1 Grand Prix and to provide swift, on-the-spot service to clients and captains of yachts visiting the Principality and the Côte d'Azur.

Make Burgess in Monaco your first Mediterranean port of call for all things superyachting.

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