

THE GARDENS OF THE CÔTE D'AZUR



PRESS
PACK
Côte d'Azur
Tourism

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80 PUBLIC PARKS AND GARDENS ON THE CÔTE D'AZUR

- | | | | | | |
|-----------|------------------------------|--|-----------|------------------------------|--|
| 1 | ANTIBES | Botanical Garden of the Villa Thuret
Parc Explora
Garden of the Villa Eilen Roc
Garden of the Fort Carré | 17 | MONACO | Exotic Garden
Japanese Garden
The Rose Garden
Fontvieille Park
Garden of the Petite Afrique
Garden St-Martin |
| 2 | BEAULIEU | Garden of the Villa Kérylos | 18 | MOUANS-SARTOUX | Garden of the Château de Mouans-Sartoux
Gardens of the International Perfumery Museum |
| 3 | BEAUSOLEIL | The Winter Garden of the Riviera Palace | 19 | MOUGINS | The Fontmerle Pond |
| 4 | BIOT | Garden of the Fernand Léger Museum
The Bonzai Arboretum | 20 | NICE | Promenade du Paillon and Albert 1 st Garden
Botanical Garden
Vigier Park
Chambrun Park
Park of Mont Boron
Park of the Colline du Château
Valrose Park (closed to the public)
Parc Phoenix
Estienne d'Orves Park
Garden of the Vinaigrier
Park de la Clua – Dr Jean Guillaud
Park of the Castel des deux Rois
Garden of the Observatory of Nice
Garden of the Monastery and Garden of the Arenas at Cimiez
Gardens of the Villa Arson – Centre of Contemporary Art
Garden of the Palais Masséna
Garden of the A. Jakovsky Naïve Art Museum and Carol of Romania Park
Garden of the Chagall Museum
Garden of the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MAMAC)
Garden of the Matisse Museum
Il Paradisio Garden |
| 5 | CAGNES-SUR-MER | Renoir Estate
Garden of the Marro Property | 21 | PEYMEINADE | Au pays d'Audrey |
| 6 | CANNES | Garden of the Villa Domergue
Garden of the Villa Rothschild
The Lérins Islands | 22 | ROURE | The Marcel Kroenlein Arboretum |
| 7 | CAP D'AIL | Sacha Guitry Park
Garden of the Château des Terrasses
Garden of the Douaniers | 23 | SAINTE-AGNÈS | Mediaeval Garden |
| 8 | CHÂTEAUNEUF-DE-GRASSE | Garden of the Villa La Bouscarella | 24 | SAINT-JEAN-CAP-FERRAT | The Gardens of the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild |
| 9 | COURSEGOULES | Garden of the Vallon du Brec | 25 | SAINT-PAUL DE VENCE | Gardens of the Fondation Maeght |
| 10 | EZE | Exotic Garden of Eze | 26 | SAORGE | Monastery Garden |
| 11 | GATTIÈRES | Gardens of the Fleurs de Poterie | 27 | TOURRETTES-SUR-LOUP | The Bastide aux Violettes
Florian's Citrus Gardens |
| 12 | GOURDON | The Gardens of the Château
La Source Parfumée | 28 | VALLAURIS GOLFE-JUAN | The Nerolium |
| 13 | GRASSE | Garden of the Perfumery Museum
Garden of the Fragonard Museum
Garden of the Villa Noailles
The Manon Estate
Garden of the Villa Fort France
Garden of the Villa La Mouissone
Garden of the Mas des Pivoines
Garden of the Saint Jacques du Couloubrier Estate
Olive-growing Estate of the Royrie | | | |
| 14 | LA GAUDE | Garden of the Villa de l'Argelière | | | |
| 15 | MANDELIEU-LA NAPOULE | The gardens of the Château de la Napoule | | | |
| 16 | MENTON | Garden of the Villa Maria Séréna
Garden of the Serre de la Madone
Garden of Fontana Rosa
Botanical Gardens of Val Rahmeh
Garden of the Palais de Carnolès
The Biovès Garden
Garden of the Clos du Peyronnet
Garden of the Colombières
The Citronneraie | | | |



In addition to its many parks and gardens, the Côte d'Azur also boasts a high number of natural protected spaces.

Today, the Conseil Départemental oversees 17 departmental parks across the Alpes-Maritimes region for a total of almost 4,300 hectares of wilderness. www.departement06.fr/documents/Import/decouvrir-les-am/decouvrir_guide-parcs.pdf

These highly protected natural spaces include the **Parc National du Mercantour** (174,100 hectares in the Alpes-Maritimes) and the **Parc Naturel Régional des Préalpes d'Azur** (90,000 hectares), home to a plethora of natural resources that house some often-unexpected local wildlife, from pines to larches, olive trees to orchids and lavender to edelweiss.

www.mercantour.eu/
www.pnr-prealpesdazur.fr/

SURFACE AREAS AT A GLANCE

Alpes-Maritimes:	430,000 hectares
Protected spaces:	
Parc national du Mercantour	146,000 hectares
PNR Préalpes d'Azur	90,000 hectares
Departmental parks	4,300 hectares

NEW IN 2017!

DÉPARTEMENT
DES ALPES-MARITIMES | 06

FESTIVAL DES JARDINS DE LA CÔTE D'AZUR

1^{re} ÉDITION
[L'éveil
des sens]

DU 1^{ER} AVRIL
AU MAI 2017

ANTIBES CANNES GRASSE MENTON NICE

 DEPARTEMENT06  @ALPESMARITIMES

Programme sur : www.departement06.fr

COMITÉ RÉGIONAL DU
TOURISME
CÔTE D'AZUR


VILL DE NICE


Antibes • Jean-Éric Poir
Rêver en bleu


CANNES
CÔTE D'AZUR


Grasse


Menton
MA VILLE, C'EST UN JARDIN


Interreg
ALCOTRA


jardival


LES COMMUNES DE LA CÔTE D'AZUR




EFP



SPRING 2017: A BRAND-NEW GARDEN FESTIVAL ON THE CÔTE D'AZUR

Drawing on the priceless natural heritage of our gardens, **the European JARDIVAL project is aiming to protect and showcase the gardens of the Côte d'Azur and Italian Riviera.** The programme leads high-profile initiatives designed to improve tourist facilities, boost innovation and protect the environment in an illustration of **the deep, long-standing ties that exist between France and Italy,** forged over centuries of cultural, political and economic exchange.

The European JARDIVAL project will allow us **to heighten visibility even further, consolidating the appeal of the many gardens** that flourish on either side of the French and Italian border.

Led by the Département des Alpes-Maritimes, it brings together **five communes and provinces** that are home to sites as remarkable as they are picturesque:

- **Cannes,** with the Villa Rothschild grounds and its huge range of palm tree varieties as well as a little waterfall covered in plants that can be heard from the inner courtyard.
- **Menton,** with the Villa Maria Serena garden and its impressive collection of majestic trees, some of which rise over 12 metres high.
- **Grasse** and the Jardin des Plantes garden, blending seamlessly in with the luxurious setting of the Fragonard Museum and perfumery.
- **San Remo** and the Villa Ormond grounds, where exotic vegetation coils around the rotundas and stone columns, framing a spectacular view of the sea.
- **Costarainera,** with the Novaro park nestled in the breath-taking San Lorenzo valley.
- **The Province of Imperia's** Villa Grock, home to a series of architectural and landscape gems in a tribute to the 20th century's greatest musical clown performer.

All these spaces will be undergoing renovation and works (new facilities to be completed in 2016 and 2017) to ensure visitors can enjoy the sites in complete comfort and safety.

In the perfect finishing touch to this goal of revealing the incredible tourism potential of our gardens, and with a view to treating the public to a new, iconic cultural event, **the Département des Alpes-Maritimes has decided to launch a new festival devoted to the gardens of the Côte d'Azur,** set to be rolled out across the entire département from **1 April to 1 May 2017.** The festival's theme for this year is "awakening the senses".

The Festival IN will feature a pop-up garden competition sprawling across 200 m² in the city centre in some of the département's most stunning sites: **Cannes** - Jardin de la Villa Rothschild; **Menton** - Jardin Biovès; **Grasse** - Place du Petit Puy and Place de l'Évêché; **Nice** - Jardin Albert 1^{er} on the Promenade du Paillon; **Antibes** - Pinède Gould in Juan-les-Pins.

The Festival OFF will allow the entire Côte d'Azur area to experience this luxurious and remarkable natural heritage the region enjoys. The line-up features events, activities, discussions, exhibitions, open days and guided tours.

A delight for all five senses!

Eric CIOTTI
Deputy and President of the Département des Alpes-Maritimes.

THE CÔTE D'AZUR AND ITS GARDENS ARE ON A MISSION TO AWAKEN YOUR SENSES!

The Côte d'Azur's parks and gardens have helped foster the vitality and renown of our region: Lord Brougham, widely held as the first to truly discover the potential of Cannes in 1834, planted the very first mimosas on the surrounding hills. In parallel to this, Tobias Smolett and Alphonse Karr were busy spreading word of the natural beauty and gorgeous landscapes of the Nice area in their writings, while **Georges Sand** described the Thuret garden in Antibes as "**the most beautiful garden I have ever seen**", thus highlighting the beauty of the Côte d'Azur's seaside gardens. Flower festivals abounded while cultured holidaymakers began experimenting with acclimatising exotic plants in their gardens.

The Côte d'Azur (encompassing the Alpes-Maritimes and Var départements) remains France's leading region for surface area given over to plants and flowers (46.6% of France's total), miles ahead of runners-up Loire-Atlantique (9.3%), Pyrénées-Orientales, Seine-et-Marne and Finistère (3.8%).

Today, the Côte d'Azur boasts **80 public gardens** (excluding urban parks) **that are exceptional in terms of their botanical and historical value.**

Nice is forever the capital of flowers, celebrated in February with the Batailles du Fleurs flower battles during the city's carnival. The **Grasse region** has just submitted its application to UNESCO for "**expertise linked to perfume-making** in the Grasse region", and its cut flower fields are gradually taking over the region. **The Route du Mimosa** trail stands out as an unmissable winter itinerary, **with Menton promoting itself as "the city of gardens" and the unrivalled capital of citrus fruit and lemon in particular**, thanks to its IGP (Protected Geographical Designation) status. The region is home to cities that make creating green urban spaces pro-active policies, and finally, the Alpes-Maritimes département will be launching a **brand-new Côte d'Azur Garden Festival in spring 2017.**

The sheer diversity and multiple facets of this region packed full of contrasting geography, ranging from the Mediterranean to the Mercantour, result in an array of different parks and gardens: sea views, mountain views, acclimatisation, botanics, citrus fruit, olive trees - the list goes on. **Each offers a haven of tranquillity and a slice of beauty for all visitors to enjoy throughout the seasons in private, intimate moments in which to soak up all the beauty of nature sculpted by the hands of passionate men and women.**

Plans for new facilities combined with the spring 2017 event creates an opportunity for us to showcase the **80 public gardens** throughout the year, **drawing on itineraries and tourism ideas** that allow our visitors to immerse themselves in these remarkable sites and meet **fragrance flower** farmers and horticulturists working to get the Grasse region recognised by UNESCO's World Heritage for its "fragrance flower expertise". A world of possibilities is also offered up by **gastronomy** and the **festivities** that unfurl across the French Riviera from January to December.

We hope to introduce over 400,000 visitors to this incredible natural heritage over the course of this ambitious event. Our goal for 2017 is to reach over a million paying visitors to the Côte d'Azur's gardens.

The gardens are inherent to the Côte d'Azur's singularity and will be busy awakening our senses in 2017 in a bid to generate tourism flow in the region.

David LISNARD,
Mayor of Cannes, President of the Côte d'Azur Tourism Board.

THE FESTIVAL AT A GLANCE



THEME 2017: AWAKENING THE SENSES

Ten 200 m² pop-up gardens

5 towns and cities on the Côte d'Azur: Antibes - Cannes - Grasse - Menton - Nice

Free admission to the Festival's gardens.

Several different events and activities: flower arranging workshops, gardening techniques, tasting sessions, culinary events, professional stands, plant markets.

Nice prepares for the Garden Festival: an exceptional, additional 1,400m² garden will be set up by the town council's technical department on the Promenade du Paillon.

Three prizes will be awarded: Jury Prize - Media Prize - Public Prize

1 guest of honour

€10,000 awarded to the winner of the Jury Prize.

The selection committee for the Festival's pop-up gardens

To guarantee jury subjectivity while ensuring that only the highest quality and most professional applications are retained, submissions will be chosen by a technical committee chaired by landscape architect Jean Mus and made up of representatives from professional landscaping associations, partner in-coming municipalities and organisers.

Jean Mus, Chairman of the Jury, Landscape architect

Daniel Veyssi, Local landscaping entrepreneur and Chair of the National Landscaping Union's Communications Commission

Michel Pena, Landscape architect in Paris, designer of the Promenade du Paillon in Nice, French Landscaping Federation (FFP)

Nikola Watté, Chair PACA Corse of the French Landscaping Federation (FFP)

Heiner Rodel, Swiss landscape architect, former Secretary General of the the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA)

Stéphanie Knoblich, Paysagiste allemande, journaliste et metteur en scène lumière

Franck Roturier, Director of Menton's parks and gardens

Marie-José Petichou-Debacq, Director of Nice's parks and gardens

Jean-Louis Gravagna, Director of Antibes Juan-les-Pins' parks and gardens

Xavier Peraldi, Director of Cannes' parks and gardens

David Bettini, Director of Grasse's parks and gardens

Jean-Hubert Gilson, Director of Quimper's parks and gardens

Raoul Relave, Landscape architect and founder of the 'Mon jardin en ligne' website

Members of the jury

Eric Ciotti, President of the Département des Alpes-Maritimes

David Lisnard, Departmental Councillor for Tourism and President of the Côte d'Azur Tourism Board

Gianni Berrino, Regional Assessor for Tourism in the Region of Liguria

Jean-Claude Boucaud, Director of the Lycée Horticole d'Antibes

Cécilia Liljedahl, Director of the Swedish Garden Festival in Gothenburg

Bruno Henri-Rousseau, Director of the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild in St-Jean-Cap-Ferrat

Michèle Ramin, President of the Arboretum Marcel Kroenlein in Roure

Mauro Colagreco, Head chef at the Michelin-starred Le Mirazur restaurant in Menton

Moya, Nice artist

Laure Grateau, CEO of Chacok

Jacques Cavallier-Belletrud, Grasse-based perfumer and the official nose for Louis Vuitton

Sylvère Fournier, Landscape designer and gardener at Châteaurenard and 2015's master gardener

Jean Mus, Landscape architect

DIARY OF EVENTS

JANUARY

Pégomas

Mimosa Festival

FEBRUARY

Mandelieu and Tanneron

Mimosa Festival

Nice

Carnaval of Nice - Floral Battles

MARCH

Tourrettes-sur-Loup

Violet Festival (**cancelled in 2017**)

Villefranche-sur-Mer

Floral Naval Combat

Menton

Festival of the Lemon and Orchid Festival

APRIL

Throughout the month

Festival of the Gardens of the Côte d'Azur

Le Bar-sur-Loup

Orange Tree Festival

Falicon

Carnation Festival

MAY

Grasse

Rose Exhibition

Opio

Rose Festival

Plascassier - Grasse

Rose of Provence Festival

La Colle-sur-Loup

"All About Roses"

Vallauris Golfe-Juan

Orange Blossom Festival

JUNE

All of France

Les Rendez-vous au Jardin

(The Garden Rendez-Vous)

Menton

Garden Month

JULY

Grasse

Jasmine Festival

SEPTEMBER

Nice

The Holy Flower Festival



ADDRESS BOOK

TOURS AND VISITS!

Le choix est large, au total, plus de 80 jardins publics et privés sont accessibles tout au long de l'année.

Some Tourist Offices on the Côte d'Azur will be organising special guided tours of the gardens which are tourist attractions in their area, in addition to the visits offered by the gardens themselves:

- **Grasse** has set up visits to private gardens, by prior booking, under the title "Garden Passion",
- **Nice** is offering guided tours called "discovery circuits" which enable walks off the beaten path,
- **Menton** is offering tours of all its gardens via its Heritage Discovery Service.

In its catalogue of locations to explore, the COTEDAZUR-CARD® offers free garden visits!

The Serre de la Madone in Menton, the Exotic Garden in Monaco, The Gardens of the International Perfumery Museum in Mouans-Sartoux, The Arboretum in Roure, explore scented plants in Peymeinade...

The card also enables access to the following locations which have must-see gardens: The Fernand Léger Museum in Biot, the Renoir Museum in Cagnes-sur-Mer, the Château de la Napoule, the Concrete Art Space in Mouans-Sartoux, the Marc Chagall National Museum, the Fondation Maeght in Saint-Paul de Vence, the Monastery of Saorge, the Observatory of Nice...

It also allows access to locations and sites with links to perfumes and citrus for tours and tastings: Au Pays du Citron and the craft jam factory in Menton, perfume creation studios in Eze and Grasse in the Fragonard and Galimard perfumeries.

1 pass with 180 activities and free activities.

Prices: 3 days, €45 (child: €25) - 6 days, €72 (child: €35).

www.cotedazur-card.com



TASTE!

Cooking with Flowers

Yves Terrillon is the ambassador for the Cuisine des Fleurs on the Côte d'Azur. Committed for many years now to exploring the use of the iconic flowers of the Côte d'Azur in food, this chef offers seasonal cooking courses in which roses, mimosa, jasmine, violets are at the heart of the process.

<http://www.crea-t-yvesculinaire.com/>

In the garden of Eve

This young Menton-based farmer sells her edible flowers to chefs working on the French Riviera.

She also offers tours of her 2,000m² estate, including a tasting session of organic flowers in season.

Mail : aujardindeve06@gmail.com - Tel. 06 50 83 56 03.

SLEEP!

Hotels with Unmissable Gardens on the Côte d'Azur!

See below: Hotel Gardens.

BUY FLOWERS!

All year on the Côte d'Azur, there are two flower markets which you just have to see: **the Cours Saleya** in Nice and **the Marché Forville** in Cannes.

December - February: order mimosa on the Internet.





HOLIDAYS!

GARDEN HOLIDAY - 9 gardens, 3 countries

OFFICE DU TOURISME DE MENTON

Tel. +33 (0)4 92 41 76 76 - tourisme@ville-menton.fr

From €470 per person

The Menton Tourist Office invites you to explore three of the most beautiful gardens of the Franco-Italian Riviera on a flowery and sunny day. Tour of the Exotic Garden of Monaco, guided tour of a Menton garden, guided tour of an Italian garden: Hanbury or Bocca Negra.

5 days/4 nights.



COTE D'AZUR LIBERTY - GARDENS AND VILLAS

CHEMINS DU SUD

Tel. +33 (0)4 920 09 06 06 - info@cheminsdusud.com

From €360 per person

Nice, Antibes, Cannes, Monaco, Menton: so many dreamy places on the Côte d'Azur. The sea and the sun of Provence, of course, but also sumptuous Mediterranean gardens and superb Belle Époque villas. Today, to avoid the traffic jams and contribute to sustainable tourism, we offer a holiday in Nice which uses only public transport (local trains and buses).

THE HOLIDAY INCLUDES:

- 6 nights accommodation in a 2-star hotel
- Breakfast
- All transport costs (trains, buses and trams) from Nice airport with a tramway Pass for a week, and all necessary tickets.

Available at a supplementary cost: a day in Roquebrune and Cap Martin. Programme available every day except Mondays. Transfer by train from Nice to Menton, then bus from Menton to the old village of Roquebrune.



A UNIQUE MOMENT WITH A PARFUMEUR

TOUR THE LAND OF PERFUME

Tel. 33 (0)6 61 88 47 54 - voyageterredeparfum@gmail.com

From €140 per person

A unique moment with a Parfumeur is your invitation to explore the fascinating world of perfumes as you stimulate your senses, emotions and olfactory memory, at the heart of the flower fields of the Pays de Grasse. The day is led by a parfumeur who shares his know-how about perfumery and unveils the mysteries of the creation of perfume. You are initiated to every stage of the creation of a perfume, from growing the flowers, harvesting them, the history of perfumery, the production of essences, formulation by the nose.

DURATION: one day, which can be adapted to suit your requirements.

OFFER AVAILABLE: February - October, depending on seasonal flowering.

THE PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- Guided tour of a flower field or a farm with the owner or farmer
- Introduction to perfumery or a related theme linked to perfumery according to the requirements and skills of the participants: raw materials, fabrication, formulation
- Perfume creation studio
- Lunch in a flower field or farm prepared by a renowned chef
- Flower shopping



HOLIDAY - FESTIVAL OF THE VIOLET, TOURRETTES MONDORAMAS

Tel. +33(0)4 42 360 360 - mondoramas@mondoramas.com

From €192 per person

A holiday organised by an agency which responds to your needs. Tourrettes-sur-Loup, in the Pays de Grasse, celebrates the harvest of this winter flower with its intoxicating scent at the Festival of the Violet. You will explore, on this organised tour, the corsos of decorated floats, musical and festive events in the Pays de Grasse during the festival.

DURATION: 3 days / 2 nights.

OFFER AVAILABLE: February.

THE PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- Full board in a 2 or 3-star hotel in the Grasse-Antibes area
- Visits: violet farm, confectioner, perfume factory and the Museum of Costume and Jewellery



HOLIDAY - THE NOTABLE GARDENS OF THE CÔTE D'AZUR DESTINATION MERVEILLES

Tel. + 33(0)4 93 73 09 07 - info@destination-merveilles.com

From €365 per person

The gardens of the Côte d'Azur present the botanical beauties of the region as well as the entire history of a glorious era. From the latter part of the 19th century, the aristocracy and wealthy of the world took up residence on the French Riviera with its gentle climate. Fine mansions started sprouting up, adorned with sumptuous gardens, for our delectation!

DURATION: 6 days-5 nights.

OFFER AVAILABLE: throughout the year, except 30/06/2016 - 31/08/2016 and winter festive period.

THE PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- 5 nights in a hotel, double room, B&B
- Baggage transfers as required by the programme
- A topographical guide to help you get the best out of the tour (1 file for 2 - 4 people)
- Tourist taxes



TOUR - THE GARDENS OF THE COTE D'AZUR, A UNIQUE WORLD TOUR

TRANSGLOBE

Tel. +33(0)4 93 58 79 00 - vence@transglobe.fr

From €535 per person

The variety of landscapes and the gentle climate have made the Alpes-Maritimes a paradise for botanists. The English, who introduced exotic plants in the 19th century, created veritable mosaics within which you will find plants from all over the world side by side. They are integrated into a Mediterranean landscape, dominated by olive trees and cypress, whose charms were rediscovered in the 20th century.

A visit to this green paradise is a rendezvous with the landscapers, gardeners and botanists who made a lasting mark. The tour begins in Menton, the garden town, and proceeds to Vence in flourishing green surroundings, a few kilometres from the coast.

DURATION: 5 days - 4 nights.

OFFER AVAILABLE: March - October, 2017.

THE PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- 4 nights in a double room in a superior 3-star hotel - Breakfast
- Entry to all gardens, tour and snack at the Villa Rothschild
- Visit includes a guide-interpreter.

HOLIDAY - PROVENCE COTE D'AZUR, TOUR OF GARDENS AND TREASURES

MONDORAMAS

Tel. +33(0)4 42 36 03 60 - mondoramas@mondoramas.com

From €500 per person

The must-see sites and the most beautiful landscapes of Provence Côte d'Azur along a sunny tourist trail with fine food as you go!

DURATION: 6 days - 5 nights.

OFFER AVAILABLE: all year round.

THE PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- 5 nights in a 2- or 3-star hotel
- Full board
- Guided tours: Aix-en-Provence (90 mins), Nice (2 hours), Monaco (2 hours)
- Tickets to: santon studio, Thoronet Abbey, Domaine des Collettes, Villa Kérylos.
- Boat trip: calanques de Cassis (45 mins)
- Visits with tastings: calisson factory, winery.

THE GARDENS OF THE CÔTE D'AZUR, A LONG HISTORY...

1294	<i>Nice</i>	First historical record of the ancestor of the Carnaval of Nice by Charles of Anjou, Count of Provence, who noted having spent "the joyous days of Carnaval" in Nice	1895	<i>Vallauris</i>	Establishment of the Nérolium Cooperative
1546	<i>Nice</i>	Arrival of Franciscan monks at the Monastery of Cimiez and creation of a chessboard garden which can still be seen today.	1906	<i>France</i>	Gardens categorised as Historical Monuments in French law
1763-1764	<i>Nice</i>	Tobias Smolett falls under Nice's charms and becomes an ambassador for the area due to the publication of his work: "Travels Through France and Italy"	1907-1912	<i>St-Jean-Cap-Ferrat</i>	Start of work on the gardens of the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild
1830	<i>Nice</i>	First floral parade (fore-runner of the Carnaval de Nice)	1908	<i>Cagnes-sur-Mer</i>	Renoir falls under the spell of the olive trees of the Domaine des Collettes and moves in
1850	<i>Côte d'Azur</i>	First planting of palm trees (by Gustave Thuret) and mimosa on the Côte d'Azur	1912	<i>Menton</i>	The Waterfield family buy the Clos du Peyronnet
1853	<i>Nice</i>	Alphonse Karr, novelist and journalist, sets up a flower-growing business in Nice	1916	<i>Mandelieu</i>	Henry Clews buys the Château de La Napoule
1864	<i>Cannes</i>	The 1 st Acacia Dealbata planted in the gardens of the Château de la Bocca by the horticulturist Nabonnand	1921	<i>Cannes-La Bocca</i>	Creation of Chanel N °5 by Ernest Baux
1867-1870	<i>Nice</i>	Start of the setting out of Valrose Park		<i>Menton</i>	Blasco Ibanez, famous writer, goes into exile in Menton
1873	<i>Nice</i>	1 st Carnaval de Nice (of the modern era)	1924	<i>Menton</i>	Lawrence Johnston, designer of the gardens of Hidcote Manor, starts work on acclimatising plants in the greenhouses and gardens at Serre de la Madone
1887	<i>Côte d'Azur</i>	Stéphen Liégeard publishes his book "Côte d'Azur"	1925	<i>Menton</i>	Ferdinand Bac completes the Garden des Colombières and publishes his book of the same name
1890	<i>Antibes</i>	Establishment of the School of Horticulture	1927	<i>Pays de Grasse</i>	Establishment of trial gardens for scented plants
			1931	<i>Mandelieu</i>	Establishment of the first Mimosa Festival
			1933	<i>Monaco</i>	Inauguration of the Exotic Garden of Monaco
			1936	<i>Cannes</i>	Jean-Gabriel Domergue moves into the Villa Fiesole



1946	<i>Antibes</i>	The Thuret Garden becomes the National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA)
1949	<i>Eze</i>	Start of work on the Exotic Garden
1950	<i>Grasse</i>	Russell Page creates the garden of the Saint Jacques du Couloubrier Estate
1964	<i>St-Paul de Vence</i>	Joan Miró collaborates with the Maeghts on the creation of the Fondation Maeght: the Miró Garden
1994	<i>Côte d'Azur</i>	An inventory lists 300 gardens in the Département of the Alpes-Maritimes
1966	<i>Menton</i>	The Natural History Museum buys the Garden of Val Rahmeh
1999	<i>Pays de Grasse</i>	The Fraternity of the Mimosa comes into being
2001	<i>Var/Alpes-Maritimes</i>	Création de l'itinéraire : "La Route du Mimosa"
2003	<i>France</i>	Establishment of "Rendez-vous aux Jardins" by the Ministry of Culture
	<i>Mouans-Sartoux</i>	Creation of the Gardens of the International Museum of Perfumery
2004	<i>France</i>	Establishment of the designation "Jardin Remarquable" (Notable Garden)
2006	<i>Grasse</i>	Establishment of the Association "Unique Flowers of the Pays de Grasse"
2015	<i>Pays de Grasse</i>	Submission to UNESCO of the application "Knowledge about Perfume in the Pays de Grasse"
2016	<i>Grasse</i>	Inauguration of the "Perfumed Fountains" - Dior-Vuitton - LVMH
2017	<i>Côte d'Azur</i>	Establishment of the Festival of the Gardens of the Côte d'Azur

Roquebrune - Cap - Martin The oldest tree in France?

Roquebrune Cap Martin can take delight in possessing such a remarkable tree. According to historians and biologists, it is between 1800 and 2200 years old. Its fused, hollowed and twisted trunks form a 23,5 metre circumference. The branches support a foliage 18 metres wide and only 15 metres high. This venerable old-timer still produces little black olives of the "pichoulina" variety.

At the start of the 20th century, the proprietors of the grove, in an effort to improve the return from their property, decided to cut the tree down. Gabriel Hanotau, historian and government minister, who was in residence at Roquebrune-Cap-Martin at the time, took exception to the proposal and bought the smallholding to save this unique specimen.

Menton to Roquebrune Village road (pedestrian access only) - Free

DID YOU KNOW?

● **Boasting over 340 hectares, the Alpes-Maritimes département is France's second leading region for surface area given over to plants and flowers (14.2 % of France's total), just behind the Var (32.4%) and ahead of Loire-Atlantique (9.3%), Pyrénées-Orientales, Seine-et-Marne and Finistère (3.8 %). Up until the eighties, ornamental horticulture in the département led the way in French production (Source: Agreste PACA).**

In 2007, thirty-odd hectares were given over to growing fragrance plants. Today's figure is 40 hectares.

● **The City of Nice is home to 300 hectares of parks and gardens.**

● **The Côte d'Azur's emblematic flowers.**
Rose centifolia - Tourrettes-sur-Loup violet - Mimosa - Grasse jasmine - Tuberose - Lavender and hybrid lavender - Carnation.

SCENTED FLOWERS IN THE PAYS DE GRASSE

In the 17th century, tanners had to extend their skills with the fashion for perfumed leathers which came from Italy. The Corporation of Glovers-Perfumers was born. Glovers bought supplies of essential oils from peasants, who distilled the wild aromatic plants on the spot. This collaboration was the start of the continuing interdependence between cultivators and perfumers.

By the middle of the 18th century, perfumery had replaced glove-making. Processing natural raw materials had developed: it is now performed in factories, replacing a long tradition of distillation by the grower, in family stills which were also used to produce alcohol.

In the first half of the 20th century the cultivation of scented plants reached its peak: nearly 2000 hectares were under cultivation in the Pays de Grasse (800 of jasmine, 700 of roses, 65 of tuberose, and numerous orange, violet, verbena, mint and other growers...). Between 1900 and 1923, the jasmine harvest rose from 200 to 1300 tonnes. At this time the Chiris factory established subsidiaries across the entire globe, thus exporting local know-how about growing scented plants and the processing of natural raw materials.

Simultaneously, research into scented plants was launched in the trial garden established in Grasse in 1927. In 1932, this garden was acquired by the National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA) of Antibes and the Chamber of Agriculture of the Alpes-Maritimes, who retained control until the 1980s.

From the 1970s, the ability to pass on scented plant cultivation was weakened by the effects of globalisation, but since 2000, a new upturn can be seen centred on a new vision of the means of production of natural raw materials, and the initiation of conservation work on an endangered botanical heritage. Today around 40 hectares of scented plants are cultivated in the Pays de Grasse by committed growers, keen to pass on their know-how.

DID YOU KNOW?

The best-known French brands make the Pays de Grasse their own.

● CHANEL has worked since the 70s in close collaboration with the MUL family in Pégomas. Scented plant growers for generations, they harvest and process their produce on the property. Chanel N°5 was created by Ernest Beaux, a French perfumier who worked for the Russian Court, whom Gabrielle Chanel entrusted with the mission of creating her first perfume. Together they invented "a woman's perfume with a woman's scent", as she liked to call it...

Designed like a high fashion dress, Chanel N°5 was the first abstract perfume: breaking with the fashionable fragrances which were, more often than not, figurative (rose, jasmine, lilac), no identifiable dominant note is given off by its eighty components.

In autumn 2016, Olivier Polge, "nose" of the famous fashion house launched N°5 Eau de CHANEL.

● VUITTON and DIOR brought the Perfumed Fountains to the heart of Grasse in summer 2016, by opening the creative studios of two noses from Grasse, Jacques Cavalier-Belletrud and François Demachy, respectively the nose of VUITTON and of DIOR. This was a chance for the VUITTON house to launch a first collection of perfumes by Jacques Cavalier-Belletrud.

● At the same time, DIOR had recently renovated "La Colle Noire", a château acquired by Christian Dior in 1951 in Monteauroux. This home was, for him, a real haven which he worked on with his own hands over a long period, where he grew the flowers he loved so much and which are already the signature of the perfumes of the house of Dior.

● DIOR also worked with the Manon Estate to harvest scented flowers.



DID YOU KNOW?

"Know-how about perfume in the Pays de Grasse" is a candidate for the World Intangible Heritage of Unesco.

The "Living Heritage Association of the Pays de Grasse", which has submitted the application, brings together all growers of scented plants, experts and workers in processing natural raw materials, the biggest French perfume houses, scientists, and local inhabitants, in the knowledge that several trades are endangered because there is no-one to carry them on. The application to register on the representative list of the Intangible World Heritage is because of the symbiosis of its three sectors: growing scented plants, knowledge of raw materials and how to process them and the art of composing a perfume.

EXTRA INFORMATION

Picking the flowers is entirely done by hand. Roses are picked from May to June. Work starts at dawn before it gets too warm. The flower is then fresh and engorged with dew. Flower-pickers each collect between 10 and 20 kilos of rose petals, or 4 kilos of jasmine flowers, every day. For roses, they carry large baskets and aprons. The edges of the aprons are attached to the waist to hold the flowers they have picked before they go into large baskets. Violet corollas and tuberose flowers go into little baskets worn around the waist. The very fragile jasmine flowers go into enormous baskets covered by wet cloth to avoid them drying out.

IF YOU WANT TO LEARN EVEN MORE ABOUT IT!

"Dans les champs de Chanel à Pégomas, en pays de Grasse"

Text: Lionel Paillès - Photographs: Pierre Even

Not far from Grasse, nestles the valley of Pégomas where the Mul family has been growing flowers for perfume for generations. In this unique landscape, sheltered from prying eyes, fields of exceptional scented plants stretch across several hectares. This is where Chanel perfumes are born.

Across the seasons, Provence rose, jasmine of Grasse, tuberose, rose geranium and sweet iris are patiently planted, pruned and pampered before being picked by hand according to time-honoured techniques, then distilled following procedures specific to each flower.

For the first time, a beautiful book opens the doors of this exclusive estate, fruit of a partnership agreed in 1987 between Chanel and the Mul family.

Set in a magnificent box, six books with luxury bindings tell the story, in words and photos, of a year's growing and harvest.

Gardens of scented flowers

MOUANS-SARTOUX - The gardens of the International Perfumery Museum

The gardens of the International Museum of Perfumery are a natural space filled with the aromas, perfumes and fragrances which are part of the essence of the Pays de Grasse. This former perfumer's country house has a large estate of two hectares of fields. The traditional species used in perfumery are side by side with landscaped areas which are enjoyable to walk in all year. Designed in 2003 as a conservatory for the scented plants of the Pays de Grasse, in 2010 the gardens became a fun way of raising awareness for the International Museum of Perfumery.

The progressive acquisition of several Grasse perfumery businesses by big multinationals in the 60s, along with increasing production costs (not least hand-picking), little by little changed and endangered the time-honoured and authentic tradition of growing scented plants in Grasse. By 2000 only 40 hectares were under flower cultivation.

The purpose of these gardens, then, is to conserve and cultivate this heritage, showing the Provence rose, the Damask rose, orange trees, tuberose, violet leaves and mimosa, promoting the know-how acquired over centuries of practice and excellence in Grasse.

It is also an environmental project, committed to an organic process respectful of biodiversity, especially in an effective partnership with the Ligue de Protection des Oiseaux (League for the Protection of Birds).

GRASSE - The Manon Estate

Since the 1930s, the Biancalana family has been growing scented plants, and the tradition continues with the knowledge of centuries at work in an area fertile for their development and quality. Carole and Hubert Biancalana, daughter and father, produce today scented plants (May roses, Jasmine, tuberose, lavandin) which are picked by hand. They love to show off their skills and introduce visitors on their guided tours to their trade as producers of scented flowers. The house of DIOR works closely with Carole.

www.le-domaine-de-manon.com

MEET

The Association "Les fleurs d'exception du Pays de Grasse", set up by Carole Biancalana and Sébastien Rodriguez, both growers of scented plants, aims to disseminate, to all stakeholders in the floral sector, the rarity and richness of these scented flowers. The objectives are to develop, perpetuate and expand an activity which is integral to the history of the Pays de Grasse. This Association also assists new growers of scented plants to set up in the Pays de Grasse.



GRASSE - Au pays d'Audrey

Audrey and Thierry Bortolini welcome the public to the plots of scented plants located around their 18th century family farmhouse. Throughout the seasons, gourmet workshops are open, giving you the chance to taste the confections produced after the estate's harvests.

TOURRETTES-SUR-LOUP - La Bastide aux Violettes

This little village of the Pays de Grasse is the only place in France where violets are grown as the sole or main crop. Since around 1880, agricultural activity in the community has essentially been devoted to this flower (there were up to 40 producers).

The Bastide aux Violettes is both a place of history and a living producer where the quality of Tourrettes violets is highlighted and its production is described, particularly as regards new techniques suitable for environmental conservation. Here you can explore the history of Tourrettes, its land, its men and women, all the uses of the violet and observe the growers' methods and the flower itself in high season. Outside, you can visit the greenhouses and explore the traditions and modern methods applied to violet production.

SAVOIR-FAIRE

Picking flowers takes place on a daily basis in winter. In February and March, the plantations are coloured violet and exude a powerful perfume. It is during peak production in spring, that the flowers for confectionery are harvested. The violets, after being delicately separated from their stems, are crystallised on the same day, on site or sent to other confectioneries for processing.

At the start of May and end of July, the leaves are cut and delivered that same day to the factories in Grasse where they are made into "concrete", then "absolute" which go into many leading perfumes.

The violet species grown in Tourrettes-sur-Loup is Victoria. It is celebrated in March each year, at the Violet Festival.



GOURDON - The Perfumed Spring

Gourdon is a village, an eagle's nest, located a few kilometres from Grasse. The gardens of the Château de Gourdon are not to be missed (see chapter on The Gardens of Chateaux). You will find distinctly local crafts and other shops on the little village streets. Just along the road from the village, there is a vast garden clinging to the rocky spur that is Gourdon, designed by Chantal Roux, director of the Galimard perfumery in Grasse, combining Alpine flowers with the finest and most typical species that Grasse's savoir-faire can provide: lavender, orange blossom, thyme, broom, jasmine and rose...

Plants and flowers are used in the production of perfumes and candles. The garden is intended to be a training-ground for student botanists who come here to learn the art of plant distillation.

Sharing

It is also a "unique olfactory pathway" which Chantal Roux plans to share "with disabled children, the visually impaired and those suffering from Alzheimer's and their carers," in a garden bursting with poetry.

TOURRETTES-SUR-LOUP - Garden of the Confiserie Florian

It's a Mediterranean garden with a natural feel, between a mountain and a river, at the entrance of the Gorges du Loup. In this wonderful refuge with a benign micro-climate, grow Seville orange trees almost a century old with their bitter fruit, the flowers of which were once harvested to be distilled in the family perfumery, now the Confiserie Florian.

There are terraces which make up a garden of cedar trees with delicate and scented fruits, the myrtle-leaved clementine (a rare specimen gifted by the King of Morocco to the town of Menton), the grapefruit tree with yellow and pink fruit and the "citrange" which bears both lemons and oranges at the same time. There are also orange trees, lemon trees, mandarins, kumquats. Flowering bushes, climbing and pendulous roses, May roses, Provence roses, Tango roses, Grasse jasmine, verbena which the Confiseries use to make rose confit, acid drop sweets and crystallised flowers. Indeed, there are around eighty varieties of Mediterranean and aromatic plants: cistus, coronilla, freylinia, gaura, lavender, laurel, pistacia, pittosporum, rosemary, wild and garden thyme... Depending on the season, the visitor can enjoy many variations of colour and aroma in these biodiverse surroundings.



VALLAURIS GOLFE-JUAN – The Nérolium

This is a village which is famed for its know-how in ceramics, for the presence of the greatest names in the Arts and cinema; Napoleon has also crossed its paths, but it is less well known that the delicate orange blossom also played a part in its development.

In fact, originating in a farming syndicate formed in 1895, the **NEROLIUM** co-operative started in 1904, under the name of "Société Coopérative Agricole des Propriétaires d'Orangers des Alpes-Maritimes", as this co-operative included almost all the producers of the Alpes-Maritimes (almost 1200 members from Mougins, le Cannet, St-Jeannet, Le Bar-sur-Loup, la Gaude, St-Laurent-du-Var, La Colle-sur-Loup etc. where there were also orange tree plantations.) Vallauris Golfe-Juan had the biggest plantation of Seville bitter oranges (*citrus aurantium*) in the region.

The Seville orange tree bears several harvests and products per year. Oranges and other citrus fruit harvested at the start of the year are made into marmalades in the factory in Golfe-Juan. The orange blossom which is picked in May is distilled by the co-operative to make two products, Neroli essential oil (which goes into production of the world's best known perfumes) and orange blossom water, used in baking. 1000 kg of blossom is needed to make 1 kg of Neroli.

Over the last few decades, production having dipped, the Nérolium co-operative decided that to survive they needed to open a marmalade factory. This workshop also offers a large range of products from small and medium local producers. Today a handful of indomitable producers keep the co-operative alive in the hope of preserving its heritage and know-how.

Perfume Factory Tours

Tourist perfumeries are open to the public and offer free guided tours so that visitors can partake in a fascinating experience of the mysterious alchemy of perfumes through the raw materials, the distillation, enfleurage, the skill of the perfumer and his creations, the tour concluding in the factory shop.

Some offer introductory classes to perfume-making which enable perfume lovers to create their own eau de toilette with the aid of a "Nose".

www.labastidedesaromes.com/

www.parfums-guy-bouchara.com/

fr.jeanne-en-provence.com/showroom/

www.gaglewski.com/

www.ydparfums.fr/

www.parfumsmicallef.com/

Among the best known:

FRAGONARD (*Partner of the 1st Festival of the Gardens of the Côte d'Azur*)

Dedicated to perfumery and aromatic plants, the Fleurs de Grasse Factory is surrounded by a superb garden full of scented plants the public can enjoy.

The flower of 2017 will be the peony.

www.fragonard.com

GALIMARD

To celebrate the bicentenary of Napoleon's arrival from Elba in 2015, the Galimard perfumery in Grasse created the **NAPOLEON** scent complemented perfectly by the feminine perfume **JOSEPHINE**.

www.galimard.com

MOLINARD

The celebrated perfume creator Habanita made Molinard famous in 1921. After many years of adapting the recipe, Molinard returned to the original formula again in 2012.

PRIVATE GARDENS

Botany enthusiasts, lovers of gardens, some individual proprietors managed to turn their gardens into real treasures. They are willing to open the doors of their properties or estates to the public, some for a few weeks, or a few days to share their work, knowledge, experience or simply their pleasure.

PRIVATE GARDENS WHICH WILL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ON THE CÔTE D'AZUR

Menton Le Clos du Peyronnet
Les Colombières
La Citronneraie (see Jardins Remarquables)
L'Esquinade

Pays de Grasse Villa Noailles (Grasse)
Domaine de la Royrie (Grasse)
Domaine Saint Jacques de Coloubrier (Grasse)
Villa Fort France (Grasse)
(see Jardins Remarquables)
Vallon du Brec (Coursegoules)
(see Jardins Remarquables)
La Bouscarella (Châteauneuf de Grasse)
La Mouissonne (Grasse)
Le Mas des Pivoines (Grasse)

La Gaude L'Argelière

Cagnes-sur-Mer Propriété Marro

CAGNES-SUR-MER - Propriété Marro

The garden of the "Marro" property is the history of a family. The great-grandfather of the current owner, initially a reaper, born in 1878 in Italy, settled in Cagnes-sur-Mer as a market-gardener, buying the first plot of land in 1928, on which he built the existing house. The grandfather cut down on the production of vegetables, and replaced part of the vegetable garden with a plantation of agapanthus and replaced the vines with fruit and ornamental trees: pine, carob, cedar! The garden was complemented, over the years, by a topiary crown, ball and armchair, as well as a rose garden containing more than a hundred species.

This garden has retained its original irrigation canals which are now used to drain away rainwater. The two wells are used to water the plants for an hour each day and supply the water jets and fountains. Watering methods are the same as those of a hundred years ago.

You will also see in the garden the press, ram and tanks still used to make wine. As for the fork, pick, spades, and the wooden planters belonging to the grandfather - they are still in use ...

Nothing goes to waste here, everything is put to good use: trees cut down become furniture or are used for heating and sawdust and chips are used for mulching, old rusty nails are thrown into the plants and pebbles which are dug up provide drainage for roots when planting!

CHÂTEAUNEUF-DE-GRASSE – Garden of La Bouscarella

A former olive grove, the Bouscarella, meaning "Little Warbler", is hewn out of the rocky bars of the hill of Saint-Jaume, just outside Châteauneuf. Fourteen restored terraces, bathed by waterfalls, give the location its attraction.

By the end of the World War I, the garden had become a flower garden, but vestiges of its agricultural past guided its design, an English-style landscape with water features.

Great travellers, lovers of gardens, Nicole and Jean-François de Chambrun created an environment made up of paths and contrasts where rare specimens rub shoulders with local plants (more than 2500 species!). No pesticides here.

The 14 embankments in the "nez parfait" style, the piles of sleepers which support the terraces, adorned with majestic blue iris and rose bushes, each offer something different without ever seeming to have been planted, pondered, studied.

The orchard, beside a small farm with a conserved threshing floor, the majestic cypress trees, punctuated by centuries-old olive trees and the coloured palettes of the varying blooms make the Garden of the Bouscarella a timeless visit. Its owners are keen to retain "the feel of a Grasse farm from before World War I!"



GRASSE - Domaine de la Royrie

Founded in the 15th century on the initiative of the monks of Lérins, then gifted in 1437 to "Good King René", the Duke of Anjou and a lover of good food, the olive oil producing estate of la Royrie has come down to us over the centuries.

South-facing, sheltered from the wind, the olive grove is intended to be a "garden laid out by history".

Genuine original terraces, inhabited by olive trees many centuries old, bear witness to this ambition. This organic farm of 300 trees over 2 hectares produces an oil which is prized by connoisseurs. The entire estate is today classified with a protected designation of origin and Organic Agriculture registration.

Local flora is particularly highlighted in this most beautiful estate to which Monique and Lionel Brault have restored its former glory. Lavender, anemones, rosemary, cistus, Provençal gorse, to name but a few, grow among the ancient caillette olive trees, which bear the "petite olive niçoise" (the little Nice olive). A herb garden recalls the initial vocation of the estate, where the concept of oleology was born, applying the principles of oenology to olive oil.

The Domaine de la Royrie offers an educational and fun tour by appointment. The owners of the Domaine will bring local history alive for you, will help you explore Mediterranean flora, will tell you about the daily lives of 19th century peasants, introduce you to tree-cutting skills, to hand-picking of flowers and the production of olive oil. Each tour concludes with a taste of organic produce from the orchard and vegetable garden.

Domaine Saint Jacques du Couloubrier

The story goes that this garden gets its name from the grass-snake "couleuvre", which is common in the wilds around here. This vast space of 8 hectares, which was originally designed by the landscape gardener Russel Page in 1950 for a press baron, was abandoned for a long time.

Taken over in 2005 by Stephen Butt and his wife, the garden has today recovered its splendour. The garden of "les possibles". Designed by the head gardener, Pierre Jeanjean, the Couloubrier garden is constantly being enriched with new plant species. Wisteria, citronella and jasmine, olive trees, holm oaks and citrus make up, with the rose bushes, zones perfectly adjusted to their micro-climate and fill this garden with discovery after discovery. A greenhouse dedicated to bulbs recalls the traditions of the perfumes of Grasse, while a fountain and a vast stretch of water enclose a promenade of surprises.

Villa Noailles

"There are gardens which are said to be scented. I would say that this one sings." This is how Charles de Noailles, patron of the arts, producer and collector of the first half of the 20th century, described his garden in Grasse. It surrounds a Franciscan country house dating from the 18th century, which he acquired in 1923. However, it was not until 1947 that the Vicomte de Noailles set up home in this location, described by Ferdinand Bac as "a patriarchal country house of the 18th century,

with its court and nymphaeum, little rustic waterfalls, its cypress and myrtle grove on the hillsides." From then on, looking after the garden kept Charles de Noailles occupied until his death in 1981. A place where everything makes perfect sense. Preserving the terraced olive grove intact, the garden is structured around the spring which Charles de Noailles said was, "The most important thing in my garden."

From terraces to pools, the place is punctuated by plantings combining English and Italian styles, at the heart of which rare species of camellia can be found (an autumn variety, the camellia Sasanqua, in fact bears the de Noailles name). This surprising garden, with changing moods, but constantly peaceful, is not unlike the Vicomte, not chatty, but more inclined to express himself in his horticultural art than in the society parties given by his wife, Marie-Laure. Restored at the start of the 1990s, the garden was registered as a Historical Monument in December 1996.

La Mouissone

On a hillside, at 400 metres of altitude, the Domaine de la Mouissone stretches over three hectares and offers a breath-taking panorama over the surrounding countryside and the Mediterranean from Nice to Théoule-sur-Mer at the other end of the Département! Strangely, this property, planted with ancient olive trees, takes its name from a local variety of fig, la Carica Mouissona. Formerly a dependency of the Villa Saint-Georges, property of the famous perfumer from Grasse, Léon Chiris, the estate produces its own organic olive oil, under its origin protected label, which can be tasted and purchased in the nearby shop. The owner, Lady Lockett invites her visitors on a real journey at the whim of the essences which she plants where she thinks best, following the constraints of nature and the soil. 15 years of work have been needed to restore the terraces and tame the 100 metres slope of the property, now punctuated by themed gardens. The buildings edged with lawns and beds are located on flat surfaces, while garrigue and woodland cover the steeper areas. A bamboo plantation, with cool shade, contrasts with the arid areas inhabited by succulents. Two vegetable gardens conclude the tour, one lurking in the shade and the second in full sun. These provide the estate's fruit and vegetables. Visits to this garden of the Mouissone are by arrangement, bubbling, as it is, with projects. Its constant development and exceptional panorama make it a pleasure to see and see again.

Le Mas des Pivoines

Le Mas des Pivoines is one and a half hectares of gardens and terraces, around a restored country house, dating from the early 19th century. Lucile and Marcel Barrault, the proprietors, have created "a simple garden with a country atmosphere," which means there are no hedges or enclosures. This allows you to enjoy the landscape of Grasse to the full, all the way along the terraces edged with iris and rockery plants.





There is a sequence of gardens, separated by arches sculpted with rambling roses and vines. Further along, a country park combines species, bark, blooms and autumn foliage. It is a delight to the eyes. A playful stream runs along the bottom of the park.

In this garden, peonies from the world over are to be found. The venerable "Duchesse de Morny" opens the floral ball in April. Some of these plants bear 130 to 140 flowers! They are followed by their arborescent and herbaceous sisters whose brilliance rivals the roses and iris.

LA GAUDE - l'Argelière

A private estate located at the edge of an oak and pine wood, the Jardin of l'Argelière hosts almost 1200 species over 3000 m².

Organised in terraces, it holds a collection of old and botanical roses which illuminate spring. From the rose of Provence to Mermaid via Buff Beauty, these roses, climbing through the trees or covering a pergola lend the garden a fairy-tale appearance. Cloches and a little greenhouse host the most fragile tropical plants. Lysiane Offerhaus, the owner of this fine garden, uses neither pesticides nor chemical fertilisers, allowing wild plants to co-exist with her protégés, to maintain a balance which promotes the eco-system. Little pools, with their aquatic flora and fauna, complete this interesting garden.

MENTON

Les Colombières is the work of Ferdinand Bac (1859-1952), a German born in Stuttgart, grandson of King Jerome of Westphalia. He studied at the Beaux-Arts in Paris. With a true artist's soul, he was a successful painter, drawer and caricaturist who also excelled in interior design, architecture and landscape gardening. He launched the Colombières project in 1919, finishing in 1927. The property, an olive plantation of six hectares, had been acquired by his friends, the Ladan-Bockairy family. A walk in this garden is a voyage around the classical Mediterranean, where Greek mythology comes to life. Ferdinand Bach recreates the tales of Ulysses over an initiatory route studded with 15 locations. Dotted with outbuildings, sculptures, mosaics and frescoes, they are dedicated to figures such as Nausicaa, Orpheus, Nikea, Nymphae... These buildings have been constructed in such a way as to frame remarkable viewpoints over the sea and the bay, or to highlight the extraordinary plants in the garden, like an unusual olive tree or a particularly slender cypress or a thousand-year-old carob. A registered historical monument, the garden has been completely restored at its owner's initiative, with the aid of the State and, particularly, the Departmental Council of the Alpes-Maritimes.



Le Clos du Peyronnet is the work of the Waterfield family. It is the last garden in Menton which has remained in one family, now in its third generation, for more than a century. In 1912, Derick and Barbara Waterfield acquired 5000 m² which was already planted with olive trees and some exotic plants fashionable at the end of the 19th century, such as palms and nolinae. They started by developing a "wild garden" without much real commitment. Around 1950, Humphrey, their son, painter and landscape designer, gave the garden its Italianate soul and structure. He drew perspectives, outlined zones: water garden, orchard, vegetable garden... and collected rare plants with his friend, Lawrence Johnston. From 1971, William Waterfield, the current owner and nephew of Humphrey, pursues this family dream, enriching the collections in accordance with the site and the historic structures. Le Clos is at once a collector's garden - with particular points of horticultural interest, like the Pelargonium, Bauhinia, Oreopanax, subtropical fruits (there are 8 different avocado varieties) and especially a great collection of winter-flowering bulbs grown in pots - and a Mediterranean garden craftily designed with pools, pergolas and stairs where stone and water combine (the water stairway descends through a sequence of five pools with the sea as the sixth and final step).

L'Esquinade. Esquinade means 'crab' in the local dialect. Located in the newly-built Super Garavan district, this original, authentic garden is the archetype of a collector's garden. Simone and Edouard Mazzola bought a small valley of just under a hectare in 1972 at a time when the motorway was being built. They soon landscaped the small valley, turning it into a new garden.

With its gentle sloping landscape and stream, the Jardin de l'Esquinade is home to a collection of high quality plants, encompassing no fewer than 160 varieties of citrus fruits (of note are the lemon trees, including the famous Menton variety), 130 species of palm tree and an array of fruit trees, herbs and spices. The garden also features a rich collection of hibiscus, mimosa and several ornamental species and exceptional plants from the Caribbean, all coming together in an explosion of colours and fragrances.

"JARDINS REMARQUABLES" OF THE CÔTE D'AZUR

The fourteen gardens registered as "Jardins Remarquables" on the Côte d'Azur, vary greatly: mountain gardens, seaside gardens... They all enjoy the benevolent protection of passionate gardeners who, every day, work on some of the finest sites in this region.

THE LABEL

The label "Jardin remarquable" acknowledges the quality of certain gardens and the efforts made in their presentation and welcome to the public. It can be awarded to gardens which are already protected by historical monument registration.

Created in 2004, this State label is awarded for a five-year period to parks and gardens which are open to the public, which are of historic aesthetic or botanical interest. This must be matched with exemplary maintenance procedures which respect the environment and a welcome which is attentive to visitors' needs.

ANTIBES - The Botanic Garden of the Villa Thuret

George Sand described it as "an Eden which seems to float on an immensity!"

Charmed by the climate and the wilderness that the Cap d'Antibes then was, Gustave Thuret, 19th century algologist and botanist, decided to set up home here. He bought an area of several hectares on which he created his botanical garden. From a network of correspondents across the entire globe, he imported many seeds which he acclimatised, including mimosa which has left a deep mark on the modern Côte d'Azur.

Since 1887, following a donation, it is the French government which continues Gustave Thuret's work, as it became part of the Centre for Agricultural Research of Provence, which, in 1946, became the National Institute for Agricultural Research (INRA). A plant pathology service is available to horticulturalists. Research is also focused on replanting the Mediterranean forest which has been decimated by fires and the re-establishment of plant cover in areas affected by natural erosion, or seaspray which activates pollutants and town planning.

The English garden respects Mediterranean seasons, without the need for summer watering, nor chemical products. In this favoured place, great plants from all over the world co-exist, such as the impressive and majestic eucalyptus. In fact, no less than 2600 plants of different species and varieties currently inhabit the park which represents all the Mediterranean-type climates in the world.

www.sophia.inra.fr/jardin_thuret

COURSEGOULES (Pays de Grasse) - Garden of the Vallon du Brec

Nestling at an altitude of 1000 metres in the Pays de Grasse, the Garden of the Vallon du Brec offers a walk past a series of pools which are remarkable as a group, like the pebble garden, inhabited by the sculptures of Jean Grisot, artist, sculptor and owner of the garden since 1992. It is planted with botanical varieties from China, Japan, and North America, old rose varieties and some of the plant varieties of the Côte d'Azur. The walk across the footbridges leads from one colour to another, one discovery to another and one can stop in painted wooden outhouses, which show an Asian influence, as one passes from one world to the next.

Antibes	Botanic Garden de la Villa Thuret (public garden)
Coursegoules	Garden du vallon du Brec (private garden)
Eze	Exotic Garden (public garden)
Gattières	Garden of the Fleurs de Poterie (private garden)
Grasse	Garden of the Villa Fort France (private garden)
Mandelieu-La Napoule	Garden of the Château de La Napoule (public garden)
Menton	Citronneraie du mas Fofaro (private garden) Garden of the Palais de Carnolès (public garden) Garden of Val Rahmeh (public garden) Serre de la Madone (public garden)
Nice	Botanic Garden (public garden) Parc Phoenix (public garden)
Roure	Arboretum Marcel Kroenlein (public garden)
Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat	Garden of the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild





Finally, at the garden's exit, the studio of Mitchell Marland, painter in oils on wood, can be visited.

For a more immersive visit, the property has bed and breakfast facilities. Co-owner and artist, Mitchell Darland is responsible for the interior design and the general layout of the Vallon du Brec. Inside the apartments are lamps, tables and original works of art which have been hand-crafted.

www.le-vallon-du-brec.com/

EZE – Exotic Garden

George Sand said of the Exotic Garden at Eze: "It's a fairy tale on the corniche."

This dizzying garden, set out between 1949 and 2005, needed the labour of men and donkeys to bring materials and plants almost 430 metres above the Mediterranean. Created by Jean Gastaud, agricultural engineer, the garden, part of which was reworked by Jean Mus, has several species of succulent plants, as well as xerophytes and plants from wet regions around the caves and waterfall.

The pathways are lined with clay sculptures by Jean Philippe Richard, highlighting the fact that this is a place apart, which lends itself to contemplation. QR codes here and there allow you to check the garden's website.

150,000 visitors for the southern part (one of the ten most-visited sites of the Côte d'Azur).
3,500 metres² in the South, 2500 metres² in the North.
1,200 plants brought in and planted.
QR codes throughout the garden allow you to check the website of this Côte d'Azur institution.
www.jardinexotique-eze.fr

GATTIÈRES - The Gardens of the Fleurs de Poterie

This 1500m² garden in the Nice area, has twelve ancient olive trees, plus more than 800 rare plants and ... flowers made of pottery and clay by the ceramicist Anne-Marie Doloire, owner of the site, who started work here in 1982. Flowers are in bloom throughout the year within these walls adorned with urns, marbles, shells and coral in clay. It is a fun and feminine garden which has a vegetable garden with ancient and unusual varieties of tomato.

The workshop by the garden is part of the visit and you can buy pottery there too. An introduction to how to take cuttings is also available.

www.jardindepoterie.com



GRASSE - Garden of the Villa Fort France

Passed from a successful English author, Lady Fortescue, a collector of rare plants and author of the best-seller "Perfume from Provence" to the Courcel family, the terraces of the garden of the Villa Fort France are a refuge for 1000 different rare plants such as the famous Chinese sequoia, one of the oldest trees on the planet.

The garden is designed around a charming villa from the 30s, and is worked each day with all the creativity of its artist proprietor.

www.valeriedecourcel.fr

MANDELIEU-LA NAPOULE - The Garden of the Château de La Napoule

In 1916 the American artist and sculptor, Henry Clews bought the ruins of the Château de la Napoule, located by the seaside. With his wife, he then undertook the major task of restoring the building in order to use it to host shows and exhibitions. On these four hectares of land, the couple returned their splendour to the gardens of the château: alternating English and French layouts, a Venetian garden, a Roman garden and even a Moorish garden, the variety of garden designs is simply dizzying. The final imprint of the couple on this garden is further evidence of their eclecticism: the mausoleum where they lie united for eternity, in a quiet corner.

The Château de la Napoule protects and conserves today the cultural and historical heritage of Henry and Marie Clews. It is dedicated to the promotion of art and international cultural exchanges, The Clews Center for the Arts undertakes to support and inspire talent and artistic creation. It is also used today as an artists' residence.

www.chateau-lanapoule.com

MENTON

The Citronneraie of the Mas Fofaro

Planted in the 1950s on the hill of the Annonciade, the Citronneraie (lemon orchard) of the Mas Fofaro aims to preserve the emblematic lemon variety of the city of Menton. Bought by François Mazet, former rally driver, it hosts 450 trees of the famous Menton lemon "le citron de Menton", the most famous lemon, sought by Michelin-starred chefs as well as many other citrus trees. Olive trees complete a scene rich in aromas, while 800 tropical plants give a touch of originality. This terraced garden is valuable evidence of the importance of the lemon in the customs of the city of Menton.

www.lacitronneraie.fr



Garden of the Palais de Carnolès

Formerly the villa of the Princes of Monaco, constructed by architects Cotte and Gabriel in the 18th century, the Palais Carnolès was surrounded by gardens of orange and lemon trees, flower gardens and vegetable gardens. The present collection of citrus trees was planted from 1970 onwards, thanks to the National Institute for Agricultural Research in Corsica, which has restored its former glory.

This is an ode to citrus, with 137 varieties on the site, including 24 sweet oranges (*Citrus sinensis*), 6 Seville oranges (*Citrus aurantium*) and 6 lemon trees (*Citrus limon*). The collection of the Palais de Carnolès is a testing ground for integrated pest management.

In 1999, the French Conservatory of Special Collections recognised the lemon collection of this garden as worthy of note.

www.menton.fr/Jardin-du-Palais-de-Carnoles.html



Garden of Val Rameh

Laid out on a small plot acquired by Lord Radcliffe, former Governor of Malta, the garden of Val Rameh was bought in 1966 by the Natural History Museum with the aim of providing an ethnobotanical garden. 1400 different species - medicinal plants, spices, bamboos - are planted over 1.5 hectares. There is a huge collection of magic and medicinal plants, a bamboo plantation, spices and citrus ... A profusion of species and varieties make this a true botanical round-the-world trip.

Among the most spectacular plants, there is the precious *Sophora toromiro*, from Easter Island, the only known specimen in the world which grows outdoors.

As a final magical touch, the story goes that Val Rameh was the name of an Indian woman whom Lord Radcliffe married.

www.menton.fr

www.mnhn.fr/fr/visitez/lieux/jardin-botanique-exotique-menton

Serre de la Madone

The greenhouse garden, Serre de la Madone was recognised as a Historical Monument in 1990, and became part of the Conservatoire du Littoral in 1999. These awards show the importance of this garden, a place where plants have been acclimatised since Lawrence Johnston planted the plants he had found on his voyages. Even to this day, some have not been identified with any certainty! Others, like the sycamore fig, one of the first trees to be domesticated by man, are real treasures of the world's flora.

Lawrence Johnston, an American who had been naturalised as British, spent 30 years (from 1924 to 1954) acclimatising rare plants he brought from his far-flung voyages in Menton - a great many are still to be conclusively identified.



A great gardener, designer of the Hidcote Manor garden in England, he was able to acclimatise the most curious plants, like the Chinese Mahonias, and to discover rare species, like the sycamore fig, a biblical tree which is probably one of the earliest domesticated fruit trees in Ancient Egypt.

The garden follows the contour of the landscape and is organised in themed terraces punctuated with statues and fountains. It became a Historical Monument in 1990, and was acquired by the Conservatoire du Littoral in 1999. After a few years of neglect, a vast programme of restoration was launched to preserve these exceptional collections. This 7-hectare garden, site of botanical and artistic discovery, is a magical place for a walk.

www.serredelamadone.com/apropos.htm

NICE

The Botanic Garden

A park owned by the City of Nice, the Botanic Garden is located on a hillside on the banks of the Var. It offers a vast panorama from the Mercantour over to the Estérel.

Opened to the public in 1991, it is like an open-air museum. Today it has 3500 plant specimens in 40 zones across the garden, thus recreating the flora of the 5 continents (Africa, America, Asia, Australia and Europe) and fulfilling the role of a conservatory.

www.nice.fr/fr/parcs-et-jardins/le-jardin-botanique

Parc Phœnix

Parc Phoenix contains plants, and also many animals. A member of the Association of Zoological Parks of France, it has 3,000 animals on display. That's why a walk in the paths of the park is more than just a botanical exploration - iguanas and peacocks live here in peaceful co-existence.

At the heart of the garden there is one of the biggest pyramidal greenhouses in the world. In its 7000 m² area, this greenhouse accommodates the flora and fauna of 7 tropical and subtropical climates, from equatorial forest to African Savannah. There are more than 2500 plant species.

The park extends over 7 hectares in the heart of the city. Awarded the Famille Plus label!

www.parc-phoenix.org



ROURE - Arboretum Marcel Kroenlein

Created by a director of the Exotic Garden of Monaco, Marcel Kroenlein, the arboretum of the same name at Roure is the only arboretum at high altitude in Europe. From 1280 to 1600 metres in altitude, it enjoys the benefits of an alpine climate, sheltering deciduous and coniferous trees from mountainous areas all over the world, which can be admired in the company of a mountain guide, available all year round. It is said to be a "Green Cathedral" as it hosts, over 6 hectares, more than 2300 species of flowers, plants, bushes, trees (epicea, larch, Scots pine, juniper, briar, etc.).

The arboretum is also dedicated to Land Art - "The Tree and Art". Michèle Ramin, director of the site, offers space in the Arboretum every year to artists where they can install work which will disappear over time and seasons.

You can have a picnic at the Prince's Table, as Prince Albert of Monaco comes every year to see the new art installations.

www.arboretum-roure.org



SAINT-JEAN-CAP-FERRAT - Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild - Sea View

The Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild offers a walk through the nine gardens which surround it, through colonnades, waterfalls, pools, flower beds, shady paths and rare tree species: the Florentine garden, the Spanish garden, the French garden, exotic, rockery, Japanese, Provençal, rose garden and finally the Sèvres garden.

The creation of the gardens took 5 years' work, from 1907 to 1912. As with the Villa, renowned designers were involved, such as Harold Peto (some of whose plans can be seen in the Villa Museum). Much in demand as a landscape gardener in Europe and the USA, he built his reputation by designed classically inspired gardens. Scents and splendours of species, diversity in planting delight the visitor, amazed and charmed by so much dazzling vegetation.

To enter this Eden is to set sail around the world. You are on a transatlantic cruise.

The French garden dominates the others both in size and location. It extends directly from the Villa. From the building its magnificent perspective is magnetic: opposite the Villa, the Temple of Love is inspired by the Trianon and overlooks the stepped waterfall. The slope of the waterfall was, on fact, specially structured to give a white appearance to the water, the famous "water shawl" of the Orient. As for the garden, affords art-lovers a unique view of the palazzino. In summer, lotus and water-lilies populate the large pools.



The lawns, adorned by classical fire-pots and large Italian Renaissance vases, loll in a perfect arrangement. You will marvel at nature's bounty within such a structured setting.

Back down the steps towards the courtyards, the visitor comes to the Spanish garden. Datura, jasmine, honeysuckle exude their heady scents. The orange is not far away... At the far side of these stairs, a grotto is hidden behind the pink marble columns. In the middle of the grotto is the dolphin fountain. This feeds the pool, the central feature in the décor, which stretches to the foot of the pergola. In the shade of the columns, enjoy a timeless pause.

Beyond the pool and the pergola, lies the Florentine garden and a change of worlds. At its centre, a horseshoe stairway frames a rocky grotto. Behind the philodendrons and water hyacinths, the marble statue of a young boy looks away from the panorama.

Through the cypress-lined Florentine garden, the visitor arrives at the stone garden. It is a strange spectacle which intrigues with its careful selection of art works

from a variety of places and eras. Below the camphor, is a disparate group of works the Baroness could not house inside the Villa: arches, fountains, capitals, bas-reliefs from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, monstrous gargoyles, stone grotesques and Sicilian gnomes.

The Japanese Garden, "Cho-Seki-Tei" - which means "the garden where one listens calmly to the sound of the waves at twilight" - plunging the visitor into a zen world. Designed and laid out by Professor Masao Fukuhara, this Japanese garden displays the traditional wooden pavilion, the bridge, lanterns and bowls, representing a thousand years of Japanese tradition. Calmness reigns. It was restored in March, 2016.

The exotic garden is the kingdom of the cacti and succulents. Alone or in groups, they challenge the sky. The final bouquet of this firework show is the rose garden. Many varieties of the Béatrice's emblem perfume this far corner of the garden. A quiet corner, with its little hexagonal temple. Its only inhabitant is an allegorical divinity, representing the spring.

Also not to be missed is the Anglo-Provençal garden on the east side, and the Sèvres garden which concludes the visit, leading you back to the tea-room.

www.villa-efhrussi.com




THE ESSENTIAL PARKS AND GARDENS OF THE CÔTE D'AZUR



ANTIBES JUAN-LES-PINS

From 1900 to 1971, Antibes was the capital of rose-growing for floristry. After the World War I, the rose replaced vegetable growing. With the introduction of heated greenhouses, horticulture became a real local industry, due, in no small part, to the train which enabled rapid transport. The same development happened with mimosa around Cannes. Antibes was then the main supplier of roses in Europe. In the 1970s, a terrible storm destroyed many of the greenhouses and, along with increased costs, changed the industry forever.



Antibes has retained beautiful gardens with a sea view along the famed Cap d'Antibes, the path beginning at the Pinède Gould (pinewood). The original pinewood, which so charmed the original inhabitants, has been preserved. The shade of these centuries-old pines shelters the paths which meander through the wood, offering some welcome coolness to walkers in summer, and an unbeatable view over the Mediterranean. In July, the path leads you in the footsteps of the famous jazzmen who have made "Jazz in Juan" such an unmissable fixture in the international jazz firmament.



Gardens to see in Antibes:

- **The Botanical Gardens of the Villa Thuret**
See the Jardins Remarquables
- **Le Parc Exflora**
- **Parc de la Villa Eilen Roc**
See Gardens of the Stately Homes of the Côte d'Azur
- **Garden of Fort Carré**

Parc Exflora

This park, inaugurated in 1994, covers 5 hectares between Juan-les-Pins and Antibes. Designed by the landscape architect, Alain Goudot, the garden draws its inspiration from the evocation of Mediterranean gardens over the centuries. As Alain Goudot says, "This garden is alive. It is always changing as the plants develop!" Alternating zones inspired by Provençal tradition, Florentine, Greek, Roman and Moorish, this seaside garden is designed to take advantage of the effects of light which invite relaxation. You move from shade to full sun in the olive groves, orange groves and palm plantations, before reaching the lake with its water-lilies in front of a maze of yew, box and laurel. The Parc Exflora offers a soothing walk through bright colours, and according to Alain Goudot, "The composition of a garden is a sort of set design using the light on your chosen subjects, to the visitor's delight, as one can enjoy the constant changes with the time of day, season and year."

CAP D'AIL

In Cap d'Ail, the districts which overlook the sea afford an almost perfect view of the villas and gardens of the Belle Époque. From the Villa "Les Funambules" where Sacha Guitry wrote many plays, to the "Notre Dame du Cap Fleuri" church, one passes "Mirasol", "Lumières" and "The Rock, villas with strange and original names, which were the basis of the legend of the luxurious and lush Côte d'Azur.

Gardens to see in Cap d'Ail:

- **Sacha Guitry Park**
- **The Garden des Douaniers**
- **The Garden du Château des Terrasses.**



Sacha Guitry Park – Sea View

Named after the playwright, owner of the villa “Les Funambules”, this garden hosts several Mediterranean trees (including the famous carob, the dried grains of which became the standard for the jeweller’s carat), succulents and cacti. The garden was created in 1990 and overlooks the coastal path leading to the Principality of Monaco. Beneath the carob, a stone’s throw from the pergola’s jasmine perfume, there is a vertiginous view down to the Mediterranean. It was in this atmosphere that the great master, Sacha Guitry, found his inspiration, some years ago.



The Garden du Château des Terrasses

Surrounded by a huge park planted with exotic species, palms and conifers, the villa was constructed around 1890 for William Mendel, a British banker. Rented by the Russian Imperial family in 1895, the villa hosted Queen Victoria and President Félix Faure. In 2001, the son of its last owner signed the villa over to the community of Cap d’Ail, which undertook to restore to its former condition.

The Château des Terrasses has since been a place for a quiet walk in the shady paths between its impeccable lawns, planted with de palm trees and adorned with elegant flowers. What is more, it offers unique views across the sea and the Bay of Cap d’Ail, which take the visitor back to the golden age of the Belle Époque.



The Garden des Douaniers

Opened in September 2014, this garden enables you to explore rare species and varieties, some of which are otherwise unknown in the region.

Around fifty new varieties have been specially planted in this garden with its twin ecological and educational aims: arbutus, tea-tree, Arabica coffee, camphor laurel, caper, lemon, bergamot, cedar, pink grapefruit, Tahiti lime, ginger, jacaranda, tamarisk.



The Gardens of the Perched Villages

EZE

This perched village in the east of the Département is a maze of little streets, little arts and craft shops and luxury hotels, with discreet rooms on the little paved streets. The ruined castle shelters the exotic garden with its amazing views.

The Nietzsche path leaves the seaside, and snakes up a steep slope to the perched village. It is said that Nietzsche, who stayed in Nice towards the end of his life, came to this path when he was

ill, and found his inspiration to write the third part of Thus Spake Zarathustra.

The Exotic Garden - EZE - Sea views

See the Jardins Remarquables

SAINTE-AGNÈS - Sea views

Sainte-Agnès, the highest coastal village in Europe, located at the side of a dizzying rocky outcrop, dominates, from its height of 800 metres, the Bay of Menton and the Mediterranean, offering a unique panorama. In the Middle Ages, gardens were in front of walls or else inside cloisters. Their primary function was to feed and treat the locals. Gardens, therefore, had a particular importance in mediaeval strongholds. In Sainte-Agnès, the gardens have been restored by the Association des Peintres du Soleil (Painters of the Sun). A beautiful mediaeval garden is concealed at the heart of the village. Divided up and given symbolic names, there is the garden of the Virtues, the garden of the Vices, the Odours, Tastes, the Princess’s garden and the tinctorial garden with plants which were used to dye fabrics at the time. Paradise and Hell are alongside the garden of sight and that of medicinal herbs and the Fountain of Life ... Hidden in little spaces surrounded by box or santolina, these gardens are made up of food plants, medicinal, aromatic and ornamental plants as they were found in monasteries and mediaeval gardens.

MENTON

Gardens are the hallmark of the city of Menton. In fact, since the 18th century, the city has been renowned for the quality of its botanical locations. This is the city of lemon trees. In the 19th century, as a result of Menton’s micro-climate, botanists, particularly from Britain, introduced tropical and subtropical species and put together the original harmonies of planting which, today, make Menton an open-air greenhouse. Maria Serena, Val Rahmeh, Fontana Rosa, Serre de la Madone, are dream locations where the countryside holds sway, where scores of types of palm tree stand over centuries-old olive trees and where Southern hemisphere plants rub shoulders with those of the Mediterranean.

Continuing this specialism has required the creation of contemporary spaces in the city centre, like the Square des États-Unis and the Garden du Campanin, to which pomegranates and pots adorned by lemons confer a typically Mediterranean cachet.

The rescue of the garden Serre de la Madone, the renovation of the Jardins des Colombières and Fontana Rosa, the constant additions to the collection of citrus at the Palais Carnolès are concrete examples of the promotion of this botanical heritage.



A circuit of the exceptional gardens organised by the Heritage Department enables the public to explore these magnificent spaces. The Tourist Office organises every year the Mediterranean Days of the Garden. Four of the seven remarkable gardens are included, there is a street festival focused on the lemon, the city's emblem, in February each year and several lemon-based local specialities.

Menton is a floral city. Indeed, the city has earned four flowers, the top award in "Villes et villages fleuris" (France in Bloom equivalent), for the last 15 years. Since 1995, Menton has won the national prize for its flowers, holds the Golden Flower award and the title of the Best Garden City in France. The flower beds, the 7000 trees and the exceptional gardens cover 46 hectares. The city also has the olive grove of the Parc du Pian, the plateau Saint-Michel and the Forest of l'Ubac Foran.

DID YOU KNOW?

The "Menton Lemon" has a Protected Geographical Indication label.

The European Commission has registered the name "Menton Lemon" as a Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), according to European regulations from 2 October, 2015. This award recognises the quality of the product and its geographical origin. The "Menton Lemon" is grown in the heart of the Alpes-Maritimes, in the communities of Castellar, Gorbio, Roquebrune-Cap-Martin, Saint-Agnès and Menton.

Since the lemon appeared in local citrus farms in 1341, the link between this fruit and Menton has never weakened over the centuries.

It is cultivated on terraces between the sea and the mountains on a specific soil, known as Menton sandstone. The gentle maritime climate and the appearance of mist in the summer limit the sugar content and promote an acidic taste, which is not unduly bitter, in the fruit.

Between 53 and 90 mm in size, "Menton Lemon" is also characterised by the intense scent of its zest, with fresh and intense notes of citronella, and its juice with its acidic, yet not bitter taste. It is also known for the light yellow to greenish-yellow colour of its early fruits, intense and gleaming light yellow colour at maturity and bright, almost fluorescent, yellow in winter.

Picked by hand over a number of runs, the "Menton Lemon" is not waxed or chemically treated after it has been picked.

Some Numbers

- 150 - 200 tonnes of lemons, depending on the year*
- Twenty producers*

Gardens to see in Menton:

- **The Maria Séréna Garden**
(See The Gardens of the Stately Homes of the Côte d'Azur)
- **Serre de la Madone Garden**
- **The Fontana Rosa Garden**
- **The Botanical Garden of Val Rahmeh**
- **The Garden of the Palais Carnolès**
- **The Biovès Gardens**
- **Le Clos du Peyronnet** *(see Private Gardens)*
- **Le Jardin des Colombières** *(see Private Gardens)*
- **La Citronneraie**
- **The Garden of the Esquinade** *(see Private Gardens)*

Maria Séréna - Sea view

Close to the Italian border, the garden of this villa, said to have been built for Ferdinand de Lesseps, designer of the Suez Canal, to Charles Garnier's plan, enjoys one of the mildest micro-climates in France where the temperature never falls below 5°C, even in the hardest winter. This climatic peculiarity makes this garden a true botanical treasure island. Over a hectare, majestic palm trees from all over the world, giant Strelitzia (Bird of Paradise), exuberant cycads, punctuate this garden which also contains its own observatory. Plants, which would normally be grown in greenhouses, grow here in the open air (like the Canary Islands Dragon-Tree, the only specimen of this species which grows outside in France and the astonishing silk-floss tree, *Chorisia speciosa*) and are the essence of this garden. There is also a twisting canal, adorned with aquatic plants.

Fontana Rosa - the Spanish Garden

The villa and its gardens, which take their name from a nearby spring, were constructed in 1875 and purchased in 1922 by Vincente Blasco Ibanez, a Spanish novelist and film-maker, who was an exile from his own country. They are a poetic tribute; a botanical work the poet dedicated to his country. Neglected after the death of its owner in 1928, the villa and its gardens were donated in 1970 to the city of Menton, which only took on their renovation many years later. The garden was registered as a Historic Monument in 1990.

Vincente Blasco Ibanez primarily wanted this space to be a place to read and a memorial to his childhood. The Arab-Andalusian feel of the garden recalls that, symbolised by the numerous multi-coloured mosaics from Valencia which adorn its different sections.



The ubiquitous fountains, shady trellises of Mediterranean species such as ficus, palms and majestic araucarias, together create an ambiance quite unique of its type.

The Biovès Gardens.

Located in the city centre, these gardens bear the name of Emile Biovès, Mayor of Menton at the end of the 19th century. Laid out under the cover of the Careï, this promenade of 800 metres boasts lawns and flowers, exotic species, sculptures and fountains throughout the year. They take on floral decor for the festivities at Christmas and citrus decor for the Fête du Citron® (The Lemon Festival).



NICE

Around every street corner in Nice you will find green spaces. There are more than 300 hectares of parks and gardens, off the tourist trail, which offer unusual dreamlike landscapes. The gentle climate has enabled acclimatisation of many plant species from all over the world. This palette of forms and colours has inspired many passionate botanists and gardeners.



In the 19th century, European aristocracy passed its winters in this city with its pleasant climate. Lovers of the exotic, they imported many plants and trees, putting together as the fancy took them, amazing landscapes featuring statues and rocks. Then towards the end of the 19th and into the 20th centuries, fine public gardens were laid out which also featured beautiful collections of rare species.

Now that the planet requires special care and attention, the City of Nice has a very committed policy as regards sustainable development and environmental protection. Accordingly, an extensive programme of refurbishment of parks and gardens is underway.

Today, Nice sees itself as the "Green City of the Mediterranean," by creating new parks such as the Estienne d'Orves park with its additional 15 hectares, increasing the planted volume of existing beds and, more recently, laying out the twelve-hectare breathing-space that is the Promenade du Paillon, right in the heart of the city.

The incredible variety of plants, artfully deployed by the landscape gardeners of yesterday and today, allow discoveries of great interest to the initiated and enjoyable walks which are an indispensable part of city life.



Gardens to see in Nice:

- Promenade du Paillon and Albert 1st Garden
- The Botanical Garden
- Mont Boron Park
- Chambrun Park
- Parc Phoenix
- Valrose Park (closed to the public)
- The Château Hill Park
- Estienne d'Orves Park
- Vinaigrier Park
- Park of la Clua – Dr Jean Guillaud
- Park of the Castel des Deux Rois
- Vigier Park
- Il Paradisio Garden
- The Estate of the Observatory of Nice
- Garden of the Monastery and Garden of the Arenas, Cimiez
- Garden of the Anatole Jakovsky Museum of Naïve Art and Carol of Romania Park
- Garden of the Matisse Museum
- Garden of the Beaux-Arts Jules Chéret
- The Gardens of the Villa Arson
- The Garden of the Palais Masséna
- The Garden of the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MAMAC)
- The Garden of the Chagall Museum

The promenade du Paillon, a botanical voyage across the continents... Mediterranean flora is represented throughout this garden with holm oak, majestic pines and Provençal cypress. This central green thread along the whole Promenade is planted with olive trees, vines, carobs, pomegranates, figs and other southern European plants.

Asia lends a hand with its camphor and giant bamboo, already a good size at up to ten metres in height. As you wander, there is a collection of citrus to explore, a reminder that before coming to the Côte d'Azur from the 17th century, lemons and oranges came from China and India.



Africa. A little further along, African vegetation has replaced the former Paillon car park. Take a look at the grove of *Phoenix reclinata*, an unusual palm tree made up of several trunks, or the *Erythrina*, a large-leaved tree with a sumptuous orange-red blossom in spring. A symphony echoed in winter by the scarlet flowers of the *Aloe*.



The South Sea Islands and Australia. On the square Leclerc, you land in the South Sea Islands and Australia. Walking through a eucalyptus forest of remarkable specimens, whose bark trails in multi-coloured strips of red, pink, brown and green ... In summer the bunches of red flowers of the Bottle Tree (*Brachychiton*) fight it out with the Firewheel Trees (*Stenocarpus sinuatus*), with their flamboyant flowers. In the same area, dozens of arborescent ferns up to 2 metres in height create a tropical atmosphere, in the shade of the resident giant ficus, an old tenant of the square, just in front of the statue of General Masséna.

South American influence comes with the yellow flowers (in summer) of the Tipuana tipu or the pink flowers of the Silk-floss Tree (*Chorisia speciosa*), a bottle tree which protects itself against herbivores with a covering of sharp spikes on its trunk. Among other curiosities are the Chilean coconut (*Jubea spectabilis*) which produce small edible coconuts, minifruits from a trunk which can grow 2 metres in diameter.



The voyage continues in the Albert 1st Garden, with North America. Between Bernar Venet's Arc and the Fountain of the Three Graces, tens of de magnolias with bunches of immaculate flowers form a colonnade. The excursion a little further with the autumnal flaming of the oaks and American walnut trees and the maples. Shades go from yellow to red and brown ... for an Indian summer in Nice.

The green and blue carpets.

The green surface allows a surface which is suitable for many different uses: the intensive use of the esplanade, for art exhibitions, fun activities for children and youngsters, tranquillity for the walker and the dreamer... A large water mirror and an extended misting space are located on either side of Place Masséna, 3000 m² on Masséna et 1500 m² on the Albert 1st Garden. Sequences of 128 water-jets misters are programmed on the natural stone bed of the water mirror, with lighting at night.

The aquatic theme continues on the other side of Place Masséna, in the Albert 1st Garden, on the "Plateau of Mists" with its natural basalt and limestone slabs and the "fog". A surface of 1400m² with 960 misting heads, 60 water tanks, each supplying sixteen nozzles, enable the spraying of very fine droplets, forming a giant "cloud" you can walk through freely.



As much as the Promenade du Paillon is cosmopolitan, with its plants from all continents, it also pays homage to the flower which remains one of the emblems of the city: the carnation. Across from the Lycée Masséna, a rectangle of more than 2000 carnation plants recalls the era when this flower was exported from Nice to the four corners of the Earth.

A Marine Bestiary for Children

A life-size whale, dolphins, octopuses, a huge turtle ... These marine animals have set up home at the heart of this new park across from the Lycée Masséna. Did they make it all the way here from the mouth of the river? Truth to tell, they had a bit of help with their migration.

These sculptures first saw the light of day in a studio in the Cévennes which specialises in the fabrication of playgrounds using natural materials. Made of solid durable wood which is soft to the touch, these giant toys harmonise with the surrounding plant décor. There are different playgrounds for children up to the age of 12.

For under 3 years: A 3-metre long by 2.4-metre wide turtle, with its eggs on which toddlers can walk, and at the back, a slide and a 3-metre long wave serving as an armchair.

From 3 to 6 years: Two 6.5-metre long dolphins, with slides and nets; a man-ta ray nearly 3 metres long with springs; a 1.5-metre long snapper which moves when children walk on it.

From 6 to 12 years: The 30-metre long whale is the star of this playground. Kitted out with numerous games, ropes, equipment, bars, nets, rings, its stomach can hold a lot of little "Jonahs" looking for adventure.

The Forest Park of Mont Boron, the garden of the early men

Perched above the city, Mont Boron separates Nice from Villefranche-sur-Mer. This was probably the hunting-ground of the area's first inhabitants from the Terra Amata cave 400,000 years ago. Having been cleared in the Middle Ages to give no hiding place to the Saracens, Mont Boron was replanted as woodland in the 1860s. The park covers 57 hectares criss-crossed by 11 kilometres of footpaths.

Overlooking the bay, which appears through the trees as the path winds, this is a walk through a typically Mediterranean environment. Aleppo pines, Scots pine, carobs, holm oak and olive trees shade a profusion of bushes (mastic, terebinth, euphorbia), and flowers (dwarf iris, wild and white orchids, rare plants which are endemic to Nice) locals, which compete with more exotic species, introduced last century like freesia and pittosporum. There are also two notable military constructions: the Fort and the Battery of Mont Boron.



Chambrun Park, a garden dedicated to music

At the end of the 19th century, Count Aldebert de Chambrun acquired this 11-hectare estate on the heights of Nice.

On this former market garden, which had belonged to Count Cais de Pierlas, a château dating from the early 19th century hung above the city. The Count applied himself, with the architect Philippe Randon, to make of this place a magnificent pleasure park devoted to his love of music. Over and above the waterfall and pools, the Count planted numerous trees. Palms, cypress, cedars and maritime pines which completed the scene. A very romantic small temple rotunda, inspired by Graeco-Roman antiquity, was built on a natural outcrop accessed by a 72-step staircase.

A great music-lover, the Count wanted to organise concerts and recitals in his garden.

Sold off in small lots after the World War, the former park is today largely covered with buildings, but still takes a pride in its ancient trees.

NB: A huge Lebanese cedar dating from the 18th century.



Valrose Park

This was one of the most grandiose properties of the Belle Époque. Nowadays, the headquarters of the University Nice Sophia Antipolis and the Faculty of Science, Valrose Park came into being between 1867 and 1870, at the request of Baron Von Derwies, a Russian railway magnate. 800 under the command of 4 architects were required to build the château and it took all the talent of the gardener, Joseph Carlès of Nice, to lay out the 10 hectares which make up Valrose Park to this day.

A last vestige of the Second Empire.

In a gently sloping valley, the slopes hosting a huge collection of conifers, stretch the lawns. The garden is therefore a mix of French and English inspirations and exotic and forest planting.

Planted with palms, cedars, magnolias and ginkgo biloba trees, equipped with pools, grottos and little waterfalls, Valrose Park has an abundance of flowers and plantations. According to legend no less than 100 gardeners were needed to maintain the park.

A landmark for many birds.

The wooded valley and its pond constitute an eco-system in themselves where 35 indigenous bird species can be observed, twenty of which nest at Valrose. Migratory birds stop off here: heron, hoopoe, kingfisher, pipit and wagtail.



The Garden of the Observatory of Nice, A park near the stars

The astronomical Observatory of Nice, located at the summit of Mont Gros, the cupolas of which were designed by Charles Garnier and the Large Cupola by Gustave Eiffel, was set up on the site of an old exotic garden, on the route of the Grande Corniche. Clinging to Mont Gros, this huge 40-hectare park has a spectacular view of the Côte d'Azur.

Bischoffsheim, the banker, built the Observatory in this huge tree-lined park, where the visitor can seek the shade of the Aleppo pines and the Mediterranean species which fill this extensive space. Cistus and other scented plants confer a very Provençal atmosphere to this place, far from the city and its buzz.

The Garden of the Monastery, Cimiez

(See Monastic Gardens)

MONACO

DID YOU KNOW?

Concerned with safeguarding its roots in the face of urban sprawl, the Principality developed a policy dedicated to creating gardens and green spaces for a total of 529 000m² in a City-State of just 195 hectares: the highest in Europe after Vienna.

20% public and private green spaces

Whether public or private, green spaces here cover a little over 529,000m² across the region, amounting to a total of 13.75m² per inhabitant: the result of an incisive policy rolled out over the past few decades.

In 1960, the public, State-managed spaces covered 50,000m². Today, that figure has exceeded 276,000m². Most of these public green spaces take the shape of gardens that are generally structured around a theme (rose gardens, olive groves, Japanese gardens, exotic gardens, fitness trails, kids' gardens, etc.) and 800 trees.



Gardens to see in Monaco:

- The Exotic Garden
- The Japanese Garden
- The Rose Garden
- Fontvieille Park
- Jardin de la Petite Afrique
- Jardins Saint-Martin

The Exotic Garden

The idea for this garden, located on a rocky, near-vertical area with an ideal exposure, came from Albert I of Monaco, the "Learned Prince".

The rockery developed slowly, and it was a few years later, in February 1933, before it was inaugurated and opened to the public by his successor, Prince Louis II.

Unique of its type, it brings together a wide range of cactus and succulent plants, which adapt so well to dry climates by storing water in their organs, flowers or stems.

From the 50s, greenhouses were constructed with the aim of bringing to Monaco specimens of all succulent plants in the world.

6000 varieties from the desert and semi-desert areas of the world make up the 15,000 m² of this exceptional garden. Certain century-old specimens, at more than 12 metres high, have taken on spectacular proportions. Others display stunning morphologies or dazzle when in bloom.

The Japanese Garden

The Japanese Garden of Monaco is a surprising area which takes you on a trip outside time and space.

Laid out over 7000 m² at the foot of the city and its spectacular buildings, facing the sea, the Japanese Garden has azaleas, rhododendrons and camellias at the turn of its paths and waterfalls around a traditional tea-house. Opened in 1994 by Prince Rainier III, it is a homage to Princess Grace.

Ducks and koi carp in pastel shades share the central pool while a traditional zen garden, of sand and stones, afford a peaceful pause, conducive to meditation.

This is a real work of art. This unique garden was designed with the strictest respect for the zen principles by the landscape architect Yasuo Beppu, winner of the 1990 Grand Prix at the Osaka Floral Exhibition.



It harmoniously combines stone, water and vegetation around a three centuries old olive tree which anchors this Mediterranean garden to the Mediterranean basin.

The rocks are local, but the wood for the construction of the tea-house and pavilion were cut and dressed in Japan before being assembled on site.

Imbued with a unique atmosphere, this garden is an unexpected change of pace from the hectic lifestyle of the Principality of Monaco.

The Rose Garden

Created in 1984 and renovated in 2014, not far from the Fontvieille canopy, almost 10,000 roses are on display across 5,000m².

300 rose varieties are on display organised in 6 themes: the roses of the Royal Family of Monaco, scented roses, "Historic Roses of Princes and Princesses", botanical and collection roses, rosebushes and rambling roses, new prize-winning roses from international competitions. All are a pleasure to see and smell in environmentally friendly surroundings, far from the hurly-burly of the city.

Fontvieille Park

A lake edged by palms and olive trees, set in Mediterranean plants, tropical flowers, moving and stunning contemporary sculptures... that's the Fontvieille Park. This haven of peace has 4 hectares of winding, shady paths, sheltered from the wind from the sea by a hedge of elegant bushes, just the thing for a quiet walk

On your way around, you will see stunning trees from across the world: Korean maple, Asian phlomis which serve to burnish this garden's original elegance.



Jardin de la Petite Afrique

In 1879, Marie Blanc set out to create a garden that would be unique in its kind. To do so, the wife of casino-builder François Blanc turned to two landscape architects André & Linden to design a Mediterranean garden,

and the Petite Afrique was born. Located in the Carré d'Or in front of the casino, this green space overflows with exuberant essences, tropical plants well-suited to the Mediterranean climate. Autumn, winter and spring offer up the most spectacular natural show by far, and are favourites among the general public. This is one of the Principality's historic sites, much-loved by tourists who enjoy strolling here, admiring the ducks and other free-roaming birds. Horticulture fans will enjoy examining the handful of rare specimens.

Jardins St Martin

The entrance to the Jardins de St Martin can be found at the foot of the Palace, winding its way up to the Oceanographic Museum on the front of the Rock. The tranquil, peaceful St Martin gardens were the first to be created in the Principality, originally set up under the reign of Prince Honoré V in the 19th century on the south-eastern side of the Rock of Monaco to ensure full sunlight.

The trend for gardens then spread across the Riviera. Amid this luxurious Mediterranean flora, bronze statues can be found, particularly that of Prince Albert I, visible during languid strolls through the shaded alleys that wind their way along the crest. Signposted trails are available for visitors, as well as benches from which to kick back and soak up the bucolic setting.



The gardens are home to species of flora that are typical of the Mediterranean wilderness, in addition to exotic essences. Under the Aleppo pines are classical works of art, a pond complete with tree ferns and heather species such as azaleas, rhododendrons and camellias. Spectacular viewing points are accessible to all visitors. Far from the hustle and bustle of town, the Jardins de St Martin offer gorgeous views of the Mediterranean Sea, Fontvieille Port and the famous Louis II stadium.

Other gardens of interest in Monaco:

- **Parc Princesse Antoinette** (over 200 olive trees, crazy golf, sports fields)
- **Jardins du Casino** (running along the side of the casino, with Buddha Bar and view of the sea and Fairmont)
- **Jardins de l'Unesco** (Fontvieille, very well-designed with fountains)
- **Square Marcel Pagnol** (Place des Moulins, playground for kids)



GARDENS OF THE STATELY HOMES OF THE CÔTE D'AZUR

Gardens of the Stately Homes

- Villa Eilen Roc - Antibes
- Villa Kérylos - Beaulieu-sur-Mer
- Riviera Palace - Beausoleil
- Villa Domergue & Villa Rothschild - Cannes
- Villa Masséna - Nice
- Maria Séréna - Menton

ANTIBES - Villa Eilenroc - Sea View

Writing about Eilenroc, George Sand said, "One is in an Eden which seems to float on an immensity."

The construction of the Villa Eilenroc took place from 1860 to 1867 but the park at that time was little more than scrubland. It was 1873, when the property was acquired by the wealthy Scotsman, James Wyllie, that he had the gardens laid out with an exceptional quality of planting by such famed gardeners as Ringuisen.

After changing hands several times, the Villa was purchased by the Beaumonts who brought in the landscape gardener, Jacques Greber, consultant for the Universal Exhibition in New York in 1939, to restructure the immense 11-hectare tyres and restore its glory.

Madame Beaumont donated the property to the city of Antibes Juanles-Pins in 1982.

BEAULIEU-SUR-MER - The Villa Kérylos

Théodore Reinach, financier, politician, archaeologist, mathematician and art critic commissioned the villa in 1902 from Emmanuel Pontremoli, an architect with a passion for Greek civilisation. Kerylos, which means "tern" in Greek, is the re-creation of the home of a ship-builder from Delos, west of Mykonos, in the second century BC. Built on a promontory, a stone's throw from the sea, it is a unique and timeless setting. The Mediterranean garden around it follows the same philosophy. It takes you on a Mediterranean voyage through the olive trees, vines and pomegranates, in the shade of the pines and cypress trees, the palms and papyrus. Pink laurels, iris and myrtle provide colour, as was found on the shores of the classical Aegean Sea.

BEAUSOLEIL - The Winter Garden of the Riviera Palace

A Garden in Winter.

Constructed in 1898 by architect Georges Chedane on behalf of the Société Internationale des Grands Hôtels et Wagons-Lits, who already owned the legendary Orient Express, this imposing building was a luxury hotel. Located at an altitude of 180 metres, its panoramic view stretches from Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat to the Italian capes.

Formerly a rack-railway, long since gone, enabled the wealthy residents direct access to the Casino of Monte-Carlo, below.

The conservatory, designed by Gustave Eiffel, was intended for winter celebrations for hotel residents. 900 metres², it houses many tropical plants, in planters or pots of brilliant ceramic, combined, here and there, with a large collection of rare flowers.

The contrast between the luxuriant exotic vegetation and its exterior Mediterranean counterpart contributed to the refinement of the hotels of the day on the Côte d'Azur.

CANNES

Villa Domergue - Sea view

At the heart of a pinewood, sloping down to the Bay of Cannes, the artist, painter, print-maker, sculptor, Jean-Gabriel Domergue set up home in 1936. He built a Villa named "Fiesole", where he created the first poster for the Cannes Festival.

Inventor in 1920 of the "Fashion Salon by Artists", great organiser of parties, balls and luxurious galas, Jean-Gabriel Domergue said, "I would like to have been Le Nôtre, and create a living architecture of lawns, rare trees and pruned box... and in such gardens that I had come up with, I would have put on magnificent shows and extraordinary firework celebrations."

The garden is of Florentine inspiration and its focal point is a large stairway edged by cypress and columns which adds a spectacular edge to the garden's architecture.





Laid out in terraces planted with cypress, pine and Mediterranean plants, the garden was designed by Domergue himself. It is further adorned with pools and waterfalls directly inspired by the Villa d'Este, near Rome.

Its paths are populated by artworks in stone and bronze by Domergue's wife, Odette, who was a sculptor and who designed the wrought-iron gate onto the terrace.

According to the owners' wishes, the Villa and part of its collections were left to the city of Cannes in 1973.

The Domergues repose in the mausoleum they designed in their garden.

Villa Rothschild

Bettina de Rothschild (1858-1892) commissioned this Villa where she entertained politicians, artists and friends, such as Chopin and Ingres. The Villa, which today accommodates the Multi-Media Library of Cannes, is located in a huge estate which was enlarged over the years. Levelled and planted with ornamental species (particularly palms, date-palms, araucaria and magnolias), the garden was not to Alphonse de Rothschild's taste so he had his gardener make it over.

It was a Mecca for the high life. Around a gently sloping central lawn, alleys wind, which you itch to walk down to see the Villa as a whole.

It has a country feel and there are several valuable specimens and numerous varieties of species on display (Cycads, palms, conifers...). The Villa also has a little waterfall supplied by the River Siagne.

World War II saw the end of the lavish parties and the garden fell into decline until the City of Cannes took on its use in 1947.



Therapeutic Garden

Today, a part of the garden is devoted to those affected by Alzheimer's disease. An olfactory circuit has been installed to enable work on memory through smell.

NICE - Villa Masséna - Sea View

Victor Masséna, grandson of the Imperial Marshal, commissioned the architect Aaron Messiah in 1898 to build him a palace nestling in an 8000 m² park on the Promenade des Anglais. Today it is the Masséna Museum.

The park was designed by Edouard André, who transformed landscape gardening towards the end of the 19th century with his writings and creations. He combined vast beds of flowers and perennials (camellia and box) with more luxurious plants, like palms, cycads and orange trees, in particular. He suggested paths which meander through the trees offering the stroller cool and elegant shade, most valuable in Nice.

In 2007, very sensitive restoration of these historical gardens contributed to giving this fine aristocratic home a magnificent green setting. It is designed in three parts: the courtyard in the north, the French garden on the east and the large lawn to the south of the Villa. Classical paths with a bit of English inspiration mixed in.

MENTON - Maria Séréna - Sea View

(See Jardins Remarquables)

SAINT-JEAN-CAP-FERRAT - Villa Ephrussi de Rothchild

(See Jardins Remarquables)



THE GARDENS OF THE CHÂTEAUX OF THE CÔTE D'AZUR

GOURDON - The Château of Gourdon

Perching almost 500 metres above the Gorges du Loup, facing the Mediterranean, Gourdon enjoys a spectacular location, overlooked by a château the foundations of which date back to the 12th century.

The design of the château's gardens was created by Le Nôtre, Louis XIV's gardener. The lord of the castle, Louis le Lombard, had terraces constructed and soil brought in, since at that altitude and on such a slope, they were needed to complete the job. Box, ancient lime-tree and Judas trees adorn the main terrace, set off beautifully by pools. The Italian terrace shows off its green chiaroscuro of lawn and box hedges while the walls are clad in snapdragons and valerian.

A medicinal garden adds to this verdant space, backing onto the southern façade of the château. Here, the aromatic plants and medicinal herbs grow around the sundial designed by Tobie Loup de Viane in 1972. In the gaps in the ramparts nestle the typical plants of this area. Juniper, rosemary, briar, sage, cistus and lavender make up a Provençal garden, flooded with sun.

Mandelieu-La Napoule - The Château of la Napoule - Sea View

(See the Jardins Remarquables)

MOUANS-SARTOUX - The Garden of the Château of Mouans-Sartoux

The landscape gardener Gilles Clément has designed several concepts which are expressed in the different areas of this garden.

A beautiful stage, for summer festivities, is the starting-point for visitors while the "Garden of the Seven Colours" rubs shoulders with a meadow with fig-trees and olive trees. A terrace of wisteria and flowering plum-trees, to the north of the château, leads to the other areas.

This allowed the architect to play off the contrasts between a "Garden Clearing" around the château and a "Transparent Wood" subtly punctuated by stone plinths lead to a little bridge over the Rougon. Following the topography of the location, the park offers a permanent cycle of blossom, which brings visitors time and again in search of a walk, repose or meditation.

Educational workshops created by Marc Barani as well as a children's playground, complete what is a stunning experience.

THE MONASTIC PARKS AND GARDENS OF THE CÔTE D'AZUR

SAORGE - The Gardens of the Monastery

An important stronghold on the route linking Nice to Turin via the pass of Tende (the Salt Road), Saorge was busy with people passing through.

It is here, above the village and the gorges of the Roya that Franciscan monks founded a convent in 1633 where they established a 3-hectare garden with a magnificent viewpoint to the valley of the Bendola.

The monastery gardens are laid out in terraces on a steep slope. Each terrace is supported by low vaulted walls, known as "voutains". One of these is adorned by pergolas of vine, around a small oratory, while another holds the reservoir of water, indispensable for the plantations.

A great part of these gardens, which exude serenity, was given over to vegetable production. This fed the residents on writing retreats, thus taking its place in the purest subsistence tradition of monasteries.

The micro-climate of Saorge enables the cultivation of a wide range of vegetables and aromatic, culinary and medicinal plants, making this a suitable place for educating people about traditional practices.

NICE - The Gardens of the Monastery of Cimiez

In 1546 the Franciscans of the Observance set up in Cimiez. Here, on the hill chosen by the romans as capital of the Province of the Alpes-Maritimes, they established a checkerboard garden, following the rules of Albert the Great (1193-1280) for monastic gardens.

The design for these 9,550 m2 of vegetable gardens and orchards has not changed since its foundation, making this monastery garden one of the oldest, if not the oldest in Nice. The three traditional categories: medicinal, ornamental and vegetable are still visible.

A Witness of the History of Nice. Taken over in a sad state by the municipality in the 1920s, Auguste-Louis Giuglaris supervised its restoration.

A broad esplanade divided by a wide path, the garden is bordered by a bower of rambling roses.

Citrus trees, orange trees, lemon trees and mandarin trees, break up the lawn and flowerbed along the paths, interspersed with

Mediterranean species like olive trees and cypress.

A small intimate terrace opens below, adorned by a fountain and pools, offering an exceptional panorama over the valley of the Paillon and, further away, the sea.

CANNES - Saint-Honorat Abbey

The Abbey of Lérins is part of a long monastic tradition over more than 16 centuries. The community of Cistercian monks follows St Benedict's rules (ora et labora), and promote the love of a good job well done, fraternity and excellence.

Botanical Tour of Saint-Honorat Island

It is possible, on a two-hour walk around Saint-Honorat to discover the island's botanical treasures as you soak up the atmosphere of this unique protected place, improbably located 15 minutes by boat from Cannes.

A score of rare and protected plants shelter on the edge of the island's forest and on its shoreline.

Contact: antoliolijer@aol.com

DID YOU KNOW?

Saint-Honorat Island has the oldest existing farm in the Cannes area. Its 8-hectare vineyard, relaunched in the 1990s produces grands vins known throughout the world.

To cultivate their land and preserve the island's natural balance, the monks' agricultural approach is wise. They use neither pesticides, nor weedkillers. Disbudding, cutting and harvesting are carried out by hand.

MUSEUM GARDENS

The Côte d'Azur is particularly known as a haven for the greatest artists of the 20th century. Many museums are dedicated to them and a route around the Côte d'Azur of Painters pays tribute to their talent through work inspired by landscapes from the coast to the hinterland.

In these exhibition spaces, certain gardens are inextricable from the interior exhibition area, others in themselves enable an understanding of the artists' world.

Gardens of Museums and Art Centres

- **Fondation Maeght in Saint Paul de Vence**
- **Villa Arson – National Art Centre – Nice**
- **Domaine Renoir – Cagnes-sur-Mer**
- **Fernand Léger Museum – Biot**
- **Anatole Jakovsky Naïve Art Museum - Nice**
- **Chagall Museum – Nice**
- **MAMAC – Nice**
- **Matisse Museum – Nice**
- **Palais Masséna – Nice** (see *The Gardens of the Stately Homes of the Côte d'Azur*)
- **International Perfumery Museum** (*Grasse and Mouans-Sartoux*)
- **Fragonard Museum – Grasse** (see *Scented Flowers in the Pays de Grasse*)
- **Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild - Saint-Jean Cap Ferrat** (See "Jardins remarquables")
- **Château of Gourdon** (See *The Gardens of the Chateaux*)
- **Château de la Napoule - Mandelieu** (See *The Gardens of the Chateaux*)
- **Château of Mouans-Sartoux** (See *The Gardens of the Chateaux*)

FOCUS...

SAINT-PAUL DE VENCE - Fondation Maeght

Painters and sculptors worked with Sert, the Catalan architect, to create works that are integrated with the building and with nature. The whole enterprise combines interior and exterior spaces with the sculpture garden, courtyards, terraces and patios, exhibition rooms, the chapel, library and bookshop.

A really verdant setting, the sculpture garden was designed to present modern and contemporary art in all its forms. In this entrance garden you will come across Fernand Léger ceramics, Pol Bury's ludic fountain, the monumental stabile by Alexander Calder and the aeolian sculpture by Takis, as well as sculptures by Jean Arp, Anthony Caro, Damien Cabanes, Eduardo Chillida, Erik Dietman, Barbara Hepworth, Fabrice Hyber, Joan Miró... presented according to the seasons.

Other works are integrated with the buildings: the mosaic on the perimeter wall is by Pierre Tal-Coat, and Marc Chagall's Amoureux mosaic on the bookshop wall; stained glass by Braque and Ubac, who also created the extraordinary slate reliefs, illuminate St Bernard's chapel.

The Miró labyrinth, monumental work in situ, is populated by sculptures and ceramics. Designed by the artist and his friend, the ceramicist, Josep Llorens Artigas, we are led by Ariadne's thread into a unique space where we come face to face with the characters and figures of dreams: an Egg, a Lizard, a Fork... dominated by an animal triumphal arch inspired by the great Greek and Catalan legends.





NICE - Villa Arson (National Contemporary Art Centre and School of Art)

The Villa Arson nowadays houses a School of Art and the National Contemporary Art Centre.

The Villa takes its name from Pierre-Joseph Arson who acquired the villa and the 6-hectare estate on which it stands at the start of the 19th century. An aesthete, he undertook to beautify the place and transformed what had been a farm into an Italian-inspired pleasure garden. Later a hotel, then a clinic, the villa, of which hardly anything remains, was donated to the State in 1943 in accordance with the wish of André Malraux to see the establishment of an international school of art of a new type.

Babylon in Nice.

A mineral fortress of brutalist inspiration, the villa today combines contemporary art, architecture and the art of garden design. From the entrance of the establishment, the garden stands out for its originality: each of five grass and paved circles bears a tree from a different continent.

The only vestiges of the original period are the lines of pine and the famous path of cypress, but there is much contemporary work to find and enjoy. Artworks are one with the vegetation. 4500 m² of hanging gardens, with roof terraces were designed by the architect Michel Marot, planted as low water flower beds.

Open-air patios break up the interior of the building with greenery, creating an original and permanent feel of bringing the outside indoors.

CAGNES-SUR-MER - The Domaine Renoir

In autumn 1908 the Renoir family moved into this cosy residence on the Collettes estate which had been constructed by the architect Febvre from Biot, overlooking a huge olive grove which was about to be cut down. Used by the painter's numerous friends and family over the years, the villa was bought by the town in 1960 and its gardens were opened to the public. This is the garden of an artist, a motif favoured by Renoir in his landscapes. The olive grove is magnificent and the trees are ancient. It features a beautiful orangerie.

The greatest painters came to visit the Master and discover this garden: Henri Matisse, Auguste Rodin, Claude Monet, Amadeo Modigliani, Maurice Denis, Pierre Bonnard, Paul Durand-Ruel, Ambroise Vollard.



BIOT - National Fernand Léger Museum and

NICE - National Marc Chagall Museum

THE FERNAND LÉGER MUSEUM in Biot: Its garden was designed and laid out by Henri Fish, in close collaboration with the architect André Svetchine. The garden is a vast

Rolling meadow, dotted with cypress, edged with a pinewood and a row of olive trees. A walk in the garden offers many viewpoints from which the mosaics which adorn the building's façades can be admired. Here and there can be seen monumental works based on Léger's works. These oceans of greenery which continue unfolding down the embankments and again further down onto the hills leading to Biot, are easy on the eye, far from the buzz of modern life.

And

Henri Fish also worked with André Hermant at the **NATIONAL MARC CHAGALL MUSEUM**, with José Luis Sert at the Fondation Maeght, and in 1984, at the Picasso Museum in Antibes he created the garden of sculptures and scents.

The Chagall Museum: In the beginning God created the Garden of Eden.... It was therefore quite natural that a garden welcomes the visitor before entering the Museum of the Biblical Message. Mediterranean flora obviously takes the major role: olives, cypress, pines and holm oaks. Henri Fish, the designer of this garden, selected, with Marc Chagall's agreement, cold tones and white and blue flowers surrounded by this green setting. The agapanthus are in flower every year on 7 July, Chagall's birthday. Against the building, a pool reflects the mosaic created by the artist. A large lawn welcomes the visitor who can, as the Master wished, sit here in peace.



HOTEL GARDENS

The inside is as important as the outside: the hoteliers of the Côte d'Azur have long understood this and that's why the most beautiful establishments of the area hired leading landscape gardeners to enhance their gardens. As structural parts of the hotels, to house remarkable botanical collections, to exhibit artists' sculptures... These gardens became, in their own right, places where clients can find the ideal setting for rest and relaxation.

EZE - The Cap Estel

The idea is a walk around pools, fountains and waterfalls, in the terraced gardens filled with Mediterranean species in a two-hectare park. The gardens, paths and fountains were restored or revamped by two inventive landscape gardeners, Catherine Houssin and Alain Goudot, the latter the author of a collection of watercolours "Les jardins de Cap Estel." But it was Strocki, who won the competition for the most beautiful garden in the region in 1911, master of the art of planting who was the first to acclimatise a multitude of plants to the property despite the disadvantages of the salty spindrift by planting, for example two large ficus macrophylla each container coming in at 1800 kilos. A century later they are still here, watching over us.

www.capestel.com

NICE - Hôtel Windsor

Writing about the Hotel Windsor and its artists' bedrooms, Philippe Couderc said, "The garden could be signed by Trénet". This hotel, located right in the middle of the city, has a luxuriant garden with many different species: century-old ficus, privets, fig-trees, medlars, palms... and a variety of giant bamboo with a black stem. In spring, the wisteria, moonflower, bougainvillea bring their colours. A haven of peace in the heart of Nice.

www.hotel.windsornice.com

SAINT-PAUL DE VENCE - Le Mas d'Artigny

Philippe Gaunard, head gardener of the Mas d'Artigny did not want to spoil the treasure which he had been entrusted to him. The eight-hectare garden, one hectare of which is built up, is located on a limestone rock and, apart from summer, nights are cool. He has deployed Aleppo pines, Florentine cypress and of course the holm oaks and heathers of the Provençal undergrowth. "We have designed a paved garden on top of some of our bungalows. In the rockeries, plants which retain soil on

the slopes like lobelia and agapanthus whose blue umbels tone down the fuchsias and saturated reds of the bougainvillea". The head gardener is quite happy not to disturb the garden's stakeholders, insect pollinators, daisies, squirrels from the nearby woods which can't get enough of the pine-nuts of the Mas.

www.mas-artigny.com

MOUGINS - Le Mas Candille

The old farm at the Mas Candille has been growing olive trees and vines since the 18th century.

The hotel is located on a property which has retained the riches of its original flora, adding to it over the years, such that today there are more than 200 varieties of Mediterranean plants on display on the site. Le Mas Candille owes its name to the Provençal word "candelou" meaning candle. It evokes the characteristic shape of the cypress which, in Provence, symbolises hospitality. This tree, typical of Mediterranean gardens, is one of the 200 plant species to be found in the 5 hectares of the park's fresh coloured carpet.

There are olive trees, carobs, hibiscus, palms, papyrus, sacred bamboo, bougainvillea, pine and less well-known plants such as red twig dogwood and perovskia which flowers in the same mauve shades as the nearby lavender. Peacefully tucked away in the hillsides above Cannes, with a spectacular view of the pre-alpine valley, the Mas Candille is a walk which offers, according to the season, the scent of jasmine, citrus, rosemary or santolina.

EZE - The Chèvre d'Or

The gardens of the Château de la Chèvre d'Or are terraced and literally gird the perched rock of Eze. Walking along the paths of the different terraces, you enjoy a more than 180° panorama. Starting on the east side, cooler and therefore greener, the experience is more olfactory, thanks to the roses, bougainvillea and a large wall of jasmine along the stone fortifications. The proprietor has installed enormous bronze sculptures of animals. On the west side (with a romantic view of the sunset), the terrain is more uneven, the vegetation more arid and rocky with cacti (some spaces shared with the Exotic Garden of Eze) and the olive trees (one of which is more than 800 years old!) along the private paths and stone stairways linking the various terrace solariums, the view, from 429m above the Mediterranean, is breath-taking.

www.chevredor.com





"LA SIGNATURE JEAN MUS & CIE"

Over and above Monte Carlo Bay and the Terre Blanche Estate in the Var, Jean Mus is responsible for some of the flagship hotels on the Côte d'Azur.

SAINT-JEAN-CAP-FERRAT - The Royal Riviera

Jean Mus revamped the design and composition of the gardens of the Royal Riviera, drawing his inspiration from Oscar Wilde's celebrated sentence: "I can resist anything except temptation." Architect and landscape gardener, lover of this region, he has expressed in this dream location, a freedom of imagination, a delicate sensibility, a local poetry and a refined exoticism. The elegant Deck, at the heart of the aromatic garden, is a haven for drinking tea, sipping a cocktail or just relaxing, letting the scents of the bougainvillea and Mediterranean plants wrap around you.

www.royal-riviera.com

VENCE - Château Saint-Martin & Spa

The Château Saint-Martin & Spa weds the spirit of Provence with the prestige of the Riviera. Its 14-hectare park, with 300 olive trees a century-old, harbours a poetic garden created by the landscape gardener Jean Mus, two clay tennis courts and a spectacular infinity pool...

Ronsard roses bloom in the branches of the olive trees, magnificent bouquets of lavender here and there... this is a waltz of scented colours.

www.chateau-st-martin.com

SAINT-JEAN-CAP-FERRAT - The Grand Hôtel du Cap

Seven hectares, almost 400 different species, this Mediterranean-inspired garden has terraces, pools and waterfalls, pots, and ornamental ponds in the calm of the pinewood of Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat.

www.grand-hotel-cap-ferrat.com

SAINT-PAUL DE VENCE - The Mas de Pierre

At the foot of the famed village of Saint-Paul de Vence, the Mas de Pierre is a magnificent mansion adorned with private gardens. A walk in its paths, edged by olive trees, fruit trees and Provençal plants, reveals canals, artworks, a scented garden, a vegetable garden from where the chef draws the quintessence of the produce... This bucolic journey reveals hundreds of lovingly cherished orchids in an old-fashioned greenhouse where a reading room welcomes guests. Further on, an aviary, housing tens of birds, each more beautiful than the last, adds to the garden's charm. An area for playing boules has been laid out close by.

www.lemasdepierre.com

La Bastide Saint-Antoine - GRASSE, is part of the estates in Grasse which were constructed in the 18th century in the lower part of the mediaeval town, when the perfume industry was booming. It overlooks six hectares of wide terraces where hundreds of ancient olive trees grow, with massive trunks and knotted roots. When Jacques Chibois became the owner in 1994, everything had to be restored. The overall garden remains what it was at the end of the 19th century when the property belonged to one of the legendary gardeners of the Côte d'Azur, a certain John Taylor. Taylor chose the elegant traditional home that is the Bastide Saint-Antoine, where natural grass, studded with bulbs and wild flowers replaces the green sward in the English style ... He was probably the first to cover the façade of a building with climbers, not a Provençal practice, but an English one which gained a following in the region. Still today, a bougainvillea spreads its "floral lava" across the wall almost all year. A less well-known plant climbs at its side: a gorgeous red Cape Honeysuckle (*Tecomaria Capensis*). The fact that this plant which is highly susceptible to frost has survived for decades proves that the Bastide enjoys a particularly mild climate. The gardens of the Bastide have retained the characteristic layout of the old farms of Grasse, with typically wide paths rolling down through the olive trees. Part of the agricultural buildings can still be seen: the old reservoir, the cold frames for winter, a small greenhouse. The olive groves are interspersed with cypress plantations and surrounded by borders of agapanthus, while the old well is adorned with purple passion-flowers. "Simplicity" is a word often used by Jacques Chibois to describe his ideal in cooking. "Sensory frugality gives birth to true elegance" suits what he does on these terraces as much as what he puts on a plate. The garden of the Bastide is indeed, as always, the image of its owner.

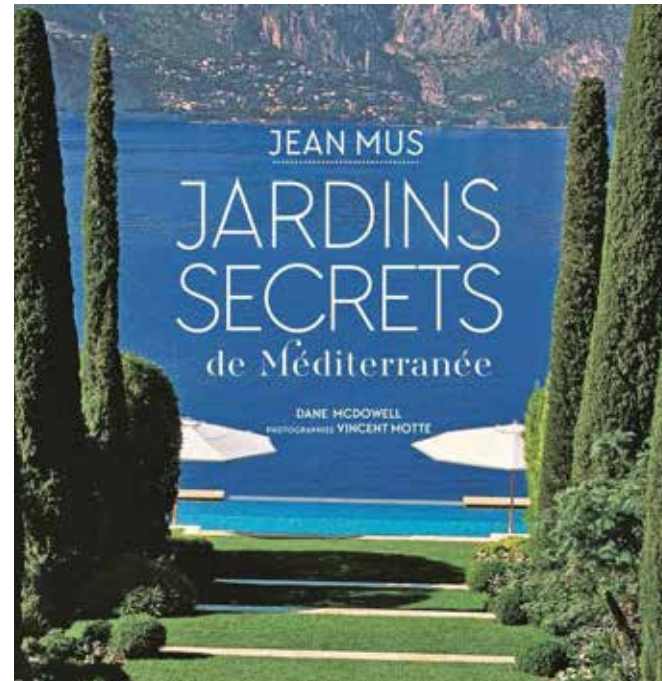
A BIT MORE INFORMATION

Jean Mus, renowned international landscape gardener and ambassador for Mediterranean gardens, has set up with his whole team in the village of Cabris. He creates unique locations, both public and in heavenly hotels. He is responsible for the gardens of the Ritz in Paris and the Hotel de Paris in Monaco. At the end of this year, he tops the gardening best-seller lists.

"Jardins secrets de Méditerranée"

Text: Dane McDowell - Photographer: Vincent Motte - published by Flammarion.

Thousand-year-old olive trees in the midst of balls of lavender and myrtle, the music of a fountain in the shade of a hackberry, the fragrance of everlasting daisies and jasmine of Grasse, a path of pebbles down to the sea... this is the delightful world of Jean Mus. Seaside, garrigue, bastide, Portugal, Greece, Italy, Monaco... Jean Mus opens to us the secrets of a score of his creations. An inexhaustible source of inspiration which works with Mediterranean nature rather than subjugating it, so we can enjoy its generous odours, colours and music.



"Jardins méditerranéens contemporains"

Text: Dane McDowell - Photos: Philippe Perdereau - published by Ulmer

In this book, Jean Mus presents 22 legendary gardens from his most recent creations, the most natural of gardens, spectacular, sensual and always respectful of nature. An impassioned ambassador of Provence, Jean Mus re-invents it in every property, and extends the Mediterranean coast to Flanders and California. Full of anecdotes and practical advice, authored by Dane McDowell, this book is to be savoured as an invitation to discover, page by page, these enchanted gardens.



THE UNCLASSIFIABLES

BIOT - The Bonsai Arboretum

It was Jean Okonek, former nursery gardener specialising in the acclimatisation of rare trees, and his son Karol, himself an agricultural engineer, who created this 2000 m² bonsai garden in 1990.

Organised by species, cleverly decorated, the garden is an exceptional place, at the same time zen and spectacular.

Whether outside, with the conifers, or inside with the tropical species, the garden reveals its many treasures at each turn of its paths.

The Biggest Bonsai Forest in Europe

The passion of the Okoneks for the living sculptures that are bonsais has led them to recreate whole a Japanese garden where a real miniature forest of pines (*Picea Albertiana*) can be found, a whole 6 metres long! Centuries-old olive trees, great Chinese elm (the biggest tree in the museum at almost two metres high), Japanese pine, apple trees, ficus, pomegranates, fig trees... it's a whole forest eco-system which is recreated in this living museum.

Enthusiasts can buy materials and there are group and one-to-one lessons which enable people to learn the ancestral techniques of bonsai.

MOUGINS - Fontmerle Pond

Fontmerle Pond, located at the edge of the Departmental Park of Valmasque, is a remarkable and rare site of around 5 hectares. It is a natural pond which hosts an astonishing collection of lotus, planted in the 60s by the former owner, Monsieur Gridaine, and which has since been the biggest lotus colony in Europe.

These sublime specimens bloom from July to the middle of September with flowers of 25 centimetres in diameter and leaves up to 1 metre. The bald cypress, which border the water are from Florida and develop roots above the ground which are known as pneumatophores.

The pond is also notable for the richness of its birdlife, with more than 70 species recorded, some which stay all year, others coming for the winter.

The pond is part of the Departmental Park of Valmasque and can be freely visited all year round.

On a hill above the pond stands "Le Manoir de l'Étang". Now a hotel, this building has a history: after the World War II, Maurice Gridaine, cinema set designer who designed the first Palais des Festivals in Cannes, took a shine to the ruined manor. In 1949, Jean Cocteau and Jean Marais came on the scene: the project, dear to Marcel Pagnol, to create a movie lot came back to life. Meanwhile in Italy, Cinecittà was born and relegated the project to oblivion.

CANNES - The Lérins Islands

Along with the Croisette this group of islands aspires to be a candidate for registration on Unesco's World Heritage sites. For the City of Cannes, it's about protecting and promoting its natural, cultural and spiritual heritage. The unique value of the property lies as much in its environmental characteristics as in its heritage and cultural ones, over 2300 years of history.

Sainte-Marguerite Island "*Nowhere have I seen these fairy-tale sunsets*". Guy de Maupassant.

Sainte-Marguerite, the larger of the two islands, is 210 hectares in area, 3.5 kilometres long by 1 kilometre wide. It is a listed site, and is protected by the combined work of the Cannes City Hall, which owns most of the buildings, and the National Forests Office (ONF), which strives to preserve the estate forest (140 hectares). A ministerial decree in 2002 registered this heritage as a biological reserve.

Green setting on the Mediterranean, this maritime forest is criss-crossed by signposted paths and alley which were laid out in the 19th century, which allow visitors to discover the richness and variety of the landscape: a succession of creeks and beaches along the 12 kilometres of coastline, Aleppo pine and holm oak plantations, forest roads bordered by majestic eucalyptus...

The Batéguier Pond, in the east of the island, hosts a special flora and a large ornithological reserve.

Unlike completely natural reserves, the biological reserve of Sainte Marguerite Island is known as a "managed" reserve. Indeed, the National Forests Office (ONF) carries out operations on the site to protect specific species and habitats. The vegetation of the island and the forest of Aleppo pine and holm oak is protected from tourists' feet by zoning which enables seedlings to grow in peace.





In the centre of the island, walkers can go round an admirable alley of eucalyptus planted in the 19th century, one of the oldest in Europe. The scrub consists of mastic, myrtle, filaria, with olive trees, white cistus and roses, honeysuckle and clematis mixed in.

Saint-Honorat Island

The smaller of the two islands, Saint-Honorat is a flat 1.5km long by 400 metres wide. Apart from the shoreline, it belongs to Lérins Abbey, the monastic complex being on the south coast of the island.

Unlike Sainte-Marguerite, which for many centuries was a dependence of the Abbey, Saint-Honorat has been shaped by agriculture, vine-growing being the main contemporary form. The coastline and forest plantations are less wild than those of its bigger sister island, but work in the fields, the serene atmosphere and the remarkable architecture remarkable, fully integrated to the daily lives of the monks, give it a unique charm.

Over and above the production of wine and olive oil from the centuries-old olive trees, the community has been producing liqueurs for more than a century, Green Lerina and Yellow Lerina (made with an infusion of 44 plants in alcohol), Mandarine, Marc and Lerincello (using Menton lemons).

THE LEGENDS

According to legend, Saint Honorat, arriving on his island, found it to be infested with poisonous snakes. Hearing his prayers, the Lord enjoined him to take refuge atop a palm tree then caused a tidal wave which submerged the island and thus exterminated the evil creatures. In memory of this miracle, Lérins Abbey and the City of Cannes adopted a palm in their coat of arms. The Film Festival made this the symbol of its top award.

Another legend has it that Honorat had a sister, Marguerite. The pious Marguerite cherished her brother and followed him to the neighbouring island, making Honorat promise to visit her "every time the almond (or cherry) trees blossomed!". Thanks to Marguerite's prayers, and divine intervention, it blossomed every month.

A NEW TREND - Shared Gardens

Local communities are directing their policies for management of green spaces towards the idea of collective familial, shared gardens, thus putting individual initiative to the benefit of the community. On the Côte d'Azur, there are many examples.

IN THE MÉTROPOLÉ NICE CÔTE D'AZUR:

- 28 collective gardens (19 familial, 7 shared, 1 of inclusion), covering an area of more than 89,400 m² in 11 communities: Cagnes-sur-Mer, Carros, Colomars, Ilonse, La Tour-sur-Tinée, Le Broc, Marie, Nice, Saint-Jeannet, Saint-Martin-du-Var and Vence;
- 116 educational gardens covering an area of more than 13,500 m² in 14 communities: Belvédère, Cagnes-sur-Mer, Cap d'Ail, Carros, Colomars, Falicon, Isola, La Gaude, La Trinité, Le Broc, Levens, Nice, Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, Saint-Martin-du-Var.

www.nicecotedazur.org/environnement/agenda-21/jardins-collectifs-familiaux-partag%C3%A9s-et-d-insertion-et-p%C3%A9dagogiques-de-la-m%C3%A9tropole-nca

DID YOU KNOW?

89 Nice schools have vegetable and / or educational gardens, representing 67% of the total number of schools.

IN CANNES:

Since 2014, family gardens have been created by Cannes City Hall and allocated to people of the city. More than 90 allotments totalling 4.5 hectares in four different locations of communal territory have been allocated to families.

To preserve the environment, the citizens are obliged to cultivate and maintain the gardens according to sustainable methods, leaning towards organic. Beyond the nourishing virtues of a vegetable plot, these gardens are real places of sharing and conviviality for these families. What is more, several shared gardens owned by the City Hall, are now being managed by clubs from Cannes so members can grow plants. In the Lower Valley of the Siagne, Cannes' green heart which is devoted to agriculture and open-air leisure pursuits, an orchard of 4000 metres² has been planted with 140 fruit trees. Eventually almost 200 trees will enable picking and the processing of the fruit for the planned educational farm.

IN MENTON:

Citizens of Menton can enjoy having a vegetable plot in the Fossan area, where garden plots of 80m² have been set up in connection with a residents' association.



THE ROUTES

THE MIMOSA ROUTE

From Bormes-Les-Mimosas in Grasse via Rayol-Canadel-sur-Mer, Sainte-Maxime, Saint-Raphaël, over to Mandelieu, Tanneron, Pégomas ending at Grasse.

The English often obsessed with botany, were present in large numbers on the Côte d'Azur of the 19th century. Charmed by their holiday homes on the Riviera, they imported mimosa from Australia around 1850, to decorate the gardens of their sumptuous residences. Over the years, mimosa, laden with symbolism, has become one of the popular emblems of the Côte d'Azur in winter.

The 130-km Route of the Mimosa extends today from Bormes-les-Mimosas to Grasse. This tourist route, recommended from January to March, is typically the symbol of the Côte d'Azur in winter, offering a gentle climate and a wandering holiday under the blue skies and sun.

Around 1880, mimosa, which originated in Australia, first appeared on the slopes of the Croix des Gardes in Cannes, probably first introduced by one of the great winter guests like the Duke de Vallombrosa, the Marquis de Morès or Lord Brougham.

The Société d'Horticulture et d'Acclimatation then contributed to promoting it. From then on mimosa growers sprung up across the region, in Mandelieu, Pégomas, Tanneron and La Roquette. From the stations of Cannes and Mandelieu, mimosa was sent to all the cities of France and Europe.

ON THE OLIVE TREE ROADS

In general, the history of the Mediterranean has been bound up with the cultivation of olive trees and today it is still a focus for farmers and tourism organisations, interested in lifestyle and traditional crafts passing from generation to generation.

This route gives you the chance to discover mills in a number of villages and the stories of men and women, families who care passionately about their craft.

It is also a chance to taste the best of the region's produce, some bearing the prized AOC quality label, through olive products which can be tasted on the premises, of course, but also back home or even in the most prestigious restaurants.

The olive tree is an eternal, legendary and nourishing tree. It has shaped landscapes, infused traditions, tastes and lifestyles... century after century...

EXPLORATORY CIRCUITS IN NICE

Known for its rich heritage and the picturesque little streets of the Old Town, Nice conceals treasures, sometimes unknown even to its inhabitants. Now, in the centre and outlying areas of the city there are some 150 kilometres of pathways, walks, shortcuts and stairs, which lead to a multitude of remarkable buildings, landscaped areas with many species and superb panoramas. More than 60 more or less rare species are listed in a guidebook for the "Exploratory Circuits" routes by which you can go and see for yourself, learn about their history, get more information and, quite simply enjoy strolls and surprises. Grouped by districts, on these eight circuits you can adapt the route to the time you have, the difficulty and the distance.

THE LAVENDER ROUTE

www.routes-lavande.com

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