

Beautiful Nice is a Great Year-Round Destination for Travelers

by Alexandra Cohen

This past summer I returned to Nice for the first time in eight years and was able to enjoy a fantastic few days by the Mediterranean. Indeed, this capital of the French Riviera is a perfect city for a relaxing getaway.

For those who have not yet visited, Nice is the fifth largest city in France, with 350,000 citizens and more than 1 million people living in the surrounding areas. Located between the Alps, Provence, Corsica, and Italy, the exceptional climate makes it a great year-round destination for travelers.

During my visit, I was able to enjoy time walking along La Promenade des Anglais, a street known throughout the world. This long avenue runs right along the Mediterranean coastline, spanning a distance of 7 km, and is frequented by walkers, cyclists, and joggers alike. This area is renowned for its palm trees, its private and public beaches, and its array of hotels, including the legendary Negresco and the Palais de la Méditerranée.

Just across the street from the sea lies Vieux Nice, the historic district of the city. In Vieux Nice, you will find a hub of activity, particularly at night, where you will find an array of small restaurants with terraces, markets, craft shops, and more. Nearby, you will also find Place Masséna, a historic square known for its black and white geometric paving, red ochre buildings, and 7 statues, which when evening comes, light up with warm and lively colors.

When visiting, it is also worth exploring La Promenade du Paillon, which was inaugurated in 2013. This 12-hectare green ribbon in the heart of Nice is known for its 1,600 trees, 6,000 shrubs, and 50,000 perennials. Benches punctuate the walk to allow you to stop, relax, and enjoy the view.

Where to Stay

During my trip, I stayed at the gorgeous Hyatt Regency Nice Palais de la Méditerranée in a spectacular king room with a full sea view.

This historic and luxurious 5-star hotel is located on the legendary Promenade des Anglais, directly across the street from the

sea. There are 187 spacious guestrooms and suites, complimentary Wi-Fi, the option for mobile entry with your room key available through your smart phone, a beautiful indoor-outdoor pool, as well as a gym, sauna, and Turkish bath. The hotel restaurant, le 3e, includes a lovely terrace which overlooks the Mediterranean, as well as the outdoor pool, includes a large and delicious breakfast buffet, which I was able to enjoy every morning. The hotel also features a business and conference center on site. Dogs under 15kg are permitted on the premises for an additional fee.

All rooms include a flat-screen TV with satellite channels, air conditioning, an in-room, laptop-sized safe, an alarm clock, bathrobes and slippers, a hair dryer, an iron and ironing board, an electric kettle, and a mini-bar.

During my stay, I was very impressed with the hotel's customer service. Their concierge service is able to reserve seats for hotel guests at the nearby beach – they will give you a voucher and place the charge under your room. Response to requests for room service and other needs was always swift.

In terms of accessibility, six rooms (including one suite) are adapted for the disabled with walk-in showers (equipped with a seat on the wall and a grab rail), a sink accessible for those in wheelchairs, height equipment (bed, mini bar, safe box, toilet) for wheelchair access, as well as a wardrobe with a telescopic rod.

Interestingly, a few years ago, the hotel had its own two and a half month-old Labrador puppy as part of the association "Les Chiens Guides d'Aveugles". A hotel staff member spent two years training him as a future seeing eye dog. He was present three weeks a month at the hotel and learned obedience and savoir-vivre, following which he was made available for adoption at no charge to a visually impaired person.

Dining out

There are many fantastic dining options at your disposal in Nice. During my previous trip to Nice in 2014, I dined at Le Grand Balcon, located near the opera house. Having had such a great experience last



time, I was looking forward to returning, and it did not disappoint. Since my last visit, their terrace seems to have more than doubled in size, and all of their tables were full. While their menu offers numerous options, I personally enjoyed their sea bream ceviche with pomelo, the scallops with truffles and home-made mashed potatoes, and the parmesan cheese risotto. For dessert, I had a tasty, restyled lemon meringue pie. Undoubtedly, should you choose to visit, you will enjoy their creative and delicious cuisine.

Another excellent restaurant worth visiting is Bocca Nissa, a trendy restaurant and tapas bar. At first glance, the building resembles a beautiful Mediterranean town house. You will enter by walking down a hallway with walls lined entirely by greenery. Their rooftop terrace provides views of Vieux Nice and is also lined with plants and twinkle lights. Their menu contains a large array of tapas to share. I personally tried their tortilla dish, as well as their fried squid and sardines, sea bream ceviche, and beef ravioli. For dessert, their chocolate bombs were a real treat. For those less interested in tapas, their menu also boasts larger meals that one may choose to share, such as lamb chops and beef ribs.

Needless to say, I absolutely look forward to returning to this piece of paradise in France.

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