



PRIME TRAVELER

French Riviera, By Reservation Only

Why the best beach isn't free, how the coast actually books up, and the etiquette that separates a guest from a gawker.

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The Reservation Economy

This coast runs on advance booking in a way that catches first-time visitors off guard, and understanding this one fact before you land changes how you plan the entire trip.

The Best Beach Isn't Free

Much of the most desirable shoreline is organized into private beach clubs, renting loungers and umbrellas for the day, rather than open public sand. This isn't unusual overreach, it's simply how beach access here has worked for generations, and treating it as the default rather than a surprise makes the whole system easier to navigate.

Everything Books Out in Peak Season

July and August see beach clubs, sought-after restaurant tables, and even marina space for a private boat booked out well in advance. If your trip falls in these months, decide what actually matters to you and reserve it days or weeks ahead, not the morning of.

Nobody is trying to exclude you. The coast is just genuinely busier than its size can casually absorb in high summer.

Choosing Your Base

Nice

THE PRACTICAL, AFFORDABLE HUB

The largest city on the coast, with the best train connections, a real public beach alongside its beach clubs, and noticeably better value than its glossier neighbors. A genuinely good default base for a first visit.

Cannes

GLAMOROUS, AND DRAMATICALLY DIFFERENT DEPENDING ON THE MONTH

Famous for its film festival and La Croisette waterfront promenade, Cannes swings between a relaxed seaside town most of the year and an intensely crowded, expensive one during festival season.

Monaco

A COUNTRY THE SIZE OF A NEIGHBORHOOD, BEST AS A DAY TRIP

Genuinely tiny and genuinely extravagant, Monaco is easily seen in a day from either Nice or Cannes by train, and rarely makes sense as an actual overnight base unless budget is no concern at all.