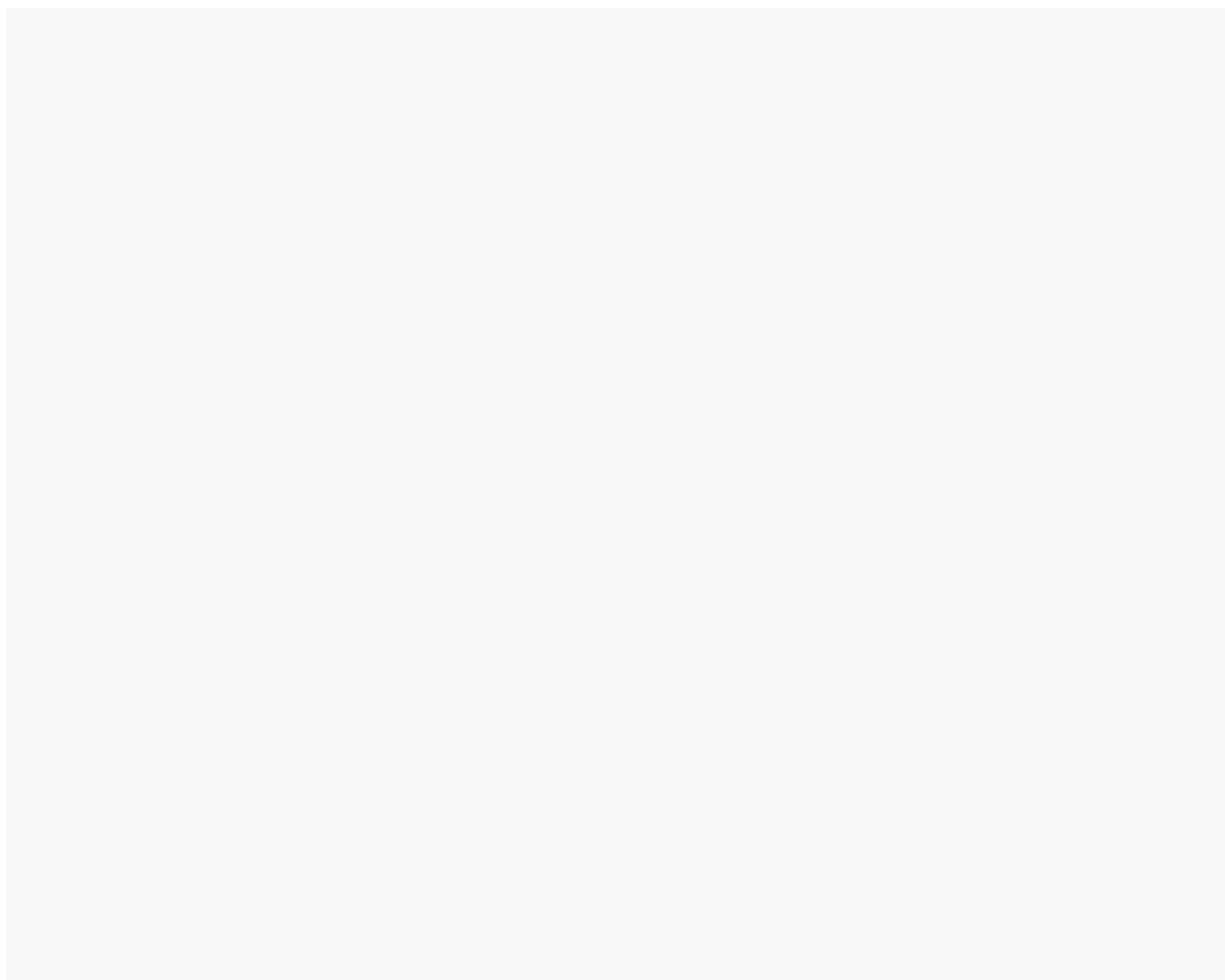


# Planning your Ultimate Charter: French Riviera

Planning the ultimate charter is something that we leave to the experts. That's why we've decided to get in touch with the industry's best to discuss how they would plan the perfect yacht charter. In the first in our [Planning the Ultimate Charter](#) series, we spoke to Alex at [Bespoke Yacht Charter](#) about sunsets, local cuisine, and top anchorages in the French Riviera. This is what he had to say.

## Where to go...

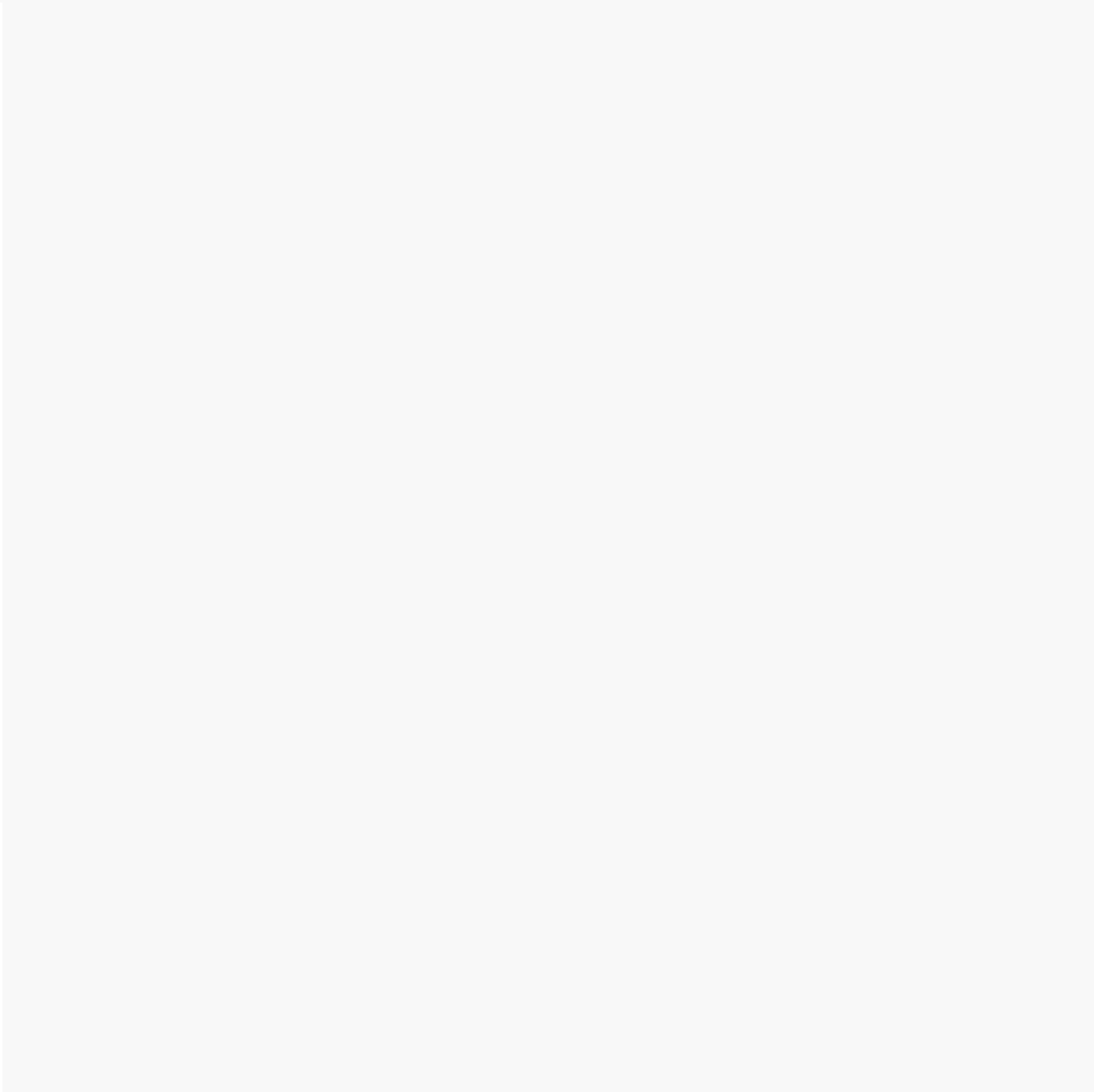


A post shared by Bespoke Yacht Charter (@bespokeyachtcharter) on Feb 18, 2017  
at 4:47pm PST

There are many great charter destinations in Europe but I will focus on the French Riviera as this is where 70% of the charters we book take place. What is perhaps the original luxury yacht charter destination in the world doesn't appear to be losing its' magic! The south of France is especially popular with first-time charterers but I also have clients that have done two-week charters here every summer for more than 15 years. September is really the best time to charter on the Cote d'Azur, the water is warm, huge crowds are gone, though the atmosphere is still superb, and perhaps best of all, charter rates are lower than in July and August.

## What to do...



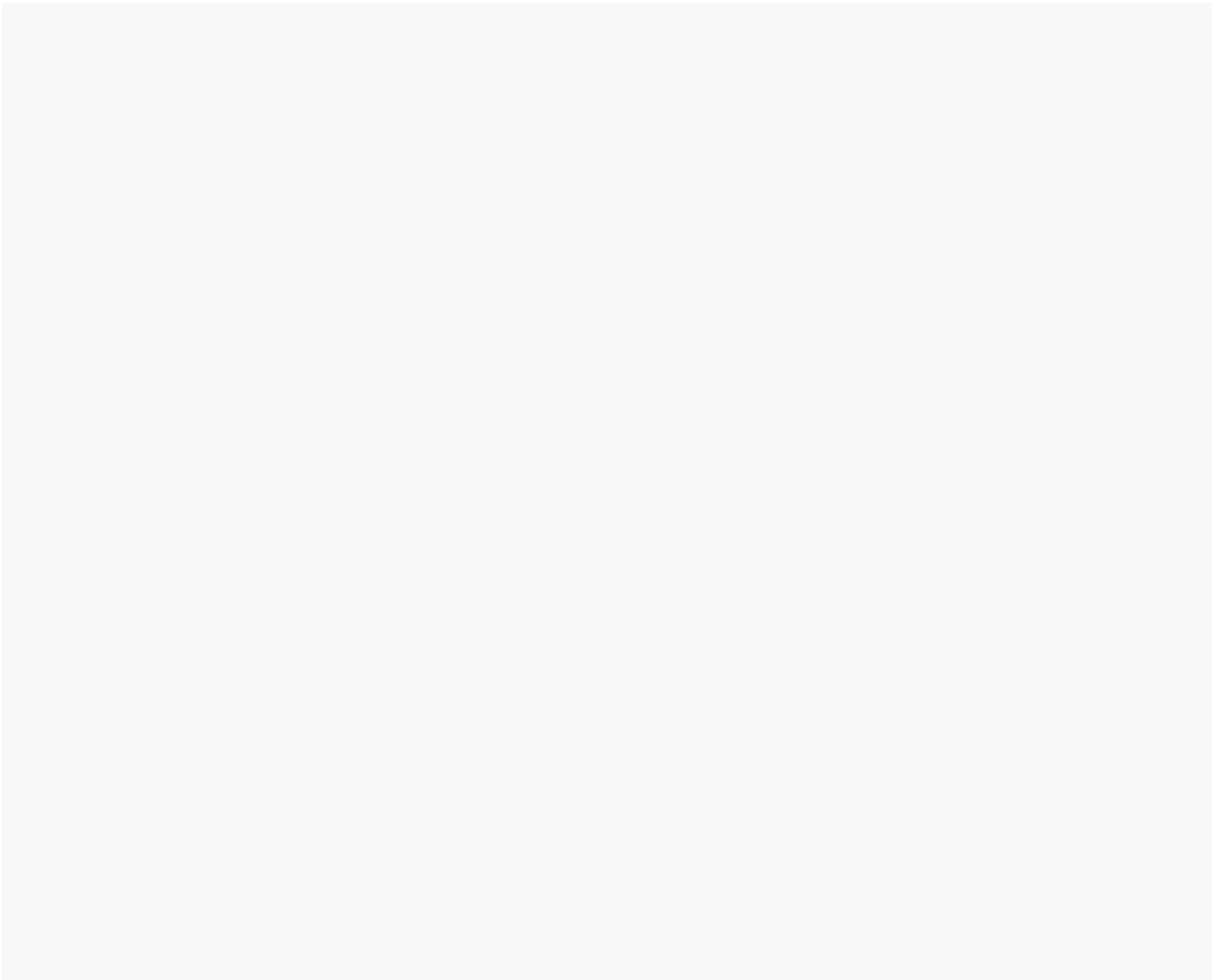


Those Monday mornings ☺ #getaway #capferrat #sunny #cheesy #weekend #nice  
#sea #blue #summer #wow #fitness #londonlife #enough

*A post shared by Laurent de St-Jo (@laurentdestjo) on Feb 20, 2017 at 1:45am PST*

I would recommend an itinerary including Antibes, Cannes, Cap Ferrat, Monaco, Nice, St Tropez and perhaps the island of Porquerolles. Berths are obviously like gold dust in high season, so it is critical to book them well in advance, though if guests are prepared to stay at anchor then any itinerary can be very flexible.

# Wining and dining



Lunch at #mirazur #maurocolagreco #menton #france #twostars #michelin #food #instafood #foodporn

*A post shared by Fabio (@fabulousfabio72) on Feb 18, 2017 at 4:17am PST*

I am a huge fan of [Mirazur](#) in Menton. Simply stunning food in a spectacular location on the border between France and Italy. The views over the old town of Menton are magnificent and the restaurant is regularly voted as being one of the best in the world.

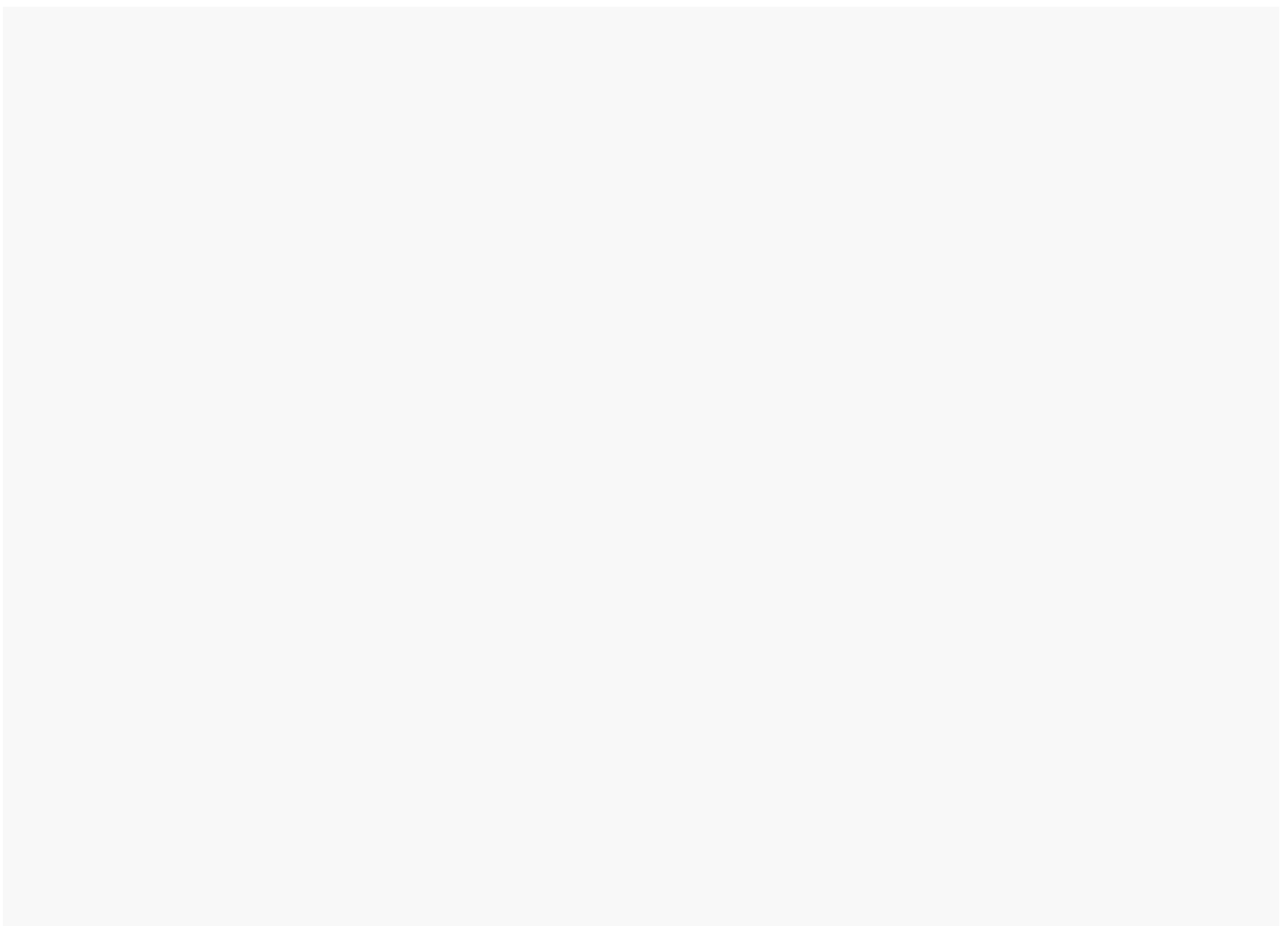
I also love [Blue Bay](#) at the Monte-Carlo Beach Hotel in Monaco. Chef Marcel Ravin is a true pioneer, using only the freshest

local ingredients in very inventive and creative ways. The atmosphere is very relaxed but the food truly amazing. It's much more chilled out than the other Michelin starred restaurants in Monaco like Alain Ducasse and Robuchon, though they are great too!

There are also some excellent restaurants in Nice. Special mention would go to Jan, near the Port, run by South African Chef Jan Hendrik, who used to work on charter yachts! He now has his own Michelin-starred restaurant in the south of France, which is a real achievement!

I also like [La Petite Maison](#) in the old town of Nice. The atmosphere is always very lively and full of celebrities.

## Unmissable anchorages



\*?? Massif de l'Estérel(83) par @Christiane C-V #CotedAzurNow  
#CotedAzurFrance #esterel #frenchriviera #france

*A post shared by Météo Côte d'Azur (@meteocotedazur) on Feb 19, 2017 at 8:52pm PST*

I love the Esterel coast between Cannes and St Raphael, the way the red rocks drop into the sea. Théoule just west of Cannes is a beautiful anchorage though it does lose the sun pretty early in the day. My favourite place in the world to have breakfast on a yacht! The views over the Bay of Cannes are stunning.

East of Monaco, there is a great anchorage on the Menton side of the Cap Martin peninsula. It's usually much less crowded than the Monaco side and the water is exceptional for swimming. Epic views of the alps and over Italy!

## The best sunset





? #tbt #esterelmountains

*A post shared by Lisa Dyhrberg Kjær Kristensen (@\_lisafisa) on Nov 2, 2016 at 12:07am PDT*

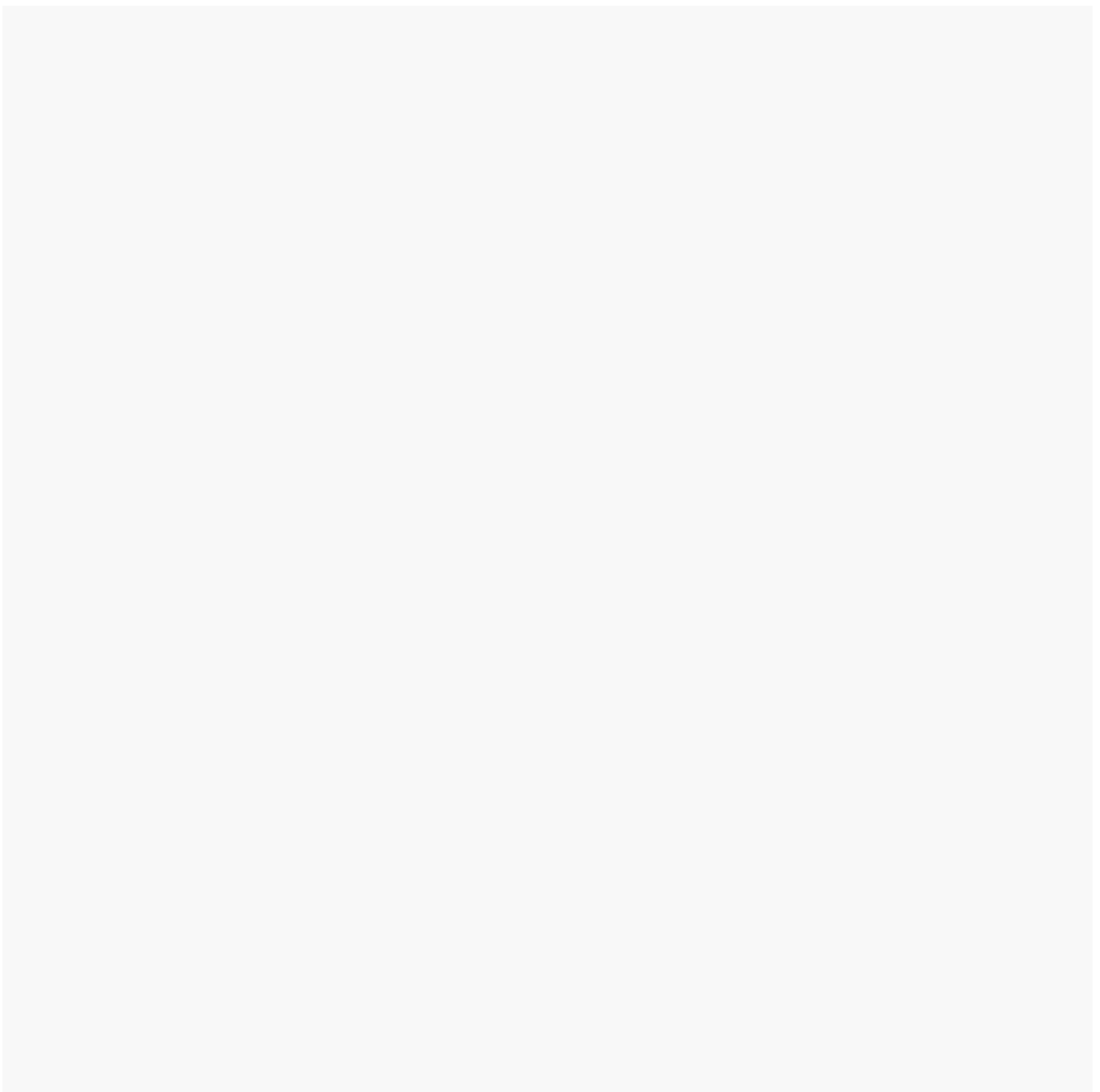
The south of France perhaps lacks the amazing sunsets one gets in the Balearics and Corsica but there are still some lovely places to be as a long summer day comes to an end.

I love being on a yacht anchored in the bay of Juan Les Pins as the sun sets over Cannes and the Esterel mountains. It's a beautiful place to be and a very popular superyacht anchorage, very popular with owners that also have villas on the Cap

d'Antibes.

I also highly recommend watching the sunset of the city of Nice, either from the Colline du Chateau above the old town, or even better from Mont Boron, the hillside between Nice and Villefranche-sur-Mer. There's something magical about sunsets over a city.

## Local cuisine



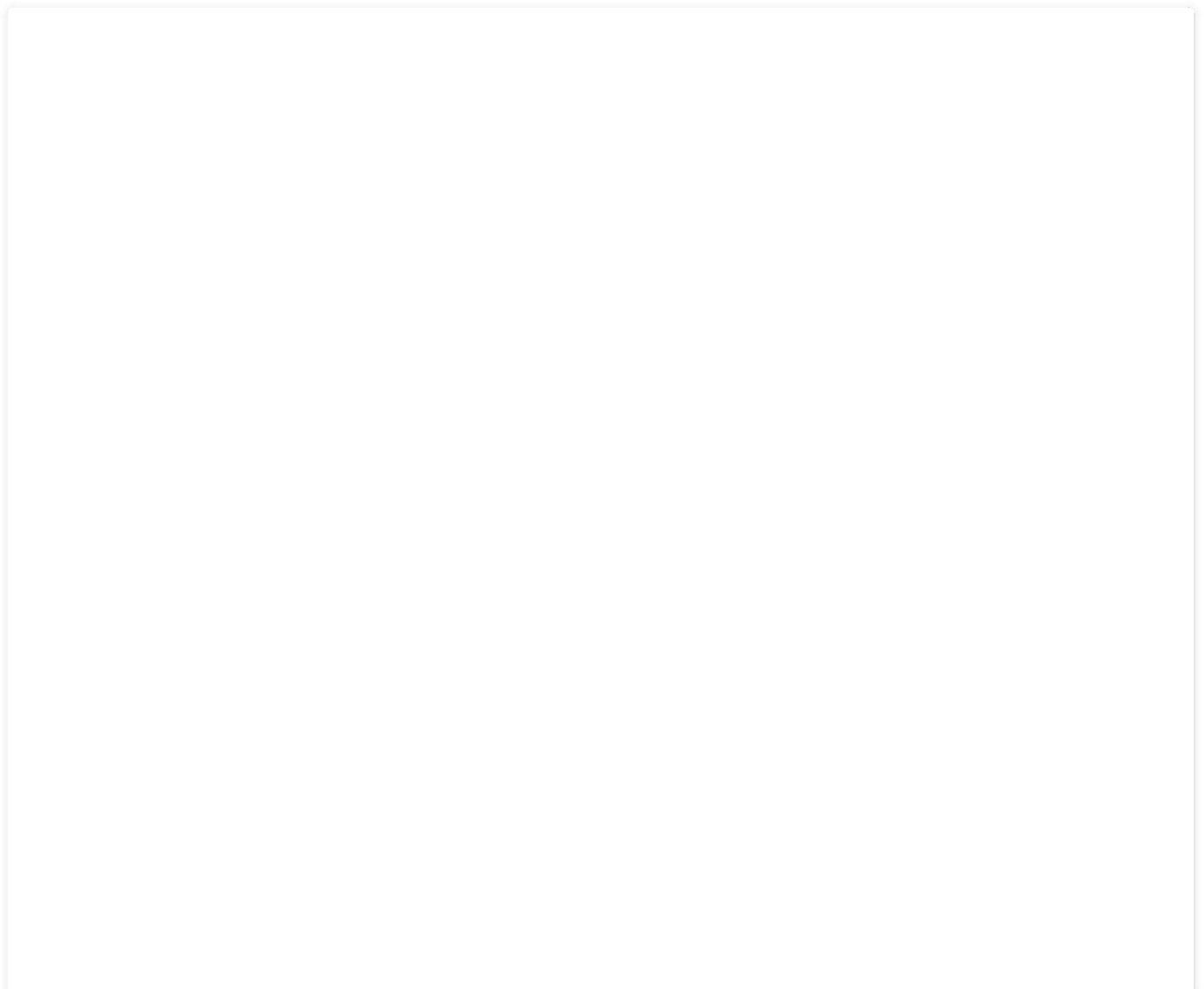


If you're stuffing #courgette flowers, help the filling stay in by gently twisting the end of each flower closed – be careful not to break the baby courgette off if there is one. Find recipe inspiration online @bbcgoodfood and tag your courgette recipes #CourgetteWeek – we'll regram our favourites!

*A post shared by BBC Good Food (@bbcgoodfood) on Aug 30, 2016 at 4:48am PDT*

I think simplicity is key! Anything with plenty of garlic, olive oil and fresh local ingredients. There's nothing better than simply grilled fish for lunch that the Chef has bought in the market that morning. I also love stuffed Courgette Flowers!

## Beaches for entertaining the little ones



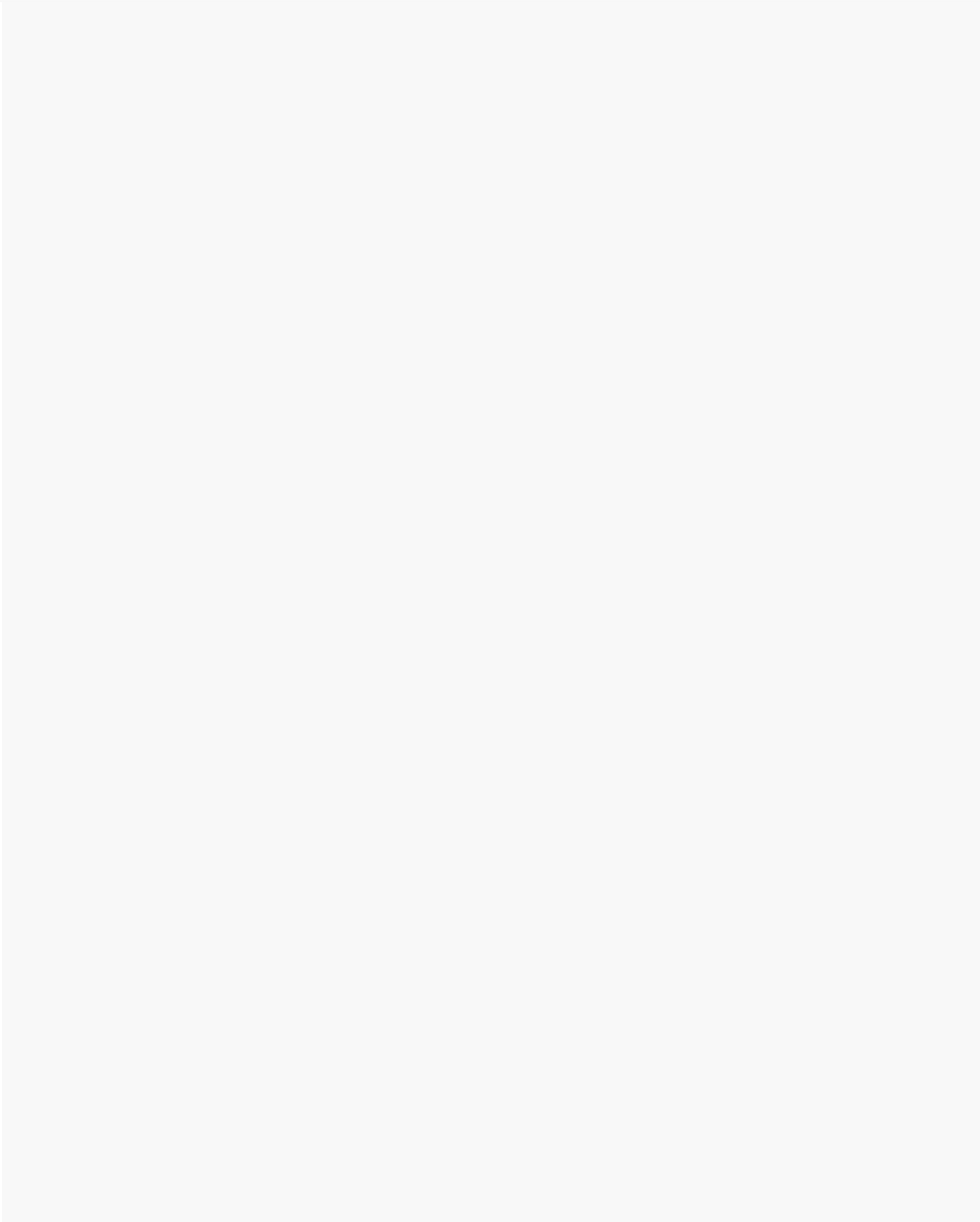
{i took about 100 photos while at this beautiful beach, i just couldn't get over the view and how lucky i was to be in such an amazing little spot in the world. i had no idea 2016 would lead me to such a place, but can only hope hard work will lead me on an even better journey this year. cheers to 2017?!|  
#palomabeach #southoffrance #cotedazur #newyearthseve}

*A post shared by :: naomi jacobs :: (@sweetjacobs) on Dec 31, 2016 at 1:51pm PST*

I love Paloma Beach in Cap Ferrat and Plage Mala in Cap d'Ail but perhaps the best beach for families would be Plage de la Nartelle in Sainte-Maxime. It's very similar to its' more famous neighbor Pampelonne in St Tropez, great beach clubs, beautiful sand and you can walk out 2-300 meters without going out of your depth. There's also a company offering every possible type of watersports that will come out to your yacht.

## **Natural wonders and local sights**





Le paradis juste à côté de la maison ☐

*A post shared by Marine Mistake (@marinemistake) on Feb 19, 2017 at 5:28am PST*

The Island of Porquerolles west of St Tropez has to be seen. White sands, turquoise water, and spectacular scenery! It's

like St Barths has come to the Mediterranean!

## Transport

Nice Airport has regular flights to everywhere in Europe, New York and Dubai. It's actually the second busiest airport in France!



Arrived in style ! ✈️🇲🇦#jetsetter #tap #travelling #travelingram  
#colorofnature #aviation #instaaviation #speed #instavideo #landing #birdview  
#panorama #landscape #cotedazur #hemisphere #montecarlo #montecarlo #montecarlo #montecarlo#montcarlo  
#greatview #beautiful #photo #picoftheday #monaco #monacoair #helicopter  
#helicoptermonaco #love

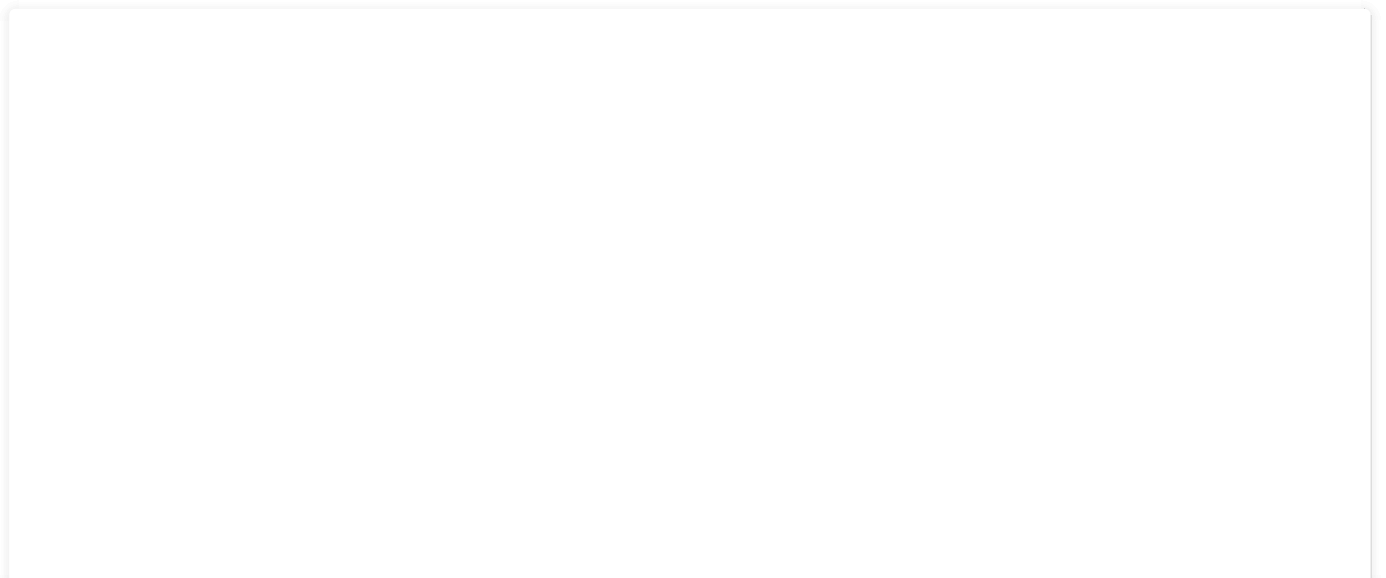
*A post shared by EmilyL (@emily.in.portugal) on Mar 11, 2016 at 10:02am PST*

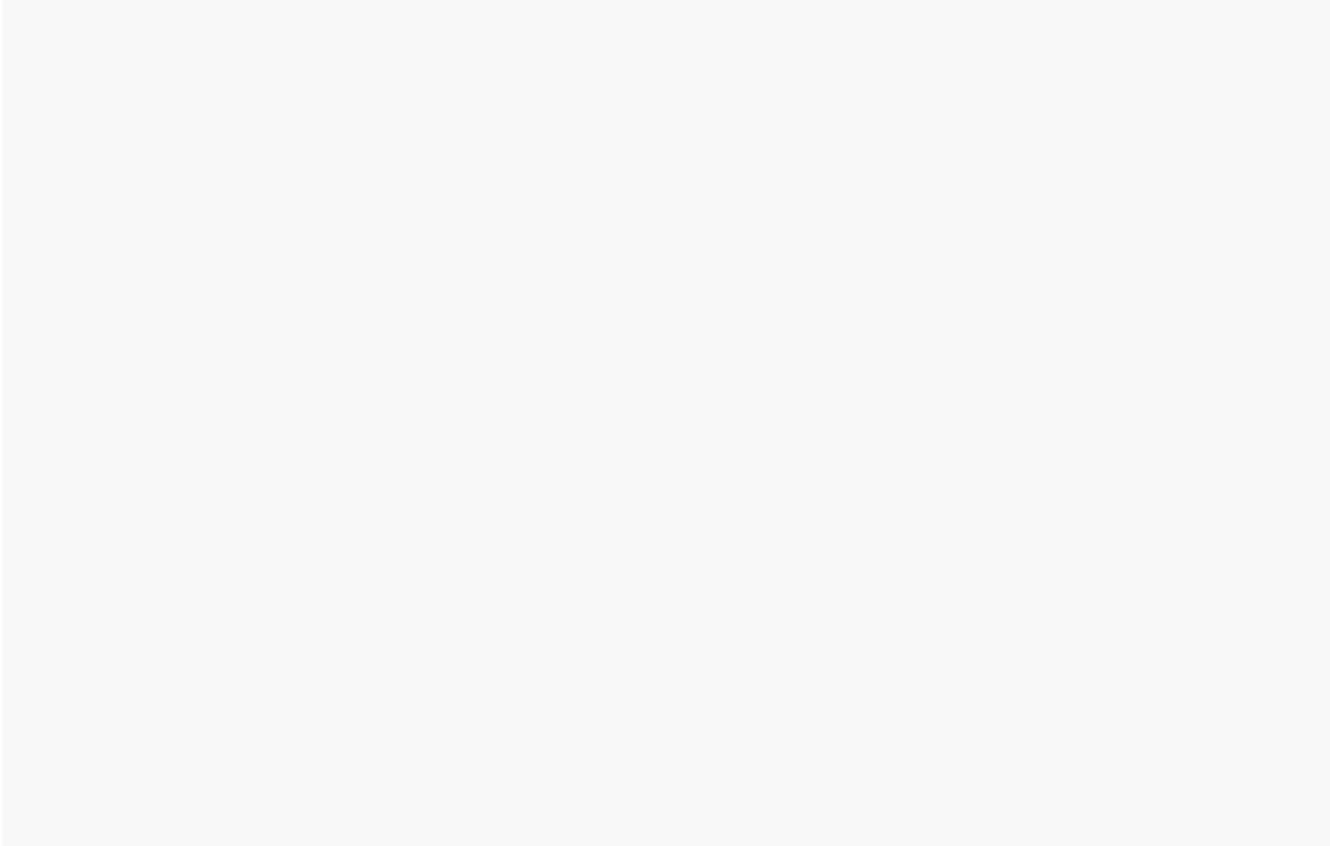
The roads are very busy in July and August! Fortunately, there are multiple companies offering regular helicopter services between Nice, Monaco, Cannes and St Tropez. This is by far the easiest way to get to your destination if you want to avoid a hot, sticky traffic jam. There is also a port in St Laurent du Var, just next to the airport. We embark a lot of charters there. Guests can be onboard, drink in hand within 30 minutes of the plane landing! Nice is also very popular for private jets. There is also the possibility to land at Cannes Airport on a private plane which is just next to the marina at La Napoule.

## **What should you pack for the charter?**

Simple Mediterranean chic! Plenty of shorts, linen shirts, Tod's driving shoes and of course the obligatory Vilebrequin swimming trunks in loud colours! Temperatures can drop in the evening, especially on the water so do bring a jacket or two.

## **Best charter boat for the French Riviera**





Benetti Vivace 125' – M/Y Ironman A hi-tech yacht with the performance of a superhero #benettiyachts #benetti #benettiyachtsofficial #ironman #vivace125 #hitech #fast

*A post shared by Benetti Yachts (@benettiyachtsofficial) on Nov 25, 2016 at 2:32am PST*

The vast majority of yachts would work well for the south of France. The famous mistral can create quite a swell, so I tend to recommend that clients sacrifice speed for a more stable yacht. Top recommendation would be something like a Benetti 30m Tradition. It's the perfect size, able to get into almost all the ports, comfortable at anchor and with plenty of deck space. A relatively slow cruising speed is not really an issue as the distances involved are small. There are of course those charterers that want to be in St Tropez for breakfast, lunch in Monaco and Portofino for dinner. For that type of charter, nothing beats a Mangusta!



## Sail or motor?

The south of France tends to be more the land of the motor yacht but there is absolutely no reason at all why one wouldn't wouldn't enjoy chartering a sailing yacht here, though for keen sailors Corsica and Sardinia would likely make more sense.