BLUE OCEAN CLUB

ECOSYSTEM PILLAR - YACHT CHARTER GUIDE

French Riviera

Yacht Charter Guide

CRAFTING SIGNATURE CHARTER YACHT EXPERIENCES

French Riviera Yacht Charter
Region: Mediterranean
Gateways: NCE - CEQ - LTT - MCM
Source: Editorial
Blue Ocean Club LLC

blueoceanclub.com

FRENCH RIVIERA

Overview

Not a floating hotel itinerary - a choreographed operation. Captains, marina agents and concierge lock the sequence before wheels-down at NCE.

French Riviera yacht charter - Monaco, Cannes, Antibes & Saint-Tropez. Berths, APA, itineraries and live fleet with Blue Ocean Club.

AIRPORTS	NCE, CEQ, LTT, MCM
REGION	Mediterranean
PAGE	https://blueoceanclub.com/charter/destinations/french-riviera

WHEN TO GO

Season & rhythm

- How a Riviera week actually runs.: Not a floating hotel itinerary - a choreographed operation. Captains, marina agents and concierge lock the sequence before wheels-down at NCE.
- Embark ready: APA open, toys checked, crew briefed on diet and privacy before the first cork. Arrival logistics sit in the Door-to-deck block below - this panel is the onboard open.
- Coastal cadence: Short hops along the Golden Triangle - morning toys, lunch at a held beach-club table, golden-hour reposition, overnight either on a quay or a quiet roadstead.
- Concierge lock: Restaurant, beach club and villa slots confirmed weeks out. Helicopters, security and medical cover sit on standby - not scavenged the morning of.
- Event week or cruising week.: Grand Prix, Cannes and the Yacht Show rewrite berth economics and itinerary logic. Quiet weeks trade spectacle for water, privacy and value.
- Event weeks: Monaco GP, Cannes Film / Lions, Monaco Yacht Show. Berths book 6-12 months out; Port Hercule nights can multiply several times over. The yacht is a hospitality platform - visibility is the point.
- Cruising weeks: May-June and September shoulder, or midsummer away from headline dates. Freer movement Monaco Cap-Ferrat Lérins Saint-Tropez, with anchorage days that event weeks simply cannot afford.
- What changes: Berth strategy, APA contingency, tender logistics and dining holds. Same coast - different operation. We design the week for the calendar you actually fly into.

ON THE WATER

Cruising grounds

Monaco to Cap Ferrat

The eastern Riviera opens with Port Hercule - a tight, theatrical harbour that is as much a stage as a marina. From Monaco most captains run west along Cap Ferrat, dropping the anchor in Villefranche or Beaulieu for swimming and a tender run ashore to Eden Roc or the Cap's pine-fringed coves. Evenings often return to Monaco for Yacht Club dinners, casino nights or Grand Prix week when the bay becomes the world's most exclusive paddock. Short legs, big atmosphere: this stretch packs more signature moments into a few nautical miles than almost anywhere else on the coast.

Antibes, Cap d'Antibes & Juan-les-Pins

Antibes is the Riviera's working megayacht capital - Port Vauban holds some of the largest private yachts in the Med, yet the Cap itself stays green, rocky and surprisingly intimate. Day-anchors under Cap d'Antibes give clear water for toys and a short tender to Garoupe or the old town's ramparts and Picasso museum. Juan-les-Pins adds a livelier shoreline for sundowners without the Croisette crowds. Brokers favour this pocket as the quiet counterpoint between Cannes and Monaco - close to Nice Côte d'Azur airport, with berths that actually fit when Cap Ferrat and Port Hercule are full.

Cannes & the Îles de Lérins

Cannes is the festival and beach-club heart of the Côte d'Azur: Vieux Port and Port Pierre Canto for berthing, the Croisette for nights ashore, and a bay that fills with chartered platforms every May. Ten minutes by tender, the Îles de Lérins flip the mood - pine scent, monastery silence on Saint-Honorat, and sheltered swimming off Sainte-Marguerite. Captains typically split the week between a harbour night and quiet day-anchors around the islands so guests get both the red-carpet coast and a private-island morning. Event weeks (Film Festival, Lions, Yachting Festival) need berths booked months ahead; shoulder season is freer and often more charming.

Gulf of Saint-Tropez

Saint-Tropez remains the Riviera's most photographed gulf - the old port by night, Pampelonne's beach clubs by day, and Cap Camarat's wilder headland for overnight calm. Club 55, Nikki Beach and Bagatelle sit a tender ride from the usual day-anchors; evenings pull back into the village for dinner on the quay. The gulf itself is wide enough that a well-run charter never feels trapped in one scene. West toward Cavalaire and the wilder Var coast, the same week can turn quieter without a long passage - the classic Riviera decompression after Monaco or Cannes.

The Îles d'Hyères: Porquerolles & Port-Cros

An hour west of Saint-Tropez, the Îles d'Hyères feel like another country - national-park rules, turquoise shallows and almost no cars on Porquerolles. Port-Cros is the quieter sibling: hiking trails, no-take marine reserves and some of the clearest snorkelling on the French coast. Charters use these islands as the soft landing after a high-energy Riviera week, or as the whole itinerary for guests who want nature over nightlife. Berthing is limited and overnight stays are tightly managed in season, so captains plan day-anchors carefully and keep a mainland fallback in Hyères or Toulon if the weather turns.

QUAY NIGHTS

Marinas & berthing

Port Hercule, Monaco

The Riviera's most theatrical harbour - Grand Prix walls, Yacht Club Monaco, and tight high-season berthing that books months ahead. - Max LOA ~100 m - Draft ~8 m - Gateway MCM - Transfer Heli 7-12 min from NCE - Peak lead: 6-12 months for GP / Yacht Show / Festival weeks

Port Vauban, Antibes

Europe's largest yacht marina - megayacht berths, Cap d'Antibes day-anchors nearby, and a quieter counterpoint to Cannes. - Max LOA ~165 m - Draft ~8 m - Gateway NCE - Transfer Chauffeur 25-55 min from NCE - Peak lead: 6-12 months for GP / Yacht Show / Festival weeks

Port de Cannes (Vieux Port)

Festival and Croisette berthing - steps from the Palais, with Lérins day-anchors a short tender ride offshore. - Max LOA ~80 m - Draft ~8 m - Gateway NCE - Transfer Chauffeur 25-55 min from NCE - Peak lead: 6-12 months for GP / Yacht Show / Festival weeks

Port de Saint-Tropez

The old port by night, Pampelonne by day - limited slips, high demand, and the classic Riviera scene. - Max LOA ~80 m - Draft ~8 m - Gateway LTT - Transfer Chauffeur 25-55 min from NCE - Peak lead: 6-12 months for GP / Yacht Show / Festival weeks

Port de Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat

Sheltered Cap Ferrat berthing between Monaco and Villefranche - pine coves, Eden Roc, and quieter overnight options. - Max LOA ~80 m - Draft ~8 m - Gateway NCE - Transfer Chauffeur 25-55 min from NCE - Peak lead: 6-12 months for GP / Yacht Show / Festival weeks

Port Camille Rayon, Golfe-Juan

A practical berth between Cannes and Antibes - often more available than the Croisette when festivals fill the bay. - Max LOA ~80 m - Draft ~8 m - Gateway NCE - Transfer Chauffeur 25-55 min from NCE - Peak lead: 6-12 months for GP / Yacht Show / Festival weeks

Port de Beaulieu, Beaulieu-sur-Mer

Eastern Riviera harbour under Cap Ferrat - tender access to Villefranche swimming and a calm alternative to Port Hercule. - Max LOA ~80 m - Draft ~8 m - Gateway NCE - Transfer Chauffeur 25-55 min from NCE - Peak lead: 6-12 months for GP / Yacht Show / Festival weeks

Port Lympia, Nice

Nice's commercial yacht harbour - practical embarkation near NCE with Cap Ferrat and Villefranche a short run east. - Max LOA ~70 m - Draft ~6 m - Gateway NCE - Transfer 15-25 min from NCE - Peak lead: 2-8 weeks shoulder; longer in July-August

DAY WATER

Anchorages

Anse de la Scaletta (Plage Mala)

Cap d'Ail

A pocket bay on the Cap d'Ail coast, known ashore as Plage Mala: clear water, a cliff amphitheatre, and a short tender run from Port Hercule or Villefranche. Popular day-stop when Monaco berths are full; overnight only in settled weather.

Rade de Villefranche

Villefranche-sur-Mer

The great horseshoe of Villefranche offers deep water, a cinematic amphitheatre of hills, and easy tender access to the old port and Citadelle. A favourite overnight when Cap Ferrat and Monaco are packed.

Between the Îles de Lérins

Cannes

The passage between the two Lérins islands is the classic Cannes day-out: swim stops, pine-scented shores, and La Guérite / Fort Royal a tender ride away. Overnighting is for settled nights only - prefer Port de Cannes when the breeze builds.

Plage de Pampelonne

Saint-Tropez

Five kilometres of sand south-east of Saint-Tropez town. Yacht fleets raft on the roadstead through summer while tenders run Club 55, Nikki Beach and Gigi. Overnighting is common in settled weather; Port de Saint-Tropez for a town night.

Plage Notre-Dame

Porquerolles

The island's most photographed bay on the north shore: pale sand, clear water, and a pine fringe. Ideal lunch and swim stop when cruising the Hyères islands; Port de Porquerolles for overnight berthing if the roadstead fills.

Anse de Méjean & Anse de Magaud

Toulon

Méjean and Magaud sit on the coast between Le Pradet and Carqueiranne: rocky headlands, small beaches, and a less theatrical scene than Saint-Tropez. Useful weather hole and staging bay when transiting Toulon roads toward Porquerolles.

TRANSFERS

Helicopter & chauffeur - briefly.

Rotor or road from NCE / CEQ to the berth, timed to tender and dinner - not a taxi scramble. Concrete airport marina options sit in the Door-to-deck table below.

Helicopter

Monacair and private charters: NCE Monaco Heliport in roughly seven minutes; coastal hops to Antibes, Cannes and Saint-Tropez when the Corniche would cost the afternoon. NCE Monaco in ~7 minutes Private drops to Cannes, Antibes, Saint-Tropez

Chauffeur

S-Class and SUV fleets briefed on marina gates and FBO kerbsides - airport berth, berth Club 55 or Paloma, late returns from Èze. NCE / CEQ Hercule, Vauban, Cannes, Saint-Tropez Marina beach clubs and villa legs

We lock heli seats and cars against your embarkation slot with Limitless Sky aviation and ground partners.

NUMBERS - FRANCE

French VAT & APA - the short version.

On the Côte d'Azur the base charter fee is only the starting line. Budget VAT and a heavier APA before you lock dates.

French VAT

France typically applies 20% VAT on qualifying charter legs in French waters. Exact treatment depends on the yacht's commercial structure and itinerary - we confirm the figure before you sign.

APA (Riviera)

Industry APA is often 25-35% of the base fee. For a French Riviera high-season week we plan closer to 40% - fuel at anchor, premium berths, and champagne service move the needle fast.

What we send PAs

A line-item estimate (base + VAT guidance + APA + known berth premiums) before deposit, then a live APA report from the captain during the week.

SIGNATURE ROUTE - 7-10 DAYS

The Golden Triangle: Monaco to Saint-Tropez

This is the quintessential Riviera experience - high-energy hubs balanced with protected anchorages, tailored for privacy or visibility.

01-02 - Monaco & The Eastern Edge

The logical starting point is Nice Côte d'Azur Airport (NCE), with a 10-minute helicopter transfer to the Monaco Heliport. The yacht is waiting in Port Hercule. Securing a berth here, particularly for yachts over 60m, is the first hurdle - bookings a year ahead, at a premium. A prime slip in a non-event week for a 60m yacht can run 2,500-3,500 per night. During the Grand Prix, that figure can easily surpass 15,000 per night, if a berth is available at all. For principals prioritizing privacy over the Monaco scene, board at anchor off Beaulieu-sur-Mer or in Villefranche-sur-Mer. The tender collects guests from Beaulieu port or the Welcome Hotel in Villefranche. Anchorage: Between Cap-d'Ail and Monaco, Plage de la Mala - cliffs, clear water, and an ideal first afternoon of toys. Dining: La Réserve de Beaulieu (two Michelin stars), African Queen in Beaulieu port, or Le Plongeoir in Nice on its rock pillar in the sea.

03 - Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat Peninsula

A short cruise west brings you to the most exclusive real estate on the coast - a day for slow cruising and anchoring. Plage de Passable on the west side of the Cap offers calm water and views across Villefranche. Anchorage: Baie de l'Espalmador, between the Cap and Beaulieu - excellent holding, and a base for Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild. Beach club: Paloma Beach - family-run since 1948. Book lunch well ahead; the understated alternative to the St-Tropez scene.

04-05 - Antibes & the Îles de Lérins

Cruise past the Baie des Anges to Antibes. Port Vauban's IYCA - the Billionaires' Quay - is a destination in itself, and a critical hub for provisioning and light technical support. Berthing for +70m is a strategic play that needs established broker relationships. The real jewel is the Îles de Lérins, fifteen minutes from the bustle of Cannes - island sanctuary after the mainland density. Anchorage: Plateau du Milieu, between Sainte-Marguerite and Saint-Honorat. Use designated mooring zones or DP - posidonia rules are strictly enforced. Dining: La Guérite on Sainte-Marguerite for the high-energy lunch scene; the monastery on Saint-Honorat for wine and quiet contrast.

06-07 - The Bay of Saint-Tropez

The final leg past the red rocks of the Estérel is one of the Med's great arrivals. A Vieux Port berth in front of Sénéquier is the ultimate display - and nearly impossible to hold for a week in high season without long planning. For most yachts over 40m, the operational reality is to anchor in Baie des Canebiers or off Pampelonne and run a high-spec tender as a constant shuttle - more privacy, more flexibility. Anchorages: Pampelonne for beach clubs; Baie des Canebiers ("Billionaires' Bay") quieter and closer to town for evening tenders. Beach clubs: Club 55 remains the icon. Verde Beach and Gigi for a younger crowd; Loulou a staple. Book a month out. Evening: Aperitif at Sénéquier, then L'Opéra for full-throttle spectacle, or La Vague d'Or at Cheval Blanc (three Michelin stars).

WITHIN THIS COAST

Local guides

Cap Ferrat

The pine peninsula between Monaco and Villefranche - Paloma Beach lunches, Plage de Passable swims, and overnight options at Port Saint-Jean when Port Hercule is full. Short legs, high privacy, serious real estate ashore. Day-anchor opposite Monaco; tender to Paloma before noon - Port Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat for quieter overnight berthing - Villa Ephrussi & Eden Roc within a short tender or car hop

Villefranche-sur-Mer

One of the Mediterranean's great natural harbours - deep holding, a cinematic amphitheatre of hills, and easy tender access to the old port. The preferred overnight when Cap Ferrat and Monaco are packed. Rade de Villefranche - classic overnight between Nice and Monaco - Tender to Quai de l'Amiral Courbet / Citadelle - Board here privately when Port Hercule berths aren't held

Menton

The softer eastern bookend toward Italy - lemon groves, Belle Époque façades, and a calmer pace than Monaco. Useful as a quiet night before a Portofino strike, or a winter cultural stop around the Lemon Festival. Quieter alternative east of Cap Martin / Monaco - Menton Lemon Festival (Feb-Mar) for winter cultural weeks - Natural staging for Liguria / Portofino extensions

EXPLORE FURTHER

Child destinations

- Cannes - Croisette nights, Lérins day-anchors and Palais-week berths within tender reach of every beach club.
- Monaco - A 24-48 hour Port Hercule punctuation - Grand Prix walls, Yacht Club dinners, then east or west along the coast.
- St-Tropez - Pampelonne beach clubs by day, the old port by night - the Riviera's most photographed gulf.
- Antibes - Cap d'Antibes swimming coves and Port Vauban's megayacht berths - the quiet counterpoint to Cannes.
- Nice - Côte d'Azur jet gateway - Port Lympia embarkation with Cap Ferrat and Villefranche minutes away by sea.
- Nice - Côte d'Azur gateway - Promenade, Port Lympia and Cap Ferrat day-anchors within a short coastal hop.

BEFORE YOU FLY

FAQ

How far ahead should we book a Port Hercule berth?

For Grand Prix and Yacht Show weeks, 6-12 months is normal for yachts over 50m. Non-event high season still needs weeks of runway for larger LOA.

Is Antibes better than Monaco for embarkation?

Port Vauban is the working megayacht hub - more LOA flexibility and provisioning. Monaco is the theatrical punctuation. Many weeks use both.

What APA should we budget on the Riviera?

Plan closer to 40% of the base fee in high season once fuel, premium berths and fine dining are included - above the generic 30% textbook figure.

Can we combine Cannes Film Festival with a cruising week?

Yes - berth or tender the festival nights, then swing to Lérins, Antibes or Cap Ferrat for water. Festival weeks need berth holds months ahead.

Which airport is best for a Côte d'Azur charter?

Nice (NCE) is the default door-to-deck gateway; Cannes-Mandelieu (CEQ) and La Mole (LTT) suit western embarkations; Monacair into MCM for Port Hercule arrivals.

Day charter or full week on the Riviera?

Day boats work for a single Croisette or Cap Ferrat moment. A full week is how you actually use Monaco-Antibes-Cannes-Saint-Tropez without rushing.

OPERATIONAL

Mooring notes

Saint-Tropez - Port de Saint-Tropez

Very hard in July-August; scarce even mid-week. Peak: 4-8 months for a quay-side slip. Shoulder (June / September): 6-10 weeks is realistic if you stay flexible on nights. Les Voiles (late Sept / early Oct) locks the gulf early - treat it like an event week. Pampelonne day-anchors remain the fallback when the old port is full. We rarely promise a Saint-Tropez overnight on short notice in high summer. The working plan is: hold a Cap Camarat or Cavalaire fallback, tender into the quay for dinner, and only commit a berth when the agent confirms in writing.

Monaco - Port Hercule

Extremely constrained above ~50m; event weeks are a different market. Non-event: 3-6 months for a preferred wall. Grand Prix / Yacht Show: 9-14 months, often via existing relationships and with a premium. Monaco GP (late May) and Monaco Yacht Show (late Sept) - berths can run 10k-15k+ per night for larger yachts when available at all. Historic GP / Formula E are lighter but still special. If Port Hercule is the brief, we start the berth conversation before the yacht shortlist. Many principals board at Beaulieu or Villefranche and take a single Hercule night for Yacht Club / casino - that is often the smarter play.

Antibes - Port Vauban

Easier than Monaco or Saint-Tropez - still busy for megayacht berths. High season: 6-12 weeks for a suitable slip. Shoulder: often 2-4 weeks. Cap d'Antibes day-anchors are usually available same week in settled weather. Cannes Film, Lions and Yachting Festival spill demand into Antibes and Golfe-Juan. Port Camille Rayon is the practical overflow when Vauban or Cannes Vieux Port fill. Vauban is our default embarkation when Nice airport timing matters and Cap Ferrat / Hercule are full. Quiet nights, serious yacht services, and a short run to Lérins or Monaco.

Berth fees, APA budgets and event lead times are indicative and move with LOA, season and harbour policy. Blue Ocean Club confirms live figures in writing before deposit. Not a substitute for captain pilotage or marina contracts.

ENQUIRE

Begin a conversation.

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