

# PRESENTATION BROCHURE



INSCRIBED ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST IN JULY 2021



**unesco**  
World Heritage site

Nice, winter resort  
town of the riviera



**Nice, winter resort  
town of the riviera**



> The skyline of the Promenade des Anglais and the hills, 2019



> Belgrano Manor

I am delighted by the honour granted to us by UNESCO which, during the 44th session of the World Heritage Committee, held recently in Fuzhou in China, inscribed “Nice Winter Resort Town of the Riviera” on the World Heritage List.

With this decision, UNESCO recognises the Outstanding Universal Value of Nice’s heritage in terms of architecture, landscape and urban planning, and particularly the vast urban ensemble of 522 hectares shaped by the cosmopolitan winter resort from the mid-18th century to the mid-20th century, which is an eminent example of the fusion of international cultural influences.

This ensemble is formed from its ordered planning, its green spaces planted with exotic species, its promenades – in particular, the iconic Promenade des Anglais – and its tourism heritage, reflecting influences from around the world, with its villas, hotels, “palaces”, holiday apartments, along with places of worship and social venues.

I would like to express my gratitude to the World Heritage Committee, its President H.E. Mr Tian Xuejun, and the representatives of its 21 member states.

I am also grateful to UNESCO as a whole and its Director General, Mrs Audrey Azoulay.

I would like to convey my sincere gratitude to Mr Emmanuel Macron, President of the Republic who, in January 2020, selected Nice’s nomination to represent France.

This gratitude also extends to the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs, Mr Jean-Yves Le Drian and the Ministers of Culture who kindly supported our application, Mr Franck Riester and Mrs Roselyne Bachelot-Narquin.

My thanks also go to two ambassadors, Permanent Delegates of France to UNESCO, who successively supported our application: H.E. Mr Laurent Stéfanini and H.E. Mrs Véronique Roger-Lacan.

In addition, I want to pass on my warmest thanks to Mr Jean-Jacques Aillagon, former Minister of Culture, who I appointed as President of the Nice World Heritage Committee in 2014 and who, through his talent and commitment, has played a decisive role in our success today, working with Mr Olivier-Henri Sambucchi, Mr François Laquière and Mrs Julie Reynes who I would also like to thank along with their entire team.

Finally, I would like to dedicate this great honour, bestowed on us by UNESCO, to the people of Nice with whom we share the responsibility and the duty to preserve the heritage of this city, now registered on the World Heritage List, for future generations.

July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021,

**Christian Estrosi**

Mayor of Nice,  
President of the Nice Côte d’Azur Metropolitan Authority



> View of the city from the Gairaut artificial cave and waterfall

In 2014, Christian Estrosi, Mayor of Nice, embarked on Nice's nomination for inscription on the World Heritage List. He appointed me as the President of a committee responsible for managing this project. The first step for this committee was to begin an important process of discussion, research and documentation in order to identify what could form the basis for the Outstanding Universal Value of Nice's heritage. Initially limited to the Promenade des Anglais, which gave rise to an exhibition and a publication, the committee's investigations, informed by the opinions of many French and foreign specialists in the fields of history, geography, urban planning and architecture, soon settled on every part of the city born of the winter resort which was Nice's principal activity from 1760 to 1939. It was this urban ensemble that was presented to the World Heritage Committee. At the same time, the City of Nice and the Nice Côte d'Azur Metropolitan Authority implemented a systematic policy of documentation and protection of the heritage arising from the resort, in particular by launching a general inventory, recapturing the title of "City of Art and History", obtaining new protective measures for historical monuments from the State and also by developing and approving the creation on 30 June 2020 of an Outstanding Heritage Site.

Today, 27 July 2021, the World Heritage Committee, which is currently presided over by the People's Republic of China, agreed to register "Nice Winter Resort Town of the Riviera" on the World Heritage List. This heritage, which covers 522 hectares of the municipality of Nice with a 4243-hectare buffer zone that extends to the municipalities of Falicon, Saint André de la Roche, Aspremont and Tourrette Levens is proof, in accordance with criterion (ii) which UNESCO uses to identify the Outstanding Exceptional Value of a property, of an "exchange of considerable influences during a given period [...] on the development of the architecture, [...] of the urban planning of cities or the creation of landscapes."

The characteristic attributes of the Outstanding Exceptional Value of Nice are found primarily in the buildings, hotels, villas, holiday apartments, places of worship and social venues whose architecture and décor express the international influences of the winter visitors. However, international influences, notably English and Italian, have also shaped the development of the landscapes (promenades, parks, viewpoints, gardens planted with exotic species).

I am delighted with this recognition of the Outstanding Universal Value of Nice which is now entrusted to the care and protection of not only those who are lucky enough to live there, but also of all of humanity. I would like to thank Christian Estrosi for the confidence he has shown in me by appointing me to manage this nomination.

I would also like to thank all those who, with me, have enthusiastically and competently supported this nomination, and especially the small team of the Nice World Heritage Committee, our partners of the French Committee for World Heritage Properties, our colleagues at the Directorate General of Heritage and the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Culture and finally the Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs, and specifically the Permanent Delegation of France to UNESCO, without whose commitment we would not have obtained this favourable decision so quickly.

July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021,

**Jean-Jacques Aillagon**

Former minister

Chairman, Nice World Heritage Team



> Example of an Art Deco entrance

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# The inscription on the World Heritage List

## The process

The World Heritage List was instituted by a 1972 convention, signed by the Member States of UNESCO. Nice's nomination can therefore be submitted by France as a signatory of that convention, rather than by the city of Nice itself.

As each State can only submit one nomination file per year, a process has been put in place to choose which file France submits annually to UNESCO.

That process is overseen by the French Committee for World Heritage, itself placed under the dual supervision of the Culture and Environment ministries.

Nice's nomination file has so far successfully made it through these different stages of the selection process. On 23 October 2015, the city council applied for Nice to be included on France's Tentative List. On 11 October 2016, the French Committee for World Heritage accepted the application. On 6 March 2017, Nice was officially added to France's Tentative List.

In 2017, 2018 and 2019, the French Committee for World Heritage examined and validated the 3 main parts of the application file, namely: the statement of outstanding universal value, the perimeters of the core-zone and its buffer zone, and finally, the management plan. The complete file was then transmitted and on 13 January 2020, the French government announced its decision to submit Nice's nomination to UNESCO for 2020.

The World Heritage Centre was then able to launch the evaluation procedure by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS).

On 27 July 2021, the World Heritage Committee during its 44th session, presided over from Fuzhou by People's Republic of China, inscribed «Nice, Winter Resort Town of the Riviera» on the World Heritage List.

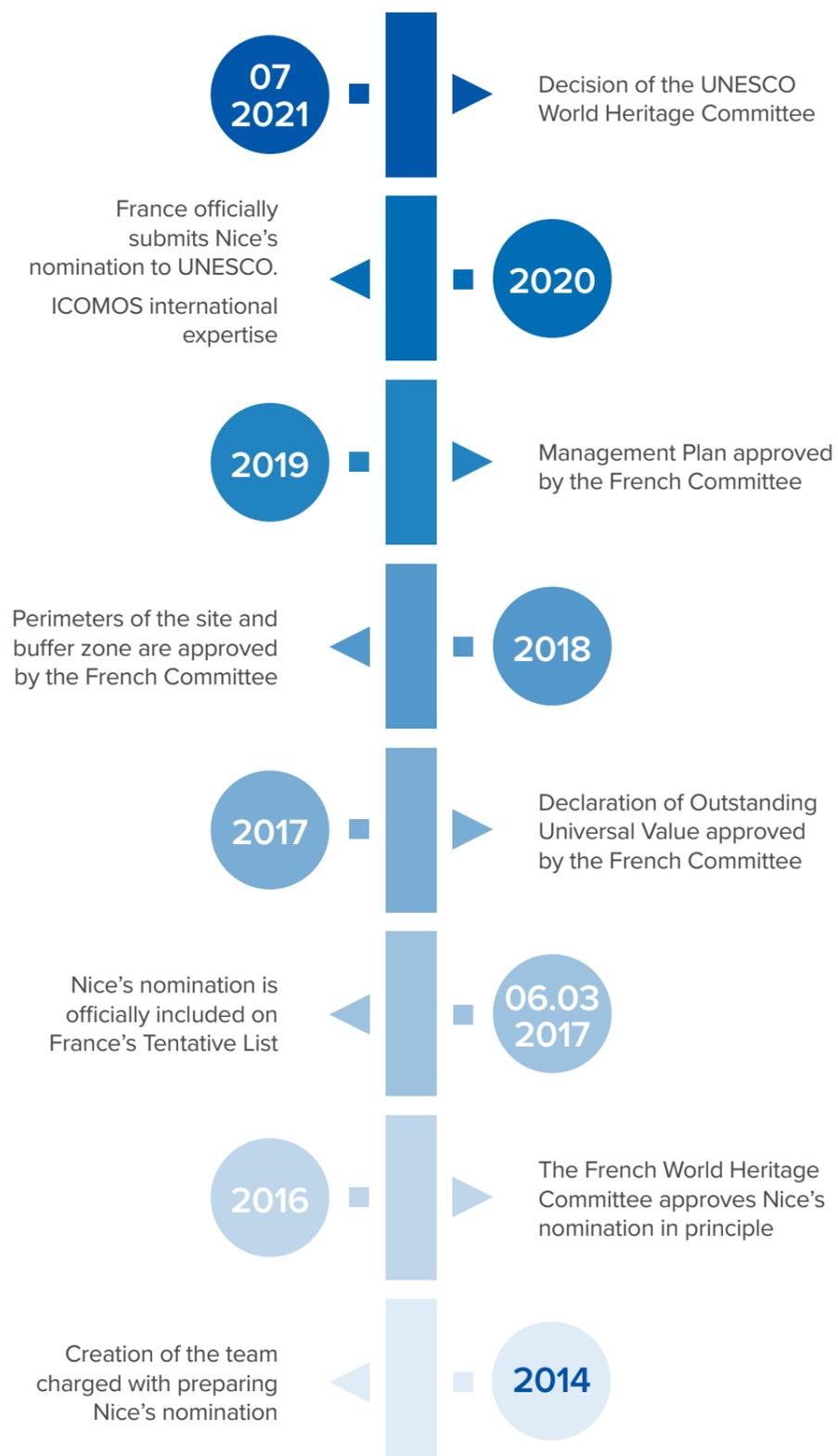
### **Statements of Ministers for Europe and Foreign Affairs and of Culture published on 13 January 2020:**

With the nomination of Nice, the French model of cultural, heritage and tourism development is brought to the fore. Nice's inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List will raise the cultural profile and attractiveness of France as a whole.

**Jean-Yves Le Drian**, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs

Nice's nomination, which we have decided to submit this year, is profoundly original. It underlines the heritage value of a previously unknown form of urban development: cosmopolitan and leisure-focused. From the late 18<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Nice was the scene of the invention of an important aspect of modern life.

**Franck Riester**, Minister of Culture





# The Outstanding Universal Value

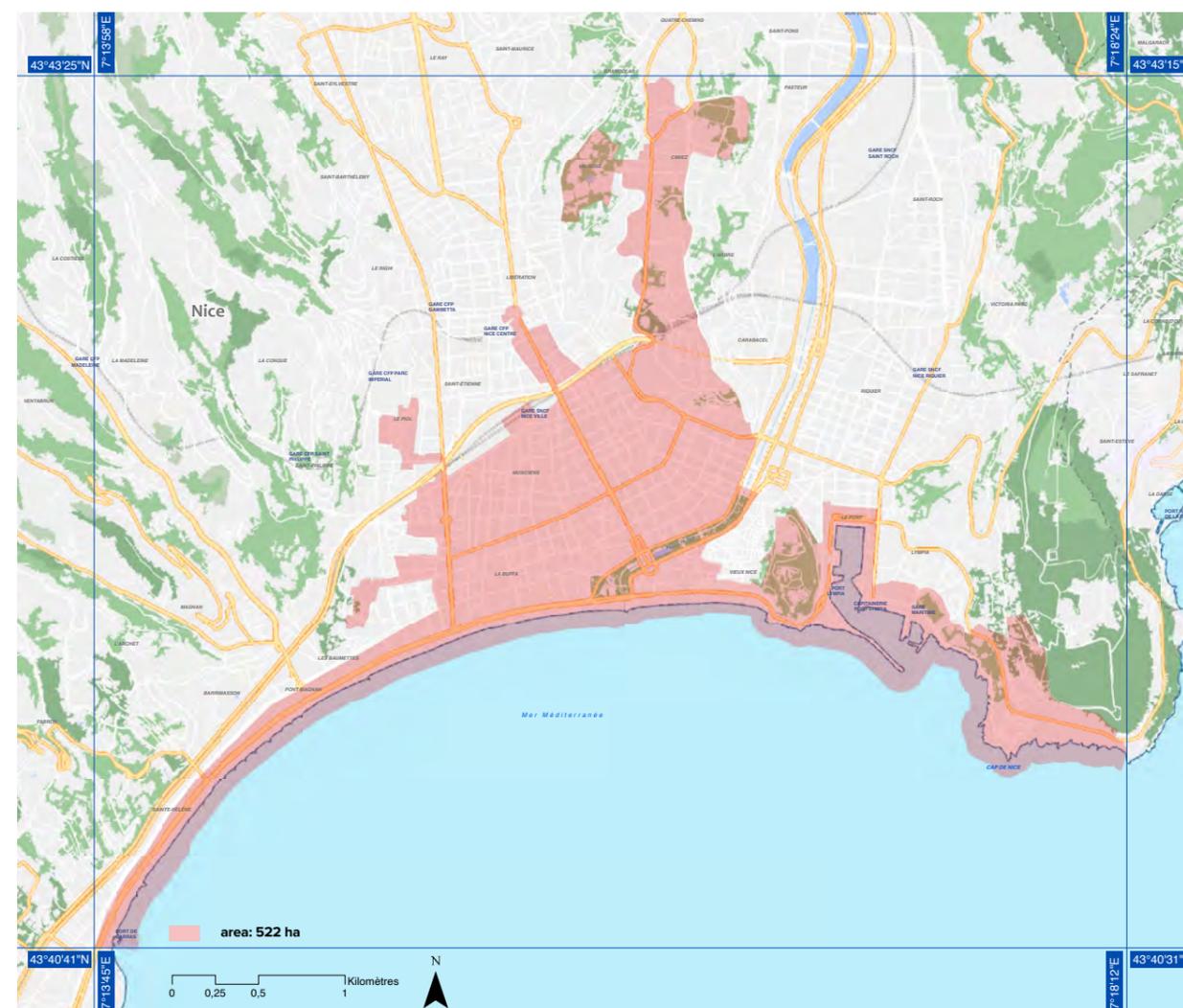
According to *The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation* of the World Heritage Convention, to be inscribed on the World Heritage List, a site must display «Outstanding Universal Value». This is a statement which demonstrates that the property has an exceptional cultural significance that transcends national boundaries and has an invaluable importance for present and future generations of all of humanity. To justify this Outstanding Universal Value, Nice nomination dossier relied on criterion (ii) among the 10 selection criteria set by UNESCO.

The Winter Resort Town of Nice reflects the fusion of international cultural influences. The attributes of its Outstanding Universal Value (O.U.V.) appear essentially on the buildings, with the variety of architectural styles and decors, as well as through the specific uses and functions: hotels, villas, leisure rental buildings, opera house, casinos and places of worship of foreign communities. The urban and landscape design associated with this period (walks, parks, viewpoints and panoramas, acclimatization of exotic species...) and the perspectives that create a permanent visual link between the city and its geographical setting (sea and mountain) complete this archetypal Resort Town of the Riviera.

## Criterion (ii) :

To exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design.

Surface area of the site inscribed on the World Heritage List:  
522 hectares





# Object of the inscription

## Nice, Winter Resort Town of the Riviera



> Nice, Hugo d'Alesi. French Railway Company «Paris-Lyon-Méditerranée». 112 x 78 - BE - Poster, SNCF Historical Archives Centre.

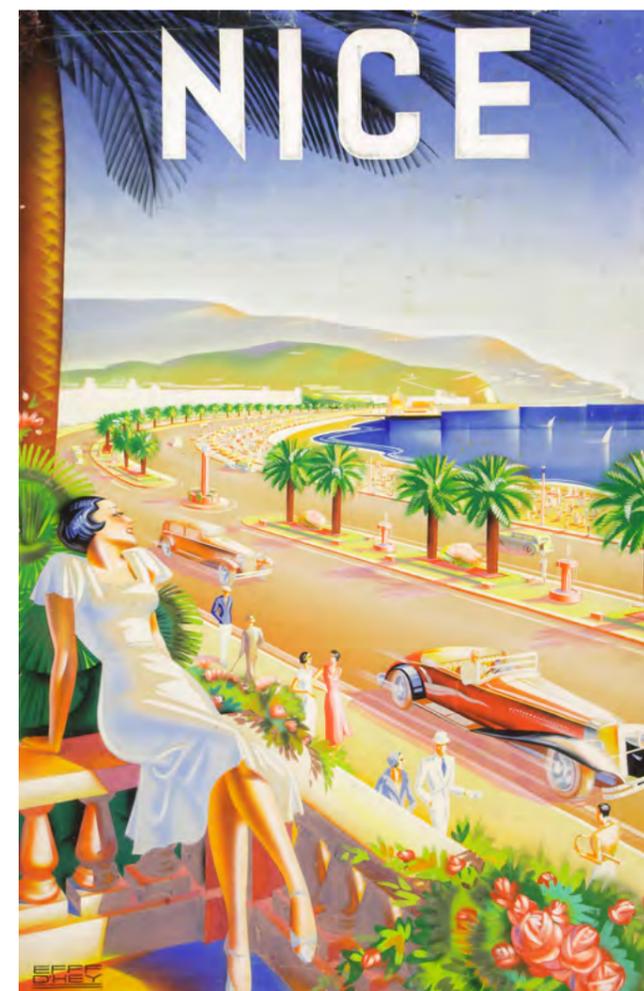
A number of early forms of tourism (sometimes referred to as “proto-tourism”) became widespread in the 18th century – water cures, climate or seaside tourism, mountain sojourns – which, after a series of mutations, gave rise to contemporary forms of tourism.

Nice saw the development of a specific form of this activity, the riviera «villégiature», motivated, to begin with on the climate, and later, on the seaside.

Derived from the Latin *ripa* meaning shore, “riviera” is the Italian word used from the 17th century onwards to denote the area between the Apennines and the sea, the length of the territory of the Republic of Genoa and, more specifically, the coastal strip demarcated to the east by the River Magra (near La Spezia) and to the west by the Var.

In the late 18th century, Nice became the first site along this coastline – which until then was renowned for being inhospitable and inaccessible – where winter tourism began to develop. Thus it was in Nice that the attractions of what was to become “the Riviera” in the later sense of the word were first discovered: the uniquely picturesque landscapes owing to the proximity of mountain and ocean, the mild winter climate, the exotic vegetation and even, to some degree, the distinctive local way of life. In the second half of the 19th century, other resorts would develop along the coast of Liguria (the Italian Riviera), Dalmatia (the Austrian Riviera, around Opatica), Crimea (Yalta) and around the Alpine lakes. The term “Riviera” therefore denotes a particular form of spatial organisation which began in Nice and spread to other coasts, anticipating what were to become popular tourist destinations in the 20th century, made accessible by the development of transport.

This riviera «villégiature» led to the growth of a burgeoning town in Nice which, by the turn of the 20th century, had earned the title of “winter capital” principally due to the increasing numbers of people who sojourned there each year: 150 000 by 1900. No other holiday resort at the time achieved such numbers.



> Nice by Eff d'Hey, Poster, 1935, Massena Museum, Nice

The second reason was the cosmopolitanism of the population, beginning with the English, then Russians and nationals of the German and Austro-Hungarian empires, and going on to include visitors from all over Europe and the Americas. This extraordinary density would lead to a distinctive urban décor, projecting over a vast area (the area of the nominated historical urban landscape covers nearly 522 hectares) an impressive array of hotels, villas and luxurious leisure apartments, the number of which is not to be found in the other resort towns.



# Description of the inscribed property

## The specific attributes of the site



> Masséna museum

With the inscription on the World Heritage List, the city of Nice offers to the attention of the universal heritage consciousness an exceptional urban landscape, born from the appearance and then the development of the winter resort of riviera. The property is characterized by attributes, the first of which is the use made of an exceptional site and its mild and sunny climate. The second attribute is the distinctive urban development that arose from the growing tourism economy leading to the city's outward expansion from its historic core. The third is the choice of abundant and varied vegetation designed to enhance the urban landscape and its exoticism. The fourth attribute is the architectural heritage associated with tourism infrastructure and accommodation, which exhibits many stylistic influences owing to the cosmopolitan nature of the city. Finally, the last attribute is characterized by the artistic and literary wealth of Nice, as a place of creation and a source of inspiration.



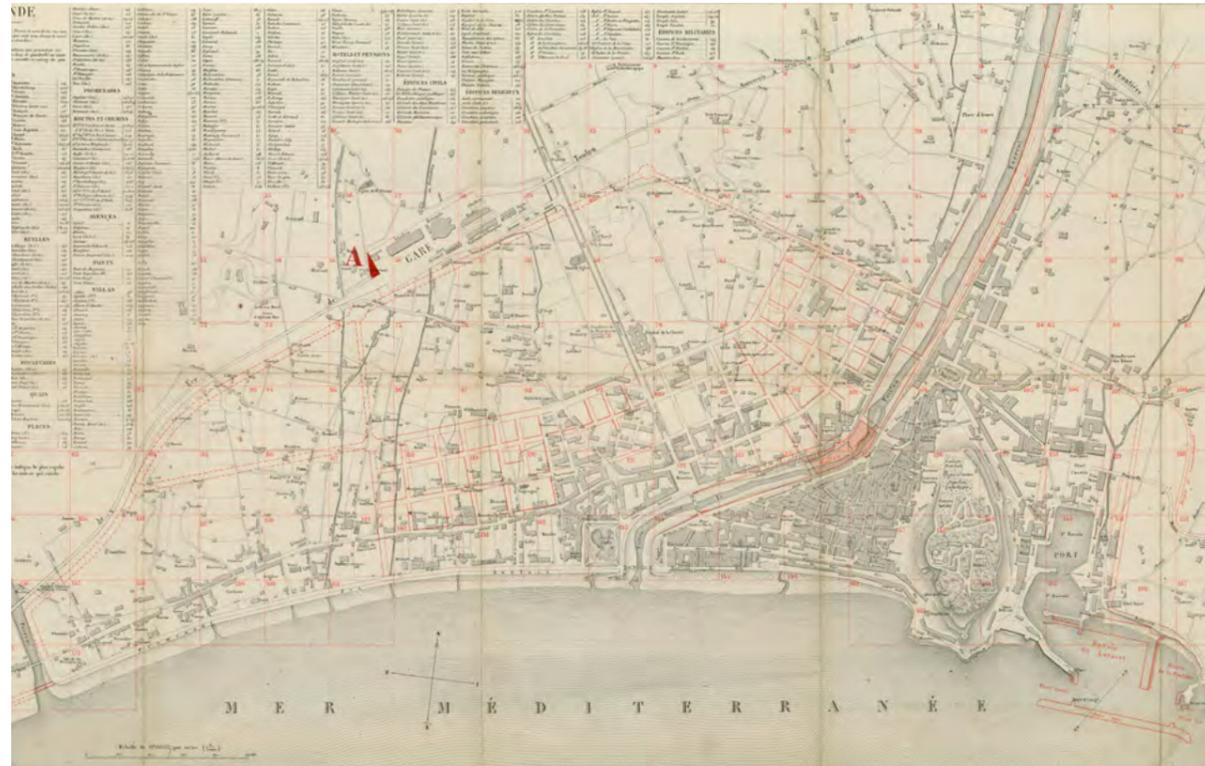
> View from Mont Boron

## ■ THE ORIGINAL LANDSCAPE

The sweeping curve of the hills around the Baie des Anges, the grandiose mountain backdrop, the sea, and the mild, sunny climate were the ingredients behind Nice's popularity, and they remain its principal asset. These features of the site and the climate, which had been attracting people to Nice since the 18th century, would become emblematic of the Riviera landscape in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.



> View from Castle Hill (Terrasse Nietzsche)



> Map of the city of Nice showing the urban structure planned by the Consiglio d'Ornato (1830-60), Nice, Bibliothèque du Chevalier de Cessole

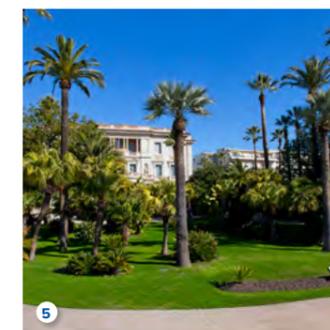
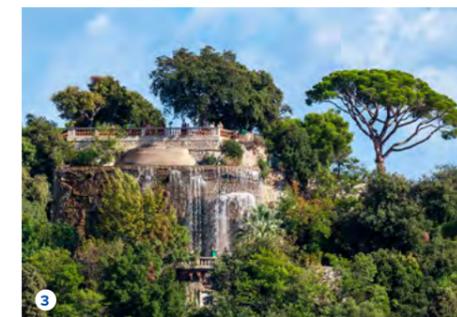
## ■ URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Conceived in the late 18th century as an extension to the original urban core, with the idea of embellishment at its heart, the layout of the central plain was intended to control urban development linked to the growth of Nice as a holiday destination. It took the form of a grid fanning out from sea and the historic town structure, and was designed to enhance the site with long, straight vistas between the sea and the mountains. From 1831, the Consiglio d'Ornato (town-planning committee) drew up rules aimed at creating an attrac-

tive, harmonious city, enhanced with promenades. The idea of promenades, along wide boulevards bordered with hotels or shops, or along the seafront or riverbanks, had been conceived in the late 18th century, with the Promenade des Ponchettes, intended to attract foreigners and encourage them to stay through amenities that catered for their tastes all year round (pergolas, belvederes, etc.). The most emblematic of these promenades is the Promenade des Anglais.

## ■ URBAN VEGETATION

Nice's present-day flora originates from the embellishment of the city in the early 19th century, with exotic species like the palm trees bordering the seafront and native varieties like the pines capping the hills to the east. The agricultural and pastoral landscape was replaced by a carefully laid-out, Arcadian landscape, with many thoroughfares enhanced with set-back verges lined with plants and trees. The city also comprises public and private parks and squares. A hundred or more noteworthy trees from that period still dot the urban landscape. The creation in 2013 of a vast botanical garden on the covered section of the River Paillon continued this tradition.



1. Double line of palm trees on the Promenade des Anglais; 2. Carabacel hillside; 3. Castle Hill waterfall; 4. Promenade du Paillon; 5. South garden of Villa Masséna; 6. Villa Les Marguerites; 7. Palais Langham





## ■ AN OUTSTANDING ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

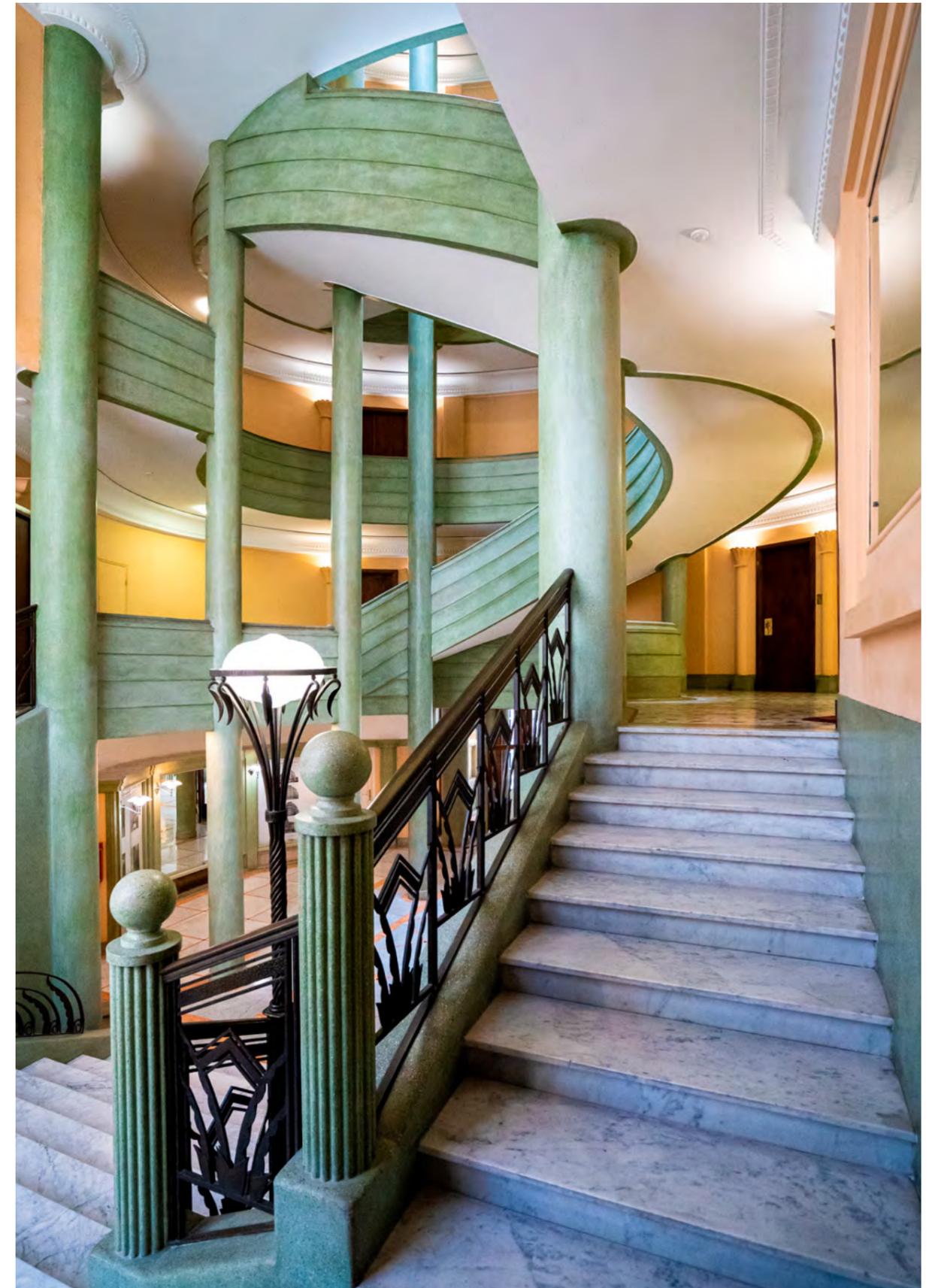
*The specific architectural features which express the cosmopolitan character of the winter resort*

Across all the stylistic expressions of Nice's architectural heritage – from neo-classicism to eclecticism, Art Nouveau and Art Deco, to the beginnings of 20th century modernism – constants are to be found.

Firstly, the international influences that bear witness to the cosmopolitanism of this urban archetype of «villégiature». These influences are accentuated by the fact that the patrons of these constructions and their architects also came from many different backgrounds. They have been enriched with the specific know-how of Italian artisans (colored plasterworks, painted friezes, sgraffito, etc.). In addition, Nice's heritage bears the typical building components of the riviera «villégiature» (belvederes, large roof overhangs, bow windows, loggias, luxurious materials and decorations ...). It's even the names of the building, which evoke cosmopolitanism, the good air, the beautiful views, the prestige... This urban landscape of riviera villegiature, – this city of leisure which should not resemble industrial or purely functional cities – intends to express everywhere a certain kind of lifestyle, exoticism and well-being.



1. Belvedere of the Château de l'Anglais; 2. Château de Valrose; 3. Palais Juliette; 4. Detail of Garacci-Bensa building; 5. Palais Tony Pin; 6. Detail of Palais Semiramis; 7. Former Hôtel Alhambra



> Stairwell of the Gloria Mansions building



The extraordinary abundance of accomodation and meeting places

> **Villas** are the oldest type of tourism accomodation. They still number in their hundreds, with some in the city centre, while most are up in the hills and along the seafront. The oldest stands on the Promenade des Anglais; built on the seafront by Lady Penelope Rivers, it dates from 1787. The vast majority of the villas date from the turn of the 20th century, and the urban landscape and hillsides are dotted with some fine examples of Art Deco, modernist and contemporary architecture.



1. Villa Marichu on Cap de Nice; 2 and 4 Villas on Boulevard Edouard VII; 3. Villa Rivers, today called Furtado-Heine; 5. Villa Fiorentina; 6. Villa Rachel; 7. Château de l'Anglais on Mont Boron; 8. Villa Pollux

> **Immeubles d'agrément** are the most widespread type of accommodation. Scarcely found in the standard inventories of holiday resorts, these distinctive blocks of holiday flats characterise Nice's heritage and are found in large numbers here. Characteristic of the urban landscape of the city centre, their ornate façades recall those of hotels, since both shared the same goal of attractiveness. In Nice, they are often named "palais", "palace", "palazzo".



1. Palais Hongran; 2. Palais Paschetta; 3. Palais Alice; 4. La Couronne; 5. Rue de l'Hôtel des Postes; 6. Palais Mary and Capitole; 7. Palais Mozart; 8. Palais Juliette; 9. Palais Fomitcheff



> **Hotels and guesthouses** emerged in the late 18th century, as transport improved and sojourns became shorter. The emergence of Grand hotels (substantial hotels) in the 19th century, followed by palaces (luxury hotels), completes the picture of tourist accommodation. There are more than 450 historic hotels (dating from 1835 to 1949) still standing within the limits of the proposed World Heritage Site, most of which are Grand hotels and palaces. Some have been converted, but a third still function as hotels.



1. Hôtel Negresco; 2. Grand Hôtel Masséna; 3. Former Excelsior Régina Palace; 4. Former Hôtel Riviera Palace; 5. Former Grand Hôtel des Palmiers

> **Meeting places** are also evidence of the city's time-honoured vocation as a tourist destination. Ten or more places of worship of foreign communities (Greek or Russian Orthodox, Anglican, German or American Protestant, etc.) are to be found in the urban landscape of the city centre. In some cases adjoined by gardens or cemeteries, they remain today a focus of historical and human values. Entertainment venues also help to forge the image of the city centre and the seafront, by their sheer number and quality – examples include the opera house, the Château de Valrose concert hall and the Palais de la Méditerranée – as do department stores and luxury boutiques, many of which have reserved their original shopfronts.



1. Private beaches on Promenade des Anglais; 2. Saint-Nicolas Orthodox cathedral; 3. Nice-Ville railway station; 4. Diving board at La Réserve; 5. Former "À La Riviera" department store; 6. Opera house, south facade; 7. Palais de la Méditerranée casino



## ARTISTIC AND LITERARY PORTRAYALS OF NICE

Nice has attracted **many writers, artists and filmmakers** who, like the tourists, come in search of the beauty of the Riviera landscape, the pleasant climate, the quality of the air and light, and also the atmosphere of freedom that is characteristic of a city devoted to leisure and frequented by the world's cosmopolitan elites.

A number of important works have ties with the city, either because they refer to Nice specifically or because they were created there, as Nietzsche's philosophical novel "Thus Spoke Zarathustra". Painters like J.M.W. Turner, Edvard Munch, Marc Chagall, Raoul Dufy and Max Beckmann have depicted it. A great many writers have mentioned Nice in their books or letters.



> Raoul Dufy  
La Baie des Anges, Nice, 1929. Huile sur toile  
© Bridgeman Images / Adagp, Paris, 2021.

*There are two cities in Nice, the old city and the new city, l'antica Nizza and the new Nice: the Italian Nice and the English Nice.*

**Alexandre Dumas, Impressions de voyage, 1851**

*"Under Nice's halcyon skies, I discovered the third book of Zarathustra. Many hidden spots and heights in Nice's landscape are made holy to me by unforgettable moments."*

**Friedrich Nietzsche, Ecce homo, 1888**

*The blue-glinting sea is ruffled by a mild, surly breeze. On days such as this, the French Riviera is sad and edgy. The gigantic palm trees: dusty. Orphaned, the famous Promenade des Anglais [...] All languish after the next season, when the foreigners will at last return, and the money will flow once more.*

**Endre Ady, The Riviera in Autumn, Budapesti Hirlap, 25/09/1904**

*Every morning at eleven, invariably, he arrived on the Promenade des Anglais at the time of the greatest crowds. Under the double row of palm trees bordering the sea, people different nationalities and languages, who had come to Nice to spend the winter, gathered little by little. The dense and moving azure of the Baie des Ages was interrupted where the sun's radiance was reflected, in a throbbing golden triangle whose summit leaned on the coast, while through the still blue of the sky the white fleeced clouds glided. A spring illusion rejuvenated this crowd during the hours of sunshine.*

**Vicente Blasco Ibañez – The old man of the Promenade des Anglais – 1921**

From as early as the late 19th century, the quality of the light offered to the **city a cinematographic** destiny. Its tourism infrastructure and outwardlooking perspective have also contributed to making Nice a film subject, its image reproduced and glorified the world over. That destiny was consolidated in 1919 with the creation of Studios de la Victorine. In all, over a thousand films have been made in Nice, and the city is at the heart of movies as different as *À propos de Nice* (Jean Vigo, 1929), *La Baie des Anges* (Jacques Demy, 1962), *La Nuit Américaine* (François Truffaut, 1972) or *Magic in the Moonlight* (Woody Allen, 2014). Among all these works, whose creation is inseparable from the periods spent in Nice by their creators, stands out the long Nice period of the pictorial work of Henri Matisse, to which the city has dedicated a museum.



> Henri Matisse,  
Poster Nice, Travail & Joie, 1949,  
lithography on paper.  
Archives Henri Matisse  
© Succession H. Matisse

*« When I realized that every morning I would see this light again, I couldn't believe how lucky I was »*

**Henri Matisse, 1917**

*[...] And just before evening of the following, perfectly summery day – the station at Nice, the seasonal throng on its platforms... In the blue dusk, when right as far as Cap d'Antibes, melting away like an ashen spectre in the west, there stretched in a curved diamond chain innumerable waterside lights, he stood in just a tailcoat on the balcony of his room in a hotel on the promenade, thinking of how it was minus twenty degrees in Moscow [...]*

**Ivan Bunin (Nobel Prize in literature), Dark Avenues, 1940**

*The well-heeled French and British who frequented the Riviera in winter would rather die than be seen there in summer. They found the place too hot, but to us Americans, the temperature was perfect, the bathing delightful.*

**John Dos Passos, The Best Times, 1966**

*During the day, the rain on the Promenade des Anglais, on the pale buildings and the palm trees, made our hearts sink. It soaked the walls, and before long the pastry-shop colors and ridiculous décor were completely sodden. Nightfall wiped out this desolation, with the streetlamps and the neon.*

**Patrick Modiano (Nobel Prize in literature), Sundays in August, 1986**



# A responsibility for the future

According to the World Heritage Committee, the objective of inscription on the World Heritage List is to “**recognize and protect sites that are outstanding demonstrations of human coexistence with the land as well as human interactions, cultural coexistence, spirituality and creative expression**”.

It is for the State on whose territory the site and the buffer zone around it are situated, and locally, for the management institutions, to protect the site in the first instance, under the watchful eye of the international community. For that reason, a Local Committee for the site, chaired by the Mayor, must be set up following inscription. The State must then submit regular reports to UNESCO on the condition of the inscribed properties.

The system for managing the site should draw on the most appropriate regulatory protection tools and on all public and private stakeholders who could have an impact on the site’s characteristic attributes.

Inscription confers considerable prestige on a property, given the recognition of its value by the international community. It also brings greater public

awareness of the site and its outstanding qualities, thereby favouring the development of tourism.

The strategy proposed is therefore based on existing rules and mechanisms, which it reinforces, for instance through specific new local, national, European and international partnerships, complementary **regulatory heritage protections** (in particular, with new listings as historic monuments) and, above all, the creation of an **Outstanding Heritage Site**, in accordance with Law No 2016-925 on freedom of creation, architecture and heritage. The protected area encompasses the entire site and is subject to the rules applicable to buildings and public spaces grouped together in an architectural and heritage enhancement plan.

Various points of the management plan of the inscribed site tie in with other local policies (sustainable development and economic development planning, etc.), because in Nice the overall landscape, public spaces and built heritage are key to any development strategy, and have been for more than two centuries.

**Map of the core and buffer zones**  
Surface area of the core zone: 522 hectares  
Buffer zone: 4 243 hectares  
Total: 4 765 hectares





> Palais Tony Pin



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town of the riviera



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