

Press pack

*Hyères - Côte d'Azur
and the Golden Isles: Porquerolles, Port-Cros & Le Levant*

5 good reasons to come to Hyères...

LOCATION



Located at
the heart of
Provence
and
French Riviera

The Golden
Isles
archipelago

Porquerolles, Port-Cros,
and Le Levant

40 km
(25 miles)
of coast

beaches, cliffs
and coves

MILD CLIMATE



Up to 300 days
of sun per year

Ville Fleurie

A garden city
with flowers
all year long

Year round
activities

AN UNTOUCHED NATURE



A Marine
National Park

Port-Cros
Porquerolles

Giens

& its peninsula,
a double tombolo
and saltmarshes

27,000 ha
of water

115 ha
of wild areas

AN EXCEPTIONAL HERITAGE



2,400 years
of history

An archaeological
site

VILLES
& PAYS
D'ART &
D'HISTOIRE

Ville d'Art
& d'Histoire

(a French label awarding
the heritage and nature)

Jardin
remarquable

4 exceptional
gardens

open to the public
all year-round.

ART DE VIVRE



the ideal
starting point
for your tour of Provence

Provençale
"Cuisine"

A lush land

orchards, vineyards



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HYÈRES, *between sky & sea*

Landing on its Mediterranean shores in the 4th century B.C., the Greeks name it "The Blessed Olbia". The modern name 'Hyères' comes into use in 963 and designates an ensemble of salt marshes, fisheries and an abbey. In the 11th century, the Knights of Fos build a fortified castle on the hill. A medieval city placed under the authority of the Count of Provence expands on its slopes and is regularly host to aristocratic and crowned visitors seeking warmth amidst the European winter.

In the 18th century, Hyères becomes the favoured winter retreat for a cultural and political elite, including many writers. Queen Victoria sojourns there in 1892. Throughout the years, the town has enjoyed an exceptionally mild climate and a varied biodiversity. The natural beauty of the Golden Isles archipelago with its turquoise waters and an exceptionally rich soil participate to Hyères' strong appeal on visitors. Located between Marseilles and Saint-Tropez, the oldest sea resort on the Côte d'Azur is now host to a myriad of international events in fields as diverse as sailing, photography, contemporary fashion and design.

AN EXCEPTIONAL NATURAL HERITAGE



Located at the extreme south of Provence, Hyères stretches between sky and sea. This vast territory is famous for its varied land, marine and submarine landscapes and for its mild climate.

THE LEGEND OF THE GOLDEN ISLES

The Hyères-born writer Gustave Roux recalls the legend surrounding the Golden Isles - or "Stoichades" (the aligned ones).

Prince Olbianus had four daughters whom he loved dearly and whose beauty matched their skills and accuracy. They were excellent swimmers and would often venture swimming off the coast. One day, as they were bathing away from the shore, a pirate ship appeared on the horizon. The prince, their father called for them to return hastily but the foreign ship was nearing fast. In despair, the prince fell to his knees and begged the Gods to spare his daughters. The Gods were moved by his request and just as the pirates were about to catch up with them, the four daughters felt their limbs stiffen and their bodies turn to stone. The three sisters who were the furthest away from the shore became the islands archipelago known as the Golden Isles. The youngest daughter who was closer to the coast turned to stone as she desperately tried to reach her father's arms. She became the Giens peninsula.



MARINA / PORQUEROLLES



NOTRE-DAME BEACH / PORQUEROLLES



HARBOUR / PORT-CROS



LITTORAL PATH / LE LEVANT

PORQUEROLLES

4 MILES LONG,
1.9 MILES WIDE, 2,500 YEARS OF HISTORY...

Ever since the Celts first moored on the southern part of the island, Porquerolles has witnessed the passage of numerous civilisations. Primarily used as a place of trade and agriculture, the island undergoes industrial development with the construction of a sodium factory in the 19th century. For centuries, the island changes hands until François Fournier, having made his fortune in foreign gold and silver mines in Mexico, buys Porquerolles in 1912 as a wedding present to his young wife.

Porquerolles is located at the core of the Port-Cros National Park whose mission is to protect natural and cultural diversity. With 37 miles of sign-posted footpaths, lanes and tracks, the island's three vineyards, four plains and long sandy beaches can only be accessed on foot or by bicycle.

PORT-CROS

UNTOUCHED JEWEL IN THE HEART OF THE NATIONAL PARK...

Port-Cros owes its modern name to the hollow shape of its harbour.

It is the smallest of the three islands – 2 miles long and 1,4 miles wide – but also the highest (194 metres) and most mountainous. The island's past is a stormy one. For centuries, it is ransacked by pirates mooring on its coasts until French King Francis the 1st turns it into a marquisate.

Port-Cros has a unique flora and is a crucial shelter for many bird species. The island is also the 1st Maritime National Park in Europe.

With exceptional landscapes, a diverse flora and fauna, a rich history and architectural heritage, Port-Cros is an exceptionally preserved destination. Nowadays, no vehicle is allowed on the island. Nature reigns undisturbed but by the intermittent hiker.

Port-Cros is also famous for its literary visitors. In the 1920 s., the island becomes a favoured holiday destination among French intellectuals, especially the circle of the Nouvelle Revue Française. In 1925, the journal's editor Jean Paulhan rents a fort on the island. Schlumberger, Supervielle, Malraux, Gide, Arland as well as the poet Saint-John Perse regularly visit Port-Cros.

L'ÎLE DU LEVANT

A NATURIST HAVEN

The main part (90 %) of Le Levant belongs to the French army and is used as a launching base for submarine missiles. However, if the island is so famous, it is not so much for its military prowess than thanks to the Drs Gaston and André Durville who, in 1931, created on the other side of the island the Domain of Heliopolis (the city of the sun), a community celebrating a new mode of harmonious living based on nudism, self-respect, respect of others and Nature. Spanning over 197 acres, the island's lush vegetation counts some of the most beautiful arbutus trees in Europe. Le Levant is a naturist paradise: it is allowed to walk naked everywhere except for a few public spaces like the harbour and the village square.

AN EXCEPTIONAL NATURAL HERITAGE



GIENS PENINSULA: DOUBLE TOMBOLO & SALT MARSHES

Although Giens used to be an island, it is now linked to the mainland by a double strip of sand dunes on each side of the central salt marshes. Almost unique in the world, the geological formation of the 'double tombolo' was created by the accumulation of deposits from the two nearby rivers Gapeau and Roubaud and by the existence of favourable sea currents. The central Pesquiers pond and the Redon marsh cover nearly 1,360 acres. Until 1995, the Compagnie du Midi used to exploit half this surface to produce 30,000 tons of salt yearly. In 2001, the marshes became the property of the Coastline Conservatory. It is now managed by the regional association Toulon Provence Méditerranée (TPM) with the technical and scientific assistance of Port-Cros National Park and has received the protection label "humid zone of national importance". Hyères' salt marshes have been recognised as one of the most remarkable natural landscapes in the Var region; however they remain a fragile ecosystem used as a temporary halt for migratory birds and a permanent shelter for sedentary species. Colonies of pink flamingos live there and over 260 other bird species have also been spotted around the salt marshes, including puffins, pied avocets, grey plovers and black-winged stilts.

The Giens peninsula also shelters several traditional fishermen's harbours. Among them: La Madrague where typical fishing barks known as 'pointus' moor between two sea expeditions, the naturally-protected Niel harbour that is shaded by large parasol pines and the Tour Fondue (literally 'Melted Tower'), the departure place to catch a ferry to Porquerolles. On the western part of the tombolo runs the Almanarre, a long sandy beach stretching over 2.4 miles: a true paradise for windsurf and kite-surf aficionados.



GIENS PENINSULA

PORT-CROS NATIONAL PARK: 1ST EUROPEAN MARITIME PARK

Port-Cros National Park was created on the 14th December 1963 and is one of the oldest National Parks in France. It is also the first European maritime park and in 2001, it received the label ASPIM recognising its Mediterranean importance as a protected area. The park was entirely re-organised in 2012 and it now includes two cores (protected areas and public welcome points) comprising of Port-Cros island, the small classified isles Gabinière and Rascas, Porquerolles' 2,471 acres of natural areas and the coastal waters up to 600 metres from the shore. The National Park is also working on the creation of an expanded territory project that will concern 11 coastal villages. This wider zone will be managed by a Charter (a territorial project inspired by self-sustainable development principles) whose aim will be to maintain balance between economic growth and respect of natural areas. The National Park is also in charge of a Mediterranean National Botanic Conservatory on Porquerolles whose task is to safeguard Mediterranean wild flora and endangered fruit species. In 1997, the National Park received a European label, recognising its crucial role in collaborating between local communities and the natural areas purchased by the Coastal Conservatory on the Giens Peninsula and the Lardier Cape. It also plays a scientific and technical advisory role in the management of the ancient salt marshes. The National Park belongs to Natura 2000, a European network that strives to manage and protect natural habitats and species deemed of 'inter-community' interest. In this spirit, it lobbies for the implementation of heritage measures to manage a pilot site -covering both land and sea- called 'The coast of Hyères and its archipelago'.

Port-Cros National Park is also a founding member of the association MedPAN. Since 1999, it has been in charge of overlooking the French part of the Pelagos sanctuary, a 33,783 square miles Mediterranean protection zone for marine mammals. The sanctuary is the result of a multilateral agreement between France, Italy and Monaco.

Expanding over 4,200 acres of land and 7,166 acres of sea, Port-Cros National Park is a breathing open-air museum. It also boasts since 1963 a submarine discovery trail that places the public's exploration of the underwater world only a mask and snorkel away (the submarine trail is 200 metres long and includes 6 educational stops along the way).

THE NATIONAL BOTANIC CONSERVATORY IN PORQUEROLLES

The National Botanic Conservatory's biodiversity is truly unique. Created in 1979 and located on the largest of the three islands, its mission is to safeguard Mediterranean flora. Spanning over 444 acres of agricultural soil, it cultivates wild and domesticated local plants such as the Vitex Chaste Tree (also known as Chasteberry) and the nerium oleander. It also looks after a conservation orchard that maintains alive ancient species of fruit trees including fig trees, stone trees and citrus. The Botanic Conservatory is a real research-lab that stocks close to 2000 wild plants seeds. Visiting the National Botanic Garden is a wonderful opportunity for an informative walk in the world of plants and their adaptation abilities.

HYÈRES, A GARDEN ON THE CÔTE D'AZUR



ST-CLAIRE GARDEN

Hyères is not only rich in preserved natural areas, it also cultivates a taste for domesticated gardens and orchards. In 1564, Queen Catherine of Medici, while on a Grand Tour, visits Hyères with her son Charles IX and falls in awe with the town's fruit and citrus trees that remind her so much of her native Italy. She receives the authorisation to build a royal residence in Hyères surrounded by orange groves but the project remains unfinished. Less than a century later, the bishop Capissuchi de Bologna offers a nursery of orange trees to the king Louis XIV (the very same trees now in front of the Park Hotel in the city centre). In the 19TH century botanic-crazed patrons take advantage of the climate to introduce tropical species that flourish in the local gardens.

HYÈRES RECEIVED THE HIGHEST RANK OF THE FRENCH LABEL “TOWN OF FLOWERS”

AND IS HOME TO 4 OF THE 10 “REMARKABLE GARDENS” PRESENT IN THE VAR.

GARDEN OLBIOUS RIQUIER

This traditional 19TH century landscaped garden was Olbuis Hippolyte Antoine Riquier's gift to the town in 1868. It comprises of 17 acres of lawns, large trees, winding alleys and even a lake and a greenhouse designed for tropical plants and birds. A convention linking it to Paris' Jardin d'Acclimatation defines the garden as a place to grow, create and study the adaptation of tropical species to the climate of the region. The garden plans were drawn in 1869 by landscape architects Pierre Barillet-Deschamps and Georges Aumont who also worked on many Parisian gardens. Many exotic species of palm trees, bamboos and succulents are found there, as are a small zoo and a playground for children.

PLANTIER DE COSTEBELLE'S PARKLAND,

On this property, Baroness Prailly builds a neo-Palladian villa in 1857 along with a garden rich in indigenous palm trees such as the Phoenix dactylifera designed on the model of these acclimation gardens that were in vogue on the Riviera in the 19TH century. Baroness Prailly is the first to introduce the Yucca filifera, a species that blooms for the first time in France in 1876. Twenty years later, the French Academician and novelist Paul Bourget buys the property. The property that used to be known as the 'Palm Trees Villa' remains one of the rare locations on the coast to grow the Chilean Jubaea.

GARDEN ST-CLAIRE

Located on the heights of the medieval town, this garden communicates via a picturesque trail with the modernist Villa Noailles and the St-Bernard garden. The castle St-Claire belonged at a time to the American writer Edith Wharton who created an impressive ensemble of terrace gardens in which she planted rare subtropical species. Most of them are from South America, Africa and Australia and bloom all through the year like the cycads, birds of paradise, musa trees, coral trees, aloes, yuccas, lantana and a rich collection of salvia.

GARDEN ST-BERNARD,

Surrounding the Villa Noailles, the garden St-Bernard was built between 1924 and 1930 by the villa's architect Robert Mallet-Stevens. A 'cubist garden' was also conceived by architect and landscape designer Gabriel Guevrekian. Under the villa, Charles de Noailles starts working in 1925 on a narrow terrace Mediterranean garden where he cultivates local plants such as lavender and rosemary as well as rarer species like angel's trumpet (datuna), silverberry, bignonia, wisteria, pittosporum, heliotrope, helichrysum italicum. In 1973, the town purchases the garden, which offers an unbeatable view on the entire coast.



« Under my window are where Hyères' gardens start. I say gardens but should really say a forest of orange, pomegranate and lemon trees. The view ends with the sea (...). It would not be possible to find more beautiful and delightful a view. »

Diane de Vichy
Letters to her children, Winter 1767-1768



ST-BERNARD GARDEN

2,400 YEARS OF HISTORY...



OLBIA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE



VIEW FROM GARDEN ST-BERNARD

ANCIENT OLBIA

The Greeks install their initial settlement by the sea in front of the present-day Almanarre beach. They call it "The Blessed Olbia". In the 4th century B.C., it is a military and commercial outpost on the maritime route to Marseille (Massilia). Animal skins, corals, oils, wine and especially salt are traded there. In the 2nd century A.D. the Romans establish the nearby galley halt of Pomponiana. The Roman town quickly expands and becomes an important spa-equipped town spreading until the Giens peninsula. This National Heritage-classified archaeological site is 66 acres wide and is the only example of a perfectly preserved Greek site on the French coast. It is opened to the public and offers guided tours as well as educational workshops for young groups. Olbia grants unique insight into the remnants of an Ancient town that survived over 500 years, including fortified walls, sewage and pavement infrastructures, residential dwellings, collective wells, sanctuaries and public spas. In the 13th century, an abbey was built on the ruins of this city abandoned in the 4th century A.D.

MEDIEVAL HYÈRES

In the 11th century, the Knights of Fos settle at the top of the Castéou hill (204m high) and build one of the largest fortified castles in Provence whose remnants have been classified as National Heritage. Placed under the rule of the Count Charles 1st of Anjou (1246-1285) during the reign of his brother Louis IX, the town that spreads on the slopes of the hill is a prime example of a medieval fortified village. In 1481, Provence is attached to the Kingdom of France and Hyères is slowly forgotten about until François the 1st visits it in 1529. Charles IX and his mother Catherine de Medici follow suit in 1564. The town is, however, deeply affected by the religious wars in the second half of the 16th century. Later on, the castle is dismantled as a preventive measure against its landlords, the League of the Lords deemed too powerful and rebellious by King Louis XIII (1610-1643). The medieval town centre still shows traces of the three concentric city walls as well as picturesque alleys, fortified gates, passages, staircases, facades, etc.

...AND ARCHITECTURE



KNIGHTS TEMPLAR TOWER

Also called Saint Blaise Tower, the Knights Templar build it in the 12th century for military and religious purposes. These monk-soldiers used to own a large agricultural estate in the nearby Sauvebonne valley. When the Order disbands in 1319, the Malta Order inherits the tower. It also successively serves as a granary hall in the 18th century and as the city's town hall in the 19th century. The tower now regularly hosts temporary exhibitions.



THE CASTLE

One of the largest fortified castles in Provence, it is re-organised by Charles 1st of Anjou in 1527 and ultimately dismantled by Louis XIII in a gesture of authority following the destructive religious wars. The castle has been labelled Historical Monument for its important architectural remnants. It offers a spectacular view onto the coast and the islands.

ST-PAUL COLLEGIATE CHURCH

A Romanesque-style building from the 12th century, its structure is expanded in the 14th century by the construction of a gothic nave. The collegiate church displays an important collection of ex-votos (432 pieces) bearing testimony to 18th religious fervour.



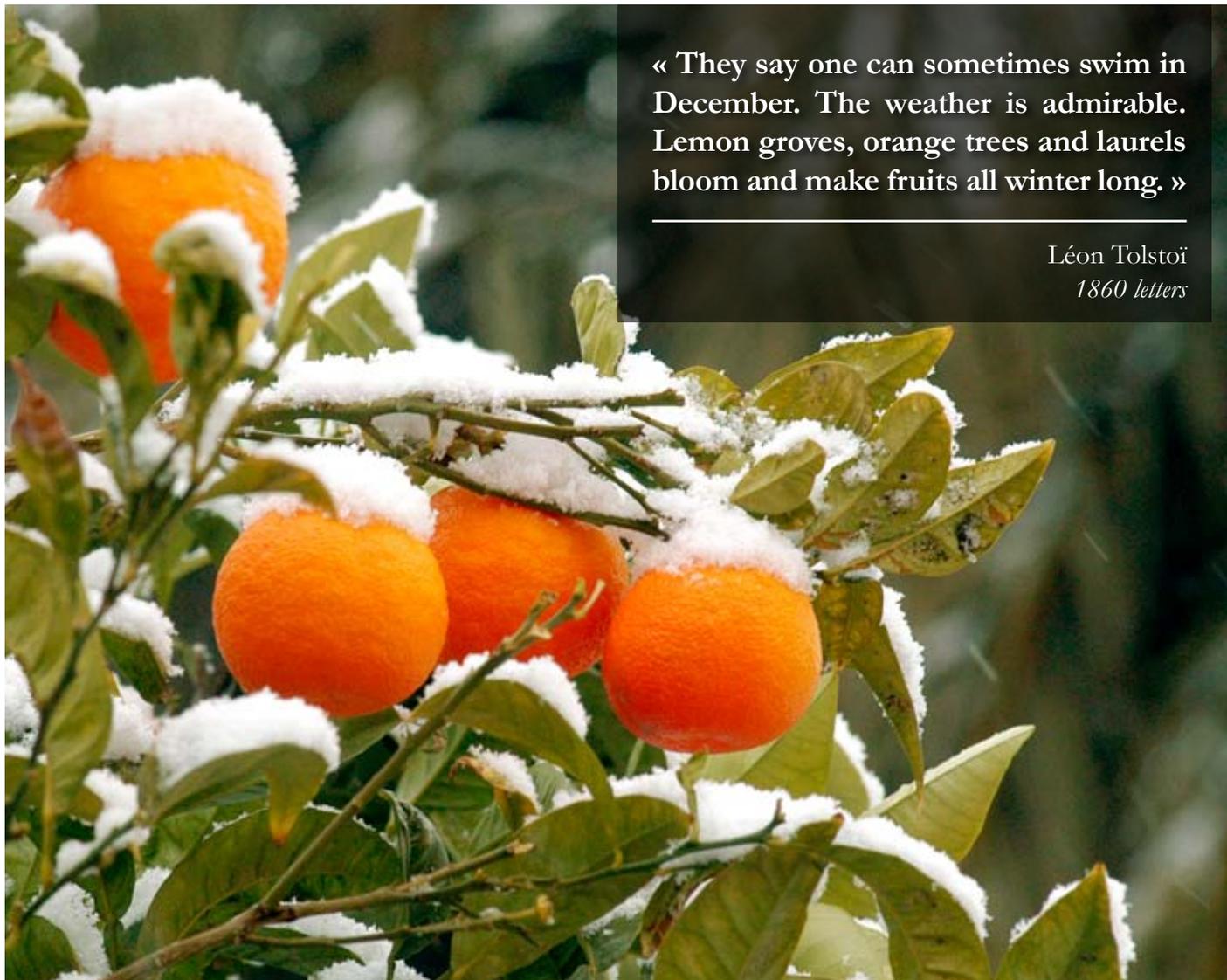
CASTLE ST-CLAIRE

The maritime officer and archaeologist Olivier Voutier – best known for having excavated the Milo Venus – builds this peculiar neo-Romanesque villa. His gravesite can be seen at the top of the gardens close to the medieval tower. A few years later, the American writer Edith Wharton moves into the house and turns it into her own literary and botanical shelter. The building is now home to the offices of the Port-Cros National Park.

ST-LOUIS CHURCH

A mix of Romanesque and Gothic styles, this thirteenth century building offers a beautiful display of 19th c. stained-glass windows produced by the Metz-based Maréchal workshop.

A SEA RESORT IN WINTER...



« They say one can sometimes swim in December. The weather is admirable. Lemon groves, orange trees and laurels bloom and make fruits all winter long. »

Léon Tolstoï
1860 letters

THE 18TH CENTURY BRITISH REBIRTH

In the 18th century, Hyères' mild winters and exotic flora start appealing to foreign visitors. In 1760, infrastructures are developed to welcome an influx of winter tourists coming to Hyères for health reasons. Members of the cultural and political élite of the time converge toward Hyères from every corner of France and Europe, some for temporary stays, others to settle permanently. Illustrious visitors include Talleyrand, the Saxe-Gotha family, the son of King George IIIrd and Pauline Bonaparte, Napoleon's sister. Hyères gains its reputation as one of the most pleasant towns for winter stays and becomes a serious contender for Nice. On the eve of the Revolution, the first seaside resort on the Côte d'Azur reaches a climax of popularity amongst British aristocrats when Queen Victoria comes to sojourn at the Albion Hotel in 1892.



QUEEN VICTORIA



VILLA NOAILLES /VIEW ON HYÈRES



VILLA NOAILLES

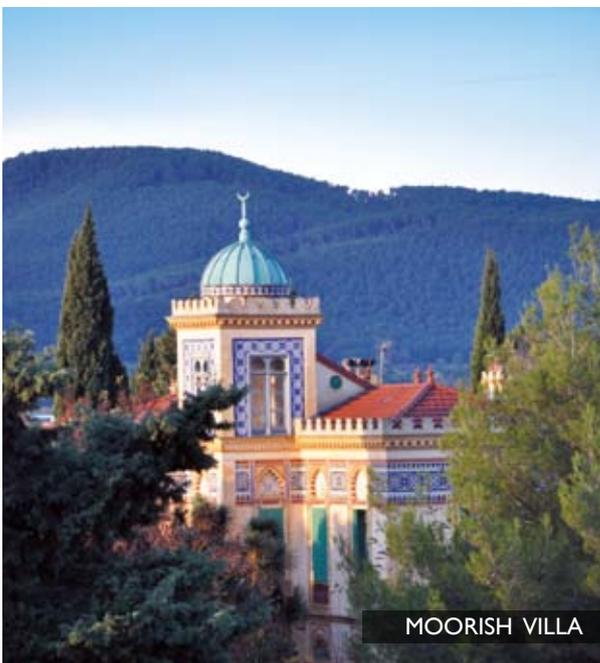
THE LEGACY OF 19TH C. PALACES

In 1875 the arrival of the railway, along with an ambitious architectural programme, mark the start of significant changes in the town. The southern district of Costebelle becomes a touristic and athletic destination while the town also expands eastwards with the construction of beautiful villas on the Venaudo hill starting in 1930. The minds behind this ambitious modernisation of the city's architectural landscape are the entrepreneur Alexis Godillot (known in France for having invented the eponymous military boot) and the architect Pierre Chapoulart. Combining new architectural projects with a complete renewal of the town's urban plan, Godillot and Chapoulart are behind the large palm-tree-lined avenues that, from 1865, criss-cross the city centre, a new building for the national French bank, a casino and a post office completed in 1883. They also install new fountains and build prestigious villas. This building frenzy gives the relatively small town of Hyères (10,000 inhabitants at the time) the air of an aristocratic resort.

Some of Godillot and Chapoulart's outstanding architectural successes include the town's first Grand Hotel and the large caryatid-laden Hotel des Ambassadeurs. To this day, the Moorish villa stands out for the originality of its casted cement and glazed tiles-facade and the Tunisian Villa (1884) remains a striking sight. Other significant buildings from this epoch are the neo-classic Park Hotel surrounded by ancient orange trees and the nearby Rotunda that used to be the Park Hotel's dining room and now host the headquarters of the Tourist Office.

AN ARTISTIC AND LITERARY HEAVEN

The 19th century also constitutes a crucial time for Hyères from a cultural point of view as the town becomes increasingly popular among wealthy and literary visitors such as Alexandre Dumas, Alphonse de Lamartine, Leo Tolstoy, George Sand, Joseph Conrad and Robert Louis Stevenson. The first World War and the 1929 economic crisis put winter tourism to a halt. Palaces that had been converted into hospitals during the war are then purchased by the state or split and sold as individual households. Nonetheless, in the decade known as the 'Golden Twenties', Hyères becomes the epicentre of a dynamic cultural life. The writer and academician Paul Bourget purchases the neo-Palladian Plantier villa and welcomes illustrious guests such as Edith Wharton. Wharton herself is seduced by the town and, in 1927, she buys the castle St-Claire as a retreat to write and do some gardening. In 1923 the Parisian patrons of the arts Marie-Laure and Charles de Noailles commission the construction of a modernist villa to the architect Robert Mallet-Stevens. In the large house that includes an indoor swimming pool, they host the entire cultural and artistic avant-garde of the time: Luis Buñuel, Jean Cocteau, André Breton, Salvador Dalí and Man Ray all spend some time there. The cultural aura surrounding the villa has survived into present times and is now used as a venue for important international events in the fields of fashion, photography, design, architecture and music. A permanent collection opened all year round also grants intimate insight into the life and works of the Noailles.



MOORISH VILLA

HYÈRES' FLOURISHING ECONOMIES: HORTICULTURE AND TOURISM

The town's mild climate is a natural explanation for the development of two types of local activities: agriculture and tourism. As the second world war draws to an end and workers gained the right to paid holidays (in 1936), a new kind of tourism emerges: more working-class and concentrated in the summer months. The construction of a port and an airport, and an exceptionally preserved landscape also help turn Hyères into a major pole of development in the region, especially in the field of horticulture.

56,000 INHABITANTS, 7,000 PALM TREES

Known as a grower of rare and exotic trees, Hyères starts producing trees on an industrial level in 1867. By the 1920s, the production reaches a peak of over 1,250,000 cultivated palm trees exported by rail throughout Europe every year. Nowadays, the yearly production of about twenty different species of palm trees is around 100,000. The Gros Pin nursery has developed a particularly advanced method of 'in vitro' culture. Ten palm tree species are included in the Hyères label including –nobles of all– the Phoenix canariensis which is also the town's symbol.

OTHER CULTURES

Hyères produces remarkable fruits and vegetable, including the aptly named 'purple artichoke'. Local products can be bought directly from the growers at weekly markets taking place throughout the town every week. Some agricultural domains specialise in the production of oil. With 16 vineyards, viticulture is also an important local sector of activity. These vineyards produce the three classical tints (red, rosé and white) according to a traditional terraced-layout and benefit from exceptional weather conditions. Since the creation of a training programme in apiculture in the 1950 s., Hyères has become the breeding and testing ground for nationally recognised honey experts. A new kind of specialist, the 'horticulturist-phytologist' is also working in Hyères these years and is increasingly looking into the nutritious and therapeutic qualities of a plant called 'spirulina'. Such is the art de vivre in Hyères!

FLOWER POWER

In the mid-19th century, local flowers such as the narcissus and the viola begin exporting to the United Kingdom and Germany: a popularity due, to a large extent, to Queen Victoria who was particularly fond of these species. Hyères is the national capital of cut flowers. It is famous since the 1960 s. for its production of roses, dianthus, gerberas, tulips, gladiolus, iris, anemones, birds of paradise and chrysanthemums. Nearly 40 % of the national production of flowers comes directly from Hyères. Hyères-based SICCA is the first one wholesale flower market in France and the third in Europe. It counts over 500 sellers and processes 1,300 transactions every hour.

SCRADH (REGIONAL UNION FOR THE APPLICATION AND DEMONSTRATION OF HORTICULTURE)

Research plays a crucial role in current agricultural practices. In-vitro vegetal breeding, the use of solar panels in greenhouse, vegetal genetics are some of the fields investigated by experts to breed new species. The SCRADH is the regional antenna of the agriculture chamber and of Philaflor, a leading research institute in integrated biological protection of horticulture. Some of their findings on the adaptation of vegetal species to drought conditions can be seen on the avenue Léopold Ritondale at the entrance of Hyères.

WELLNESS THERAPY

On the 8th March 1913, a ministerial decree classifying Hyères as an official hydromineral and climate resort marks the town's transformation into an official destination for healthcare and wellness. Mostly used as sanatoriums until the 1960 s., establishments are converted into therapy centres. Over 3,000 people work all year round in Hyères both in private and medical health centres, hospitals and clinics specialised in physical rehabilitation, thalassotherapy, and balneotherapy.



« Up there, Hyères, green and blossoming / like the Garden of the Hesperides / Hyères, a fruit whose exposed hills turn southward / oranges, pomegranates... »

Frédéric Mistral
1867

HYÈRES' VINEYARD

SEA, SUN AND AMAZING BEACHES

With 25 km of beaches in Hyères, the sea is everywhere and offers a wide selection of activities: swimming and sunbathing of course, but also family picnics, beach games and nautical sports. From the vast expanses of white sand to salvage luscious creeks, there is a beach for everyone here. Thanks to the numerous beaches, it is possible to choose a beach for each day, depending on the wind and time.



A DESTINATION FOR SPORTS



INTERNATIONAL DESTINATION FOR WATER SPORTS

Hyères' large water surface (66,718 acres) – naturally framed in its southern-east end by the Golden Isles – has become an important destination for the practice of sailing and water sports. With over 1,430 permanent moorings, the S^t Pierre marina is one of the most active in the Var region and is complemented by six neighbouring marinas as well as many available mooring spots throughout the Golden Isles. For over 40 years, the French Olympic Sailing Week has taken place in Hyères, remaining faithful to the town's natural beauty, insolation and strong winds. In Spring, the town is also hosting over a week one of the five stages of the ISAF Sailing World Cup: a crucial event in the sailing world calendar with 1,200 participants representing about fifty different countries.

Hyères is the permanent training ground of the French windsurfing team. Since 1998, the 2.5 miles-long Almanarre beach hosts the French Funboarding Cup, a discipline present at the World Cup. Moreover, every year since 2006, aficionados of kitesurfing and windsurfing meet in Hyères for the Ventilo Show. But water sports in Hyères are not only for professionals. All year round, the town offers a wide range of water activities for all levels and ages such as whale-watching in the Pelagos sanctuary, apnoea, scuba and underwater diving, kitesurfing, sailing, windsurfing, funboarding, sea kayaking, stand-up paddle, pirogue, snorkelling, longline fishing with professional fishermen, etc.



DIVING IN HYÈRES

There are over forty diving spots in Hyères and the Golden Isles: all precious entry gates into the wonderful maritime National Park and its mythical shipwrecks scattered at various locations and depths on the underwater bed. For the more advanced divers, a string of shipwrecks can be admired between the Giens peninsula and Le Levant island.

Levels of accessibility differ and a military authorisation is required to explore La Puissante, a striking shipwreck surrounded by posidonia and large noble pen shells. The nearby shipwrecks of Le Donator and Le Grec are also famous diving spots surrounded by a rich underwater flora and fauna. Coloured sea anemones, sponges, spirographis, scorpionfish, eels and groupers share this silent stage. Actually, a famous scene starring a grouper in Jacques Cousteau's 1956 Cannes-prized film *The Silent World* would have been filmed in Port-Cros! Hyères has all the required facilities and equipment to help advanced athletes and amateur visitors catch the perfect shot of their submarine adventure. In Port-Cros, a submarine discovery trail has been created. Accessible to snorkelers, it is a fun family activity and an entertaining way to raise the public's awareness to the necessity of protecting such a fragile ecosystem.



OTHER SPORTS – ON LAND

In 2011, Hyères expanded its cycling network to 58.7 miles of clearly sign-posted lanes used by locals and visitors alike. The town's skate park is also known as one of the best in Europe. The French cycling team regularly trains at the Velodrome that also hosts the track cycling French Cup. The town's state-of-the-art horserace track is the second most important on the Côte d'Azur after Cagnes-sur-Mer. Visitors of all ages and levels can practice horse riding, go karting and tennis. Miles of hiking trails of all levels of difficulties criss-cross the area and run along the coast. The Borrelles valley offers 49 acres of hiking, cycling and fitness trails.

HYÈRES' WAY OF LIFE

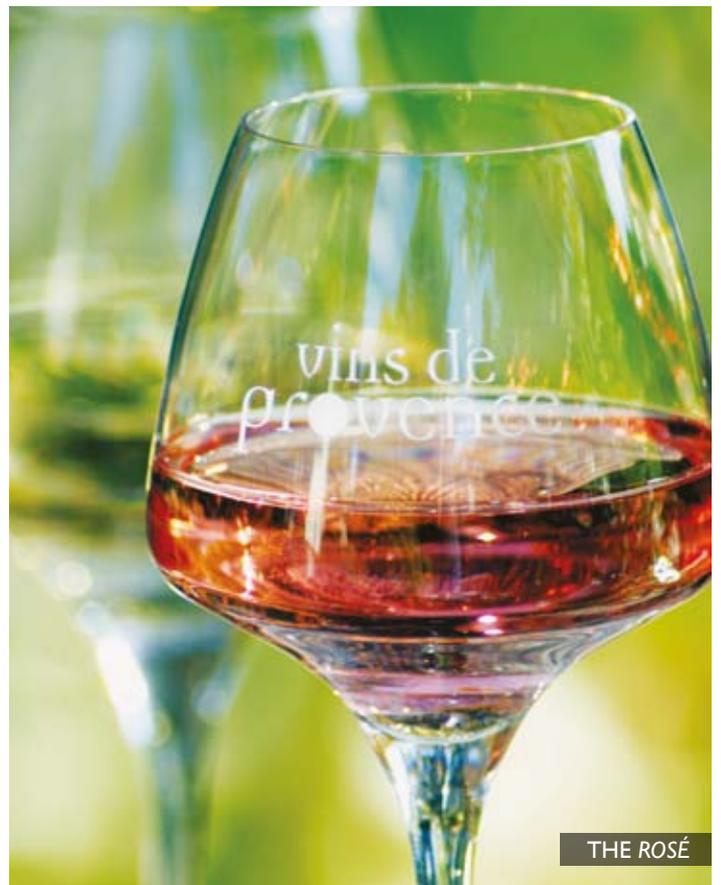


PROVENCAL WAY OF LIFE

Hyères' estimated population of 56,000 inhabitants often doubles in the summer (between July and September).

Responding to the touristic boom of the 1960 s., the town has developed a welcoming, family-friendly type of tourism and offers a wide range of accommodation: large chains or small boutique hotels, all-included residences, bed and breakfasts, guest rooms, campsites and other open-air facilities. Hyères counts 42 hotels, 23 bed and breakfasts, 30 all-inclusive, 34 campsites, 3 holiday villages and 116 seasonal rentals. All in all, this amounts to 25,000 beds, not including the 33,000 beds of holiday houses privately owned. There are, on top of that, over 200 restaurants scattered through the town, many catering a traditional local cuisine.

There are plenty of local gastronomic specialities to try from: the Princesses des Iles d'Or, a chocolate and orange speciality by Dominique, one of the best chocolate craftsmen in France, biscuits, nuts from the Golden Isles, orange-based delicatessen, fresh pasta, bouillabaisse, stuffed Mediterranean vegetables, pistou soup, arbutus jams, figs, honey, chutney, olive oil, artichokes, tapenade, anchoiade, etc. All this to be enjoyed with a glass of wine from one of the town's sixteen vineyards of course...





A MEAL WITH A SEAVIEW

AT HYERES & NOWHERE ELSE...

EVENTS

MARCH

22ND TO 25TH MARCH > GALATHÉA, INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF THE MARITIME WORLD

The festival offers a deeper insight into the fauna, flora, as well as the archaeological vestiges that populate the Mediterranean sea and the littoral that surrounds it. More than 40 stands of associations and institutions, but also of professionals and artists working on the maritime world will be present to exchange with the public.

www.festival-image-hyeres.com

APRIL

21TH & 22ND APRIL > BOOK FESTIVAL

The book festival will count with the participation of more than 120 authors. Conferences and round tables will take place over two days, offering the change for privileged moments of debate and discussion, during which everyone will have the chance to engage with the authors, their works and more largely literature.

www.fetedulivre.hyeres.fr

22ND TO 29TH APRIL > WORLD CUP SERIES

Organised by the French Sailing Association, the ISAF Sailing World Cup brings the best of the sailing world to town. Hyères is one of the five stages of the ISAF World Cup and the only one to be held in France: other ISAF hubs include Qingdao (China), Melbourne (Australia), Miami (USA) and Weymouth and Portland (United Kingdom). The stage includes the participation of about 60 associations, 600 boats and nearly a thousand competitors. Taking place in the beautiful settings of the Hyères bay, the race is one of the most popular on the ISAF circuit. Lasting a week, it offers a rich array of athletic activities.



26TH TO 30TH APRIL > INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FASHION, PHOTOGRAPHY & FASHION ACCESSORIES

Every spring, the International Festival of Fashion and Photography takes over the Villa Noailles. Each year, ten promising stylists from around the world and ten young emerging photographers are selected to showcase their work. Professional fairs and showrooms take place throughout the festival. www.villanoailles-hyeres.com



MAY

10TH TO 13TH MAY > PORQUEROLLES WEEK (regatta)

Organised by the International Yacht Club of Hyères and the Yacht Club of Porquerolles, Porquerolles Week gathers more than 80 boats and renowned sailors in Porquerolles for a regatta around Hyères' Golden islands. On land, various convivial events await the visitors.

26TH & 27TH MAY > THE REED FESTIVAL

This may come as a surprise but the world's most renowned wind instruments' reeds hail from Provençal cane productions. The reed festival not only opens the doors of the best reed making workshops, it also organises basketwork exhibitions, concerts and a clarinet competition. www.festivaldelanche.com



JUNE

1ST JUNE > FONDATION CARMIGNAC: OPENING OF THE PORQUEROLLES ISLAND SITE

Opening of the new Carmignac Foundation on Porquerolles island which will host a valuable collection of contemporary art. www.fondation-carmignac.com

7TH TO 10TH JUNE > PORQUEROLLES CLASSIQUE (regatta)

Large gathering of traditional boats in Porquerolles. Forty of the most beautiful sailing boats of the Mediterranean will compete around the island and in the bay of Hyères.

29TH JUNE TO 1ST JULY > DESIGN PARADE

10 young designers are invited to showcase their work to a jury of internationally renowned professionals. The festival includes a competition, exhibitions and talks. Works remain on show at the Villa Noailles until the end of september. www.villanoailles-hyeres.com

Besides Hyères being one of the most well-known destination for world water sport events, such as the World Cup Series or the Porquerolles' Cup, the city also has to offer a wide range of cultural, fashion, architecture and music events. For more details, feel free to consult our online agenda: www.hyeres-tourisme.com/agenda

JULY

7TH TO 11TH JULY > PORQUEROLLES JAZZ FESTIVAL

Founded by passionate jazzmen in 2002, the Porquerolles Jazz Festival takes place every July on the island. www.jazzaporquerolles.org

20TH TO 22ND JULY > MIDI FESTIVAL

Now in its 14TH season, MIDI Festival has become an important summer event on the French Riviera. The programme of this new edition will include concerts in the garden of the Villa Noailles and DJ sets in the second part of the evening. www.midi-festival.com



SEPTEMBER

MID-SEPTEMBER > INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF MUSIC IN HYÈRES

Classical music festival.

21TH TO 23RD SEPTEMBER > DUC D'ALBE CATAMARANS' RACE (regatta)

The largest catamarans' gathering of the Mediterranean, the Duc d'Albe consists of a single race in the bay of Hyères. Important yachtsmen like Yvan Bourgnon or Bruno Peyron started sailing on these catamarans.

OCTOBER

8TH TO 14TH OCTOBER > HYÈRES SAILING TRADITION (regatta)

Gathering of about twenty antique boats in the bay of Hyères. These boats will arrive straight from the «Voiles de Saint-Tropez» race and will offer an unbeatable parade of historic sailing boats.

25TH TO 28TH OCTOBER > ALMANARRE GRAND PRIX

Windsurfing competition on the famous Almanarre beach, located on the Giens peninsula.

NOVEMBER

9TH TO 11TH NOVEMBER > NOVEMBER IN HYÈRES (regatta)

A traditional end-of-season event in the Mediterranean. Every year, the regatta brings the Hyères region together and includes from 55 to 80 boats.



DECEMBER

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS > "PITCHOUNS" FESTIVAL

This children's festival takes place every December at the Villa Noailles. It includes exhibitions, entertaining workshops, family activities, shows, films, book signings, showcases and many more surprises. www.villanoailles-hyeres.com

HYÈRES, FACILITIES

All-year entertainment

PALM TREE CASINO

Game room with 225 slot machines, British roulette and black jack. Auditorium with a seated capacity of 620 people.

MULTI-VENUE CINEMA

Centrally located, state-of-the-art cinema with 6 projection rooms.

ESPACE 3000

Multi-usage venue with a 2000 sq. metres modular floor plan and a 300 seats capacity.

On-stage giant screen and projection cabin.

SPORT FACILITIES

Swimming complex with 4 swimming pools, a velodrome, skate-park, horserace track, 7 athletic stadiums, 6 gyms and 2 tennis clubs.

MEDIATHEQUE

Inaugurated in 2005, it offers reading rooms, an exhibition hall, a 78-seats auditorium and WIFI access.

AMUSEMENT PARK

Magic World and Kiddy Park rollercoaster and Speed Kart.

DENIS THEATRE

Theatre and music venue with a capacity of 256 seats.



VISITOR INFORMATION

HOW TO COME?

✈ International Airport Toulon/Hyères +33 (0)8 25 01 83 87

Daily flights to Paris Orly / Roissy CDG, Brest & Bruxelles all year long
Domestic flights: Paris Orly / Roissy CDG (Hop! Air France), Ajaccio, Bastia (Air Corsica), Bordeaux (Volotea & ASL Airlines), Brest (TUIfly), Lille, Strasbourg (Hop! Air France).

International flights: Bruxelles Sud (TUIfly), Copenhagen (Scandinavian Airlines), Genève (Hop! Air France & Swiss), Alger, Oran (ASL Airlines), Rotterdam (Transavia), Southampton (Flybe).

www.toulon-hyeres.aeroport.fr/en

🚆 SNCF

TGV : 3635 www.voyages-sncf.com

TER (Regional Express Train) : 3635 www.ter-sncf.com

🚌 BUS

FLIXBUS (long distance transportation) +33 (0)1 76 36 04 12
www.flixbus.fr

Réseau VARLIB (local transportation Hyères > St Tropez)
+33 (0)9 70 83 03 80 www.varlib.fr

Réseau MISTRAL +33 (0)4 94 03 87 03
(gare - port - centre ville - Carqueiranne - Le Pradet - Toulon)
www.reseaumistral.com

🚤 BOAT

nautical Map SHOM 7282 / 6615

Saint-Pierre marina: 43°04,7' N - 06°09,6' E
Harbour master's office +33 (0)4 94 12 54 40

Porquerolles marina: 43°00,10' N - 06°12' E
Harbour master's office +33 (0)4 98 04 63 10

Port Cros marina: 43° 00,54' N - 06° 22,87' E
Harbour master's office +33 (0)4 94 01 40 72

Le Levant marina: 43° 01' N - 06° 26' E
Harbour master's office +33 (0)4 94 00 47 64

🚤 TO THE ISLANDS...

TLV-TVM +33 (0)4 94 58 21 81
from Saint-Pierre marina or La Tour Fondue in Hyères
www.tlv-tvm.com

Les bateliers de la Côte d'azur +33 (0)4 94 05 21 14
from La Londe les Maures marina, Toulon or la Seyne-sur-mer
www.bateliersdelacotedazur.com

Vedette des îles d'Or +33 (0)4 94 71 01 02
from Le Lavandou marina, La Croix Valmer or Cavalaire
www.vedettesilesdor.fr

Les bateliers de la Rade +33 (0)4 94 46 24 65
from Toulon marina or Saint-Mandrier-sur-mer marina (from may to september)
www.lesbateliersdelarade.com





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www.hyeres-tourism.co.uk
www.facebook.com/hyeres-tourisme

Photo gallery: www.hyeres-photos.com
Youtube: www.youtube.com/hyeres-tourisme

USEFUL LINKS

Villa Noailles
www.villanoailles-hyeres.com

Parc National de Port-Cros
www.portcrosparcnational.fr

Transport maritime TLV
www.tlv-tvm.com

Jazz à Porquerolles
www.jazzaporquerolles.org

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