

# GP Traveller / Monaco Grand Prix™ / guide

Everything you need to plan your trip

## GETTING TO MONACO

Direct flights to Nice are available from many European airports with national carriers and low cost airlines. Airfares will increase dramatically in line with limited availability so booking as far in advance as possible is advisable. You'll find cheaper airfares if you can fly out to Nice a few days before the Grand Prix™ weekend or staying on a few days after the Grand Prix™ and the savings made can go a long way towards covering the extra few nights accommodation. Flying indirect is also an option which will often result in lower airfares.

If you'd prefer to travel by train, services are available via Paris. European rail tickets can only be booked up to three months in advance of travel so you'll need to book your accommodation and Grand Prix™ tickets first and then wait until February / March before booking your train tickets.

## WHERE SHOULD YOU STAY DURING YOUR MONACO GRAND PRIX™ TRIP?

The majority of visitors to the Monaco Grand Prix™ will choose to stay in either Monaco or Nice and for many the deciding factor will be price. Both Monaco and Nice have a selection of three, four and five star hotels but expect to pay between £1,500 to £2,000 per night for a hotel in Monaco.

Many hotels in both locations will also have a three or four night minimum stay requirement during the Formula One™ period.

Nice is a twenty minute direct train journey from Monaco and also has the closest international airport. Couple this with an abundance of hotels of every standard and a lively nightlife and you can start to understand why staying in Nice is the most popular option for many Grand Prix fans.

Avenue Jean Médecin is the main street that runs from Nice Ville station down towards the Promenade des Anglais. Choose a hotel located on one of the many side streets leading off Avenue Jean Médecin and you should find yourself no more than a twenty to thirty minute walk from Nice Ville station. Staying in one of the hotels on the Promenade des Anglais will take longer but trams do run along Avenue Jean Médecin in the direction of Nice Ville Station. →

Staying in Monaco on race weekend does have an added advantage but there are a few things you should consider before booking a hotel.

Monaco is of course a street circuit which means that many roads are closed from around 7am until the final on track action is over and as a result this can cause lengthy diversions especially if you choose a hotel which isn't close to your vantage point.

As a general rule the Fairmont Monte-Carlo, Hotel de Paris, Métropole, Novotel, Port Palace Hotel and the Hermitage are all central and should allow the easiest access to most harbour area grandstands and apartments. Le Meridien Beach Plaza and the Monte-Carlo Bay are a little further out and on the opposite side the circuit to the Harbour area grandstands, Ermanno Palace apartments and Panorama apartments.

If you are spending the weekend on a luxury yacht it's likely that you'll be required to take a tender (speedboat) transfer from Fontvieille harbour. You may find the Columbus Hotel has easier access to your meeting point but some walking or a taxi will still be required.



Fairmont Monte-Carlo

# WHICH MONACO GRANDSTAND IS GRANDEST?

## Grandstand B

With the Monaco Casino as the backdrop the Casino Square grandstand is possibly one of the most iconic vantage points in motor racing. The cars come into view as they turn the corner at Hôtel de Paris and pass in front of the Casino before disappearing out of sight.

The giant TV screen immediately in front of this grandstand make it one of the easiest places to follow the Grand Prix™ at any circuit I've visited.

Racing around the narrow streets of Monaco is one of the most challenging races for an F1™ driver and watching from the Casino Square Grandstand really highlights the challenges of Monaco and the skills of the drivers.

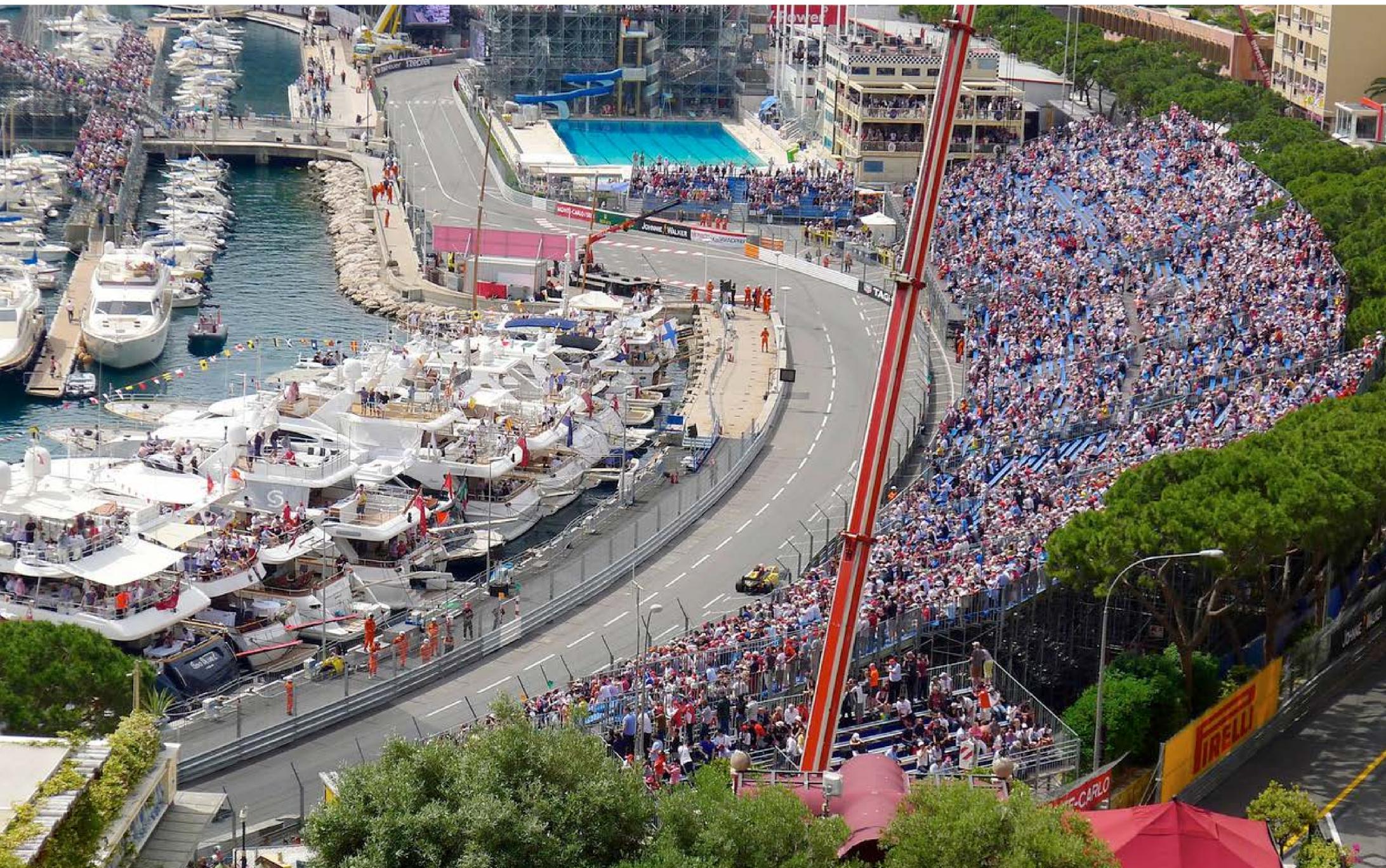
Grandstand B



## Grandstand K

Looking out towards the impressive Monaco Harbour and the luxury super yachts lined up side by side, Grandstand K has views of the circuit from the exit of the Chicane to the first

S of the swimming pool. Grandstand K is by far the largest of the Monaco grandstands and arguably the most popular with spectators. If any grandstand at Monaco was going to be a “safe bet” then Grandstand K is the one.



Grandstand K

## Grandstand L

This grandstand is located on the swimming pool complex near the harbour. The back of the grandstand runs along the short edge of the swimming pool while the front points in the direction of Rascasse. You'll have views of the cars as they exit the S of the swimming pool and I've seen several racing incidents from this grandstand. The high rows in Grandstand L also have views into the pit lane as the grandstand sits parallel with the pit building (a unique feature to Monaco).

## Grandstand T

Grandstand T has views of the straight between the exit of the S of the swimming pool and Rascasse Corner. Grandstand T is positioned opposite the pits and the higher rows have some views of the pit lane making this grandstand the equivalent of a Main Grandstand at any other Grand Prix™ circuit. Formula One Paddock Club™ guests may also use Grandstand T so you know this must be a good choice.

## Grandstand V

Grandstand V is positioned on the final corner of the Monaco street circuit. It's also opposite the entrance to the pit lane and is the closest grandstand to the circuit so you get some really close up views of the cars as they concertina up going into the final corner. You won't see any high speed action from this grandstand, it is after all the second slowest part of the circuit but you will see the cars running very close to the inside wall. Be warned though, Grandstand V is a very small grandstand with great views and it sells out quickly so be sure not to miss out and book your tickets early.

## Grandstands N, O & P

Grandstands N, O & P are all part of the same structure with O located in the middle and extending up higher than N and P which are posited on either side of O.

These grandstands have a central harbour position and the upper rows of grandstand O have

a prime viewpoint over the twists and turns of the swimming pool section of circuit.

Grandstands N and P have views of the cars as they exit Tabac and along through the S of the swimming pool.

## Grandstands A & A1

Grandstands A & A1 are located at the Sainte Devote corner which is the first corner on the Monaco circuit. This section of track is very tight and has been the scene of many incidents over the years. The drivers need to keep their wits about them to avoid any meeting with the infamous wall on the outside.

Grandstand A is positioned on the outside of the track and Grandstand A1 is positioned on the inside of the track. Similar to Grandstand V on the final corner, Grandstands A & A1 are also very small and sell out quickly so you'll need to secure your places early.

Grandstands N, O & P



# CHOOSING THE BEST HOSPITALITY AT THE MONACO GRAND PRIX™ TRIP?

There is a seemingly endless list of hospitality venues at the Monaco Grand Prix™ and you may already be feeling overwhelmed by the many websites all trying to sell you their hospitality packages.

I'm going to narrow down the options to just four hospitality venues. I've been lucky enough to experience all four first hand and I believe these are the only four venues you need to consider for the best Monaco Grand Prix™ experience.



# LUXURY SUPER YACHTS

Watching the Monaco Grand Prix™ from the deck of a luxury super yacht is a very special experience. For a yacht charter, getting your boat in a prime position for the Monaco Grand Prix™ is a lengthy process of applications and permits so choosing a charter with a good track record and good links to the Monaco authorities is essential.

Ideally you'll choose a yacht positioned trackside for the best views. Some yachts are moored on a T Jetty well away from the harbour wall so you'd have a very limited view from this position.

A good yacht will have three decks for a choice of vantage points including the upper deck for the most elevated views of the cars. A good charter may also limit the number of guests below the maximum permitted to avoid over crowding.

So what can you expect from your luxury super yacht experience?

The views from a trackside yacht at Monaco are comparable to those of a mid to lower level grandstand seat but being on a yacht at Monaco is as much about the experience as it is the views.

You can expect an open bar from the moment you board to the time you disembark including premium Champagne served by attentive stewards. Catering is usually of a high standard with carefully selected outside caterers often providing the food on the busier days of the race weekend.

Outdoor and indoor deck space is ample with comfortable seating and TV screens available if you need to get out of the sun but still want to follow the on track action.

Remember that access to the yacht will be via tender (speedboat) transfer which should be included in your package. Direct access from the yacht to the quayside is only possible once the track closes and the roads reopen.

For the full Monaco yacht experience be sure to book your place at one of the evening parties which take place onboard with live music and the moonlit Monaco harbour as your backdrop.





# APARTMENTS, BALCONIES AND TERRACES

During the Monaco Grand Prix™ weekend many of the apartment and office buildings that line the circuit use their terraces to give guests a unique view of this amazing street circuit.

Apartments, balconies and terraces and generally the same thing with a good apartment having an outside balcony or terrace. Apartments are exactly that, residents move out and the caterers move in, you're in someone's home so don't expect the opulent surrounds of the Paddock Club™ or luxury yacht.

The major advantage of watching the Monaco Grand Prix™ from an apartment block is undoubtedly the elevated viewing position which is not possible at most other Grand Prix™ circuits. Choose wisely and you'll have a genuine jaw dropping view that will stay etched on your mind for years to come.

I've been lucky enough to try out a few apartments at Monaco but the one that stands out is the Ermanno Palace located just before Sainte-Dévote.

Not all apartments in Monaco are created equally and the last thing you want is another apartment building blocking your view and that's why the Ermanno Palace comes so highly recommended.

Posited immediately next to the track, the Ermanno Palace Apartments have an uninterrupted view. You genuinely can see around 70% of the Monaco circuit including the first few rows of the grid, the pit exit, the climb up to Casino Square, the tunnel exit, the chicane, the harbour front, the swimming pool and a side view of the podium.

This is possibly the only vantage point at a Grand Prix™ where you don't need a TV to keep track of what's happening (although TV's are available as well).

The Ermanno Apartments are reasonably sized with ample room for two or three tables with reserved seating for lunch. Step outside the apartment and the balconies are spacious with ample room for a front row view for everyone. Spaces are limited to between twenty to thirty guests depending on the size of the apartment so overcrowding is not an issue.

Views from the Ermanno Palace Apartments



# FORMULA ONE Paddock CLUB™

The Formula One Paddock Club™ is Formula One™'s own in house hospitality. The overriding advantage of the Paddock Club™ are the pit lane visits which come as standard. I'm not talking about the pit lane visit on Friday afternoon which is open to any grandstand ticket holder. Paddock Club™ guests get pit lane access at prime times on the days that matter.

You can expect pit lane access between 07:40 to 08:40 on Saturday morning before the third Formula One™ practices session, between 12:10 and 13:45 on Saturday afternoon just before qualifying and between 08:00 to 09:00 and 11:45 to 12:15 on Sunday. The latest times are published on the race weekend timetable available on the official Formula One™ website about four weeks before the event.

During these pit lane visits you can expect to see mechanics preparing the cars in the team garages, TV crews presenting live on air, global

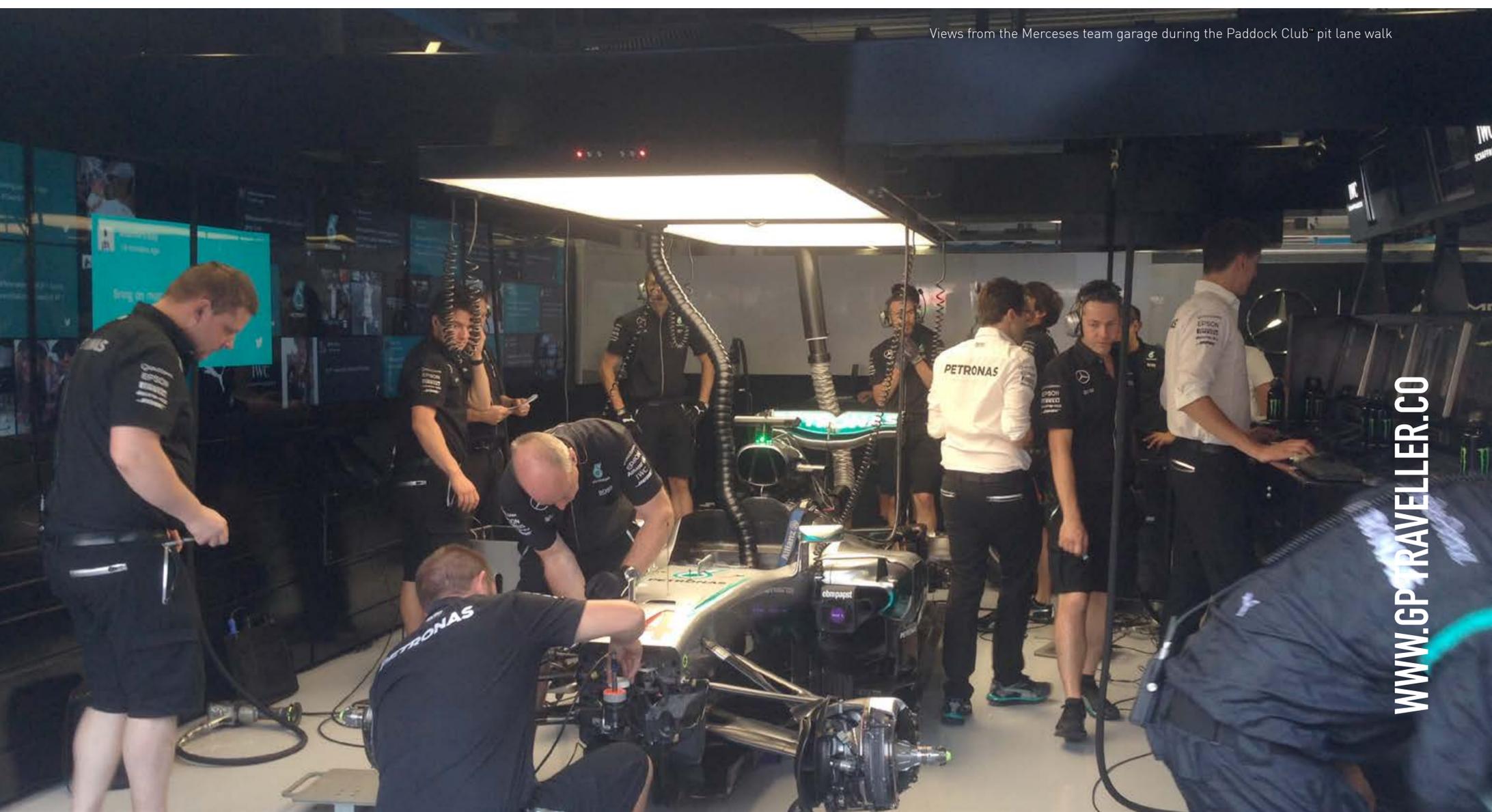
celebrities, Formula One™ legends and maybe the odd driver or two!

Unless you are a guest of an official Formula One™ sponsor, the Paddock Club™ is the most up close experience you are likely to get at any Grand Prix™.

As a Paddock Club™ guest you'll be looked after by the attentive Paddock Club™ staff in the Club Suite. The Paddock Club™ in Monaco is hosted in the Monaco Yacht Club which is positioned on the chicane at the exit of the Tunnel and in the satellite Club Lounge located next to the Formula One™ Paddock. You can choose how you split your time between the two venues and a complimentary boat shuttle to take you between the two locations is available.

Paddock Club™ guests can also watch the race from a reserved seat in Grandstand T positioned opposite the pit lane.

Views from the Mercedes team garage during the Paddock Club™ pit lane walk



# MONACO DANCE ACADEMY (F1™ CLUB)

If you're hovering between grandstand viewing or a hospitality package then the Monaco Dance Academy (also known as the F1™ Club) may just be for you.

The Monaco Dance Academy is at the budget end of the hospitality spectrum but it punches above it's weight compared to the other choices out there with a similar price tag.

Any other week of the year this charming building, perched just above St Devote is a working dance school but, on Grand Prix™ weekend it is transformed into an elegant clubhouse with elevated views from three different locations throughout the building.

Views are semi restricted with the best views being of Sainte Devote corner which has been the scene of many incidents over the years, the harbour front and the the twists and turns of the swimming pool section of circuit. You'll certainly see far more than you would from a grandstand seat and with a little help from the TV's positioned around the building it's possible to follow the race with ease.

Hospitality at the Dance Academy first appeared on the scene in 2014 and each year the catering and facilities get better and better. Additions in recent years include live music, Q&A with a former F1™ driver, F1™ Simulator, F1™ art exhibition, nail bar, massage and F1™ merchandise.

Views from the Monaco Dance Academy building



# GETTING AROUND DURING THE MONACO GRAND PRIX™

Scheduled flights arrive in to Nice Côte d'Azur International Airport which is located just 15 minutes from central Nice and around forty minutes from central Monte Carlo. Pre booking a transfer in advance is a safe and convenient way to get from the airport to your hotel.

Advantages to pre booking a transfer include knowing that your driver will be waiting for on arrival eliminating the chance of having to queue for a taxi or find alternative transportation on arrival, payment is made in your local currency at the time of booking so there is no need to worry about taxi fares or having enough cash to pay for the journey and your driver will know your destination in advance.

If you're continuing on to Monte Carlo you'll also have the option of helicopter transfer. Helicopter transfers to Monte Carlo can be booked in advance and a transfer service from the heliport in Monaco to your hotel is usually included as well. The flight time between Nice Airport and Monaco Heliport is just twelve minutes but airfares are priced at a premium on Grand Prix™ weekend.

If you're arriving in Nice by train the main station is Nice Ville. Many hotels are only a twenty to thirty minute walk from the station or taxis are also available outside.

## **Getting from Nice to Monaco**

Trains run between Nice and Monaco up to three times an hour and the journey time is no more than twenty five minutes. But, be warned, delays are common and queues in both Nice and Monte Carlo are long and slow over the Grand Prix™ weekend.

Booking your train tickets before you arrive in Nice is advisable as this will eliminate time spent queuing at the ticket office.

If you are unable to purchase tickets prior to arriving in Nice you can head to the station ticket office on Thursday or Friday and pre purchase tickets for Saturday and Sunday keeping your trips to the ticket office to a minimum.

The last train from Monaco to Nice is around 11pm so be sure to check the timetable if you plan to stay in Monte Carlo during the evening.

Some hotels also offer a shared minibus transfer between Nice and Monaco (and vice versa). Details of these services are usually advertised on the hotels reception desk and prices can be upwards of 65 Euros per person. Transfer times will depend on how many pick-up's the driver makes at other hotels and drop-off locations in Monaco may be outside the city centre depending on which (if any) permits the driver has.

# WHEN TO BOOK YOUR MONACO GRAND PRIX™ TRIP

As you'd expect, Monaco is the most popular Grand Prix™ on the F1™ calendar and forward planning is definitely an advantage.

Monaco's regular slot on the calendar is at the end of May but the FIA (the people who regulate Formula One™) may not confirm the following year's race schedule until as late as November or December, leaving only a five to six month window between the dates being confirmed and the Grand Prix™ taking place.

As Monaco is such an important and iconic event for Formula One™, it's also the Grand Prix™ that is least likely to be moved from its regular slot on the calendar during any reshuffles, but this should never be taken for granted and making any travel arrangements that can't be cancelled or amended with minimal financial penalties is still a risk.

Despite this, many people will book flights and accommodation up to eleven months in advance which is generally when flights go on sale for the following year and when airfares are at their cheapest. You should always check the cancellation and change conditions of your flights before booking but if changes are permitted you may find that it is cheaper to book early and secure the best price flights with the flexibility to amend the dates in the future for a penalty than it is to wait until the Formula One™ calendar is confirmed as flight prices will have increased substantially by this time.

You'll also need to check the cancellation fees on any hotels you book. Hotels in and around Monaco will charge a premium on race

weekend and as a general rule will be more accommodating than an airline if the Grand Prix™ dates change between you making the reservation and the Formula One™ schedule being confirmed. I'd recommend checking with your hotel before you book and do it by email so that you have written evidence just in case the Grand Prix™ dates change.

Of course, if the Grand Prix™ date is already confirmed by the time you start planning your trip you should book flights, hotels and race tickets as soon as possible to avoid prices increasing or missing out on your preferred choices.

## **Booking schedule**

### **June to October**

Early booking period - This is the best time to book flights, hotels and tickets but the Grand Prix™ dates may not be confirmed and could change so make sure any travel plans can be changed or cancelled with minimal financial penalties.

### **November to December**

This is usually the time when the following years Grand Prix™ dates are finalised. Flight prices and availability are generally good.

### **January to May**

This is the period when many people start making travel plans for the year ahead. Flight prices will steadily increase with demand and some hotels, grandstands and hospitality facilities may start to become fully booked.

# PROTECT YOUR TRIP TO ENSURE YOU AVOID ANY COSTLY CANCELLATIONS OR LOSSES

When you book a holiday through a travel agency in the UK they are legally required to provide financial protection for your trip. When one of our guests at Altitude Luxury Travel asks us to arrange their Grand Prix™ trip they are financially protected against our business or any of our suppliers going out of business. This means that if the airline they were due to fly with, the company who we bought the Grand Prix™ ticket from or the hotel there were due to stay at goes bust there is financial protection in place so that our guests money (and holiday) is protected and that money can be recovered.

If you think this will never happen to you just Google “holiday company goes bust” and you’ll soon see that this is not an uncommon occurrence.

When you book your holiday (or in this case Grand Prix™ trip) independently it is extremely unlikely that you will receive any financial protection from the companies that you use to piece together your trip.

Just to clarify, when I say book independently, I mean you are booking each element of your trip through different companies or websites and not as a package from a licenced travel agency. An example of this would be buying your flight from the EasyJet website, your hotel from Expedia and your Grand Prix™ ticket from the circuit. This DIY approach would give you no financial protection if any of these companies were to go out of business.

The good news is that you can protect yourself. Hopefully it goes without saying that you should take out adequate travel insurance for your Grand Prix™ trip just as you would for any holiday. I would recommend you look for a travel insurance policy that also includes Supplier Failure Cover and Scheduled Airline Failure Cover.

It’s also likely that the cost of your Grand Prix™ trip may exceed the standard cancellation cover limit of a basic travel insurance policy so check if you can increase the level of cancellation cover for an additional premium to prevent any short falls when making a claim.

Always read the policy wording and Key Facts documentation to ensure you have the correct cover for your personal circumstances.

If your bank or credit card company provide insurance always check that it is adequate for the trip you are taking.

You should also only buy travel insurance from someone who has passed an exam set by the Financial Services Authority.

# WWW.GP TRAVELLER.CO

The Grand Prix™ travel and lifestyle guide

Altitude Multimedia Limited has taken all reasonable care to ensure that the information contained in this publication is accurate on the stated date of publication or last modification.

The information in this publication is for guidance purposes only. Altitude Multimedia Limited assumes no liability or responsibility for any inaccurate, delayed or incomplete information, nor for any actions taken in reliance thereon. Anyone using the information provided by GP Traveller does so at their own risk, and by using such information agrees to indemnify Altitude Multimedia Limited from any and all liability, loss, injury, damages, costs and expenses (including legal fees and expenses) arising from such use.

The opinion expressed in each article is the opinion of its author and does not necessarily reflect the opinion of Altitude Multimedia Limited. Therefore, Altitude Multimedia Limited carries no responsibility for the opinion expressed thereon.

Materials contained on this website are subject to copyright and other proprietary rights.

This guide is unofficial and is not associated in any way with the Formula One group of companies. F1, FORMULA ONE, FORMULA 1, FIA FORMULA ONE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP, GRAND PRIX and related marks are trade marks of Formula One Licensing B.V.