



A SUSTAINABLE STAY

One of the world’s wealthiest destinations, Monaco is upping its investment in the environment. Natasha Dragun looks at how to make the most of the principality’s green offerings in 48 hours.

Surrounded on all sides by France and the Mediterranean, Monaco is home to mega-yachts, the Formula 1 Grand Prix and more supercars (Bentleys and Lamborghinis galore) than, possibly, Monégasque citizens. But this adult playground is also at the forefront of an inspiring environmental revolution, establishing itself as a world leader in sustainable tourism. From electric cars to forward-thinking hotels, here’s how you can minimise your footprint when you touch down and stay a while.

DAY 1

9am
Drop your bags off at the Hôtel de Paris Monte-Carlo, fresh out of a four-year renovation that saw the elegant 1864 Belle Époque palace awarded Green Globe certification for its commitment to the environment. While rooms are lavish – velvet armchairs, silk throws, gilded mirrors, sea views – the hotel’s style does not come at the expense of sustainability. There’s a comprehensive recycling program in place, transportation is either electric or hybrid, and

initiatives have been implemented to reduce CO2 emissions throughout. There’s also a focus on boosting neighbourhood biodiversity, partly achieved through the lush, leafy boulevard now linking the hotel to the new One Monte-Carlo precinct.

10am

Cross Monaco’s yacht-studded Port Hercules by Bus Boat, the electric-powered boat shuttle that forms part of Monaco’s bus network and connects iconic Monte-Carlo with Le Rocher, Monaco’s atmospheric old town.

Travellers visiting the Rock of Monaco who wish to go to Monte-Carlo can also cross the Saint-Martin gardens, descend via Fort Antoine, enjoy a pleasant crossing on the Bus Boat, then take a bus back to the Casino.

The Bus Boat is another form of sustainable transport in line with Monaco’s goal to reduce the reliance on personal cars.

Once off the shuttle, make the most of facilities at the city’s smart bus shelters. These freshly minted depots offer interactive location displays, real-time transport information and free Wi-Fi.



12pm

Le Rocher thrusts skywards on a pistol-shaped rock, its strategic location overlooking the sea. Explore the neighbourhood's windy medieval lanes on foot, starting at La Condamine Market to pick up provisions for a picnic lunch. More than 120 years old, the covered space is a riot of colours and aromas, with delis and cheesemongers beside stalls where you can order grilled seafood and fresh pasta.

1pm

Still in Le Rocher, enjoy a short walk to the principality's first public park, St Martin Gardens, opened in 1816. Wander along paths hemmed by pine and oak trees, then find a grassy perch to spread your picnic rug overlooking the ocean. This leafy haven adds to Monaco's staggering amount of green space, which now represents more than 20 per cent of the principality and some 23,000 plants.

2pm

Dust off the crumbs and stroll to the Oceanographic Museum, founded by reigning monarch Prince Albert II's great-great-grandfather Prince Albert I, who created the space to watch over the oceans more than a century ago. Today, its 6,000 artefacts provide an important message about the preservation of global marine environments.

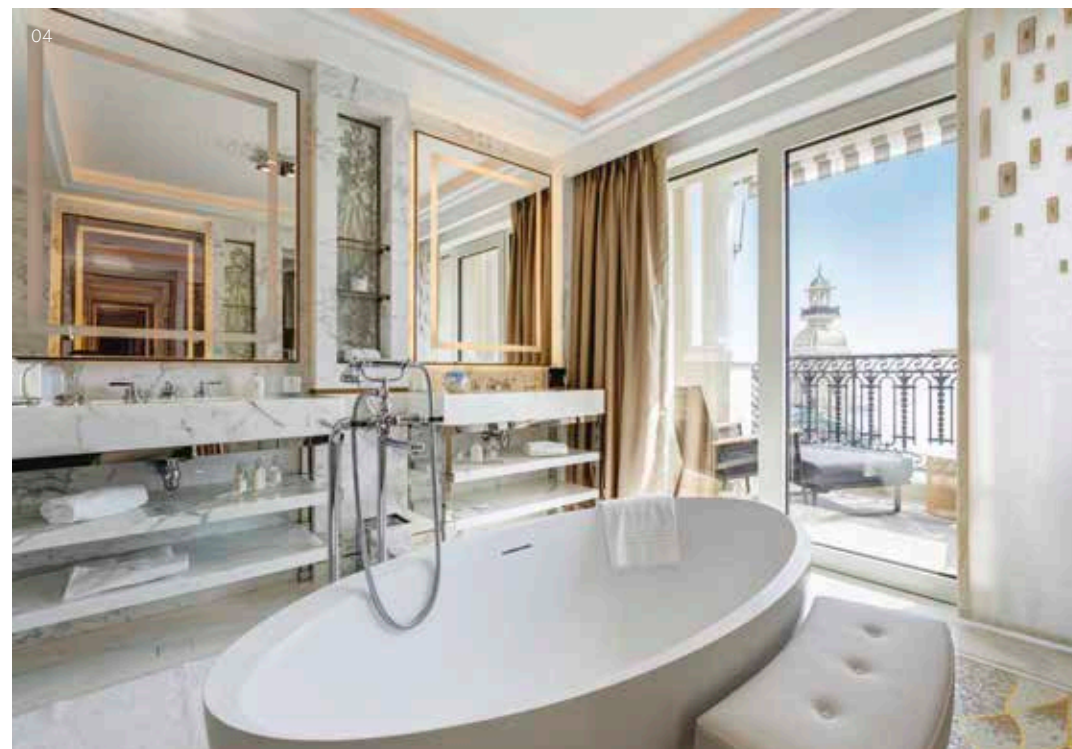
4pm

Leaving the museum, make the most of two smartphone apps. The first is for Mobee, which is Monaco's electric car-sharing fleet of tiny tandem-seat Renaults. Locate your nearest vehicle using the app, which also indicates where you can find free Mobee parking and recharging stations. Or, download Citymapper to determine your nearest car, plus the fastest route to your destination.

The new Citymapper initiative delivers detailed options for getting you around the principality, with routes favouring environmentally friendly car- and bike-sharing schemes as well as walking trails and public transport. When you're done exploring, head back to your hotel to check in and dress up for dinner.



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05



01 Diamond Suite Princess Grace at Hôtel de Paris Monte-Carlo 02 Hôtel de Paris gardens 03 Elsa is the world's only organic, eco-certified Michelin-starred restaurant 04 An opulent bathroom at Hôtel de Paris 05 A suite at the same hotel 06 Terre de Monaco is responsible for many of the urban gardens 01-06 © Monte-Carlo SBM

7:30pm

Leaving Hôtel de Paris Monte-Carlo, tap "Monte-Carlo Beach" into your Citymapper app. This waterside hotel is home to one of the principality's most awarded dining rooms, with seasonal eatery Elsa (open daily 20 March to 11 October 2020) entering the record books as the world's only 100-per-cent organic, eco-certified Michelin-starred restaurant. Mod-Mediterranean

cuisine is masterfully crafted, with all produce sourced from organic farms located within a 150-kilometre radius.

The Bio Sama (plate of assorted vegetables) is an Elsa signature for good reason. Ingredients come from seven surrounding gardens, and are arranged like a colourful bouquet with herbs, flowers, Taggiasca olive oil and fleur de sel. It's almost too pretty to eat – almost.

DAY 2

10am

While Monaco has enjoyed an extensive e-bike-sharing network for years, the fleet was completely upgraded in July: 300 state-of-the-art bikes are now available to commuters. These fresh chariots come with pedal-assist technology – a must, given Monaco's hilly terrain – and can be given a zap at 35 charging stations around town.

Use Citymapper to find your nearest ride and plot your route to the upmarket southern suburb of Fontvieille, a pretty hood partly built on reclaimed land.

11:00am

Ditch your wheels and take a leisurely amble along Fontvieille's Heritage Trees Trail. Among a handful of self-guided green walks across the principality, the trail was established to combat deforestation through different leafy neighbourhoods (the other two being Monaco-Ville and Monte-Carlo). Download a map and tick off plants – there are more than 1,000 – protected by a 'Tree Code', classifying them according to age, height and species rarity.

1:00pm

It would be remiss to visit the principality and not enjoy a meal prepared by Monaco culinary stalwart Alain Ducasse, at the helm of two restaurants in Hôtel de Paris. After a quick freshen up, make a beeline for his newest eatery, Ômer, which takes diners on a giddy tour of the Mediterranean while showcasing the region's finest and freshest produce.

Your reservation here will get you light and tasty plates like sweet calamari paired with a pesto made with marjoram; white tarama with melon and samphire; and ocean-fresh seared swordfish decorated with jewel-like olives, capers and raisins.

4:30pm

Monaco's coastline may be small, but it's certainly mighty, with ocean-loving Albert II ensuring the principality's waters are well protected for future generations.



07

07 Fine dining at Alain Ducasse's restaurant, Ômer 08 The same restaurant's leafy outlook © Monte-Carlo SBM

Head to Larvotto Beach or the caves of Les Spélugues, both of which are protected marine reserves home to an astounding amount of colourful fish and coral. Time your visit right and you'll also glimpse turtles, dolphins and migrating whales.

If you're planning to swim, be sure to bring a change of clothes to slip into before your Michelin-starred dinner.

7:30pm

Reserve a table on the terrace at Blue Bay, an applauded restaurant where flavours of the Caribbean and Mediterranean mingle on your plate. Chef Marcel Ravin's masterful dishes include green papaya 'spaghetti' carbonara, and his signature slow-cooked organic egg with cassava, truffle and passion

fruit is bliss in a mouthful. Ravin also offers a vegan menu featuring produce from the kitchen's gardens, planted in consultation with Terre de Monaco.

This local crowd is behind some of the most groundbreaking urban organic fruit and vegetable gardens in Europe; it also offers agriculture classes and workshops, like a tasting of edible flowers and herbs. Forward-thinking and sustainable - this is Monaco in a snapshot. ♦

Travel file

Accommodation
montecarlosbm.com

Information
visitmonaco.com mobeec.mc citymapper.com
terredemonaco.com



HÔTEL de PARIS
MONTE-CARLO

THE STAGE TO CREATE YOUR OWN STORY

In 2019, the iconic Hôtel de Paris Monte-Carlo is to start a new chapter of its story, fully re-opening its 208 rooms and suites, after 4 years of unparalleled transformation and refurbishment. Unveiling a fully redesigned guest experience, through a complete makeover of its existing venues and the introduction of brand-new facilities - among which 2 exceptional suites, a fine jewellery courtyard, a wellness club and ÔMER, the new Mediterranean brasserie by Alain Ducasse, the Hôtel de Paris Monte-Carlo significantly furthers Monte-Carlo Société des Bains de Mer founder's dream of "a hotel surpassing every creation until now".



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Wellness Sky club