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## How to attend the F1 Monaco Grand Prix in style: from luxury hotels with circuit views to the best bars and restaurants in Monte Carlo



One third of the triple crown of motor sport, the Monaco Grand Prix is the most coveted win on the F1 circuit CREDIT: GETTY

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By [Eilidh Hargreaves](#)

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The stars are currently out for the 76th Cannes Film Festival, but as soon as the event wraps up later this week, those of note will be heading 30 miles east to Monaco, for its legendary Grand Prix.

One third of the triple crown of motor sport, which also includes the Le Mans 24 Hours and Indianapolis 500, the Monaco Grand Prix is the most coveted win on the F1 circuit - and the most dangerous of the courses.

From May 23 there are test races as the atmosphere quickly builds towards the grand final, which kicks off shortly after 3pm on Sunday May 26.

Seventy-eight intense laps of the Circuit de Monaco, including hairpin turns at breakneck speeds through the centre of Monte Carlo, will determine the winner - Nico Rosberg and Sebastian Vettel of Germany, Lewis Hamilton of Great Britain and Daniel Ricciardo of Australia are all serious contenders this year.



Last year's winner Daniel Ricciardo celebrates post race CREDIT: GETTY



As exciting as the race itself is, the occasion makes Monaco the place to be in late May. While it is usually hot and dry at this time of year, rain and cloud, with interspersed sun are forecast for this weekend; something to bear in mind, especially if you are yacht-bound.

From securing a luxurious suite in one of the principality's most discerning hotels to the best spots to observe from, and access to the most dazzling of the weekend's parties, this is how to attend the Monaco Grand Prix in true style:

## **How to get last-minute tickets**

The most exclusive ticket available is the Formula One Paddock Club, which consists of several super premium areas surrounding Port Hercule. They are sold out for this year, but luxury concierge Quintessentially has confirmed its Monaco office would be able to fix you up regardless.

A few tickets for the Platinum VIP Terrace, Gold VIP Terrace and Silver Terrace are still available through the official channel, from £2,009, £1,658 and £1,280. Each of these premium packages comes with continental breakfast, a three-course lunch, afternoon tea and an open bar with select beverages (including champagne).

The difference in calibre comes down to location. The Platinum VIP Terraces - the most prestigious - are located on the upper floors of the Main Straight's buildings, providing an excellent vantage point of the Main Straight, the Ste Dévôte chicane, the exit of the Fairmont Tunnel, La Racasse, the Nouvelle Chicane and the Beau Rivage Hill.



The race circuit goes through the streets of Monaco, making it one of the most dangerous races in the world

Guests also gain a brilliant view onto the entrance and exit to the pits and Port Hercule.

The Gold VIP Terraces are on the lower floors of the Main Straight's buildings, so whilst the view is slightly less global than in Premium, guests are closer to the ground and therefore the cars. Located in the Beau Rivage Hill buildings the Silver Package still feels at the centre of the action, looking down onto the race and the port.

For the full last-minute travel package, Quintessentially Travel offers a three-night stay at the Hotel Metropole in a Prestige Junior Suite for two adults from £14,300.

This includes complimentary access on Saturday and Sunday to the Private Lounge of the hotel, which overlooks the only downhill stretch of the circuit.

While it is a tricky time to secure the most luxurious accommodation in Monaco itself, many guests opt to stay in a suite in Cannes instead.



## Where to watch the race from

Try to stay off your feet - you'll need them for socialising and dancing the evenings away. For those seeking true luxury, the real viewpoints to hustle for are not just close to the track; they come with a comfortable seat, overhead cover for a gloomy forecast like this year's and Michelin-star dining.



Le Louis XV by Alain Ducasse is one of the most lauded restaurants in Monte-Carlo, and a great spot to watch from

If you haven't already booked your accommodation (or perhaps you're looking to improve your digs) there are a few remaining rooms available at Hotel de Paris, from 12,500 euros for a four-night minimum stay.

It is worth noting that if you do stay here, you can expect a seat in one of these venues on race day - who needs a grandstand when you have a royal spot like that?

But perhaps you'd prefer to be discreet. If so, there is one remaining suite available at the Fairmont Monte Carlo, which provides not only complete privacy, but a unique double view onto the race course, which you won't find anywhere else.

Looking onto both the Fairmont Hairpin turn and the Louis II Tunnel, this suite (like its three sister suites) has been designed to celebrate the history of Formula One. Available for a four-night minimum stay from 69,000 euros, it includes breakfast, access to the rooftop terrace, and a Grand Prix welcome package.

If you are lucky enough to be a Paddock Club ticket holder, then you'll get access to the premium areas surrounding the harbour, and be able to make the most of the entertainment, luxurious catering and the open bar.

The stand out feature with this package is the exclusive VIP access to the pit area with scheduled pit walks, enabling you to experience the race from the inside out.



Nearby, the Hotel Hermitage has unobstructed view from its terraces onto the race course. It's too late for this year, but look ahead to 2020 and try to secure the Diamond Suite Princiere, which looks straight onto the course - a beautiful, private, Belle Epoque suite from which to observe the goings-on without being trodden upon.



## The party guest lists to be on

Once the engines are switched off, Monaco's glitterati moves onto the yachts for the evening, where the Principality's most exclusive parties are held.

Nicholas Frankl's is the most famous of them all; known as the most popular man in Monaco, the three-time winter Olympian and owner of My Yacht Group throws and all-out yacht party every year to celebrate the Grand Prix.

Getting on board is not easy; Frankl has spoken in no unsubtle terms about having refused entry to stars like Kim Kardashian and Kanye West. What one really needs is a recommendation by a local - someone who knows Frankl and doesn't need to plead.

Should your presence be desired, slip on your finest tux and watch, or cocktail dress and high jewellery, and roll up in a Phantom. Looking the part is, obviously, paramount.

If you fail to snag a spot on the guest list for such an exclusive event as this, you can buy your way onto Formula 1's Friday night yacht party from £628 per person. Or, do as Kim Kardashian did and go, instead, to the Amber Lounge; a Grand Prix-only venue that runs a series of parties and events over the weekend.

With a fashion show, a charity auction, and a wild closing night driver's party, it attracts the likes of Richard Branson, and even The Prince of Monaco. Quintessentially recommends asking your hotel's concierge to fix you up.

For the clubbers, it's all about Jimmy'z, which has parties running throughout the week. Perhaps most notably, Jason Derulo and Bedouin are performing on the Friday night, while Nas & DJ Cruz take the stage on Saturday. Sunday is a hardcore electro night featuring huge names Black Coffee and Guy Laliberté - the former Cirque du Soleil director who has turned DJ. Part of the Bains de Mer club, it Jimmy'z is was freshly reopened last summer after renovations.

## **Other things to do in Monaco**

It's not all about cars and yachts (although it's a lot about cars and yachts); Monaco has other thrills to offer. Primarily, a trip to the casino, for one isn't truly in Monaco if one hasn't tried their luck at the Casino de Monte-Carlo.

The golden Belle Epoque building - the inspiration behind the fictional Royale-Les-Eaux casino in Ian Fleming's first Bond novel, Casino Royale (1953) - is located in Place du Casino, and whether you gamble or not, win or lose, it's the quintessential Monaco experience. Dress up and order a martini.

For a spot of shopping, Casino Square's long-awaited One Monte-Carlo mall has finally opened. You'll find designer labels spread between this address and neighbouring streets including Avenue de Monte-Carlo and Avenue de Beaux-Arts; the perfect place to buy any last minute refinements before the parties begin.

Additionally, the Oceanographic Museum is a must see, with a 450,000-litre aquarium, housing an impressive coral ecosystem.