



Made in France:

Living The Vogue

“Fashion fades, style is eternal.” –Yves Saint Laurent

Women love to be pampered and love to look fabulous, and no one knows this more than the French fashion and beauty industry. France is the home of the premier fashion houses including Louis Vuitton, Chanel, Dior, and Hermes. French designers are leaders in the fashion world and dominate worldwide fashion trends. Its no surprise that fashion has been the biggest French export since the 17th century.

In addition to these premier fashion houses, some leading French brands like Longchamp, Lancel, Tara Jarmon, and the iconic Lacoste offer fashionistas a more affordable but still luxury alternative. Longchamp is best known for bags and leather goods, but has recently expanded its ready-to-wear collection with boots, shoes, coats, and skirts all waiting to tempt its loyal customers.



“A shoe has so much more to offer than just to walk.” –Christian Louboutin

Stepping out in French designer shoes is also the height of sophistication. Every women falls head over heels for a pair of Christian Louboutin vivid red-soled shoes even if they can easily blow a month’s wage with prices starting at €700 a pair. A more modest designer making a name for herself is Valérie Salacroux whose feminine and refined style is so very French.

Luxury products that are affordable to most of us are French designer cosmetics and perfumes. Most designer clothes labels now have their own brands of perfume alongside the long-established cosmetic houses that will never go out of favour. Yet there are less well-known brands that have firm followings by women who know. Carita has a luxury line of cosmetics, and is most famous for its “fluide de beauté”, an ultra-nourishing spray-on oil for dry skin. Also, receiving rave reviews are the Anne Semonin products that are touted as being amongst the best anti-aging skincare products on the market.



“Simplicity is the keynote of all true elegance.” –Coco Chanel

Check out the latest designer clothes selections.

In Nice head for Rue Paradis, Avenue de Verdun, Avenue de Suède and the branch of Galeries Lafayette at Place Masséna.

In Cannes head for the Croisette.

© LOUIS VUITTON / LB PRODUCTION Brea PM en cuir Monogram Vernis amarante.

©Dior 5 COULEURS LIFT / shade 532 - Lifting Ivory

© Longchamp Paris Ready to wear collection spring/summer 2011 • Nylon zipped coat dress • Swimsuit Eres for Longchamp • Bohème belt in cowhide leather • Bohème cuff in cowhide leather • Gatsby Exotic hobo bag in cowhide leather • Tie&Dye wedges trimmed with calfskin leather



Shopping NICE

Nice is a great place to shop all year round. Many guests come to Nice for a weekend in December to take advantage of this and gather together perfect Christmas gifts. The annual sales in July and January are also a great time to pick up a bargain. Sales are a big event in Nice, where some real bargains can be picked up, especially in the expensive shops. The sales last for around six weeks and the official dates are set by the French government. Look for the “soldes” signs on shop windows.

The central hub of the shopping district centres on Avenue Jean Médecin. Here you can find the usual high street names of Zara, H&M, Morgan, Etam, Virgin and FNAC along with the very popular perfume and make up chain, Sephora. Midway along Jean Médecin is the Étoile Shopping Mall where you can buy sportswear, fashion, home ware, and jewellery. Teenage girls will also feel right at home in Claire’s accessories found on the first floor. In here you will also find Habitat.

Turning off Jean Médecin onto Rue Masséna will bring you even more high street chains such as Darjeeling, Blanc Blu, Footlocker, and MAC dotted around mid-ranged priced boutiques and shoe shops. The t-shirt shop, Petit Bateau, is well worth a look and women will love Arrato a little further down for its low-cost fashion jewellery. Take a ticket if you want to purchase anything, and then wait to be served.

At the top of Place Masséna is a four-storey branch of Galeries Lafayette, the French equivalent of Selfridges and Harvey Nichols. If you have an appetite for designer fashion, then head to Rue de la Liberté, just off Place Magenta. Here you can easily spend a whole day in the

twenty or so upmarket chains such as Ikks, Arche, Tara Jarmon, or boutiques such as Isabelle B., Carnet de Vol, and Indigo Blue. The well-regarded French chain, Arche, is also found here which sells good quality boots and shoes, tailored towards walking not toppling.

For the very best such as Armani, Louis Vuitton, and Chanel head for Rue Paradis, Avenue de Suède, and Av. de Verdun running parallel to Rue de la Liberté. For designer jewellery, Cartier, Leon Hatot, Bijoux Burma, Ferret, and Barichella are all here as well.

For designer labels at bargain prices the various *depôt de vente* offer second hand and vintage clothes and handbags. The best ones can be tucked away in the back streets like Rue Barberis behind the Port and Rue Barla in the Riquier district.

If you’re after individualism and gifts, then the picture-postcard-perfect Old Town is where to obtain modern art, classic paintings, period furnishings, garments of every cloth from leather to lace, hats, shoes, herbs, spices, olive oil, and toiletries.

You can pick up some of the finest fresh produce and fresh flowers on the Cours Saleya every morning except Monday. Monday gives way to a large antiques market that lasts all day until about 5:30pm. From June to September, you can spend the summer evenings strolling around the Cours Saleya when the local food and flower market is replaced by stalls selling jewellery, artwork, bags, and local crafts which can be purchased until around midnight.

If you fancy sampling the local fare, the fish market at the end of these streets at Place St-François offers fish aplenty every day except Monday.



Shopping Cannes

For the most glamorous shopping (or window shopping!) on the Riviera, shoppers will head to Cannes. One of the most famous roads in France, the Croisette is where the rich and famous head for their retail therapy. You'll find Chanel, Valentino, Prada and more. Here luxurious feminine apparel and elegant tailored suits hang invitingly from brass bars in contemporary decorated spacious shops. Whilst outside scarves, gloves, and jewellery are exhibited in display cases behind sparkling glass windows.

If it's high street stores you're looking for, head to the Rue d'Antibes, just off the Croisette. This road is home to high street chains like Zara, H&M, Etam and Sephora, with dots of the occasional designer boutiques and individual contemporary stores.

Linking the Croisette with Rue d'Antibes is the elegant Hotel Gray d'Albion, which is also home to its own shopping arcade where you can find designer stores such as Hermes, La Perla lingerie as well as perfume boutiques. Over on Rue du Marechal Foch is a branch of the shopping emporium Galeries Lafayette.

The pedestrian roads surrounding the Rue d'Antibes are for you if you want to hunt out a bargain or enjoy a more personal shopping experience. On Rue Meynadier you'll find a high density of specialist food shops for oils, wine, bread, pasta and cheese as well as individual shops selling clothing and artwork. An institution in Cannes is Chez Bruno to be found at 3 Rue Hoche where you can pick up homemade fruit confits and glazed chestnuts, made daily on the premises.

Cannes also has several markets selling fresh produce from the region. You can pick up a great bouquet of freshly cut flowers at the largest market, the Marché Forville. The market is open every day between 7am-1pm, except Monday when the same place transforms itself into the popular antiques market from 8am-6pm. Another daily market is Le Marché Gambetta, just along from the train station.



Shopping Antibes

The old quarter of Antibes is a popular place to start your shopping if you are looking for small independent shops selling specialist products. Starting at Place de Gaulle and walking along Rue de la République you will find several specialty food boutiques and art galleries tucked away in discreet alleyways.

The streets surrounding Rue de la République, such as Rue Thuret, are great for picking up a few gifts. Covering a relatively small area, it's an enjoyable and non-taxing area to browse and you are sure to find something that catches your eye. Don't miss Rue James Close, where you'll find gadgets, clothes, gifts and toys. This is the best area for securing an individual piece of homeware from candles to handmade furniture.

A visit to Antibes is not complete without a trip to the Provençal market. The market is situated on the Cours Masséna and is open every morning, except Monday, until around 1pm. Local producers from the surrounding villages sell fresh fruits and vegetables, along with meat, cheese, herbs and spices. Buy a portion of hot *socca* (the Niçois chickpea pancake) to nibble on while you browse.

If you take a stroll along the ramparts on a summer evening, you'll come across a small market selling jewellery and artwork. Local artists also sell their work on the Cours Masséna on a Sunday afternoon.

If Antibes shopping leaves you wanting more, it's worth going slightly further afield, to Juan-les-Pins. Here there are plenty of small hip fashion boutiques that cover all price ranges. Especially great for picking the latest bikinis, sarongs and beach and summer wear.

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