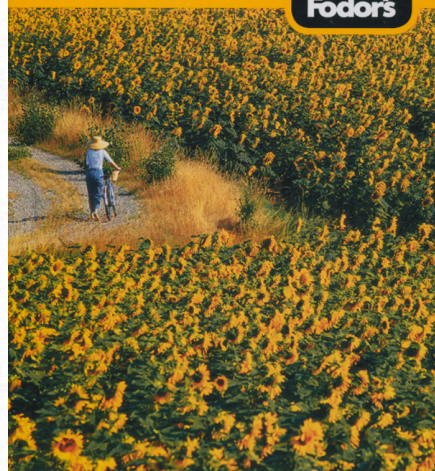


\$\$\$ Fodor'sChoice ★ **Hôtel Negresco.** One of those names, like the Pierre or Claridges, that is synonymous with "Grand Hotel," the Negresco is a wedding-cake, white-stucco slice of old-fashioned Riviera extravagance. Still the icon of Nice and a living monument to the city's golden age of travel, it has hosted everyone from the Beatles to the Burtons, and you'll feel a bit like a V.I.P. just pulling up in front of the entrance as the doorman, in uniformed splendor (knee-breeches and ostrich-plumed tricorne), helps you with your luggage. No other hotel can boast today of quite so many pillars, busts, coffered and painted ceilings, or, indeed, so many acres of white paint and gilding. The place is, in short, the very epitome of La Belle Époque, justly so since it was built by Henri Negresco in 1912. Yes, the main hall, now denuded of the world's largest Aubusson carpet, is a bit forlorn, but its Gustave Eiffel glass ceiling still awes, as does its *qualité du Louvre* collection of Old Master paintings. Upstairs, each floor is devoted to an era from French history; Napoléon III on the fifth, Louis XV on the third, with some jarring modern notes, like the plastic-glitter bathtubs, the Vasarely Op-art carpet, and the rotating

Provence & the French Riviera

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Happily, each guest room is decorated as it has been done up with elegance and class ranks among the very finest restaurants. The Grand Salon (complete with merry-goround chandelier) is an over-the-top setting for the sometimes kitsch extravagance; a Cons: this grande dame could use a dis-

des Anglais, Promenade des Anglais, hotel-negresco-nice.com ↗145 rooms, 2 restaurants, bar, beachfront, Wi-Fi, In-room: Internet, In-hotel: bar, Wi-Fi ↗AE, DC, MC, V.

Old Town, at the foot of the château, this cut into the cliff (an elevator takes you to have breathtaking views of the Baie des Anges, but also look down at the sea with lemon trees and a cliff-side pool. Cons: some rooms are surprisingly large; some are decorated with painted Provençal furniture. The garden is lovely May through September. Cons: Old Town and the Parc du Château; the sea. Cons: some rooms are surpris-

↗11 quai Rauba-Capeau, Old Town/Port ↗www.hotel-la-perouse.com ↗63 rooms, Wi-Fi. In-hotel: restaurant, bar, pool,

\$\$-\$\$\$ **Nice Pebbles and Riviera Pebbles.** If you've ever fantasized about living on the French Riviera, renting a furnished apartment is the next best thing. Established a few years ago, the friendly agency Nice Pebbles has a wide variety of comfortable apartments to choose from, many of them in the Old Town and all less than 20 minutes' walk from the beach. Fully equipped kitchens allow you to make the most of the

fabulous produce at the local markets, and a welcome pack of local delicacies comes with each rental. Riviera Pebbles has a further selection of apartments in Nice, as well as apartments and villas in other key locations along the Côte d'Azur. Note that there while all apartments have kitchens, some do not have swimming pools, elevators, telephones, air-conditioning, or Wi-Fi. ↗7 rue du Collet, Old Town ↗09-52-78-27-65 ↗www.nicepebbles.com, www.riviera-pebbles.com ↗69 apartments ↗MC, V.

\$\$-\$\$\$ **Suisse.** Charging modest prices for a spectacular view from the top end of the seafront, where the promenade winds around to the port, the Hôtel Suisse far outclasses most other hotels in this price range. You'll pay a little extra for a balcony with a sea view, but it will be oh-so-worth-it for the sight of the turquoise water glittering below. Recently redecorated by architect J.P. Nuel, the rooms provide all the modern comforts with pleasing cream-and-brown or cream-and-burgundy color schemes, and the lobby/breakfast room has also had been given a hip new look. Pros: clean, modern rooms; balconies with breathtaking sea views; accessible prices in low season. Cons: lack of space in some rooms; pricey breakfast at €15. ↗15 quai Rauba-Capeau, Old Town/Port ↗04-92-17-39-00 ↗www.hotels-ocre-azur.com ↗42 rooms ↗In-room: Internet. In-hotel: bar, Wi-Fi ↗AE, DC, MC, V.

\$\$ **La Fontaine.** Downtown and a block from the waterfront, this immaculate, simply designed hotel on a bustling shopping street offers a friendly welcome from its house-proud owners. Rooms are small and comfortable, in cheery blues and yellows and with freshly tiled bathrooms. It even has a pretty little courtyard where breakfast is served. Nearby is Le Sporting Plage, one of the city's best private beaches. Pros: helpful staff; leafy courtyard; location near the Negresco. Cons: rooms overlooking the street can be noisy; breakfast overpriced. ↗49 rue de France, New Town ↗04-93-88-30-38 ↗www.hotel-fontaine.com ↗29 rooms ↗In-room: safe, Internet, Wi-Fi. In-hotel: bar, room service some pets allowed ↗AE, DC, MC, V.

\$\$ **Villa les Cygnes.** The Baumettes neighborhood is an area not normally explored by tourists, but it's worth getting to know it for the sake of staying in this new hotel, which is really more like a luxury bed-and-breakfast. Each of the five rooms has its unique charms: on the main floor, one of the rooms opens directly onto the garden while the other has a terrace; upstairs, the rooms have balconies. You'll find the comforts of a top-notch hotel—air-conditioning, Wi-Fi, spacious bathrooms—along with feeling of staying in a family home. Meals are available if you request them the day before, and the hotel has a bar. Keep in mind that it's a bit of a hike (around 30 minutes) from here to the Old Town, where most of the action is. Pros: owners warm and welcoming; generous breakfast; thoughtfully decorated; big bathrooms. Cons: a little far from the tourist center of Nice. ↗6 av. du Château de la Tour, New Town ↗04-97-03-23-35 ↗www.villalescygnes.com ↗5 rooms ↗In-room: Wi-Fi. In-hotel: bar, Wi-Fi ↗MC, V.

\$\$ **Windsor.** This is a memorably eccentric hotel with a vision: most of its white-on-white rooms either have frescoes of mythical themes or are works of contemporary artists' whimsy. There's also a "relaxation