



## Modern Art on the Côte d'Azur at New Year

Picasso, Matisse, Chagall and their contemporaries

**27 Dec. 2024–2 Jan. 2025 (MK 606)**

7 days • £3,590

Lecturer: Monica Bohm-Duchen

Europe's greatest concentration of classic modern art in the idyllic Mediterranean setting where it was created.

Old and new collections, with outstanding work by Bonnard, Braque, Léger, Miró, Giacometti, Cocteau, Chagall, Matisse, Picasso.

Visits to the coastal towns and villages which inspired the artists.

Stay in Nice throughout.

Natural resources and climate have drawn invaders and visitors to Nice and its surroundings from the Greek colonists of classical times to the jet set of today. But from the late 19th century a special category of visitor – and settler – transformed the Côte d'Azur into the greatest concentration of modern art in Europe.

Monet first visited Antibes in 1883; Signac bought a house in the fishing village of St-Tropez in 1892. Matisse's first visit to the Midi in 1904 transformed his art, and from 1918 he spent more time on the Côte d'Azur than in Paris.

Matisse, Chagall and Picasso are merely among the most illustrious of the artists who chose to live in the South of France. Many of their fellow modernisers followed suit: Braque, Bonnard, Dufy, Picabia.

This tour is an extraordinary opportunity to see how modernity relates to the past as well as the present, and how gallery displays can be centred on the art, the location or the patron/collector. In Matisse's Chapelle du Rosaire at Vence, traditional arts and crafts have been revived by a modern genius, as in the monumental mosaic and glass designs of Léger which can be seen at Biot.

There are also echoes of collecting habits of earlier eras in the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild. The mixture of past and present and the juxtaposition of the Goût Rothschild with the beauty of its location are breathtaking. (Graham Sutherland drew exotic flowers and plants in the extraordinary gardens.)

At Antibes the Picasso Museum is housed in the Château Grimaldi, lent to Picasso as studio space in 1946 where he produced life-affirming paintings.



Nice, etching c. 1925 by Frederick Farrell

Old and new galleries abound, such as the Fondation Maeght, St-Paul-de-Vence, whose building (designed by José Luis Sert, 1963) makes it a work of outstanding sympathy to its natural surroundings, in gardens enlivened by Miró's *Labyrinthe* and other sculptures.

### Itinerary

**Day 1: Nice.** Fly at c. 10.50am (British Airways) from London Heathrow to Nice. There is an afternoon visit to the Musée des Beaux Arts Jules Chéret, concentrating on their 19th- and early 20th-century holdings.

**Day 2: Antibes, Vallauris.** Most of the paintings Picasso produced in his studio in the Château Grimaldi in 1946 have been donated to the town of Antibes. Picasso is also celebrated in Vallauris, a centre of contemporary pottery which he revived. His masterpiece *War & Peace* is here, as are many works by his contemporary Alberto Magnelli.

**Day 3: St-Tropez, Le Cannet.** Drive west to St-Tropez, which has been popular with artists since Paul Signac settled here in 1892. The Musée de l'Annonciade is one of France's finest collections of modern art (Signac, Maillol, Matisse, Bonnard, Vlaminck, Braque). Continue to Le Cannet, where the first museum dedicated to the works of Bonnard opened in 2011.

**Day 4: Nice.** The Marc Chagall Museum has the largest collection of the artist's works: notably the 17 canvases of the Biblical Message, set in a peaceful garden in a salubrious Nice suburb. Also visit the Musée Matisse, which unites a wide range of the artist's work: sculpture, ceramics, stained glass as well as painting.

**Day 5, New Year's Eve: St-Paul-de-Vence, Vence.** The Maeght Foundation at St-Paul-de-Vence is renowned for its collections (Picasso, Hepworth, Miró, Arp, Giacometti, but not all works are shown at once) and for its architecture and setting. In the afternoon visit the Chapelle du Rosaire, a Dominican chapel designed by Matisse.

**Day 6, New Year's Day: St-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, Villefranche-sur-Mer.** After a leisurely start, drive to St-Jean-Cap-Ferrat to see the paintings, sculpture and furniture of the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild, a mansion set in attractive gardens. Continue to Villefranche-sur-Mer and the small Chapelle Saint-Pierre, decorated by Cocteau.

**Day 7: Biot.** Visit the Musée National Fernand Léger in Biot, built to house the artist's works bequeathed to his wife. Fly from Nice arriving at London Heathrow at c. 3.25pm.

*In recent years renovation work has led to museum closures. At the moment all visits listed are possible but we cannot rule out the possibility of changes.*

Modern Art on the Côte d'Azur at  
New Year continued

## Lecturer

**Monica Bohm-Duchen.** Lecturer, writer and curator specialising in 20th-century art. She studied at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem before graduating in English Literature and History of Art from UCL, and with an MA in Art History from the Courtauld. She has lectured for the National Gallery, Tate, Royal Academy, Courtauld, Sotheby's and Birkbeck College. She is contributing editor of *Insiders/Outsiders: Refugees from Nazi Europe and their Contribution to British Visual Culture* (Lund Humphries, 2019), which accompanies the year-long nationwide Insiders/Outsiders Festival she initiated in 2019.

## Practicalities

**Price, per person.** Two sharing: £3,590 or £3,330 without flights. Single occupancy: £4,370 or £4,110 without flights.

**Included:** flights (Euro Traveller) with British Airways (Airbus 320); private coach; accommodation as described below; breakfasts and 4 dinners (with wine, water and coffee); all admissions; all tips for waiters and drivers; all taxes; the services of the lecturer and tour manager.

**By train:** London – Paris – Nice: c. 11 hours.  
*Contact us for more information.*

**Accommodation. Hotel La Pérouse, Nice** (hotel-la-perouse.com): stylish 4-star hotel, partially built into the cliff and overlooking the Promenade des Anglais. All rooms have a balcony or terrace. It was renovated in 2023.

**How strenuous?** There is a fair amount of walking and standing around in museums. Average distance by coach per day: 40 miles

**Group size:** between 10 and 22 participants.