

WINTER in Provence

It's a great time to visit – delicious, sparkling and festive!

Le Weekend in Cassis

One of the most beautiful seaside towns in France

HISTORY OF Galettes des Rois cakes

Arc 1950 celebrates 20 years

Spotlight on Nantes

Delicious recipes

Bringing you an irresistible taste of France - including lip-smacking garlic soup, scrumptious baked Mont d'Or cheese & more...





Cassis is a year-round charmer with its café-bordered quays on the edge of the Mediterranean Sea, and 300 days of sunshine a year says Janine Marsh.

What to see and do

Cassis, a seaside town on the coast of the Mediterranean is brimming with charm, the town boasts a port lined with colourful cafés, restaurants, and shops set in an outstanding area of natural beauty. It's a perfect weekend destination – the fast train from Paris takes just 3 hours 48 minutes, and Marseille is just 25km away (30 minutes by train) – and a world apart.

Wherever you are in Cassis you'll see Cap Canaille, one of the highest cliffs in Europe, and according to King Louis XIV, the most beautiful in France. Hike, cycle, or drive to the crest of Cap Canaille and follow the pinetree perfumed Routes des Crêtes (ridges) for a spectacular view over the sea, Cassis and the Calanques, limestone cliffs that grace this part of the Mediterranean. You can hike to the Calangues and find a cove to swim or while away the day. Or take a boat ride - it's best to go in the morning when the light is better, and watch the fish follow the boat, playfully flitting around the buoys that dot their kingdom. Somehow trees, flowers and fauna find a way to sprout from the crusty rocks, their jagged edges softened by the sea's pounding over millennia.

A vibrant market is held on Wednesday and Friday morning with a great range of goods from charcuterie and cheeses to chic shoes. And there are plenty of art galleries, shops and boutiques – including a perfumery where you can take a workshop and make your own perfume. This is the perfect place to stroll – and eat!

There are restaurants galore serving the freshest fish, authentic bouillabaisse, seasonal, classic, gourmet, gastronomic dishes. There are café's where they serve rouille, a garlicky paste to spread over crunchy bread squares and little bowls of olive oil to pour over your fish. Pair everything with a glass of wine from one of Cassis' wine domains – local wines are served in all of the town's port-based restaurants.

Brunch: Les Roches Blanches – this is one of the best brunches in all of France – a smorgasbord of pleasure.

Lunch/Dinner: Anywhere round the port, or head into the warren of narrow streets around for less touristy, more local options.

Aperitifs: Locals love Le Franc, La Marine, Monsieur Brun in the port area, or the bar at Roches Blanches.

Activities include swimming, diving, yearround snorkelling, sailing, tennis, windsurfing,





jet-skiing, and horseback riding. And for something less active – wine tasting. There are 12 wine domains in Cassis producing sunshinefilled, delicious whites and roses.

There's a small museum with a collection of paintings and Roman artifacts. Unsurprisingly, painters have long flocked to capture the beauty of Cassis. This photogenic little former fishing village is Instagram-worthy at every turn, making artists of visitors.

Les Roches Blanches

Everyone should have the chance to stay at the 5 Star Hotel Les Roches Blanches if only for one night. This former 19th century private mansion is where Winston Churchill played, and Edith Piaf relaxed. It's the sort of French paradise you see in films but don't believe somewhere this special could really exist. It does. From the pool on the terrace of my room overlooking Cap Canaille which glowed the colour of toasted apricots as the sun set,



Room with a view Les Roches Blanches

I watched sailing boats go by in a sea that seemed to turn every colour of blue, fringed by the white rocks below which give the hotel its name. I can honestly say that at the moment I had nothing in my head except how utterly beautiful and relaxing this place is. Rumour has it that the owner of the stunning Chateau of Cassis stays at Les Roches Blanches so he can have a fabulous view of his own castle!

There are four restaurants, all of them absolutely fabulous. The food is stupendous. The bar and the spa are superb. The hotel is super luxurious, but not at all stuffy.

I might have shed a tear when I had to leave.

Details: roches-blanches-cassis.com/en

How to get there

From the train station it's a long walk into town (just under 2 miles), or you can take a taxi, or bus which run on the hour until 7pm.

Find more details of activities and events at the Tourist office, located on the port: ot-cassis.com