

Excursion to the Saint-Honorat island Saturday 1 June 2024

Programme of the day

08:30 Departure from the Méridien Nice to Quai Lebeuf Cannes by bus
10:00 Public boat transfer to the island
10:30 Guided visit of the Saint-Honorat Island with a wine tasting
12:00 Lunch at the restaurant of the island
13:30 Free time
15:00 Light snack at the restaurant
15:30 End of day & Public boat transfer back
17:00 Return to Meridien Nice

Note: departure meeting point at the entrance of Le Méridien Nice. Make sure to go to the ground floor by taking the escalators, the meeting point is outside the hotel. Please do not stay in the hotel lobby/reception.

Note: if you need to quit the excursion earlier, please indicate it at the registration desk of Le Méridien conference center, from 28 to 30 May.

To keep in mind



It will be a sunny day for sure, so do not forget to bring a reusable water bottle, sunglasses, a hat and sunscreen.

For swimming, as access might be steep, water shoes are recommended rather than flip flops.

Do not walk around the island only in your swimming costume except when on the beach or swimming.

The bins have been removed on the island (because of the rubbish that flies into the sea). Don't forget to take a rubbish bag and bring your rubbish back to the mainland.

Smoking is prohibited on the island.

Dogs are allowed on the boat and even on the beaches.



Map of the island



Public Places

1. Pier	2. Lerins abbey	3. Fortified Monastery	4. Abbey Church	5. Stores
6. Restaurant & Snack	7. « les Canisses » Snack	8. harbour shelter	9. Canonball furnace	10. « La trinité » Chapel
11. « Saint Sauveur » Chapel	12. « Saint Michel » Chapel ruin	13. « Saint Caprais » Chapel	14. « Saint Pierre » Chapel	

Private Places

15. « Saint Porcaire » Chapel	16. « Saint Cyprien » Chapel	17. Saint Salvien House	18. Wine Cellar	19. distillery
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Different places to swim

In Saint Honorat Island, you'll be able to swim for sure!



The port Beach 'Plage du Port'

Easily accessible, the Plage du Port is the largest sandy beach on the island of Saint-Honorat. On this beach, admire a stunning view of the island of Sainte-Marguerite, the largest of the Lérins islands. Please note: many boats are moored nearby.

La Tonnelle cove 'Crique de la Tonnelle'

The shallow waters near the Tonnelle cove are ideal for children to swim in. This pretty beach has some sand and seaweed, which is much more pleasant to walk on than the pebbles. It is also located next to the island's restaurant and a few meters from the bathrooms.

Saint-Sauveur cove 'Crique St Sauveur'

Just a few meters from the Saint-Sauveur chapel, the cove has enough space to put your towel down, a real plus compared to the other beaches on the island of Saint-Honorat. Slightly shaded, the Saint-Sauveur cove is ideally located, close to the restaurant, the picnic tables and the sanitary facilities.

The beach of the Fort 'Plage du Fort'

At the level of the fortified monastery, the beach of the Fort is a pebble beach which has an exceptional view on the island of Saint-Ferréol.



Boats to Saint-Honorat Island

A short boat ride from Cannes, find yourself in the midst of nature on Ile Saint-Honorat. Spend a day combining culture, with tours of the island and its monuments, and relaxation, enjoying the pleasures of the sea. Have an enjoyable time on the boat crossing towards the Lerins Islands. You will discover an exceptional view over the Bay of Cannes. The boat crossing to the Lerins Islands lasts around 15-20 minutes.

Protecting heritage

The monastic community of Lerin's abbey has been committed to sustainable development for many years, and this summer is inviting all visitors to the island of Saint-Honorat to help preserve this exceptional site by taking all their rubbish back to the mainland. Rubbish left on the island is a major nuisance for wildlife and is often scattered over the sea: the Lerins abbey has therefore decided, following the example of many other sites, to remove all rubbish bins on the island. Thank you to all those who will be taking part in this initiative.

Present

The island retains a monastery, which is home to 30 Cistercian monks, and is a popular tourist attraction offering pleasant woodland surroundings, in common with its neighbour the Île Sainte-Marguerite. Points of interest include a number of disused chapels erected by monks on the island at different points in history, as well as the remains of a Napoleonic cannonball oven and a Second World War gun emplacement.

The Abbey of Lerins and the 15th Century fortified monastery are open to visitors, and a monastery shop sells various monastic goods, including wine and olive oil produced on the island. The modern monastery is closed to visitors, although it is used as a Christian retreat. The island is served all year round by a regular commercial ferry service from Cannes.

History

The island, known to the Romans as *Lerina*, was uninhabited until Saint Honoratus founded a monastery on it at some time around the year 410. According to tradition, Honoratus made his home on the island intending to live as a hermit, but found himself joined by disciples (including Saint Caprais (Caprasius) who formed a monastic community around him. This had become "an immense monastery" by 427, according to the contemporary writings of John Cassian. Later legends have it that Saint Patrick, patron of Ireland, studied at the monastery in the fifth century.

Over the following centuries, monastic life on the island was interrupted on several occasions by raids, mostly attributable to Saracens. Around 732, many of the community, including the abbot, Saint Porcarius, were massacred on the island by invaders. According to myth, many of the monks escaped, because Porcarius had been warned of the attack by an angel and had sent them to safety.

In medieval times, the island became a very popular place of pilgrimage. This was encouraged by the writings of Raymond Feraud, a monk who composed a mythological life of Honoratus.

In 1635, the island was captured by the Spanish, and the monks were expelled. They returned from exile in Vallauris two years later when the island was retaken by the French.

Church and monastery of the Lerins Abbey.

The monastery continued to suffer from Spanish and Genoese attacks. The number of monks dwindled to four and, in the proto-revolutionary climate of the time, the monastery was disestablished in 1787. Under the Revolution, the island became the property of the state, and was sold to a wealthy actress, Mademoiselle de Sainval, who lived there for twenty years.

In 1859, the island was bought by the Bishop of Fréjus, who sought to re-establish a religious community there. Ten years later, a Cistercian community was established, which has remained there ever since.

