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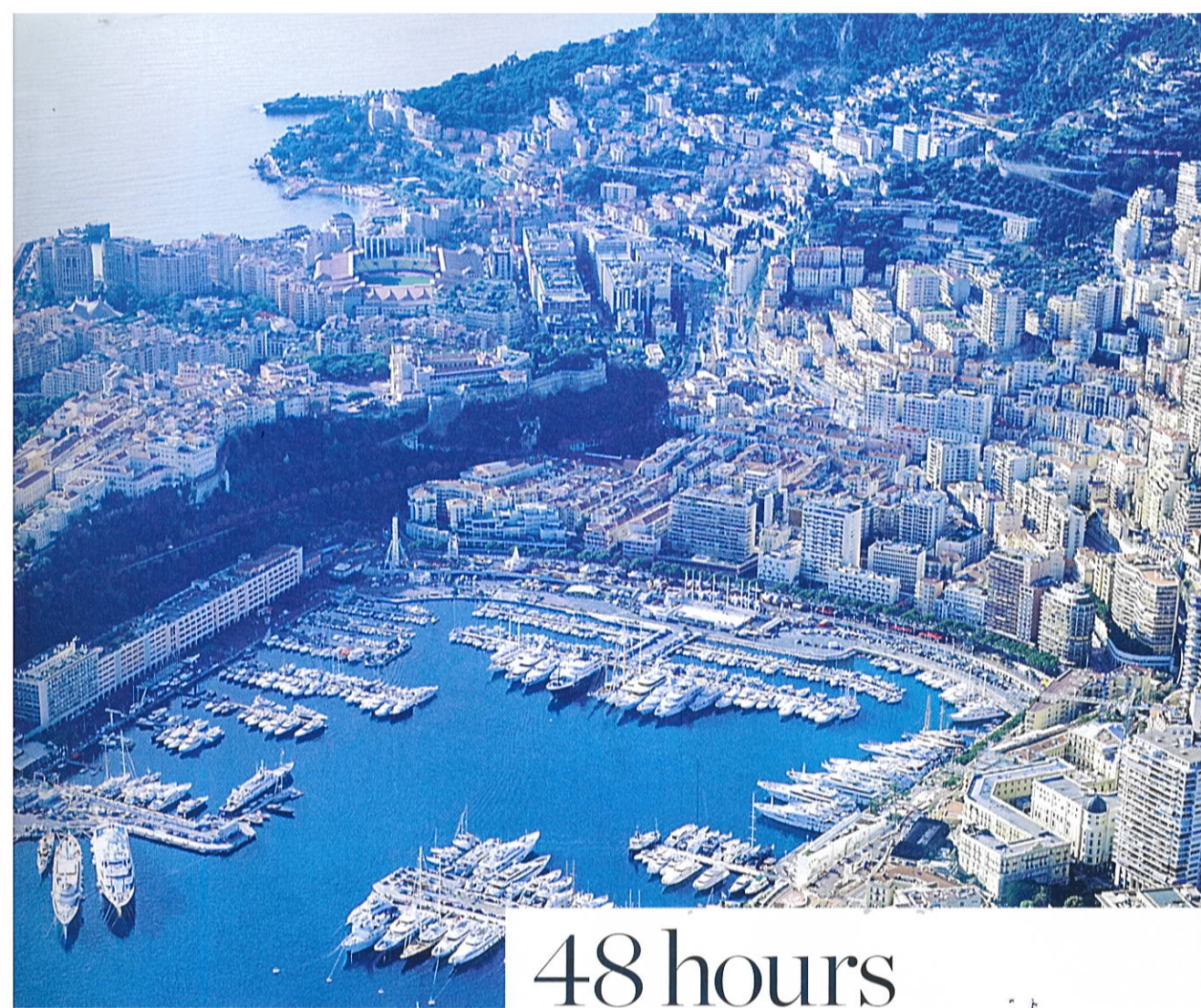
PULSE
The inside
track on must-
have watches
and jewellery

SMART THINKING
THE HI-TECH CITIES OF THE
FUTURE ARE HERE TODAY

GOING GLOBAL
LEADING LABELS AND THE
CHALLENGES OF E-COMMERCE

SINGAPORE SWING

DISCOVER THE HIP URBAN ENCLAVES
THAT MAKE THE LION CITY ROAR



48 hours OF LUXURY

Glamorous fine dining and glitzy hotels compete with spectacular Mediterranean vistas and world-class culture in Monte-Carlo. Casey Gillespie discovers the highlights of this truly decadent, jet-set hot spot



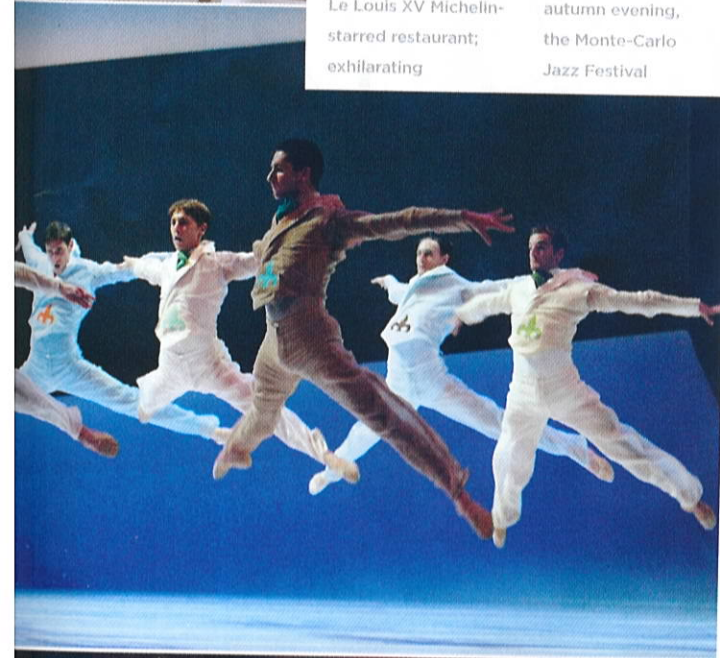
SLEEP In a country whose unwritten motto is “anything is possible”, choosing where to stay in Monte Carlo is more of a game and less of a gamble, as the question of tip-top service is never an issue. Monaco FI Grand Prix fans will revel in the iconic hairpin turn and permanent racing lines outside the **Fairmont Monte Carlo** (www.fairmont.com/monte-carlo), and the mesmerising panoramic vistas of the Mediterranean from the balconied rooms are worth the stay alone. For those looking for a taste of luxury with a fashion edge, the **Hôtel Metropole Monte-Carlo** (www.metropole.com) is the natural choice. A major refurbishment has seen fashion icon Karl Lagerfeld leave his mark—but the classically warm, French-inspired décor remains the focal point throughout. And if you would rather skirt the crowds while still enjoying the spectacular sights and sounds of Monaco, **Monte-Carlo Bay** (www.montecarlobay.com) offers a more family-friendly, resort-like feel complete with manicured gardens and a sand-bed lagoon.





Top to bottom: the opulent décor of Alain Ducasse's Le Louis XV Michelin-starred restaurant; exhilarating

performances by Les Ballets de Monte Carlo; livening up an autumn evening, the Monte-Carlo Jazz Festival



EAT When speaking of gastronomy in Monaco, one must start with Alain Ducasse's institution, **Le Louis XV** at Hôtel de Paris (www.hoteldeparismontecarlo.com): a room whose décor is as opulent as anything in Versailles (including tables laid with gold cutlery). It has an oenophile's dream wine cellar, stocked with more than 400,000 bottles, and a service so flawless that it seems the waiting staff perform an intricate, perfectly timed ballet every evening—and that's before even mentioning the three Michelin-star cuisine. But it is by far not the only place to dine in the city. Hôtel Hermitage's **Le Vistamar** (www.hotelhermitagemontecarlo.com), with its terrace's front-row views of the surrounding city and Mediterranean, is just as impressive. Live jazz plays in the background as guests dine on the restaurant's specialty, seafood, fresh from the waters below. But with the Italian border a mere 10km away, it would be a sin not to partake in the local fare. Aside from the assortment of fresh seafood, there is also a selection of buzzing pizza places, much to every carb-lovers' delight. **Express** (22 rue Comte-Félix-Gastaldi) and **Mozza** (www.mozza.mc) top the locals' list of favourites.

SHOP You'll find all the go-to luxury brands, of course—Prada, Gucci, Cartier, Gant to name a few—but contemporary art connoisseurs will also find plenty to satiate their hunger. Architect and interior designer by trade, **Kamil** (www.kamil.me) designs homes for the fiber-rich and famous, but his showroom and art gallery puts together private art viewings for those interested in growing their collections. He stocks more than 4,000 paintings so surely he has something to please every taste. **Galerie Carré Doré** (www.carredor-monaco.com) specialises in Russian and international contemporary art and rotates exhibitions regularly, and is currently hosting a must-see show from Franck Doat (until September 24). Another don't-miss is **Gallery Sem Art** (www.sem-art.mc) which offers a lively display of multimedia art with not-seen-before pieces from well-known international artists. The gallery's inviting restaurant is worth trying for a light lunch or afternoon cocktails.

DO Autumn is the perfect time to visit Monaco, not only because the heat of summer has subsided, but also because it is when the Principality's cultural calendar really heats up. The city will come to life September 25-28 for the revered **Monaco Yacht Show** (www.monacoyachtshow2013.com), and where better to shop for superyachts than Monte-Carlo? Music lovers won't want to miss the **Monte-Carlo Jazz Festival** (www.montecarlosbm.com) which takes place November 26-30. And of course, there is always the ballet. While Monaco's first ballet company was formed in 1909, now, more than a century later, the seasonal repertoire is more impressive than ever with **Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo** (www.balletsdemontecarlo.com) touring internationally most of the year. They will be at home for performances in October and December and it's worth booking early for these coveted tickets. ☺

GETTING THERE

Fly direct to Nice Côte d'Azur Airport with: **British Airways** from London www.britishairways.com; **Air France** from Paris www.airfrance.com; **Lufthansa** from Milan www.lufthansa.com