



WITH LOVE

*Dispatches from a few of
our favourite locals*

L A I N E
G O O D M A N

THE FRENCH RIVIERA

The culture
writer on gardens,
sea views and the
French Riviera's
enduring love
of art

Some things don't change. Not only can you get away with more on the French Riviera – as F. Scott Fitzgerald once exulted in a letter to his New York editor – but frivolity is only a part of the picture.

'Whatever happened seemed to have something to do with art,' Scott aptly observed back in 1926, and now, almost a century later, the Riviera is roaring to a different tune, but still jubilantly celebrating beauty.

One reason to rejoice is the completion of the meticulously restored Villa

E-1027 – a white-washed concrete rectangle on stilts, built by designer Eileen Gray. The site is glorious: set back in a tangle of wild greenery and lemon trees, the flat-roofed villa jutting out over the rocky shore of Cap Martin is filled with one-off perfect replicas of Gray's iconic furniture. Visitors can admire the modular ingenuity of swivelling wind shutters, pivoting tables, closets and mirrors, or fall in love with Eileen's woven rugs and sleek Deco bar (*capmoderne.monuments-nationaux.fr*).

Those who prefer their art of a horticultural variety would be well advised to head to Menton, once a hotspot for sun-chasing royals and wealthy foreigners. Head to the Serre de la Madone, created by



Lawrence Johnston, an eclectic mix of fountains, water-lily pools, pergolas and statues of Cupids and Madonnas and Val Rahmeh, whose Belle Époque villa and sumptuous sub-tropical plants and trees were created by Lord Radcliffe (*menton.fr*).

For a change of scene, head for the medieval perched village of Saint-Paul-de-Vence, where the local arty enclave is abuzz about the latest exhibit of the new CAB Foundation (*fondationcab.com*), a veritable colour fest of light by artist Ann Veronica Jansen. This former 50-style gallery, redesigned by Charles Zana, features an impressive collection of minimalist and conceptual works as well as modernist furniture from the likes of Jean Prouvé and Charlotte Perriand. Just as in Fitzgerald's day, this place remains all about beauty.

It takes a lot

