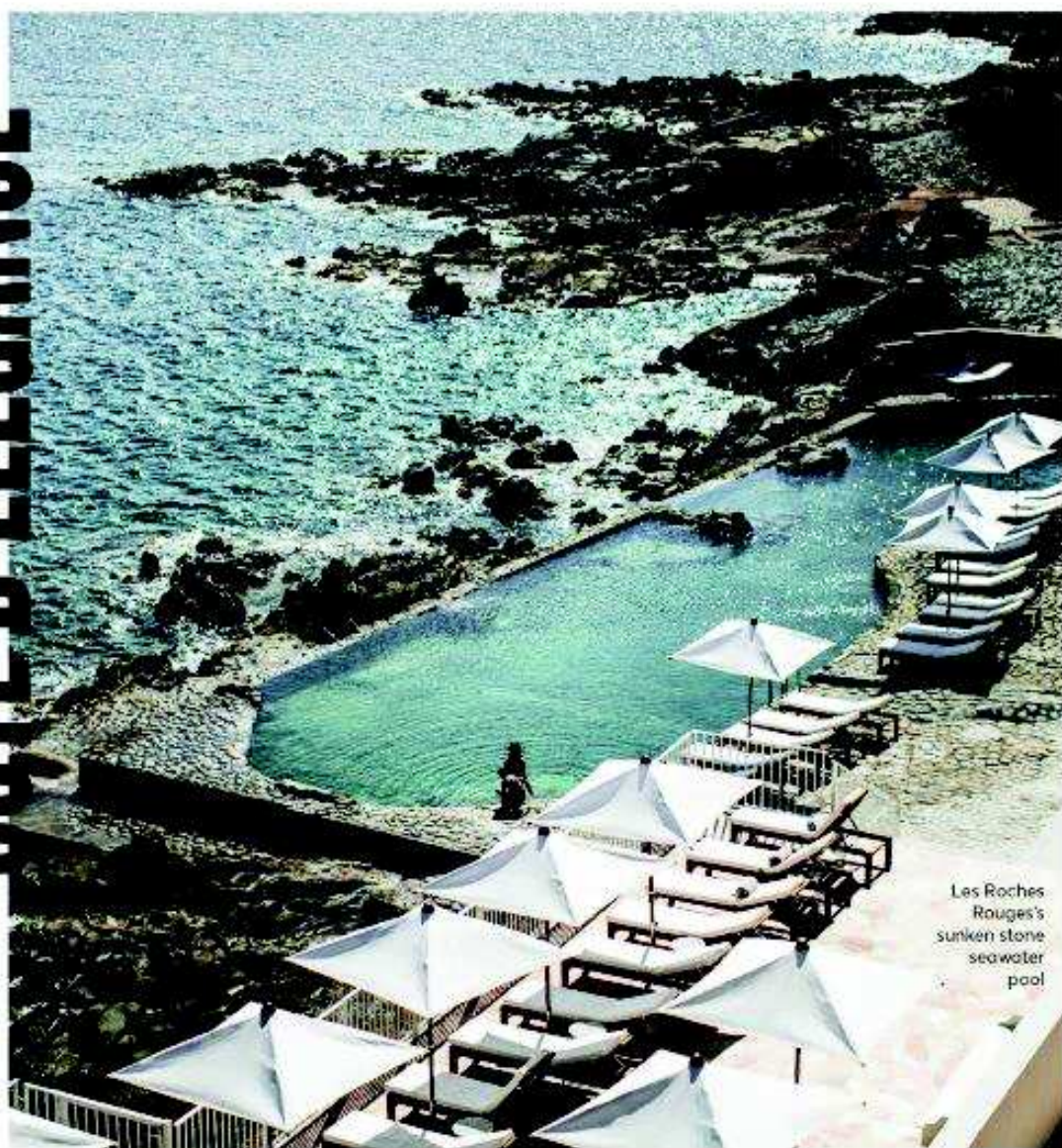


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AUTUMN 2017

CÔTE D'ÉLEGANCE



Les Roches Rouges's sunken stone seawater pool

The French Riviera is sizzling again thanks to four properties that have emerged – or re-emerged – amid the natural beauty of the coastline. **LANIE GOODMAN** reports



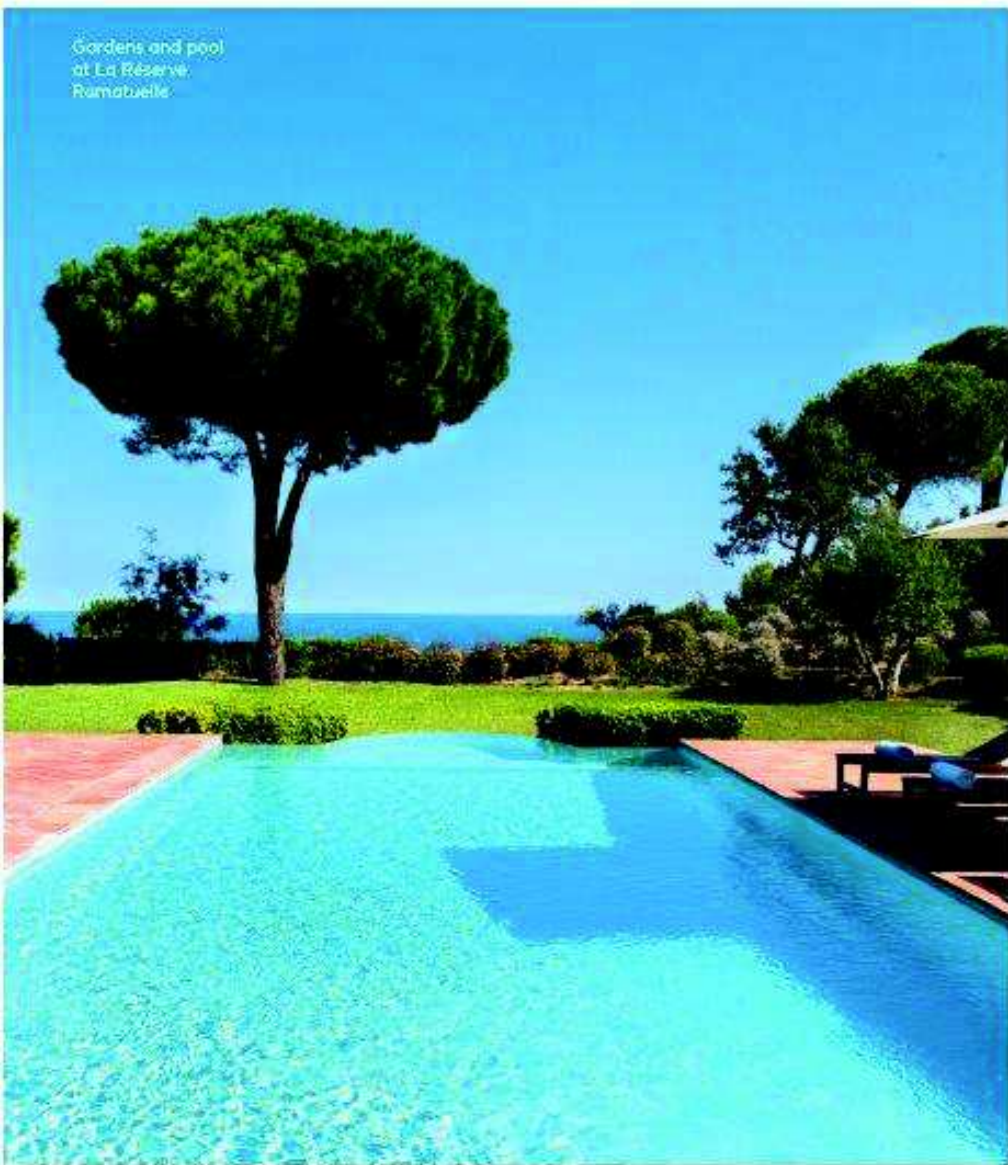
The elegant lobby at Le Grand-Hôtel du Cap Ferrat

It's no secret that the Côte d'Azur has been both overdeveloped and enormously appealing for more than a century – home to some of Europe's most popular beaches as well as secluded spots that still offer quiet glamour and timeless vistas of the wild rocky coast and windswept parasol pines. Slotting firmly into the latter category, a quartet of new or new-look properties perched on the seaside are upping the glamour quotient to dizzying levels with evocative new abodes and indulgent spas.

Hidden away near the tip of its namesake mini-peninsula, **Le Grand-Hôtel du Cap Ferrat, A Four Seasons** (fourseasons.com/capferrat) is a stunning mix of opulent Belle Époque grandeur (think a gleaming white marble lobby with →

PHOTOS FROM TOP: BENOIT LINERO; CHRISTIAN HORIAN

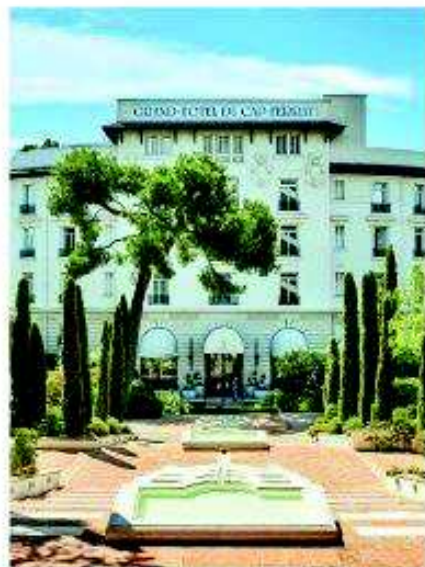
Gardens and pool
at La Réserve
Ramatuelle



SECLUDED SPOTS STILL OFFER QUIET GLAMOUR AND TIMELESS VISTAS OF THE WILD ROCKY COAST AND WINDSWEPT PARASOL PINES

an Eiffel-designed cupola), 6.9 hectares of flower-lined landscaped gardens and a stylish contemporary refurbishment by Pierre-Yves Rochon, who combines pure lines and pale earth tones with splashes of exuberant Mediterranean hues. Ever since Four Seasons took over the management in 2015, this elegant *grande dame* of littoral palaces has been aglow with innovation, not least of which is the cuisine of Yoric Tièche, the newly arrived Michelin-starred chef whose creative takes on refined Provençal and Mediterranean dishes

are rivalled for indulgence only by the treatments at the exquisitely revamped spa. The star attraction is the new beauty line Biologique Recherche, a revolutionary skincare methodology packed with pure botanical and marine extracts and an impressive range of serums, masks, scrubs and anti-ageing creams. For the ultimate splurge, opt for the majestic pink four-bedroom Villa Rose-Pierre, set back in a sprawl of private exotic gardens, which combines sweeping sea views, a curvy mosaic-tiled pool, tennis court,



The iconic facade of the Four Seasons-run Le Grand-Hôtel du Cap-Ferrat

fitness room and sauna with 24-hour butler service and private dining from the restaurant menu.

For another take on the allure of Riviera villa lifestyle with a full range of bespoke services, head to **La Réserve Ramatuelle** (larereserve-ramatuelle.com), a minimalist gem designed by Jean-Michel Wilmotte that sits on a secluded bluff above the rugged coastline just west of St-Tropez. Adjacent to the hotel, on a winding road that leads to the burnished blue sea, are 14 spacious villas scattered across the property. Check out the two new gorgeously refurbished multilevel houses – a three-bed and →



Mediterranean treats
at the Le Bailli de
Suffren bar

PHOTOS CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: © LA RÉSERVE RAMATUELLE; CHRISTIAN HORAN; YOAN CHEVOIRON



The Jean-Michel Wilmotte-designed La Réserve Ramatuelle

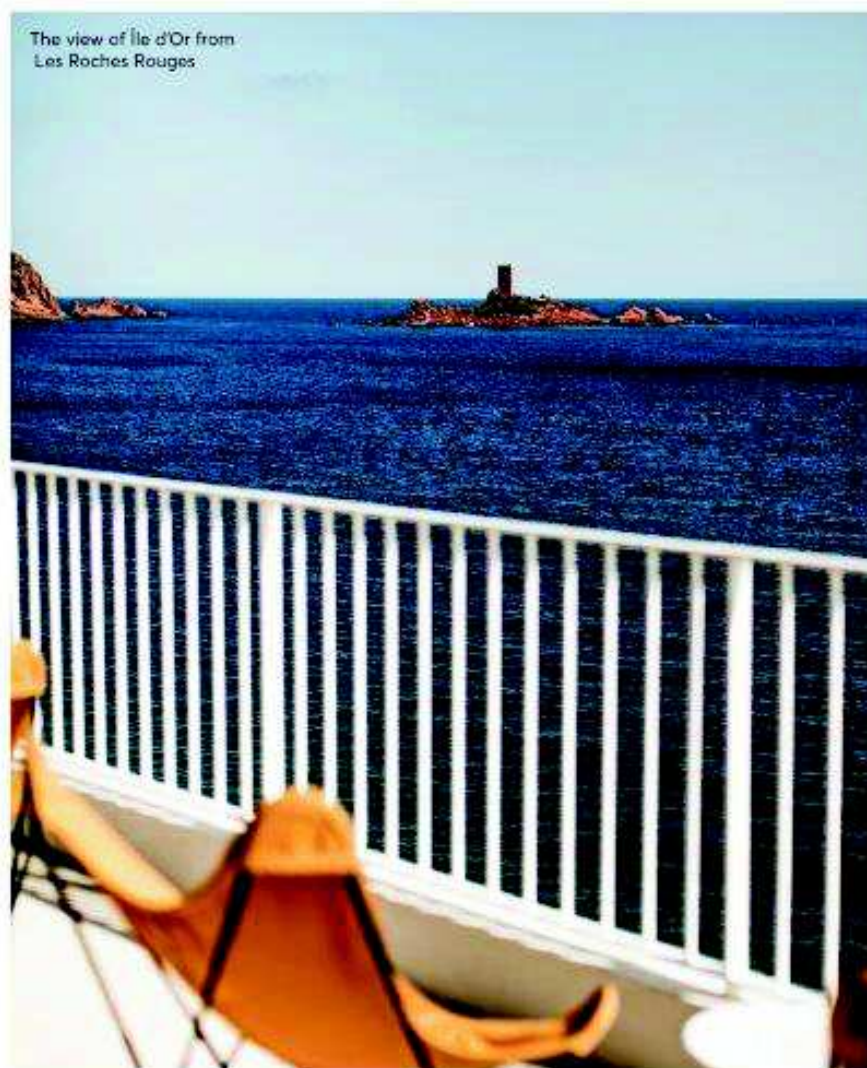
a five-bed – that fuse Provençal and sleek contemporary decor. All guests have access to the sublime La Réserve Spa, a luminous 929sq m wellness centre with customised programmes planned by a staff of doctors and nutritionists. In the spirit of healthy living, La Voile, headed by Michelin-starred chef Eric Canino, serves imaginative market-fresh specialities including spiced-rubbed red tuna, salt-crusted lamb, and a feather-light cocoa crumble served with cardamom blackcurrant sorbet for dessert.

Farther west down the coast in the tiny village of Rayol-Canadel-Sur-Mer, the 55-room recently refurbished hideaway **Le Bailli de Suffren** (lebaillidesuffren.com) sits above the shimmering Mediterranean on an unspoiled inlet of crystalline waters.

With three superb restaurants and a Carita Spa, there's no need to venture into neighbouring traffic-clogged St-Tropez. From the terrace of your room – a contemporary medley of azure and crisp

white by French interior architect François Champsaur – there's a splendid view of the islands of Port-Cros and Porquerolles on the horizon, and if ever you tire of lazing by the pretty pool, explore the lush century-old botanical gardens, Domaine du Rayol, just a five-minute walk from the hotel.

Rediscover Saint-Raphaël at **Les Roches Rouges** (hotellesrochesrouges.com), a new shore-hugging bolthole surrounded by stunning red Esterel cliffs with 50 airy sun-dappled rooms that put a premium on simplicity (guests are provided with straw baskets, rubber beach shoes and walking sticks). Highlights include a sprawling Mediterranean-style restaurant and a sunken stone 30m seawater pool that faces the Île d'Or – a mini-castle slab of golden rock that inspired Tintin's Black Island and is proof of just how much of the good life is still available on this ethereally beautiful coast. ●



The view of Île d'Or from Les Roches Rouges



Postcard pretty: inside a Les Roches Rouges room

PHOTOS FROM TOP: 6 LA RÉSERVE RAMATUELLE; BENOIT LINERO (2)