



The French Riviera: A History

MR Michael Nelson

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The French Riviera: A History is a fascinating look back over the Riviera's rich history. Perfect to dip into, or follow the whole historical journey in one sitting, it will make the perfect addition to any history buff's bookcase.

Michael Nelson shows the surprisingly cosmopolitan nature of the area in the early middle ages, such as the story of the finishing school run by Frankish kings in the 7th century where Siagrius, the ruler of the region, had studied and where the son of King Edwin of Northumbria in England was also sent. The Riviera was part of Provence in France for much of its history and was often a microcosm of France itself, with many dynastic struggles and horrific blood-letting.

Maps and plates illustrate *The French Riviera: A History*, and it is also full of fascinating anecdotes. Examples include the loan of a guillotine by Nice to Grasse in the French Revolution (Nice had no victims and Grasse had thirty) and the occasion when Jean Moulin, the leader of the French Resistance in World War II, invited the Germans to the opening of an art gallery in Nice which he was using as a front. In the nineteenth and twentieth century the British and Americans led tourism, and the Riviera was described by Somerset Maugham as 'a sunny place for shady people'.

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