



CHATEAU SAINT-MARTIN & SPA  
CÔTE D'AZUR – VENCE – FRENCH RIVIERA

FONDATION



DU  
PATRIMOÏNE

## Château Saint-Martin & Spa supports the rehabilitation of *Villa Le Rêve*

Vence, September 2024

This season, Château Saint-Martin & Spa, an Oetker Collection Masterpiece Hotel, has partnered with the City of Vence and the Alpes-Maritimes Heritage Foundation to restore one of the city's iconic villas and historic landmarks, *Villa Le Rêve*. Also known as *Villa Matisse*, the property served as a haven to the famous 20th-century painter Henri Matisse during the 1940s.

### *History*

In 1943, at the height of the occupation, Matisse feared evacuation from Nice and sought refuge in the nearby countryside. A friend told him about a vacant villa in Vence that might interest him. Seduced by the home's atmosphere and the palm trees outside of its windows, he decided to take up residence. Matisse lived there for six years, from 1943 to 1949. The view from his first-floor bedroom featured the light, nature, and setting that inspired some of his most beautiful works that are now part of the world's most prestigious collections. Within the confines of this oasis, he produced paintings, drawings, and cut-out gouache paper works, including the famous 'Intérieurs de Vence' ('Interiors of Vence') series, 'Nature Morte aux grenades' ('Still Life with Pomegranates') and 'Nature Morte devant fenêtre au Palmier' ('Still Life Before a Window with a Palm Tree').

Henri Matisse received visits from renowned artists such as Pablo Picasso and Pierre Bonnard. Nearby the villa, he created the design for the *Rosaire Chapel* of the Dominican sisters, which he considered his career masterpiece. Upon the artist's departure, the villa was converted into a boarding school for girls and became the property of the city of Vence in 2000.

### *The Project*

The City of Vence and the Alpes-Maritimes Heritage Foundation, along with their partners, aim to renovate and rehabilitate *Villa Le Rêve* to welcome visitors from around the world to discover the very place where Matisse lived and created some of his most significant works. Kicked off this year and billed for completion by the end of 2025, this project includes both renovation and enhancement of the villa, including the creation of new spaces. An installation to contextualize the artist's stay at the villa will be showcased on the first level and a study room for students of the University Côte d'Azur will feature on the second level. In addition, a welcome area will feature a boutique and a café. Once completed, *Villa Le Rêve* will be a key stop on the «Matisse Trail», which includes *Villa Le Rêve* and the *Rosaire Chapel* in Vence and the Matisse Museum in Nice, allowing visitors to explore both the artist's living and working spaces, as well as engage with his works in the region.

### *The Partnership*

Strongly committed to preserving the environmental and historical heritage of the Vence area, Château Saint-Martin & Spa has pledged financial support for this renovation project over two years. Hotel guests may also contribute with a minimum donation of 50 Euros. As a thank you, guests will receive an upcycled pouch made from the hotel's preloved upholstery fabrics, designed and crafted by a local seamstress from Vence.

This initiative is part of the annual projects implemented by the hotel's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) department, established in 2010. Château Saint-Martin & Spa takes pride in raising awareness among its guests and staff through social, environmental, and local heritage preservation efforts like this one.

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