

Your discovery itinerary of La Turbie on foot

Please locate you on the numbered plan of the village

The Trophée des Alpes

Length of the visit: 1 hour

La Turbie is known all over the world for its colossal Trophée des Alpes (also called the Trophée d'Auguste) from which it gained its name. It was built in the years 6 to 7 BC. Located on the highest point of the Roman road Julia Augusta, it glorified the Emperor Auguste, victorious over the last rebel tribes of the Alps. Thanks to his victories, the Roman Empire was unified and Pax Romana was therefore declared officially.

A unique edifice, in size as well as historical importance, it is considered as a national treasure and managed by the Centre des Monuments Nationaux (National Monuments Centre), the Trophée des Alpes is one of the architectural heritage marvels of Alpes-Maritimes not to be missed !

To get there from the Tourist Office, head in the direction of the Cours Albert 1er de Monaco passing by the avenue du Général de Gaulle



1 - "Carolo Felicerege" fountain (1824)

On your left, facing the Tourist Office, admire the architecture of this beautiful fountain, classed as an historical monument in 1943. The fountain is dedicated to Charles Félix, King of Sardinia, who inaugurated it in June 1824. Besides being an attractive feature in the village it was also very functional, flanked by two drinking troughs and a large wash house behind. Located right in the heart of the village, it greatly contributed to the quality of life of the citizens of the time. Nowadays it is a drinking stop much appreciated by cyclists having reached the Col de de la Turbie (La Turbie pass).



2 - Théodore de Banville Place

Cross the avenue in the direction of the Place Théodore de Banville, a French poet (1823-1891), and friend of Baudelaire, that so loved the region. Passing through La Turbie during his stay in Nice in 1860, he fell in love with the enormous laurel plant that had given the place its name, he thus wrote his most famous poem "Au Laurier de la Turbie" (Ode to the Laurel of La Turbie) rendering homage to the majestic plant, almost as famous as the Trophée des Alpes ! You can read an extract of the same poem on the left wall of the bar "Le Provençal".

Head in the direction of the Square Gastaut



3 - Square Gastaut

This little haven of greenness, located just outside the Medieval walls, has recently been embellished now offering all that visit a very beautiful sculpture of Saint Michael the Archangel killing the Dragon, by the artist Greta Alessio. The square has been a favourite gathering point for the villagers for a long time, such as the many outdoor balls that they organise every year. Note : The 29th of September is the Feast day of St Michael, the Patron Saint of the village.

Continue on in the direction of the Trophée des Alpes

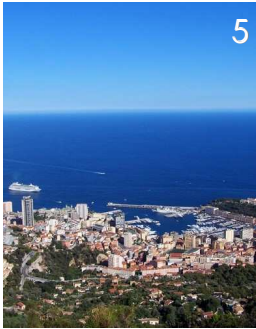


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4 - Cours Albert 1er de Monaco

Once called the Cours Saint Bernard, it was re-baptised in memory of the Monegasque Monarch in 1923. During the Belle Epoque it was the favourite place for a stroll for winter visitors, coming to La Turbie for the day via the old railway line "Chemin de Fer à Crémaillère" (1894 – 1932). Several times a day the stream train made the 2.5 kilometre journey at 7km per hour on a track only one metre in width. The "funicular" was a single wagon, divided into first and second class. Very strong breaks allowed it to slow down, stop or start on this very steep incline (More than a 400 metre difference in level) between Monaco and La Turbie giving the passengers a spectacular, though somewhat hair raising view, especially on the return journey. You can still find vestiges of one of the stops at Chemin de la Crémaillère.

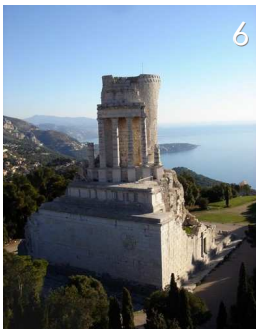
Go to the bottom of Cours Albert 1er de Monaco



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5 – The Rondo

Before going in to visit the Trophée des Alpes, take a moment to admire one of the best panoramic views along the Riviera. From the "Rondo" you have a bird's eye view over the Principality of Monaco, Cap Martin and as far as Italy. The La Turbie landscape has inspired many a poet and writer, including some of the most famous in the region. André Theuriet said of the village "La Turbie, an incredible balcony suspended over a patchwork of capes and a vast stretch of deep blue sea". (Extract from "Au pays bleu").



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6 – Le Trophée des Alpes

The Trophée des Alpes is the first stage on the cross border itinerary "Via Julia Augusta", which travels through 9 Italian and French communes from Vintimille to La Turbie, the main object of the tour being to admire the exceptional Roman architectural heritage.

You enter into the enclosure of the Trophée des Alpes through the vast terraced gardens planted with olive trees and many other Mediterranean shrubs and plants. Before walking around the Trophée take a moment to visit the museum to learn the history of the through the ingravings, plaster casts and models to fully appreciate the historical importance of this unique edifice.



HISTORY: The Trophée was built in the years 6 and 7 BC., in honour of Octave Auguste. This Roman Emperor, the adopted son of César, brought 45 celtic-ligurian rebel tribes that refused to surrender under Roman domination. Originally the dimensions of the Trophée were impressive: more than 35m long and the statue of Auguste was 49m on the ground. The Trophée was well maintained during the Roman period however at the fall of the Roman Empire the Trophée was destroyed, perpetrated by barbarians amongst others. Having lost its past splendor the Trophée was transformed into a fortress in the Middle Ages.

The fortress was bombed on the 4th of May 1705, on the order of Louis XIV: practically all that remained was destroyed. The site was thus totally exposed and the stones used for among many other buildings the Saint-Michel church.

The monument was classed in 1865, but it was only at the beginning of the 20th century, under the impulse of the then mayor of the commune (1912 to 1925), Philippe Casimir, that real excavation work began that allowed the monument to be uncovered.

The generous financial donation from the American Edward Tuck and the study by the architect Jules FORMIGE greatly contributed toward what the monument is today.

Once you have dived into the past take a look at the west side of the monument and discover the original text dedicated to August, engraved on the plaques on the wall, quoting the names of all the tribes that Auguste conquered.



Time permitting, ask to go up to the panoramic raised terraces of the monument where you have a unique vista on the whole Côte d'Azur from Italy right to the gulf of St-Tropez!

Details

Trophée des Alpes

Cours Albert 1er de Monaco - 06320 La Turbie

Tel : 33 (0) 4.93.41.20.84 - Fax : 33 (0) 4.93.41.26.89

The Medieval Village

Length of the visit: 1 hour

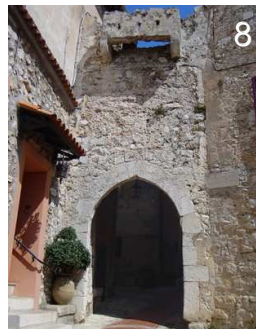
The village is historically located at a strategic crossroads and the Medieval village (11th to 13th Century) has kept the vestiges of its turbulent past. Be charmed by the narrow paved streets lined with flowers and the pretty stone houses with vaulted cellars.



7 – Quotations

Parting from the Tourist Office, head in the direction of the rue Comte de Cessole to enter into the village by the west gate

Before reaching the Medieval village you will see the building opposite the Post Office bearing 2 inscriptions. The first is taken from the itinerary by Antonin, that described La Turbie as the "Alp Summa", where Italy ended and La Gaule commenced. The second is a quote from Dante from "La Divine Comédie" (The Divine Comedy) that speaks about the difficulties in accessing the village long ago. The text can be translated thus "The most solitary and deserted road between Lerici and La Turbie is close to this one with large and easily climbed steps". It was the first literary mention of La Turbie.



8 - The West Gate

Built in a circular arch against the ramparts, during the Middle Ages it served as the defence between the town and the Trophee des Alpes. It was transformed into a fortress in the 11th Century, when the village itself was closed off by the surrounding houses. The west gate was therefore one of the only accesses to the village at that time. Passing through the gate you are on the Via Julia, built by the Romans that went from Genoa to Provence.

Continue until the rue Comte de Cessole



9 – Rue Comte de Cessole

This long road that leads to the Trophee is one of the most beautiful in the village. It possesses the name of the first President of the Nice senate : Hilarion Spitalieri de Cessole (1776 – 1845) who wrote a paper on the Trophee and the Via Julia Augusta presented at the Turin Royal Academy.

REMARKABLE! On your right under the arch at the beginning of the Caruge San Pouns (a small alleyway) you can observe a contemporary portrait of Dante.

Before the steps, turn right in the direction of the Church



10 - Saint-Michel's Church

Located only metres away from the Medieval walls, this magnificent Niçois Baroque church is a classed historical monument since 1938 and is part of the Nisso-Ligurian Baroque route. It was built between 1764 and 1777 using many of the stones from the ruins of the Trophee des Alpes. Under the direction of the "capo maestro" (Grand Master) Antoine SPINELLI the facade was given many typical elements of the Broque style.

Inside the building, you can admire the sober clean lines and the numerous precious paintings, some of which date back to the 15th Century: Saint Charles Borromée by Jean Baptiste Van Loo, Christ descended from the Cross (A. Cano, 1641), Saint-Marc writing his Gospel (attributed to Véronèse, 16th Century), the Magestic Virgin (attributed to François Bréa, between 1530-1540), the Virgin of Murillo (17th century).

Do not miss the magnificent master alter inlaid with 17 different types of marble, that comes from the Saint-Pons Benedictine Abbey in Nice, the large sculpture of Christ, sculpted from a single large trunk of cedar and the Communion table in agate and onyx, which come from the tête du Chien (Head of the dog) quarry in La Turbie.

After visiting the church take rue Capouane, in the direction of Place Mitto





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11 - La Portetta (The little Door)

You pass through the very beautiful south gate "La Portetta", which the village people used to go to the ancient Roman church which was located where the cemetery is today. On your right you will be passing by the Ramparts from the Middle Ages and the gardens of the Trophée des Alpes. Go down the steps to return to the Rue Comte de Cessole on the left. The first road on your right is Rue du Guet. Once called the Rue du Ghetto, the sculpture "La Vierge de Laghet" was hidden on the very road during the the period directly after the French Revolution called "La Terreur" (1792).

At the bottom of the Rue Comte de Cessole, turn right into the Rue Philippe Casimir



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12 - Rue Philippe Casimir

This road was known for a long time as the Rue droite, because it allowed the inhabitants and visitors alike to cross the town directly from east to west. It is now called after the Mayor from La Turbie who dedicated much of his life to the Trophée des Alpes and thanks to him excavation works began early in the 20th Century.

At the end of the Rue Philippe Casimir, you come to a little square where the old communal well can be found. On your left you can observe the northern gate to the village that was created in the 19th Century to access the new village prawning around the old town.

From the well go up the rue de l'Empereur Auguste as far as the pretty Place Saint Jean, the old main village square, where every year the very popular Saint Jean bonfire is held to celebrate the summer solstice



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13 - The Saint-Jean Chapel

An old Roman chapel for Pénitents blancs (*white sinners*), it was renovated in 1768 and given a Baroque facade. It is still a place of worship.

In the Place Saint Jean you can also find the Portail Gioffredo (Gioffredo gate). Once called the Portail Saint-Jean, it was renamed after the Nice Historian: Pierre GIOFFREDO. In the 17th Century the Trophée was prisoner within the tower built much later. On a visit to the village, Pierre Gioffredo recognised the inscription dedicating the trophy to Auguste on the gate which was then restored to the monument.

Head in the direction of place Mitto



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14 - Le Portail du Réduit

In Place Mitto you will find the "Portail du Réduit" (Réduit Gate), dating from the 13th Century made from La Turbie limestone. This very picturesque gate was the only entrance into the walls of the fortress after the Trophée was transformed into a fortress in the Middle Ages.

Finish your visit by descending the rue Incalat ("the paved road") in the direction of the rue du Portail Romain and walk till le Chemin du Moulin passing by the Cours Albert 1er de Monaco

15 - The Laundrette of the Chemin du Moulin

This basin is located on your left while climbing the Chemin du Moulin. Built more recently than the monumental fountain, visitors often ignore it, but this very beautiful work deserves that you will make him a visit. Built at the same time as two mills with grains and olives in 1908, it was restored for its centenary and put in beauty at the beginning of the year 2008 by trompe-l'oeil paintings of the artist Iva Laude.



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