

The

wide



sport

From the Tour de France to the Rio Olympics, the next 12 months promise nonstop action at the biggest sporting events on the planet. Book a front-row seat.

of

COMPILED BY ROBERT BADMAN

# world



## FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX DE MONACO

May 26-29

Monte Carlo, Monaco

[formula1.com](http://formula1.com)

The second-smallest country in the world, Monaco packs a lot of glamour into its two square kilometres. Since Hollywood's Grace Kelly married Prince Rainier III here in 1956, the principality on the French Riviera has been synonymous with style. During the Grand Prix, extravagance and hedonism take hold as glitzy parties attract stars of the sports world and the silver screen. Still, the most exciting action takes place on the circuit, where drivers push their cars and themselves to the limit on the most thrilling – not to mention dangerous – circuit on the Formula One calendar.

**Stay** With its Belle Époque-style architecture, Joël Robuchon restaurant and poolside mural by Karl Lagerfeld, Hotel Metropole Monte-Carlo ([metropole.com](http://metropole.com)) is the indisputable star among Monaco's stylish check-in addresses. Located in the heart of Monte Carlo, it's a quick spin to the casino and the Formula One circuit.

**Eat** Go all-out at Alain Ducasse's three-Michelin-starred Le Louis XV ([alain-ducasse.com](http://alain-ducasse.com)) or make your way to Maya Bay ([mayabay.mc](http://mayabay.mc)), a restaurant with two dining rooms: one offering a Thai menu (about \$28 for three courses), the other a Japanese-inspired feast (same price for three courses).



Theo Baulig

High class meets high speed at the Circuit de Monaco (opposite); Hotel Metropole's Odyssey pool area, designed by Karl Lagerfeld (left)



## UEFA EURO 2016

June 10-July 10

Paris and various locations, France

[uefa.com/uefaeuro](http://uefa.com/uefaeuro)

For French football fans, Paris never felt more romantic than the moment their national team won the 1998 World Cup at the Stade de France. This will be the main venue for the latest instalment of the world's second-most-watched football tournament, the UEFA European Championship – making the capital the obvious place to base yourself for the nationwide event. With the number of competing countries expanded from 16 to 24 this year, it will be the biggest Euro ever. Can the creator of the sport, England, win its first major tournament since 1966? In our view, the smarter money would be on Germany or Spain.

**Stay** It might be the year of the Ritz Paris, the grande dame that's reopening after a four-year makeover, but if you're after a comfortable hotel that feels more like a Parisian apartment, you can't go past Grand Amour ([hotelamourparis.fr](http://hotelamourparis.fr)). It's in the Faubourg district, which is brimming with eclectic bars, quirky restaurants and underground clubs, and is only a 15-minute cab ride from the stadium.

**Eat** If you think it's impossible to find a great local hangout in tourist hotspots, Le Coq Rico ([lecoqrigo.com](http://lecoqrigo.com)) will prove you wrong. Located in Montmartre, just five minutes' walk to the Basilique du Sacré-Cœur, this tiny bistro specialises in birds – from confit duckling to roasted Mesquer pigeon – and is almost always booked out so call ahead.

The Grand Amour has the feel of a Parisian apartment (below)







Sexy Fish (far left); the restaurant's yellowfin tuna tataki (left); the peloton rides the Abbeville-to-Le Havre leg of 2015's Tour de France



## WIMBLEDON

📅 June 27-July 10

📍 London, England

🌐 wimbledon.com

Strawberries and cream, cucumber sandwiches, Pimm's Cups: The Championships, Wimbledon, has so much history that there are even traditions around the refreshments served. Held at the All England Club since 1877, it's the world's oldest, most prestigious tennis tournament. There's no better place to enjoy the London summer.

**Stay** Looking for boutique accommodation with antique charm? Book a room at the recently revamped Lanesborough (lanesborough.com), which has 93 rooms and suites, a Venetian-style dining room and 24-hour butlers. If you prefer sleek, contemporary interiors, opt for the Shangri-La at The Shard (shangri-la.com). Occupying the 34th to 52nd floors of the Renzo Piano building, it has sweeping city views from every room.

**Eat** Melbourne brothers Gabriel and Marcello Bernardi are plating up modern Italian fare at the just-opened Bernardi's (bernardi.co.uk) in inner-city Marylebone. A few blocks south-east in Mayfair, Sexy Fish (sexyfish.com) is hot, both for its racy name and Japanese-inspired seafood.



## LE TOUR DE FRANCE

📅 July 2-24

📍 France and Switzerland

🌐 letour.com

The most spectacular stages of this famous cycling race are set in the Alps. This year's competitors – including defending champion Chris Froome – will move into Switzerland's riverside city of Bern and its World Heritage-listed medieval town centre. It's here that the gruelling 21-stage race will take its second rest day, between stages 16 and 17. It's an outstandingly scenic place to stay for a couple of nights and soak up the carnival atmosphere of Le Tour before it rolls its way into the Swiss Alps and then back to France.

**Stay** It's housed in a century-old building in Bern's Old Town but the Hotel Schweizerhof (en.schweizerhof-bern.ch) is all about modern creature comforts: rain showers, plush beds and a luxurious spa, plus five bars and restaurants.

**Eat** Chef Jan Leimbach's delicious fare – orange-and-aniseed-marinated salmon, for one – has earned Meridiano (kursaal-bern.ch) a Michelin star. Be sure to check out Jack's Brasserie at Hotel Schweizerhof, too, if only to try the pineapple and coconut risotto with goat's cheese praline.



Eric Fefenberg, James McDonald, David Griffen

Mike Stobe, Andrea Marques



## US OPEN

📅 August 29-September 11

📍 New York, United States

🌐 usopen.org



## RIO 2016 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES

📅 August 5-21, September 7-18

📍 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

🌐 rio2016.com

With the success of the 2014 FIFA World Cup still fresh in the memory, Brazil once again becomes the centre of the sports world for the Summer Olympics. Witness history being made when six-time Olympic gold medallist Usain Bolt defends his titles in the 100 metres, 200 metres and 4 x 100 metres relay. Then stay to watch the wheelchair basketballers spin their way around the court at the follow-up Paralympic Games.

**Stay** Across Guanabara Bay from Rio de Janeiro is the town of Niterói, home of the H Niterói Hotel (hniteroihotel.com) – an excellent base if you want to avoid the crush of tourists and fancy a room with ocean views. During the Olympics, accommodation in and around Rio is selling out fast. So book this one before it's too late.

**Eat** Brazil is famous for barbecued meats and no trip to Rio is complete without a visit to Porcão (porcao.com.br), a churrascaria with an all-you-can-eat buffet. Also in the Ipanema neighbourhood, try the feijoada – stew of beans, pork and beef – at Casa da Feijoada (cozinhatipica.com.br).



Sample traditional Brazilian dishes at Casa da Feijoada

Founded in 1881, the US Open is almost as old as its British counterpart, though less beholden to tradition. Flushing Meadows in New York always turns on a party atmosphere for the final Grand Slam event of the year, with plenty of dining and bar options at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center and more celebrities than you can poke a selfie stick at. Serena Williams will be chasing her seventh US Open title, while Men's No. 1, Novak Djokovic, has won it twice. Game on!

**Stay** Check in to a Midtown location so you're in the centre of all the Manhattan action and close to the 7 train for easy access to Flushing Meadows. The Peninsula (peninsula.com) is the all-out-luxe option, housed in a Beaux-Arts-style building on Fifth Avenue. If you're after an edgier stay, W New York – Times Square (wnewyorktimes square.com), with its sensational city views, is around the corner.

**Eat** In New York, there are only two ways to get into a cool new eatery: queue up or book ahead. At David Chang's Momofuku Nishi (nishi.momofuku.com) – where executive chef Joshua Pinsky is artfully fusing Italian and Korean cuisines – you might have to try both tricks. The good news is that the restaurant has a strict no-tipping policy so no post-meal conundrums.





## QANTAS WALLABIES GRAND SLAM TOUR

📅 November 5-December 3

📍 United Kingdom and France

🌐 [rugby.com.au](http://rugby.com.au)

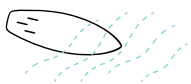


Welsh supporters  
at the Rugby World  
Cup in Cardiff

If you go to only one of the Qantas Wallabies' off-season internationals, make it the one with the most passionate fans: Australia versus Wales. Game day in Cardiff is something to behold – a sea of red jerseys flood the city's streets, while a packed Millennium Stadium echoes with more than 70,000 spirited voices. The "Grand Slam" conquest of all four British home nations has been achieved by the Wallabies just once, in 1984 – an indication of the feat's difficulty. After Wales, Australia faces Scotland in Edinburgh, France in Paris, Ireland in Dublin, and England in its grey Twickenham fortress.

**Stay** Located smack-bang on Cardiff Bay, with many of its rooms offering uninterrupted water views, The St David's Hotel & Spa ([thestdavidshotel.com](http://thestdavidshotel.com)) is only a 10-minute cab ride or a 30-minute walk from the stadium. The on-site Marine Spa has an indoor swimming pool, hydrotherapy spa pools and a range of treatments – perfect for relaxing those muscles after a day out on the field.

**Eat** Café Citta (4 Church Street, Cardiff; +44 29 2022 4040) is a firm favourite among the locals. Small in size, it serves authentic wood-fired pizzas that are big on flavour. Also check out Park House ([parkhouserestaurant.co.uk](http://parkhouserestaurant.co.uk)), where head chef Jonathan Edwards offers modern British fare in one of Cardiff's most loved, heritage-listed structures.



## BILLABONG PIPE MASTERS

📅 December 8-20

📍 Oahu, Hawaii, US

🌐 [worldsurfleague.com](http://worldsurfleague.com)

Oahu, Hawaii's third-largest island, is famed for its raw beauty and has served as a location for blockbuster films *Jurassic Park* and *Jurassic World*. Known to locals as The Gathering Place, it's where the world's greatest surfers go to compete in the final event of the World Surf League. They'll tackle Banzai Pipeline, a reef break more dangerous than a velociraptor with a sore head.

**Stay** There's no shortage of absolute-waterfront or upscale hotels on this lush island. Our pick? The flamboyantly pink Royal Hawaiian Resort ([royal-hawaiian.com](http://royal-hawaiian.com)), in Honolulu's Waikiki, which has magnificent Moorish architecture.

**Eat** Make a beeline for Alan Wong's ([alanwongs.com](http://alanwongs.com)) if you're after authentic Hawaiian cuisine – think ginger-crusted onaga (local red snapper) or lasagne with Keahole lobster and saffron-braised vegies.

Barrels o' fun:  
Oahu hosts  
the Billabong  
Pipe Masters



## Aussie, Aussie, Aussie!

Eight smashing sports events on hallowed home soil.

### A-League Grand Final

May 1

🌐 [a-league.com.au](http://a-league.com.au)

The ultimate bragging rights are on the line in a football competition where the rivalries are famously fierce.

### Qantas Wallabies vs England

June 11, 18, 25;

Brisbane, Melbourne

Sydney

🌐 [rugby.com.au](http://rugby.com.au)

The English rugby team embarks on a historic tour of Australia for the first three-Test series between these old enemies.

### Bledisloe Cup

August 20; ANZ

Stadium, Sydney

🌐 [rugby.com.au](http://rugby.com.au)

The Qantas Wallabies will be determined to beat reigning Rugby World Cup champs the All Blacks in the first match of the Bledisloe Cup series, before two Tests on Kiwi turf.

### AFL Grand Final

October 1; MCG,

Melbourne

🌐 [afl.com.au](http://afl.com.au)

The Hawks are chasing a historic four flags in a row. Victory at the MCG would feel like déjà vu – all over again.

### NRL Grand Final

October 2; ANZ

Stadium, Sydney

🌐 [nrl.com](http://nrl.com)

A gruelling season with State of Origin

duties and weeks of finals footy is all forgotten as two teams take to the field for 80 minutes of hard-hitting action.

### Bathurst 1000

October 6-9;

Mount Panorama, Bathurst NSW

🌐 [v8supercars.com.au](http://v8supercars.com.au)

Mark Winterbottom (see page 50) will be looking to go one better after finishing second in last year's big race.

### Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix

October 21-23; Phillip

Island, Victoria

🌐 [motogp.com.au](http://motogp.com.au)

The famous fairy penguins of Phillip Island will want to put their earplugs in for a long weekend of motorcycle racing.

### Australian Open Golf Championship

November 17-20;

Royal Sydney Golf

Club, NSW

🌐 [ausopengolf.com](http://ausopengolf.com)

Australia's oldest, most prestigious golf tournament will see the best of the local circuit teeing off against international stars.

### Boxing Day Test

December 26-30;

MCG, Melbourne

🌐 [cricket.com.au](http://cricket.com.au)

While the Big Bash League's Twenty20 is gaining fans, cricket tragics know there's nothing like this Test at the MCG.



## SUPER BOWL

📅 February 5, 2017

📍 Houston, Texas, US

🌐 nfl.com

Southern charm and big-city sophistication come together in Houston, which is hosting the 51st Super Bowl. If the intricacies of American football – quarterback sacks, running backs and Hail Marys – are lost on you, Houston itself offers a lot more than Texas barbecue and bootscooting. There's a thriving arts scene and a 17-block theatre district. Downtown, new bars and restaurants are buzzing, thanks to a major redevelopment ahead of Super Bowl 2017 – a sports event so big that even the commercials make the news.

**Stay** With an on-site spa, an Italian restaurant, a wine bar and Downtown Houston's only resort-style pool, the Four Seasons (fourseasons.com) is one of the city's chicest hotels, centrally located in the business district.

**Eat** A Japanese gastropub in Houston's Midtown, Izakaya (houstonizakaya.com) boasts bold tattoo-art-inspired murals and classic counter meals with a distinct Asian twist, such as hot dogs seasoned with yuzu kosho slaw. Another happening spot is B&B Butchers & Restaurant (bbbutchers.com), a butcher-shop-cum-steakhouse with a rooftop patio and views of the city.

Touchdown! The Denver Broncos and Carolina Panthers do battle (above); the charcuterie board at B&B Butchers



## THE MASTERS

📅 April 6-9, 2017

📍 Augusta, Georgia, US

🌐 masters.com

Augusta has some of the oldest and prettiest architecture in the American South. Adding to this charming city's assets is the immaculate course at Augusta National Golf Club (below) and the professional tournament it hosts annually. The Masters is steeped in tradition, most notably the winner's green jacket. Tournament organisers should probably write down Australian Jason Day's measurements as the 2015 PGA Championship winner has a realistic chance of adding the jacket to his wardrobe.

**Stay** A mere three-minute drive to Augusta National Golf Club, Sheraton Augusta Hotel (sheratonaugusta.com) has 152 guestrooms with plush-top mattresses, down pillows, flat-screen HD TVs and complimentary wi-fi.

**Eat** Prime 1079 Steakhouse, at the Sheraton Augusta Hotel, is a great option for meat-lovers. Devotees of biodynamic wines and seasonal regional food should consider chef Sean Wight's Frog Hollow Tavern (froghollowtavern.com), which has dishes such as braised Berkshire pork shoulder with smoked-tomato pork jus on the menu. ●

