



Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez - Saturday, September 26 - Sunday, October 4, 2026
September 15, 2026

The Spirit of Les Voiles

From September 26 through October 4, Saint-Tropez will once again transform into the world capital of yachting, pulsing to the rhythm of Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, organised by the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez. A remarkable fleet of 253 sailing yachts is expected for an exceptional programme of racing and unique encounters. Blending tradition and modernity, elegance and cutting-edge technology, Les Voiles remain above all faithful to the Corinthian spirit instilled by Patrice de Colmont, the creator of La Nioulargue in 1981, who passed away last year. The best racing on the water and the best atmosphere ashore - that spirit will continue to define this truly unique week.

Maxis: The Giants Take Centre Stage

With 50 Maxis expected, the 2026 edition of Les Voiles could set a new record, surpassing the 46 entries recorded in 2022. The fleet will be evenly distributed between Maxi 1, competing for the Edmond de Rothschild Trophy, and the other classes, extending through Maxi 5 and including the Maxi Grand Prix fleet (Maxi GP). These magnificent racing yachts, measuring more than 18.28 metres (60 feet), are not classified according to length, but according to performance, based on their rating. Thus *Atalante*, a 39-metre Hoek design with a new-classical appearance, competes in Maxi 5, while *Capricorno*, a radical 25-metre Judel-Vrolijk racer, races in Maxi 1.

One of the highlights of this year's edition will undoubtedly be the presence of three J Class yachts - *Hanuman*, *Rainbow* and *Svea* - bringing the atmosphere of the America's Cup to the port of Saint-Tropez and the Bay of Pampelonne. Spectacular images and compelling stories are guaranteed, not least the story of *Svea*.

Designed by Tore Holm in 1937, *Svea* is, in fact, the newest J Class yacht ever built, having only been constructed for the first time in 2017. It was only after the designer's death that the plans for this long-overlooked yacht were rediscovered in his archives. Holm, an Olympic medallist and passionate advocate of the metre rule, was working at the same time on *Svanevit* ("white swan"), an 8 Metre boat intended to compete at the 1940 Helsinki Olympic Games, which ultimately never took place. He could hardly have imagined that *Svea* would one day become a reality - still less that she would one day cross the wake of her smaller sister, *Svanevit*. The relationship between the two designs is striking. It caught the attention of Guillaume Wattinne, who bought *Svanevit* in 2023 with the intention of bringing her to the Mediterranean. With the same sweeping lines, similar stern and comparable hull colour, the 14.65 metre sloop is essentially a scaled-down version of *Svea*. For the very first time, the giant J Class yacht and the 8 Metre JI will share the same stretch of water. A family portrait has already been scheduled in the port of Saint-Tropez!

Classics: Performance and Authenticity

Some 80 classic yachts, including more than 20 centenarians, will once again illuminate the port and Gulf of Saint-Tropez this year, with the race starts taking place off the Portalet Tower. This exceptional fleet reflects the growing passion for maritime heritage throughout Europe and around the world, while confirming the international stature of Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez as the largest gathering of these historic yachts. Yet perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the development of classic yachting worldwide is the pivotal role played by La Nioulargue. It's original "rating rule",

famously sketched out on the corner of a table, directly contributed to the creation of the rating system of the Comité International de la Méditerranée, (CIM) an influence born in Saint-Tropez that has since extended far beyond the Mediterranean. Originally brought together for cruising races and rallies, particularly in Italy during the 1990s, Classic yachts gradually became more structured under the impetus of the Yacht Club de Monaco. A dedicated rating rule was subsequently developed by the CIM, now known as the International Committee of Mediterranean Classic sailing (CIMVC). Today, each yacht is assigned a rating calculated according to performance criteria weighted by an authenticity coefficient, making it possible to organise competitive racing on an international scale.

1,100 yachts are currently rated worldwide, including 300 racing certificates a year issued in the Mediterranean, an essential reservoir of Classic yachts. This represents a remarkable achievement for the CIM, which celebrates its centenary this year under the presidency of Italian Luigi “Gigi” Rolandi, recently elected under the rotating presidency system established by the Committee’s statutes. He is supported by, among others, Renaud Godard, Secretary General and Chairman of the Rating Commission, and Thierry Leret, Treasurer and Chairman of the Safety and Racing Commission.

The Corinthian Spirit - in memory of Patrice

“Racing is far too serious a business to be left to racers.” That may well have been what Patrice de Colmont had in mind when he created La Nioulargue in 1981. Patrice was not a competitor. He preferred island bivouacs aboard *Cocotte*, the small mahogany Matonnat dinghy on which he sailed as a child. But he loved the sea, beautiful boats and the people who sailed them. A master of improvisation yet a shrewd manager, an exceptional storyteller yet a man who listened, host to stars yet a friend of Pierre Rabhi and a passionate advocate of traditional small-scale farming - which he himself practised to supply the kitchens of Club 55 - the inimitable Patrice de Colmont retained a rare combination of lightness and audacity. It was this spirit that enabled him to orchestrate and grow a festive week of racing unlike any other in the world. Although he stepped away from organising the event after 1995, he remained close to Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez, offering his support and goodwill as the event sought to become the worthy heir to La Nioulargue. He continued to welcome the crews of the yachts that challenged one another on Wednesdays and Thursdays, maintaining the tradition established in 1981 by the Swan 44 *Pride* and the 12 Metre JI *Ikra*.

Patrice de Colmont died following a short and cruel illness on October 11, 2025, leaving a deep footprint. The 28th edition of Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez will therefore be the first to take place without him, but thanks to his daughter Camille, the legacy continues. Remaining true to the traditions of the Club 55 Cup and the Challenge Races, where “*protests are forbidden or must be accompanied by a cash deposit (preferably chilled rosé wine)*” according to the Sailing Instructions - wording that has remained unchanged since the very beginning.

This year, the Club 55 Maxi Yacht Cup will see defending champion *Balthasar* (Maxi 72) take on the challenge of *Tilakkhana II* (Wallycento) on Wednesday, while the two J Class yachts, *Rainbow* and *Hanuman*, go head-to-head in Match racing, in the spirit of the America’s Cup. And for the Club 55 Cup on Thursday, defending champion *Mariella*, a 1938 Mylne-designed yawl, will face *Hallowe’en*, the 1926 Fife-designed Bermudan cutter celebrating her centenary this year. Two beautiful tributes, without a doubt.

Share the teaser for ‘Les Voiles’ in [portrait](#) or [landscape](#) format!

Zoom on: The Challenge Races

Following the Club 55 Cup, Thursday will be dedicated to the Challenge Races staged between Modern and Classic yachts. A three-way match is taking shape among the Wallynano37 fleet: Ges III (2023), Katarina (2026) and Nostromino II (2024). These 37-foot one-design yachts, featuring neo-classical styling by André Hoek Design and built by Wally Yachts, are generating considerable enthusiasm. The latest MK2 version notably features electric propulsion. This year, Nostromino II

will be sailed by an all-female crew, adding another distinctive dimension to one of the week's closely watched challenges.

2026 Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez Schedule

Saturday, September 26: Registration confirmation

Sunday, September 27: Registration confirmation

Arrival of the Yacht Club de France's Coupe d'Automne (Cannes–Saint-Tropez)

Monday, September 28: Races for the Maxis and Moderns

Tuesday, September 29: Races for the Maxis, Moderns, and Classics, including the Rolex Trophy

Wednesday, September 30: Races for the Moderns and Classics, including the Rolex Trophy
Day-off for the Maxis, Club 55 Maxi Yacht Cup

Thursday, October 1: Club 55 Cup, Gstaad Yacht Club des Centenaires Trophy (staggered starts), Challenge Day for the Moderns and Classics, Wally Nano 37 Challenge
Races for the Maxis

Friday, October 2: Races for the Maxis, Moderns, and Classics, including the Rolex Trophy

Saturday, October 3: Races for the Maxis, Moderns, and Classics, including the Rolex Trophy
Prize-giving for the Maxis, including the Edmond de Rothschild Trophy
Presentation of the Rolex Trophy

Sunday, October 4: Prize-giving for the Moderns and Classics, including the BMW Trophy and special trophies

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Marine Safety: Gilles Doyen
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