

MAY MONACO

05

ONBOARD
TALITHA
—80m/MOTOR

*A race before the
red lights go out*





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In 1930 the motor race to the Riviera started in style. To call the sport elitist would be a gross understatement. Indeed, only a handful of young men like Kimberly diamond-heir Woolf "Babe" Barnato and pearl magnate Bernard Rubin could afford cars like the supercharged 120mph Bentley Blower needed to take part.

There's a good reason why 'Bentley Boys' Barnato and Rubin needed so much muscle. Their racing adversary was none other than Le Train Bleu, the world's most luxurious express train, which speeded the likes of Winston Churchill, Coco Chanel and the Prince of Wales down to Monte Carlo.

Fast-forward eight decades and the sprint to Monaco is being run again with similar panache. To keep numbers tight, invitations are only open to those with their own supercar and the wish to be welcomed at the Red Bull paddock during the Grand Prix's Friday practice session. But each Aventador or Veyron Super Sport driver that lines up at Hampton Court Palace outside London on the preceding Wednesday is in for a treat. After starters orders from former F1 champion Damon Hill, a three-day feast of fast cars, open roads and gourmet cuisine begins.

In a mirror of the 1930 course, 'The Run To' tour proper begins at Calais. The first leg is a cruise down to Versailles in time for afternoon tea and a round of pétanque. A fleet of Citroën 2CVs are on hand to shuttle any revellers into Paris. Handling 18 horsepower after been in control of up to a thousand will certainly be a novelty for some.

After a hot lap session at F1 circuit Magny-Cours the run bowls through Burgundy countryside to the historic Chateau Pizay. Despite the clay pigeon shoot and the alfresco dinner it's best to get an early night. Friday's drive is an alpine descent to the Cote d'Azur, followed by a speedboat shuttle to dinner at the Hotel de Paris. The race weekend carries on with abandon: lunch with the Red Bull crew, VIP race access and your yacht anchored in the bay. "Babe" Barnato would have been proud.

By Tristan Rutherford

"Babe" Barnato's Piccadilly Wager

Diamond heir and Bentley chairman Woolf "Babe" Barnato was not a man who liked to be outdone. After dinner table conversation at Cannes' Carlton Hotel turned to the Rover Light Six's race against Le Train Bleu on the Riviera-to-Calais route, he laid his own wager. Baranto's £100 bet claimed that he could park his Bentley outside The Conservative Club in Piccadilly before the express train reached the English Channel.

The following evening Barnato raced Le Train Bleu out of Cannes station, but hit rain at Lyon and fog outside Paris. After an early morning puncture and a last-gasp run for the cross-channel ferry he motored to his Piccadilly club ... just four minutes before the train pulled into Calais. Sadly for "Babe", his winnings were dwarfed by the fine he received from the French state for racing on public roads.





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ONBOARD TALITHA

—80m/MOTOR

Details
Length 80m (262ft)
Speed 13 Knots
Accom. 12 Guests
Crew 18

Unique Feature
A vintage yacht steeped
in dramatic history.



Talitha is the classic thoroughbred yacht. A noble behemoth with two cream funnels atop a white steel hull, her look epitomises 1930s decadence.

The yacht's story is a thrilling one, spanning eight decades of history. Talitha was launched in 1930 as Reveller, the personal plaything of Russell Alger, Chairman of the Packard Car Company. In later years she belonged to the Woolworth clan (as Chalena), the Embiricos shipping family (as Jezebel) and even the US Navy (as fiercely armed Pearl Harbour gun boat USS Beaumont). This is a yacht awash with the memories and secrets of generations gone by, but artfully refitted in 2009, Talitha's six elegant staterooms include all the comforts of any modern yacht, including a teak-decked bathing zone and an indoor cinema.

During the summer of 2012, Talitha will make her majestic tour of the French Riviera and while others crowd into Monaco's Port Hercules, Talitha's long-standing captain will bring guests to secluded anchorages off Cap d'Ail's bijou beach or perhaps overlooking David Niven's house on the inimitable Cap Ferrat. A host of tenders and toys serve this 80m (262ft) cruiser, including a 12-person Chris Craft and a fleet of Waverunners. However a true guest favourite remains the 300hp wooden Hacker speedboat – the Packard of motor launches, one might say.

THE EPITOME OF REFINED ELEGANCE