



By invitation only

Festival de Cannes has been dedicated exclusively to film professionals since inception; a nuance that crowns it king of international film festivals. **Tom Pountney** looks ahead to the 70th edition where its red carpet promises to shine brighter than ever before

A moving picture Mecca. Where the highest in art and film collide with glamour and glitterati; the world of cinema together en masse for the most prestigious of annual congregations. “Everything is here in one very neat package,” explains Marta Lamperova, a Smithsonian Journeys Cannes expert with an extensive background in film production.

“It is so different to every other festival in the world. The community may have grown exponentially, but Cannes is still reserved only for art.

“It is the occasion where Directors – cherished by Cannes – are the stars.”

Convening the creative and commercial dimensions of the industry by promoting cinematographic and professional exchanges, Cannes artfully balances upscale international cinema with intelligent Hollywood offerings, while also finding space for blockbusters and classic re-releases out of competition.

The Jury will announce the Palme D’Or winner – in addition to other awards, including ‘Un Certain Regard’ (20 films selected from

cultures near and far; original and different works) and the separately programmed ‘Director’s Fortnight’ and ‘Critics’ Week’ – from an illustrious competition list late in May (Festival runs 17-28 May).

Each year, Cannes also transforms into the worldwide film business hub, creating a prime opportunity to meet professionals and trade at Marché du Film.

With the success of the Festival de Cannes in the 1950s, the Marché du Film was formed in 1959 to run in tandem in the colossal rotunda at the back of the Palais building. The feverish

market atmosphere is the most important meeting place for film professionals who come from all over the world to buy and sell film rights, find co-producers and to network. The Marché du Film fosters exchanges and provides visibility to participants by offering a wide range of services such as meetings, exhibition spaces and screenings. Now more than 12,000 professionals, including 3,200 producers, 1,200 sales agents, 1,750 buyers and 800 festival organisers convene in the southeast of France, with more than 1,000 films available on market. Deals that started at Rotterdam or Berlinale are completed at Cannes.

When business is complete, parties are hosted by sales companies and producers – especially those with a film in competition or selection. ➤

Above: Charlize Theron on the red carpet in 2016



Celebrities on the red carpet at the 69th Edition of Cannes in 2016 Left: George and Amal Clooney with Julia Roberts and Jodie Foster Below: Eva Longoria Centre: Ryan Gosling

This is time for Hollywood's stars to sparkle, to party on the boats in the marina and to make appearances in front of huge queues outside hotels on the famous promenade.

Each national film institution will host private receptions at their respective pavilions on the beach, but the ultimate invite is for the official Festival de Cannes party where you could be rubbing shoulders with George Clooney, Charlize Theron, Ryan Gosling, Eva Longoria – or even the Prime Minister of France.

The only area accessible without an official guest-pass is the Plage du Cinema which hosts night screenings on the beach.



In a sign of the growing importance of private money in film finance, the Cannes Marché has launched a bespoke investors club aimed at high-net-worth individuals (HNWI) looking to invest in cinema. The top-level conclave of investors and industry practitioners, known as Cannes Investors Club, was

established in 2015. Under the initiative, the Marché will host workshops aimed at introducing HNWIs to top producers and sales agents in the industry.

"They're HNWIs who don't know the cinema world and want to get involved," says Marché chief Jérôme Paillard. ■

TRAVEL INFORMATION

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HOW TO GET AN OFFICIAL GUEST PASS

Media passes at the Festival de Cannes are only accredited against checked journalist CVs, so bagging one of these is not easy. In order to get into the 70th edition of the Festival de Cannes, you will have to do one of the following:

- Purchase Cannes property and live there: a handful of 'locals passes' are available to the residents of Cannes.
- Moor/rent a yacht: Yacht berths will be like gold dust during Festival week so dock early, or book a rental and throw a party fit for the glitterati of Cannes.
- Make friends with Elton John. He and Harvey Weinstein often host A-list parties up the coast in Antibes.
- Travel with Smithsonian Journeys: The Smithsonian's travel programme has a special accreditation granted by the Festival which allows for the same access as a worldwide distributor. Visit smithsonianJourneys.org/Cannes to learn more.
- Become a producer or a distributor: Many ultra high-net-worth individuals are spotting investment opportunities in the trade.