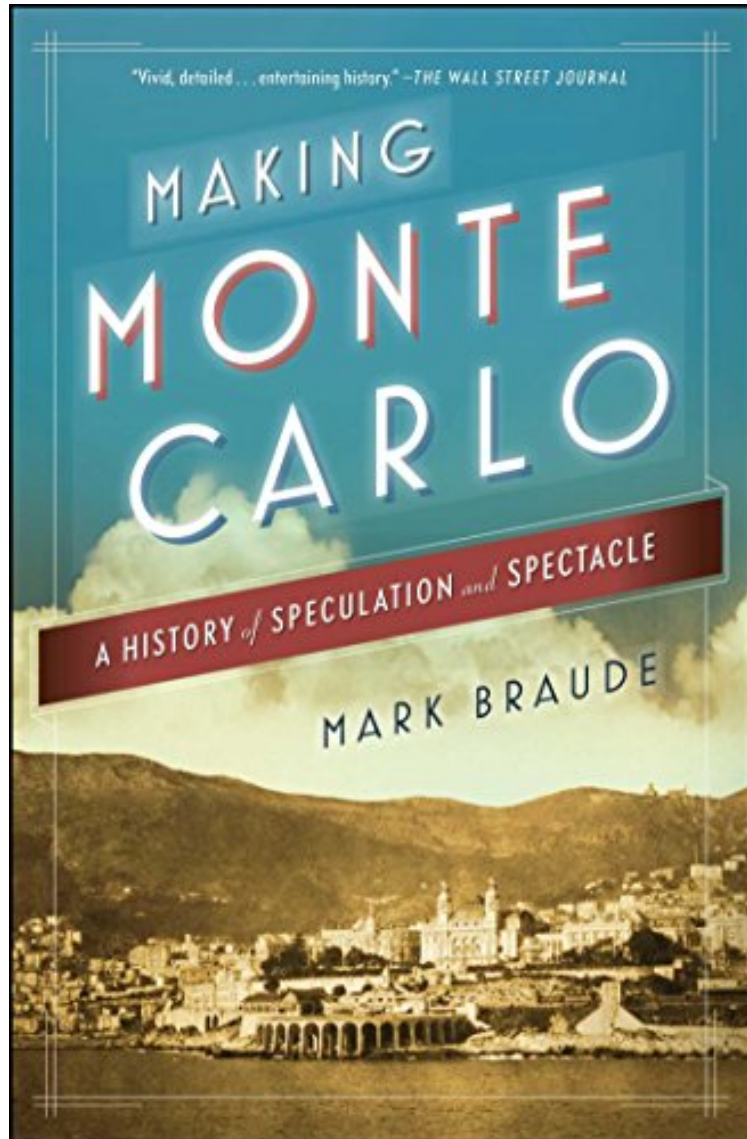


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Making Monte Carlo: A History of Speculation and Spectacle

Mark Braude

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Mark Braude : Making Monte Carlo: A History of Speculation and Spectacle before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Making Monte Carlo: A History of Speculation and Spectacle:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Engaging And Entertaining By Rusty Naylor I found the book to be engaging and entertaining, but I was disappointed the book did not delve into more recent history. 4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Fun read... By Jill Meyer I was a bit disappointed when I finished Mark Braude's book, "Making Monte Carlo: A History of Speculation and Spectacle". The book I had enjoyed reading ended in the 1930's.

Then I looked at the title again, and realised why the book ended when it did. Monte Carlo, part of Monaco, really had been the product of speculation, wild ideas, and sometimes shady operators. Was the time period Braude wrote about the end of the speculative era? Did things calm down after the 1930's? Mark Braude has written a snappy, fun book about the creation of Monte Carlo. He begins by examining the German spas which were set up in the early 1800's to provide a place to both "take the waters"...and have a little fun on dry land. That fun often included gambling and the spa towns attracted plenty of high rollers - both royal and just wealthy. The spa and casino of Bad Homburg, located in Hesse, had been started up by twin brothers, Louis and Francois Blanc. Francois was lured away to Monaco in the early 1860's to revive a not-so-thriving casino. Francois Blanc worked his magic, turning around the poky casino and livening the place up with a flashy hotel and other entertainment. But the money-making casino was still the major draw to those seeking fun in the south of France. Monte Carlo and its allure was made even more reachable by increased train service to the rocky area just east of Nice. The train service and other attractions were made known by a directed publicity campaign. Some smart minds were behind the advertising, and Monte Carlo became "the" place to see and be seen. Braude ends his book with the "Circuit de Monaco" road race, run through the streets of Monaco. Mark Braude does an excellent job of looking at the people who created the myth and the reality of Monte Carlo. The book is a fun read. So, why am I giving it four stars instead of five? Because, if ever a work of non-fiction needed illustrations, this is the book. There are three maps of the area I found, but I looked through the entire Kindle version and could find no pictures of either the people behind the development of Monte Carlo, or of the place itself. Maybe photographs will be added to future editions. They are sorely needed. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Two Stars By CustomerGreat early history, but the story petered out after the 1950s.

"A brisk historical tour of the marketing and selling of the small principality of Monaco and its famous city... A well-researched, dramatic rags-to-riches urban tale... (Kirkus Reviews) of Monte Carlo's rise from small principality to prosperous resort town of the 1920s. Monte Carlo has long been known as a dazzling playground for the rich and famous. The "vivid, entertaining" (The Wall Street Journal) Making Monte Carlo traces a narrative history of the world's first modern casino-resort, from the legalization of gambling in Monaco in 1855—passed as a desperate bid to stave off bankruptcy—through the resort's improbable emergence as a glamorous gambling destination of to its decline in the wake of WWI and its subsequent reinvention in the 1920s until the inaugural Monaco Grand Prix in 1929, on the eve of the Wall Street crash that would largely spell the end of the freewheeling era. Along the way, we encounter a colorful cast of characters, including Francois Blanc (a professional gambler and cheat and eventual founder of Monte Carlo); Basil Zaharoff (notorious munitions dealer and probable secret owner of the casino for some years in the 1920s); Elsa Maxwell (hired as the casino's publicist in the late 1920s); Reacuteneacute; Leacute;on (a visionary Jewish businessman with murky origins); Serge Diaghilev, Jean Cocteau, Coco Chanel, Pablo Picasso, and other satellite members of the Ballet Russes dance company; as well as Gerald and Sara Murphy and other American expats, such as Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald. "An engrossing examination of how politics, personality, and publicity coalesced to transform a sleepy village into a luxurious playground populated with casinos and beautiful people" (Publishers Weekly), Making Monte Carlo is a classic rags-to-riches tale set in the most scenic of European settings.

"[An] entertaining history of 'speculation and spectacles'... [a] vivid, detailed narrative. (The Wall Street Journal)" [A] stirring account of the creation of Monte Carlo and its rapid rise... Braude's fluent and fast-paced writing style is ideally suited to his subject matter, which is all about vision, speed of thought and execution... this is such an overlooked history — one that Belgian author Luc Sante justifiably describes in the book's blurb as being 'as capacious and dramatic as a 19th-century thriller.'" (Financial Times) "It was a wily Frenchman—and former cardsharp—who understood that by giving gambling an aura of class, royalty, millionaires and any number of fools could be persuaded to part with their money... Making Monte Carlo [is] an anecdotal story of how it came about by Mark Braude, a lecturer in history at Stanford... it is evident that the business model created by [the resort's founder] Blanc 150 years ago has stood Monaco in good stead... when it comes to Monte Carlo, there is never 'no more bets.' (The New York Times Book) "Fascinating book... absorbing narrative... firm grounding of anecdote, fact and interpretation in impeccable sources, as revealed in the more than 50 pages of notes... One of the many delicious stories Mr. Braude has included is the pivotal role that this iconic train deluxe played in making Monte Carlo not merely a destination on the Riviera, but the destination, only one among many such delights in a book which pulsates with them." (The Washington Times) "Lurid tales of crime and aristocratic extravagance ... Braude describes how savvy impresarios actualized an illusion of their own devising: Monaco as a glamorous oasis in which 'sun-kissed lives played out on clay courts and under canvas sails.' ... The primary pleasure in Making Monte Carlo comes from watching the various eccentrics, lowlifes, high-rollers, and famous artists stroll in to take a seat at the table." (The Millions) "It's half the size of Central Park — and one of the wealthiest places on the planet. Now Braude tells how a Victorian-era gambling impresario transformed a sleepy village in resource-free

Monaco into a glittering, casino-filled playground for the rich and famous — long before Las Vegas was even a dream. (New York Post, "This Week's Must-Read Books") "[A] fascinating new book...dazzling cameos from a rich cast of characters." (San Jose Mercury News) "An engrossing examination of how politics, personality, and publicity coalesced to transform a sleepy village into a luxurious playground populated with casinos and beautiful people...Braude admirably balances the political machinations with the glamorous aspects of Monte Carlo in his story" (Publishers Weekly) "In his first book, about 'how we create places largely through the stories we tell about them,' Braude (History and Urban Studies/Stanford Univ.) takes us on a brisk historical tour of the marketing and selling of the small principality of Monaco and its famous city... A well-researched, dramatic rags-to-riches urban tale." (Kirkus) "Braude takes an intriguing look at the creation of Monte Carlo through the people and their stories, sometimes true and sometimes exaggerated, which helped make the place what it is today. Those interested in the history of modern Europe, specifically the individuals involved in defining its most popular locales, will enjoy this book." (Library Journal) "Monte Carlo is a place that lives at the edge of our collective imagination: the locus of sensational daring and spectacular wealth. Mark Braude's fluent, detailed account puts flesh on those bones, revealing a largely overlooked history as capacious and dramatic as a nineteenth-century thriller." (Luc Sante, author of *Low Life* and *The Other Paris*) "Part thriller, part historical narrative, Braude's tale is a must-read for anyone interested in money, power and scandal, which is just about any of us. Writing with breezy prose and authoritative research, Braude delves into the seedy world behind Monte Carlo's glitter with gusto. In *Making Monte Carlo*, we learn not just of the fascinating tapestry of characters who made Monte Carlo a storied mecca for light and dark, but how the town set the stage for so many other recreational playgrounds through history and that we enjoy today." (Mary Pilon, author of *The Monopolists*) "In *Making Monte Carlo*, Braude masterfully tells the story of how princes, profit-seekers, and press agents created luxurious Monte Carlo in resource-poor Monaco. Making expert use of source material, he builds a highly readable, engaging narrative that traces the resort's origins, its Belle Époque glory, and its adjustment to the tensions of the twentieth century. Connecting the rise and evolution of Monte Carlo with the larger social and cultural forces that shaped the era, *Making Monte Carlo* is a compelling, enlightening read." (David G. Schwartz, author of *Roll the Bones: The History of Gambling*) "Braude's deftly written *Making Monte Carlo* is social and cultural history at its best. Above all, it is an object lesson in the modern art of promotion. Contrary to Sam Spade, Braude demonstrates that nothing quite pays off like the stuff that dreams are made of." (Kenneth E. Silver, author of *Making Paradise: Art, Modernity, and the Myth of the French Riviera*) "Everyone is familiar with Monte Carlo as the playground of the rich. But how did it get to be this way? This book charts the history of how the city developed from the first casino resort in the 19th century to the epitome of cosmopolitan cool." (The National) "Lurid tales of crime and aristocratic extravagance ... Braude describes how savvy impresarios actualized an illusion of their own devising: Monaco as a glamorous oasis in which 'sun-kissed lives played out on clay courts and under canvas sails.' ... 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About the Author
Mark Braude teaches history and urban studies at Stanford University. He holds a PhD in History from the University of Southern California and a Master's in French Studies from New York University. He has been a columnist for *The Globe and Mail* and has written for *The Daily Beast* and other publications. Mark was born in Vancouver and lives in San Francisco with his wife. *Making Monte Carlo* is his first book.