



FRANCE: CORSICA

8-days / 7-nights two-centre **GUIDED** walking and sightseeing tour

NEW FOR 2020

Geographically situated in the Mediterranean Sea, Corsica is a French island, strongly influenced by its close neighbour Italy (it was once ruled by the Genoese, and the larger island of Sardinia). It has its own very distinct culture and history as well as an incredibly diverse landscape. From dense forests, jagged mountains and pristine beaches with blue, blue bays, Corsica is mostly inhabited along the coast, is covered by high mountains with a variety of walking trails. The walking is not easy, it involves some rather steep ups and downs with rocky paths and stone steps but it is rewarding with glistening sea views and ancient hilltop towns. And the higher you travel the more you discover the Moorish heritage of Corsica, with ancient settlements constructed far away from the marauding pirates that once ruled the seas. This beautiful Mediterranean jewel offers a wealth of wonderful walks, a colourful history and an authentic Corsican charm.

Holiday highlights include walks on the Revellata Peninsula with views of Calvi Bay and Corsica's towering mountains, discovering the heart of the Balagne area with its beautiful villages and following the world-famous GR20 long distance route through the mountains.

Departs: 19th April; 3rd May; 11th October, 2020

Cost from: **\$3395** per person (twin share) Single room supplement from \$760 (limited availability)

Tour includes: 7 nights in a comfortable hotel room with ensuite bathroom, 7 breakfasts, 7 evening meals, experienced walks leader guiding walks on 5 days, local transport to/from the walks and between centres, arrival/departure transfers from/to Bastia airport at set times.

Not included: Meals & drinks not mentioned in the itinerary, personal expenses, transport or excursions on your free day.

Accommodation: In Bastia we stay 2 nights at the centrally located 3-star Best Western close to the centre of the city and walking distance from the harbour. In the seaside resort of L'Île Rousse we stay 5 nights in the 4-star Santa Maria Hotel, a modern hotel set on a peninsula with views and access to its own small, private beach.

Footpath and walking information:



Medium Walks: Up to 13km on steep and sometimes rough terrain with up to 320m of ascent and 550m descent in a day. A mixture of part-day city walks and full day walks. Paths can be rough and uneven and one walk follows a section of the GR20 trail.

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Suggested itinerary: *subject to change, the final choice of walks each day will be at the walking guide's discretion. There is usually a choice of two levels of guided walking each day with a free day on Day 5. Those who prefer can also walk self-guided or relax around the hotel.*

Day 1: Arrive in Bastia

Meet your walks leader at Bastia airport, at a set time and transfer to the hotel. Bastia is the capital of Haute Corse area. It lies on the north-eastern coast of Corsica and was the capital of Corsica until 1791 and it is still the military headquarters of the island. It is an authentic snapshot of modern-day Corsica, a lived-in city. The old town (Terra Vecchia) is built in and around the central part of the harbour. The upper town (Terra Nuova) lies to the south, the modern town to the north and west. The old town is a network of alleys connected by dark, vaulted passages. Enjoy time exploring at your own leisure or relax before your welcome dinner that evening.

Day 2: Cap Corse, Macinaggio

Cap Corse is a spiny peninsula that stands out from the rest of Corsica about 40km long and 10 km wide. Today you will discover the beautiful North East coast from Macinaggio village. You will walk the excise men's path (Sentier des douaniers) which follows the coast which historically customs officers watched out for smugglers.

Day 3: Transfer to Ile Rousse – Saleccia Park

After breakfast we transfer to Ile Rousse. On the way we can discover the scrubland flora of Corsica "*maquis*" in Saleccia park. After 10 years of development, the park received the "*remarkable garden*" title in 2017. We continue to Ile Rousse, a harbour built after Pascal Paoli's (the hero of Corsica's struggle for independence) decision to cut maritime trade between Genoa and Calvi. Ile Rousse bay is really magnificent and we can discover its rich history with our local guide.

Day 4: Walk Revellata Peninsula – Calvi

After a short transfer to Calvi, you will start by a lovely walk from Notre Dame de La Serra and discover the Revellata peninsula with views over Calvi town and bay and the Corsican Mountains. After the walk we can explore the charming town of Balagne. Overlooked by the medieval Citadel, this seaside town offers picturesque views of the surrounding countryside. Calvi, and many ports in Corsica, are a magnet for the yacht-owning super-rich, who sail from Nice or Cannes. There is free time in Calvi and the citadelle before we return to the hotel.

Day 5: Free day

There are plenty of options for your free day whether it be relaxing on the beach nearby to the hotel or discovering the town of Ile Rousse. There is an option to rent bikes, or to take the train between Ile Rousse and Calvi to see a procession of 75km of beaches with several stops along the way. Or perhaps take some more time in Calvi to explore the shops and other historic buildings.

Day 6: Sant'Antonio to Ile Rousse.

Today we transfer inland to the heart of the Balagne area, where the landscape changes significantly, moving into the hilltops that are dotted with villages. We arrive into the village of Sant'Antonio, located @ 500m above sea level and clinging to the side on the mountain. Sant'Antonio was nominated as one of the most beautiful villages in France, and we will soon discover why, as we walk through cobbled streets and enjoy the dramatic views. From here we walk back to Ile Rousse, through villages and with views over the Mediterranean Sea.

Day 7: Walk Bonifatu – Calenzana

Transfer in the morning inland to the foot of the high mountains of Corsica. We begin to follow the path of the fabled GR20, France's first ever *Grand Randonnee* walking route, passing through pine forests, holm oaks and granite rocks until we reach Calenzana.

Day 8: Departure day

Breakfast at the hotel and then free time before the set transfer back to Bastia airport.

Outdoor Travel offers guided or self-guided walks in most destinations within Europe, including the **Cinque Terre** and **Amalfi Coast** in Italy, **Provence** and the **French Riviera**, the **Cyclades Islands** in Greece and in many areas in the UK such as the popular **Coast to Coast** trail, the **Yorkshire Moors**, **Cotswolds**, **Scottish Highlands**, in **Snowdonia** in Wales or the English **Lake District**. Pilgrimage walks are available on the **Camino de Santiago** from Le Puy to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, or the **Via Francigena**, the '*road to Rome*'.

Contact **Outdoor Travel** for more details and reservations:

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