

FRANCE – CORSICA, THE ISLAND OF BEAUTY

7-days / 6-nights SELF-GUIDED walking - departures from April to October



Corsica is nicknamed ‘the mountain in the sea’ for its granite ranges rising steeply from the Mediterranean, and ‘the island of beauty’ from its Greek name, Kallista. On this self-guided walking holiday, explore the best of both Corsica’s pristine coastline and its rugged interior – you are based for three nights in the bustling port town of Calvi, then three nights at Corte in the mountainous heart of Corsica.

The island has a fascinating history, having been ruled by the Greeks, Romans, Moors and Genoese before a short stint as an independent nation, then coming under French governance. French is widely spoken but you will also hear Italian and the regional language Corsican. Its cuisine too is influenced by France and Italy though there are also uniquely Corsican dishes like wild boar casserole (*civet de sanglier*), the sheep’s milk cheese *brocciu*, and desserts made with chestnut flour like *fiadone*, a type of cheesecake.

For walkers, Corsica is a delight, threaded with a vast network of footpaths, old mule tracks and coastal trails. Two of the more famous routes are the GR20, a demanding high-elevation mountain hike, and the gentler *Mare a Mare*, the Sea to Sea, which crosses the island east-west. For this holiday we have selected several beautiful coastal and mountain walks, featuring dramatic scenery, charming villages, and diverse landscapes such as dense forest, alpine meadows, glacial lakes, cascading rivers and jagged coastlines. Immerse yourself in the beauty of Corsica for a holiday you will never forget.

Departs: Daily departures from 6 April to 30 October, 2024

Starts: Calvi **Ends:** Corte

Cost from: **\$1645** per person twin share
Single room supplement and solo supplement on request

Includes: 6 nights’ accommodation in 3-star hotels; 6 breakfasts; road book with detailed walking instructions and maps (one per room) and GPS files; taxi transfers to/from walk on Day 6; emergency hotline.

Not included: Lunches, dinners, drinks, entrance fees, personal expenses, transportation to the start and end of the tour. Travel between Calvi and Corte is not included (train - cost approx. €15-20 per person).

Grade: Moderate, with the option to extend some walks for a more challenging route. Many of the walks are over rough and rocky terrain. Daily walking 4 to 16km (3 to 6 hours) with ascent and descent of 220m up to 720m. The walk on Day 6 has some scrambling and steep sections.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details and reservations

Suggested itinerary:

Day 1: Arrive in Calvi

Calvi has an airport served by flights from Paris, or take the ferry from Nice or Marseille. The town's busy port is dominated by its Citadel, built over the 13th-16th centuries by the Genoese when Corsica was part of the Republic of Genoa. You stay three nights in Calvi; our usual hotel is a few streets back from the waterfront.

Day 2: Point de la Revellata loop

walking @ 15km

Your first walk is a scenic one, following the *sentier du littoral* along the jagged coastline, with sweeping views of the sea. Circle the Point de la Revellata to the lighthouse, built in 1844. Bring your bathers – the Revellata peninsula is dotted with secluded beaches, perfect for a refreshing swim. Return to Calvi via the clifftop path.

Day 3: Notre Dame de la Serra

walking @ 9-16km

Head inland through aromatic maquis scrub to the tiny hilltop chapel of Notre Dame de la Serra for magnificent views over Calvi and its bay and into the Reginu valley before returning back to Calvi. For a challenge, instead continue to the Austrian cross at Capu di a Veta (703m). This exposed, rocky section adds about 7km and 500m elevation gain to the day's walk, but you are rewarded with a 360-degree panorama of the sea and the surrounding peaks.

Day 4: Train Calvi to Corte

no walking

A free day to explore Calvi, relax on the beach or go for a boat ride (at your own cost). Make your way, with luggage, to Corte (train approx. €15-20). A trip to Corsica would not be complete without taking *U Tringhellu* (little train), and the railway journey from Calvi to Corte is spectacular – along the Balagne coastline, through idyllic L'Île-Rousse and up through the wild Navaccia valley to Corte. Corte was once the capital of the island, and it is still a centre of Corsican culture and national pride. You stay three nights in a historic building in the city centre, about 20 minutes' walk from the train station.

Day 5: Gorges de Tavignano

walking @ 13km

As soon as you leave Corte you are surrounded by nature. Follow an old mule track, now part of the *Mare a Mare* (Sea to Sea) walk, into the gorge, with the scenery becoming more and more dramatic. You come to a footbridge across the Tavignano river where there is a natural pool suitable for swimming. At dinner, reward yourself with a local beer brewed with chestnuts or a glass of rustic and robust Corsican red.

Day 6: Lake Melo and Lake Capitello

walking @ 4-7km

Transfer by taxi to the Bergerie de la Grotelle where the trail starts. Lake Melo is surrounded by peaceful alpine meadows. Cross the river and descend steeply via a rocky trail. For a challenge, continue upwards to Lake Capitello – a magnificent sight, with granite walls plunging steeply into its dark blue waters. Intrepid hikers may push on to Bocca alle Porte, the highest point on the GR20, via a precipitous path, for fine views of both lakes, the surrounding ranges and the Restonica valley. Return to the Bergerie & transfer back to Corte.

Day 7: Departure day

Tour ends after breakfast. Take the train to Bastia, Ajaccio or Calvi, for a flight or ferry to the mainland.



Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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