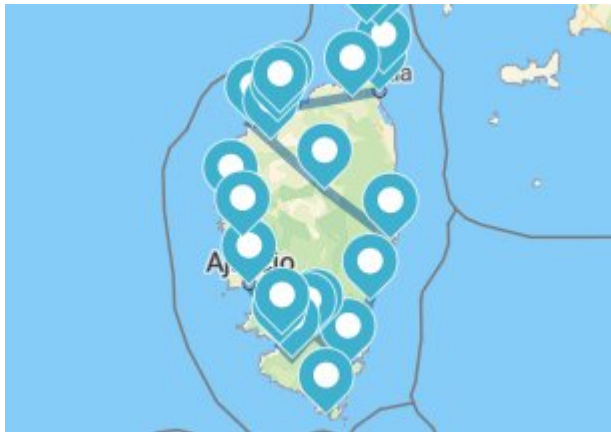


Explore the main sights of this Mediterranean paradise, brimming with glamour and authenticity

In the heart of the Mediterranean, strategically located between France and Italy, the stunning French island of Corsica is a natural paradise that invites the visitor to discover its secrets at a leisurely pace, enjoying every step of the way. From the vibrant Bastia to the imperial Ajaccio, much of this fascinating tour runs parallel to the sea and snakes between dream-like beaches such as Palombaggia, Saleccia and Lodo; cute bays like those of Calvi and Bonifacio; beautiful gulfs such as Porto; landscapes dotted with fields and vineyards; archaeological sites such as Filitos; and spectacular mountain scenery that can reach up to 2,700 metres above sea level. Natural, historic and Mediterranean, the most verdant island in the Mediterranean fascinates travellers with natural treasures such as the Cap Corse peninsula, the Botanical Park of Saleccia, the Bavella Needles, the Calanques de Piana and the Scandola Nature Reserve; and with magnificent medieval fortified towns and villages where it is still possible to discover the traces left by Phoenicians, Greeks, Etruscans, Carthaginians, Romans, Barbarians, Byzantines and Saracens. Conquered a thousand times, this island boasts striking contrasts, wonderful images and an exquisite cuisine that combines the best of French and Italian styles with excellent local wines. On our itinerary, places as beautiful as Saint-Florent, Ile Rousse, Alagajola, Calenzana, Aregno, Pigna and Corbara. Explore at your pace, and thanks to your rental car, the very best spots on the island of Napoleon, from the stylish Porto Vecchio to truly typical places such as Corte and Sartene. Corsica offers a coastline in its purest state and a wild and romantic landscape, still untouched by mass tourism, and hundreds of things to do. A perfect combination that each year attracts lovers of the good life and relaxation, which has made it world famous as the "Isle of Beauty" (Ile de Beauté). With so many attractions, it's no wonder that Ulysses decided to stay here instead of anywhere else in the world. Travel to Corsica and discover one of the last remaining paradises of the Mediterranean.



Departures:

from January 2021 till December 2021

Destinations:

Bastia, Erbalunga, Macinaggio, Ersa, Saint Florent, L'Île Rousse, Algajola, Calvi, Calenzana, Aregno, Corbara, Corte, Aléria, SariSolenzara, Porto Vecchio, Bonifacio, Levie, Sainte-Lucie-de-Tallano, Sartene, Propriano, Olmeto, Ajaccio, Piana and Sagone.

Categories:

Nature, Exotic and Family.

Day 1: City of origin - Bastia

Flight departure from the city of origin to Bastia and rental car pick-up. Your adventure on French soil begins here! Corsica is known as the most verdant island in the Mediterranean, an authentic orchard with over two hundred kilometres of white sand beaches and crystal-clear waters. Beyond its natural beauty, this French island has made a name as an elegant and chic European destination with hundreds of activities for all tastes and budgets. Known to the Greeks as "Kallisté" (the most sublime), these lands were visited by Phoenicians, Greeks, Romans, Genoese, Pisan, English, Aragonese and Arabs. A cultural mix that makes the island of Corsica a truly unique place. As soon as you arrive in the vibrant and bustling Bastia, the island's second city and one of its main gateways, you'll feel its cheerful, independent and Mediterranean spirit. At its picture-postcard Vieux Port (Old Port), tourists and locals enjoy the small pleasures of life against a backdrop of colourful fishermen's houses. The views over a sea dotted with little multicoloured boats are magnificent! Masterpiece of the Genoese empire, it's one of the most photographed images by travellers, along with the church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste (the largest on the island). Each morning, the bustling Place de l'Hotel de Ville plays host to a lively market. Overnight stay in Bastia.

Day 2: Bastia - Cap Corse Peninsula (Erbalunga - Macinaggio - Ersa - Barcaggio) - Bastia

Some more time to enjoy Bastia, with its cosmopolitan atmosphere and genuine maritime charm. Its busy port was for centuries the gateway to everything arriving from the Old Continent. Just by taking a stroll through the old quarter and along its beautiful bay, you'll discover the Italian influences

that pepper this stunning city. You can mingle with the Corsicans going about their daily chores and enjoy sights full of history such as the Place de Saint-Nicolas and its statue of Napoléon III, one of the biggest esplanades in Europe, open to the sea and dotted with palm trees and pavement cafes, all located less than 50 kilometres from the mythical island of Elba. Place du Donjon, with its graceful terraces and restaurants overlooking the pier, and religious buildings such as the Cathedral of Sainte Marie and the oratory of Sainte Croix, with its venerated image of the black Christ, are just some of the treasures that this city cherishes. During the day, we recommend a scenic tour of the north of the island, specifically the Cap Corse peninsula, the northernmost tip of Corsica, a real gem of the island's network of nature reserves. Driving along the beautiful coast road, you'll marvel at a stunning Mediterranean landscape that snakes its way round with the deep blue sea as a backdrop. Its wild landscapes, rugged white-sand coves, the continuous succession of Genoese towers (a total of 67 along the coast), its quaint fishing ports, its colonial villas (built by the "Americans", aka emigrants who left Corsica in the nineteenth century for Peru, Mexico and Venezuela, and returned wealthy) all form part of an amazing itinerary packed with surprises. Our route includes quaint fishing villages such as Erbalunga, Macinaggio and Ersa, where time appears to have stood still. And then we'll get to Barcaggio, the tip of Cap Corse! Winds permitting, the traveller will discover an exceptional place. From this point, you can see the island of La Giraglia, a bird sanctuary crowning the Cap Corse and known for its lighthouse and Torra di Giraglia, a Genoese tower declared a historic monument by France. Overnight stay in Bastia.

Day 3: Bastia - Saint Florent - Saleccia and Lodo beaches - L'île-Rousse - Algajola - Arinella Beach - Ostriconi Beach - Calvi

Bastia to Calvi is a lovely drive dotted with beautiful beaches, cute bays, colourful fields and vineyards, reddish-brown rocks, Mediterranean vegetation, and picture-postcard villages... Off we go! The region of Balagne, known as the Garden of Corsica, fascinates travellers with a wonderful coastline, majestic mountains, ancient traditions, a rich historical heritage and a welcoming people. Our itinerary includes unique places such as the chic holiday resort of Saint-Florent, a town with a charming old quarter with winding medieval streets and a yacht club with first-rate bars and restaurants. Saint-Florent is also the maritime gateway to the desert of Agriates, the largest nature reserve in the Mediterranean and close to breathtaking beaches such as Saleccia and Lodo. (Note: You can access these beaches after a short boat ride from Saint-Florent). Our next stop is the coastal town of L'île-Rousse, famous for its long curved beach sheltered by mountains. If you fancy stretching your legs, you can take a kayak ride around the area. En route to Calvi, you'll come across picture-postcard locations such as the charming village of Algajola and Ostriconi beach. And finally we arrive in Calvi! Once we cross the orange bastions of this fifteenth-century citadel, a stone fortress will reveal an intense historical past, while we'll soon surrender to its sophisticated atmosphere and its huge bay of turquoise waters, flanked by towering mountains capped by snow well into May. Overnight stay in Calvi.

Day 4: Calvi - Calenzana - Aregno - Pigna - Corbara - Calvi

More time to explore Calvi, famous for the beautiful views over the bay obtained from the shrine of Notre-Dame de la Serra. Its pristine sandy beaches and turquoise waters are a dream for lovers of the sun, nature and water sports. This drive around Corsica also takes us into the region of Upper Balagne, one of the centres of Corsican culture. Along the way, we'll discover beautiful villages perched in the mountains, graceful Baroque churches, must-visit restaurants and endless magnificent beaches and coves with golden sands tempting you to lay down your towel, worship the sun and take a cooling dip... This stretch will also take you along the so-called "Route of Artisans", with a visit to picturesque stone villages where you can discover the life and work of craftsmen, potters and glass-makers. Don't forget to pick up a nice souvenir of your trip! Among our must-visits today are Calenzana, framed by olive trees and close to Montegrosso; Aregno, a small town with attractive churches; and Pigna, a medieval hamlet with a vibrant atmosphere after having been reformed by young artisans... (Note: Remember that Villa Pigna is pedestrian); and Corbara, a beautiful village with a stunning Baroque church and a Franciscan convent offering wonderful views. Overnight stay in Calvi.

Day 5: Calvi - Corte - Aleria - Diana, Salé and Urbino Wetlands - Solenzara - Gulf of Pinarellu - Porto Vecchio

The route begins today in Corte, an incredible Corsican citadel, the only one you can find inland and located on a spectacular crag. With a deep-rooted cultural tradition, this village built in the fifteenth century known as the "Eagle's Nest" will introduce you to the authentic Corsica. Its steep streets are home to the Regional Museum of Corsican Anthropology, a great way to learn about the local culture. From the viewpoint of Belvédère, you can enjoy panoramic views of the valley of Restonica, Corte and its citadel. The route continues along the T5 up to the archaeological site of Aleria, former capital of the ancient Corsica (sixth century BC). Next to this enclave are the Diana, Salé and Urbino wetlands, famous for their cultivation of typical Corsican oysters. (Note: It's possible to visit and take part in an oyster tasting session. The best known local oysters are the trademarked "Nustrale"). And for those seeking more leisurely plans, the marina of Solenzara and the Gulf of Pinarellu are interesting stops on this busy day. We'll finish today in Porto Vecchio, a beautiful fortified seaside town that attracts celebrities from around the world. Its secret? A unique and fascinating atmosphere, picture-postcard beaches, a huge marina that has kept bygone charms intact, and amazing beachfront bars and terraces that guarantee a buzzing atmosphere and fun around the clock. Always en vogue, its quaint streets lined with sun-drenched terraces and designer boutiques make Porto Vecchio one of the most glamorous spots in Corsica. In high season, its long nights of partying are famous across Europe. In low season, it turns into a beautiful and more peaceful seafront haven. Overnight stay in Porto Vecchio.

Day 6: Porto Vecchio - Palombaggia beach - Bonifacio - L'Ospedale Lag - Needles of Bavella - Porto Vecchio

Today's stretch will take us to some of the best known and charismatic places in Corsica. Behind the wheel, you'll experience a journey dotted with picture-postcard beaches, coves and inlets with the whitest of white sand and warm turquoise waters that have made the south of the island one of the most sought-after destinations in Europe. During the summer months, the coves between Porto Vecchio and Bonifacio become the preferred anchoring points for A-listers' superyachts cruising between Corsica and Sardinia. One of the must-visits is Palombaggia, another treasure on the route, which is a beautiful and immense beach surrounded by pine trees that appears on almost every postcard of Corsica. From this point, you can enjoy magnificent views of the Îles Cerbicale. Onward journey to the picturesque village of Bonifacio, a rocky Italian-style town lovingly sculpted out by the sea. Its harbour, sheltered by a majestic citadel, is one of those images that will linger in your memory. After parking in the harbour, walk over to the citadel and its sixteenth-century drawbridge. A must-see is the Bastion de l'Étendard, which houses an interesting history museum. Discover this beautiful town whose stone walls speak of bygone episodes of war when this clifftop town was home to Pisans, Genoese and the French. It was here that Odysseus himself took refuge from a severe storm and discovered a colony of giants. If you have time and want a rest from driving, head down to the port and take a boat to the nearby Îles Lavezzi. (Note: Please check schedules. Tour not included). In the afternoon, we'll head back to Porto Vecchio. If you love nature and stunning landscapes, today you can escape to the beautiful town of L'Ospedale Lag and visit the Needles of Bavella. Located in the Regional Natural Park, this is one of the most spectacular inland landscapes on the island. In the area you can go hiking, horseback riding, or take part in other sporting

activities... Overnight stay in Porto Vecchio.

Day 7: Porto Vecchio - Levie / The "Lady of Bonifacio" - Sainte-Lucie-de-Tallano - Sartène - Propriano - Olmeto - Filitosa - Ajaccio

After enjoying Porto Vecchio and its amazing beaches, the route continues through the west of Corsica. Get ready to explore a land of deep-rooted traditions, dotted with unique sights, fascinating prehistoric sites, beautiful landscapes and castles dating back to the medieval times. After setting off for Sartène, we'll take the D268 towards Levie, home to the famous "Lady of Bonifacio", the oldest Mesolithic human remains found in Corsica. We'll continue along the D268 to the pretty village of Sainte Lucie de Tallano, famous for its olive oil production. A half-hour drive will then take us to the medieval town of Sartene, ancient capital of the "Land of the Lords" and famous for its tales of bandits, its houses with thick grey granite walls, its picturesque landscapes, and its hushed winding streets that introduce travellers to the most rural and picturesque Corsica. Regarded as "the most Corsican town of Corsican towns" and classified as "City of Art and History", it boasts attractions such as the Palace of the Governors, the church dedicated to St. Mary of the Assumption, and the Museum of Corsican Prehistory and Archaeology. You can stroll through the old town, have a coffee in Place de la Libération, or visit its beaches and vineyards... (Note: If you visit Sartene at Easter you can't miss "Le Catenacciu", the traditional Good Friday procession). About 14 kilometres away is Propriano, a charming seaside town located in the laid-back and beautiful Gulf of Valinco. We'll continue our route through beautiful coastal scenery. About 10 kilometres on is the fascinating Olmeto, a village where time seems to have stood still. The famous houses of Colomba and Fozzano remind travellers about the terrible vengeance of the novel "Colomba" by Prosper Mérimée. Then back on the road to keep on discovering the fascinating Corsican culture. There's no other place more reminiscent of the ancient civilisation than the Filitosa site. Dotted with olive and pine trees, the stones date from 4000-3000 BC. (Note. Please check timetables and opening dates of the site). And the cherry on today's cake is Ajaccio, the charismatic capital of Corsica that gave birth to Napoleon Bonaparte. Upon arrival you'll be entranced by its magical atmosphere and its location in the heart of one of the world's most beautiful gulfs. A must-visit is the Pointe de la Parata to see the glowing red sunset over the Îles Sanguinaires. At nightfall, enjoy the great atmosphere on the seafront terraces in Port Tino Rossi. Overnight stay in Ajaccio.

Day 8: Ajaccio - Piana - Porto - Évisa - Sagone - Ajaccio

More time to discover the imperial city of Ajaccio, which still pays homage to Napoleon Bonaparte on many of its streets and buildings, such as the Salon Napoléonien, the Maison Bonaparte and the Palais Fesch... Sign up to its cafe culture, take a stroll through the winding streets of the old town or the coastal district of Route, or simply soak up the atmosphere sitting on the terrace of one of the traditional tavernas in the old port... Its exceptional heritage, the magnificent gulf opening onto the Mediterranean and the radiant light bathing the city have for centuries been attracting artists such as Henri Matisse. Here you can swim well into the autumn! We'll round off the day visiting the beautiful Gulf of Porto (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) and the cute village of Pina, considered one of the most beautiful spots in France thanks to its whitewashed houses arranged in the form of an amphitheatre... En route back to Ajaccio, we'll visit pretty villages such as Évisa or Sagone. If you have time, today you can choose from several boat trips such evocative places as the Gorges de Spelunca (Évisa), the Natural Reserve of Scandola (World Heritage Site) or the Calanques de Piana (World Heritage Site). (Note: Check schedules for the boat trips. Tickets not included). We'll end the trip enjoying the "art de vivre à l'Ajaccienne", the very best way to round off a fascinating journey full of unforgettable experiences. Overnight stay in Ajaccio.

Day 9: Ajaccio - City of origin

Arrival at the airport with enough time to drop off your rental car and flight back to the city of origin. Arrival. End of the trip and our services.

Services included in the trip

- Return flight.
- Stay in selected hotel in Bastia.
- Selected meal plan in Bastia.
- Stay in selected hotel in Calvi.
- Selected meal plan in Calvi.
- Stay in selected hotel in Porto Vecchio.
- Selected meal plan in Porto Vecchio.
- Stay in selected hotel in Ajaccio.
- Selected meal plan in Ajaccio.
- Rent-a-car.
- Insolvency protection.

Services NOT included

- Accommodation taxes in France direct payment in facility.
- Possible toll charges.

Important remarks

- - Triple rooms in Europe are generally rooms with twin beds or a double, in which a folding bed is installed to accommodate the third person. Due to the inconvenience this causes, we advise against using this option as far the possible..
- - - The proposed excursions and tours for each day are purely suggestions, as you can tailor the trip to suit your times, tastes and needs..
- - - A credit card is considered a guarantee, so sometimes you will need one for check-in at hotels..
- - - Hotels usually have cots available. Otherwise, babies will have to share a bed with an adult..
- - - To pick up your rental car, you'll need a credit (not debit) card in the name of the person who made the booking, who must also be the named driver of the vehicle..