

Tour
Information



Northern Corsica by Rail





Travel

Passports

Please ensure your 10 year British Passport is not out of date and is valid for a full three months beyond the duration of your visit. EU, Andorra, Liechtenstein, Monaco, San Marino or Switzerland valid national identification cards are also acceptable for travel to France.

Visas

British and EU passport holders are not required to have a visa.

For all other passport holders please check the visa requirements with the appropriate embassy.

French consulate: PO Box 57, 6A Cromwell Place, London SW7 2EW; Tel (020) 7838 2000/1. Information Service: Tel (0891) 887 733, Fax: (020) 7838 2046. Opening hours: 0900-1130 (and 1600-1630 for visa collection only) Mon-Fri (except British and French national holidays).



Tickets

You will be issued with return train tickets.

Please take care not to lose your tickets and please check that the details on your tickets are accurate. Your ticket is non-transferable and non-refundable. No refund can be given for non-used portions.

Standard Premier on Eurostar tickets is indicated by two asterisks in the class type section in the top right hand corner. A light meal will be served to passengers travelling Standard Premier on Eurostar. Standard class Eurostar tickets do not include any food or drink on board, although there is a buffet car serving drinks and snacks.

TGV tickets do not include any food or drink on board, although a buffet car is available.

Train Seats

On all legs of the journey you have reserved seat and carriage numbers which are shown clearly on your ticket.



Baggage

As with most trains and ferries, passengers are responsible for carrying baggage onto and off the train and ferry. Baggage can be stored on overhead shelves or at the entrance to the carriages. Trolleys are available at St Pancras and Lille, but bags do need to be carried on to the platform. Porters are sometimes but not always available at St Pancras.

Travel Editions recommends a luggage delivery service called **the baggageman**, where your suitcase can be picked up from your home before departure and delivered straight to your hotel; therefore removing the worry about carrying your cases onto and off the trains.

For further information:

<http://www.thebaggageman.com>

Labels

Please use the luggage labels provided. It is useful to have your home address located inside your suitcase should the label go astray.

Ferry

We have booked private top class cabins with shower and WC with Corsica Ferries. Continental breakfast is also included. There are à la carte and self service restaurants available for dinner (not included). Continental breakfast is included before disembarkation.

Transfers

On arrival, transfer by coach to our hotel in the centre of Calvi (approx. 2½ hours).

Special Requests

If you haven't already, please notify Travel Editions of any special requests as soon as possible to allow sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements.



Accommodation

Hotel Méditerranée, Calvi

The Hotel Méditerranée is located in the centre of Calvi and only a short walk to the Marina and close to plenty of restaurants for your evening meals. The hotel offers a bar and lounge which are open in the afternoon and evenings. All bedrooms have private bathroom with shower/wet room, TV, telephone, air-conditioning, wi-fi, safe and hairdryer.

For more information visit the hotel's website:

<http://www.hotel-corse-mediterranee.com/>



Food

Corsica's cuisine is inspired by its geographical location – fish and seafood, fresh sun-ripened tomatoes, aubergines, courgettes, peaches, figs, olive oil, and herbs are all locally produced and combined in delicious Mediterranean dishes. Locally caught *rouget* (red mullet), *daurade* (seabream) or *langoustine* (crayfish) will come grilled, oven-cooked, or prepared as a soup (*Bouillabaisse*).

The influence of its mountainous inland region is also strong – enjoy the fine cheeses, such as *Brocciu*, excellent *charcuterie* (cured meats), and meat specialities like *civet de sanglier* (wild boar casserole), *Veau aux olives* (veal stew with olives, tomatoes and herbs), and *Agneau Corse* (roast lamb with garlic, rosemary and potatoes).

Corsican desserts tend to be dairy-based – typical are *Fiadone* (lemon cheesecake-like) and *flan à la farine de Chataigne* (Chestnut tart). Don't miss the renowned Corsican honey, of AOC quality. Coffee is served after the meal and will be black, in small cups, unless a *café au lait* (or *crème*) is requested.

Almost all restaurants offer two types of meals: *à la carte* (extensive choice for each course) and *le menu* (a set meal at a fixed, less expensive price). The bill (*l'addition*) will not be presented until it is asked for, even if clients sit and talk for half an hour after finishing their meal. Usually, a discretionary service charge is added to your bill in restaurants and bars, and no further tipping is required.

Generally speaking, mealtimes in France are strictly observed. Lunch is as a rule served from noon to 1330, dinner usually from 2000-2130, but the larger the city, the later the dining hour.



Drink

Wine is by far the most popular alcoholic beverage in France, and the choice will vary according to region. Producing wine for over 2000 years, Corsica's viticulture tends to be localised, individual, and traditional. Seldom seen outside the island, grapes used in Corsica include Vermentino (whites), and Nielluccio and Sciacarello (reds and rosés). Patrimoine, one of the main AOC wine regions, produces, alongside well-rounded reds and fruity whites, sumptuous sweet wines (*muscat*).

In elegant restaurants the wine list will be separate from the main menu, but in less opulent establishments will be printed on the back or along the side of the *carte*. The waiter will usually be glad to advise an appropriate choice. If in doubt, try the house wine; this will usually be less expensive and will always be the owner's pride.

Meals included in the price of your holiday are:

Breakfast – daily and 2 lunches



Destination

“A mountain in the sea”, the sparsely populated Mediterranean island of Corsica is simply stunning. Famous for its beautiful coasts, the interior is also a paradise for lovers of nature – dramatic gorges, waterfalls, forests, impossible peaks and rare wildlife – while the island’s rich history of resistance and struggle is equally fascinating.

For more information about Corsica:

<http://www.visit-corsica.com/en/>

During your trip you will visit:

Calvi

The base of your tour, the lively cosmopolitan town of Calvi, enjoys an idyllic location with Mediterranean sea-front and a stunning mountain backdrop. With its palm trees, Riviera atmosphere, and pastel buildings, the town has a delightful holiday feel to it. Stroll the *Quai Landry* promenade along the port, visit the shops lining the buzzing pedestrianized *Rue Clemenceau*, relax at the peaceful *Place Marchal*, and admire the old town with its 17th century *Église Sainte-Marie Majeure*. An absolute must is Calvi’s honey-coloured citadel, sitting high on its crag, offering wonderful sea views, and fascinating buildings including the *Oratoire Saint Antoine*, and the *Cathédrale Saint Jean Baptiste*.

For more information about Calvi:

<http://www.calvi-tourisme.com/> (French only)

The Agriates desert & Saint-Florent

Passing through the sunburnt landscape of the Agriates desert, we arrive in Saint-Florent, which was once a small fisherman’s village, and now a fashionable seaside resort, its port filled with pleasure boats. Highlights here include the port and promenade, lined with restaurants and cafés, the old town with its *Piazza posta*, site of the former post office, the delightful *Place Doria*, the Romanesque *Cathedral* and the remarkable 15th century *citadel*, which offers breath-taking views of the bay.

Cap Corse & Patrimonio

Cap Corse, described by Ptolemy in his *Geography* as *ἱερόν ἄκρον*, translated as *Sacrum promontorium* by the Romans, is a long peninsula located at the northern tip of Corsica. Admire the small marinas, ancient wine terraces, golden beaches and sheer cliffs of this “holy promontory”. Enjoy a wine tasting in the delightful village of Patrimonio, famous for the quality of its AOC wines.

L’île Rousse – San Antonio & Pigna

Named “Red Island” from the ochre colour of the natural harbour’s rocky islet, *L’île Rousse* is a delightful seaside resort. Inhabited since very ancient times, it was all but abandoned in the 4th century due to the threat of piracy and it wasn’t until the 18th century that the area was redeveloped, as a strategic port for merchants.

The charming hill village of *Pigna* is the heart of Corsica’s craft renaissance. Its flower-filled narrow cobbled streets, pastel coloured houses with blue shutters, and 18th century church are delightful.

Picturesque *San Antonio*, built on a high rock, is listed as one of France’s most beautiful villages. Besides taking a stroll through the cobbled narrow streets and admiring the stunning views of the town and the surrounding semi-arid terrain, you can visit the 16th century *Church of the Annunciation*, which, although simple looking from the exterior, houses a rich interior including remarkable paintings.

Porto & Piana

UNESCO World Heritage, the gulf of Porto is an extraordinary natural site, cowering beneath red granite cliffs and overlooking a deep blue sea. Our boat trip shows off the rock formations and sea caves, bringing us near the lovely old village of *Piana* set high on a natural balcony and rightly famous for its creeks and granite sculptures. Considered one of the most beautiful villages in France, delightfully picturesque Piana boasts the beautiful recently-restored 18th century *Église de l’Assomption*.

Corte

Located in the centre of the island, charming Corte is built on a rocky outcrop and features an ancient house and, located on the site of the 15th century citadel, the *Musée de la Corse*, which is an excellent introduction to Corse culture and history.

The small city was briefly the island's seat of government and is currently its centre for education with the university *Pasquale Paoli*. We take the mini-train up to the highest point to admire a wonderful panoramic view.

For more information about Corte:

<http://www.corte-tourisme.com/> (French only)

Bastia

Clinging to the mountain facing the Tuscan coast, the Genoese city of Bastia has a distinctly Italian feel. Enjoy a guided city tour by mini-train which goes up to the citadel and visits some of the fascinating baroque churches for which the city is famous. In the afternoon you can explore the lower town – streets lined with tall houses, colourful facades, the town hall, *St Nicolas square, cathedral, market place*, and delightful old *port* and café terraces.

For more information about Bastia:

<http://www.bastia-tourisme.com/> (French only)

Reading Suggestions

Graham Robb, *The Discovery of France*.

A general introduction to French culture, landscape and history, it also features an excellent insight into the distinctive character of France's regions.

Dorothy Carrington, *Granite Island: Portrait of Corsica; Napoleon and his Parents on the Threshold of History; The Dream Hunters of Corsica*.

Falling in love with Corsica when she first visited in 1948, historian and writer Dorothy Carrington settled there and through her books portrays her love of the island, its people, culture, history and landscape.

James Boswell, *An Account of Corsica, the Journal of a Tour to that Island, and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli*.

18th century Scottish author gives an overview of Corsica's geography and the social customs of its people, before relating his trip to the island, conducted as part of his Grand Tour in 1765, during which he met the Corsican Pascal Paoli, leader of the independence movement.

Alexandre Dumas, *The Corsican Brothers*.

Dumas relates the lives of two brothers, twins, separated at birth – one a Parisian lawyer, the other living in a Corsican village. An exploration of different cultures, ways of life, filled with intrigue, adventure and drama.

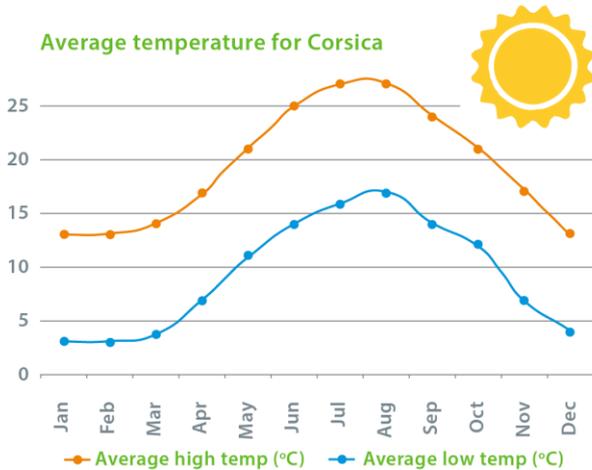
Tour manager

Your tour manager will be on hand throughout the tour to ensure that everything operated according to plan. If you have any problems or questions please see him or her immediately – it is often possible to resolve complaints or problems very quickly on the spot, and do everything to help you enjoy your holiday.



The Basics

Climate – The weather in Corsica at this time of year is likely to be pleasant, but there is the chance of the odd shower. Our best advice is to come prepared.



Time – GMT +2 hours (Summer time Apr-Oct); GMT + 1 (Standard time Nov-Mar).

Language – French.

Religion – Roman Catholic.

National holidays – New Year's day (01 Jan); Easter Monday; Labour day (01 May); Victory in Europe day (08 May); Ascension day; Whit Sunday; Whit Monday; National day (14 Jul); Assumption of Mary (15 Aug); All Saints' day (01 Nov); Armistice day (11 Nov); Christmas day (25 Dec).

Currency – Euro. €1 = 100 cents. Notes are in denominations of €500, 200, 100, 50, 20, 10 and 5. Coins are in denominations of €2 and 1, and 50, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1 cents.

Banks – Cashpoints compatible with international banking networks are located in all towns and cities, as well as airports, major train stations and other spots. They usually offer an attractive exchange rate. Those banks that still exchange foreign currencies into local money will always charge a transaction fee, so withdrawing money from an ATM usually represents the most logical means of obtaining euros.

Credit cards – American Express, Diners Club, MasterCard and Visa are widely accepted across the country. If you're eating at a restaurant, check prior

to the meal that your card will be an acceptable form of payment. Even in cities, it's advisable to carry a supply of cash with you at all times. Varying amounts of commission can be charged.

Electricity – 220 volt, two-pin continental plug.

Drinking water – Tap water is safe to drink. (Although you'll find a huge amount of bottled water for sale too)

Shops and museums – Department stores are open 0900-1830 Monday to Saturday. Most shops are closed between 1200-1430. Some food shops (particularly bakers) are open Sunday mornings, in which case they will probably close Monday. Many shops close all day or half-day Monday. Please note that most museums are closed on Mondays.

Clothes & Shoes – You may like to bring a warm sweater for cool evenings. Light rain wear for the occasional storm and good grip/flat walking shoes are recommended.

Camera – bring plenty of memory cards/film and any spare camera batteries as these are not always available. Please check with your guide before photographing people.

Bath plugs – The hotel has plugs for basins, but it is useful to carry a 'universal' one with you.

Telephones/mobiles – You should be able to use your mobile phone in France, depending on your operator and contract.

Tipping – To keep our tours affordable, we do not increase the tour price by adding in tips. However, in the tourism industry, there is a certain level of expectation that when receiving a good service, one does award with a tip. Tour Managers, Representatives, Guides and Drivers appreciate a tip at the end of their involvement with the tour, but this is entirely at your discretion. We believe in allowing you to tip according to your level of satisfaction with their services, but for your guidance about £2-3 per person per day for the tour manager is the norm. We would like to reiterate that tipping is an entirely optional payment and this information is given purely to answer any questions you may have about it.



Health

Doctor/Dentist/Chemist

Please talk to your tour manager if you are feeling unwell and they will organise for you to see a doctor.

Keep receipts for insurance claims.



Hospital

Your tour manager/hotel reception will arrange hospital transport.

Keep receipts for insurance claims.

General Health Advice

We suggest you take a good supply of your own individual medicines with you and always keep some in your hand luggage in case you get delayed or your luggage goes astray. General-purpose supplies for bites, stings, or scratches, and your usual medication for headaches, or stomach upsets are always recommended. Oral re-hydration sachets are excellent for topping up salt and glucose levels.

Visit the NHS Fit For Travel website for more generally information specific to the country you are visiting – www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk

Sun Protection

Always ensure you take sufficient sun protection and moisturiser. A sun hat and sunglasses are also advisable.

Inoculations

You should check with your own doctor and take their advice as to which inoculations are required for the country you are visiting, as only they know your medical history and recommendations are liable to change at short notice.



Insurance

To be covered under your Travel Insurance Policy, if you become ill, it is essential that you contact a local doctor and also telephone the emergency number of your insurance company. You will **NOT** be covered for any claim unless this procedure is carried out. Your insurance company will then decide on the best course of medical attention.

European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)

The EHIC replaced the old E111 in 2006. Valid in all EEA countries, the card lets you get state healthcare at a reduced cost or sometimes for free. It will cover you for treatment that is needed to allow you to continue your stay until your planned return. It also covers the treatment of pre-existing medical conditions.

Please note that the EHIC **is not** an alternative to travel insurance. It will not cover any private medical healthcare or costs such as being flown back to the UK, or lost or stolen property. Therefore, it is important to have both an EHIC and a valid private travel insurance policy. It is also important to note that each country's healthcare system is slightly different, so the EHIC might not cover everything that would be generally free on the NHS.

We strongly recommend that you take out an appropriate travel insurance policy when you travel abroad.

For more information about the EHIC please visit:

<https://www.ehic.org.uk>



Emergencies

Should an emergency arise, please call our offices on:

00 44 20 7251 0045

Outside office hours (Mon-Fri 0900-1700), telephone our emergency staff on:

00 44 20 7431 8201 or

00 44 7899 796542 or

00 44 7831 133079 or

00 44 1235 850720

PLEASE USE THESE NUMBERS ONLY IN THE EVENT OF A GENUINE EMERGENCY.

If you find that you are in need of consular assistance during your holiday:

British Consulate Marseille

24 avenue du Prado

13006 Marseille

France

+33 (0)4 91 15 72 10

Marseilleconsular.marseille@fco.gov.uk

Mon, Wed and Fri: 0900 to 1230. Outside these hours a consular Emergency Service is in operation and can be contacted on +33 (0)4 91 15 72 10

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