

Essential Corsica

Tour Style: European Multi-Centre
Destinations: France & Mediterranean
Trip code: CJLCL
Trip Walking Grade: 3



HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

The island of Corsica is the fourth largest in the Mediterranean. Geographically closer to Italy, it has been part of France since being sold to it in 1768 but still retains signs of its Italian past in its architecture, cuisine and culture. The interior of the island is mountainous while the coast is home to sun-kissed turquoise bays and stylish coastal towns. Our holiday here focuses on exploring the northern end of the island with guided walks to make the most of unspoilt views and the charms of cobbled hilltop villages which have changed little in several generations. The island's flavoursome gastronomy (charcuterie and cheese are among the most well-known dishes) is sure to add to your experience.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- A full programme of guided walks led by an experienced Local Guide
- Transport to and from the walks
- 'With flight' holidays include return flights from the UK and hotel transfers
- Half Board en-suite accommodation - 7 breakfasts and 7 evening meals

HOLIDAYS HIGHLIGHTS

- Walk the Revellata Peninsula with views of Calvi Bay and Corsica's towering mountains
- Discover the heart of the Balagne, with its beautiful French villages
- Follow the world-famous GR20 track



ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrive In Bastia

On arrival, meet your local leader and transfer from Bastia airport to our hotel, located in the city. Bastia is the capital of the Haute Corse area, and formerly the capital of Corsica until 1791.

The rest of the day is then at leisure, giving you a chance to relax before our welcome dinner this evening.

Day 2: Cap Corse

Cap Corse is a wild and rugged spiny peninsula: at about 24 miles long and 6 miles wide, it stands out from the rest of Corsica and is studded with Genoese towers and quaint fishing villages. We'll discover the beauty of the north east coast on today's walk.

Starting from the village of Macinaggio, walk along the coast through fragrant maquis on the old excisemen's path (the *Sentier des douaniers*), where customs officers would stand watch in search of smugglers. We'll be treated to views of white-sand beaches and azure-blue seas, as well as examples of the Genoese towers, built to defend the island from Berber raiders. Distance: 7 miles (11½km) with 390 feet (120m) of ascent.

Day 3: To Ile Rousse

Today we transfer to Ile Rousse. Enroute, we'll discover the flora of Corsica in Saleccia Park. The park has been developed for many years and in 2017 was awarded the title of 'Remarkable Garden'. Ile Rousse is a harbour town, built after Pascal Paoli decided to cut maritime trade between Genoa and Calvi. The bay is magnificent, and there'll be an opportunity to learn more about the town's rich history with your local guide.

Day 4: Revellata Peninsula And Calvi

After a short transfer to Calvi, our walk to discover the Revellata Peninsula begins. Starting from Notre Dame de la Serra, we'll enjoy spectacular views over Calvi town and bay as well as to the mountains of Corsica. We return to Calvi, where there's time to explore this delightful seaside town further. Calvi is the 'capital' of the Balagne region, and it was the Romans who established a settlement here.

Relax and enjoy the picturesque views, visit the medieval Citadel or spot yachts in the harbour owned by rich visitors from Nice or Cannes. Distance: 8 miles (13km) with 590 feet (180m) of ascent.

Day 5: Free Day

Enjoy a day at leisure or the chance to independently explore the area further. Your local guide can help with suggestions on the day, but you may like to consider:

Explore Ile Rousse: you could hire a bike to discover more of this town, or visit the beach

Calvi: take the train – the *Tramway de la Balagne* – and return to Calvi to explore the town further; or stop at one of the many stations between Ile Rousse and Calvi. There are many miles of beach to be enjoyed.

Day 6: The Balagne

We visit the heart of the Balagne area today. Dramatic landscapes are dotted with hilltop villages and are in stark contrast to the coastal areas we've explored earlier in the holiday. We transfer inland to Sant'Antonino, a village with cobbled streets perched on high (1,600 feet) and nominated as one of the most beautiful French villages.

From here, we walk back to Ile Rousse through delightful villages and with views out to the Mediterranean as well as to Lake Codole and the high mountains of Corsica, including the high peaks of Monte San Parteo and Monte Padro. Distance: 5 miles (8km) with minimal ascent and 1,800 feet (550m) of descent.

Day 7: Corsica's Mountains

We head inland once more to the foot of the high mountains of Corsica. Today's walk follows the GR-20 – the long-distance trail that stretches diagonally from northwest to southeast along Corsica's continental divide – and we'll walk to Calenzana, the starting point for both the GR-20 and Mare e Monti long-distance trail. Starting from Bonifatu, we pass through forests of maritime and larcio pines and holm oaks and past granite outcrops. Distance: 6 miles (10km) with 1,050 feet (320m) of ascent.

Day 8: Departure Day

After breakfast we depart the hotel and transfer to the airport for our flight home.

ACCOMMODATION

Best Western Bastia Centre, Corsica

Our first two nights are spent in Bastia at the 3-star Best Western Bastia Centre Hotel. Located within easy walking distance from the harbour, town centre as well as a variety of shops and bars, you're ideally situated to explore Bastia. The 71 spacious ensuite bedrooms feature air-conditioning, cable TV and Wi-Fi.

Santa Maria Hotel, Corsica

We spend five nights in the charming seaside resort of Ile Rousse at the 4-star Hotel Santa Maria. Set on a peninsula, offering sea views on both sides, the hotel is set on the quieter side of town. There is direct access to

a small, private beach; the hotel also features a swimming pool and a whirlpool which enjoys stunning views over the sea. All rooms feature air-conditioning, satellite TV and Wi-Fi.

USEFUL HOLIDAY INFORMATION

Weather & Seasonality

Temperatures in Corsica typically reach highs of around 68°F (20°C) in the afternoons, with cooler mornings and evenings. One particularity of Corsica is the chance of afternoon thunderstorms: whilst our holidays are planned for the months in which these are less likely, please be sure to pack suitable waterproof gear. Your guide will adapt the day's activities or walks to suit, should this unfortunately be the case on your holiday.

Joining Instructions (With Flights)

On arrival, please proceed to the arrivals hall once you have passed through passport control, customs and baggage reclaim. Your HF Holidays leader or local leader will assemble the group in the arrivals hall - look out for the HF Holidays' sign.

Joining Instructions (Without Flights)

If you are arriving ahead of the group, and are meeting them at the first hotel, please leave a message at the hotel reception for the HF Holidays' leader or local leader, detailing your room number, and a mobile telephone number if possible. The leader will contact you once the group arrives.

If you are arriving after the group, a message will be left for you at the hotel reception, welcoming you and giving details of the time and place to meet the group.

If your flight arrives before the group flight and you would like to join the transfer to the first hotel, please contact our Abroad Administration team on (0)208 732 1220 to enquire about availability and make arrangements.

Essential Information

Passport Requirements

You may need to renew your British passport if you're travelling from 1 January 2021.

On the day you travel, you'll need your passport to both:

- have at least 6 months left
- be less than 10 years old (even if it has 6 months or more left)

Use the [government website](#) to see if your passport is valid for this holiday

EHIC Cards

The UK government has officially launched the Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC), which will replace the European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). UK residents can now apply for one of the GHIC cards, which will gradually replace the EHIC cards as they reach their expiry dates. Every family member travelling requires a GHIC. You can make an application for yourself and on behalf of your partner and any dependent children under the age of 16. Both cards will offer equivalent protection for emergency and medically necessary healthcare needs when in the EU on a temporary stay, which includes holiday, study and business travel. Necessary healthcare includes things like

- emergency treatment and visits to A&E
- treatment for long-term or pre-existing medical conditions
- routine medical care for pre-existing conditions that need monitoring
- oxygen and kidney dialysis

The public only need to apply for their free GHIC cards when their current EHIC expires. The process is likely to take two weeks. For more information visit <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>.

The GHIC is not an alternative to travel insurance. We advise all holidaymakers to also invest in travel insurance that covers healthcare, so they are covered for other issues that may arise, as well as cancellations and lost luggage.

Essential Equipment

To enjoy walking/hiking comfortably and safely, footwear, clothing and equipment needs to be suitable for the conditions. Safety and comfort are our priorities, so our advice is to come prepared for all eventualities.

- Footwear with a good grip on the sole (e.g. Vibram sole) is the key to avoiding accidents.
- Walking/hiking boots providing ankle support and good grip are recommended (ideally worn in), and specialist walking socks to avoid blisters.
- Several layers of clothing, which can be added or removed, are better than a single layer (include spares).
- Fabrics (lightweight and fast drying) designed for the outdoors are recommended.
- Waterproof jacket and waterproof over trousers.
- Warm hat and gloves.
- Denim jeans and capes are not suitable on any walks.
- Rucksack with a waterproof liner.
- Thermos flask for hot drink.
- Water bottle (at least 2 litre).
- Spare high-energy food such as a chocolate bar.
- Small torch.
- First aid kit – your leader's first aid kit doesn't contain any medication or blister kits (such as Compeed).
- Sun hat and sunglasses
- Sun cream.

Optional Equipment

- Walking poles are useful, particularly for descents.
- Insect repellent.
- Camera.
- Gaiters.

Safety On Your Holiday

Insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so, and advise us of the insurance company and policy number.

We have negotiated special holiday insurance and full details of this cover can be found in our brochure or at www.hfholidays.co.uk.

If you would like to purchase insurance from us, please call us on 020 8732 1220 or email holidayservices@hfholidays.co.uk.

For more information about healthcare abroad and its costs, please visit: www.dh.gov.uk/travellers.

If you are arranging your own travel insurance, please ensure it is adequate for your specific itinerary. Generally, this should include cover for walking at altitudes over 2,000m, which will cover you for a wide range

of our holidays.

Once you have made your booking, you will receive a pre-holiday questionnaire where we ask for details of next of kin and insurance details. **You must complete and return this to us - we need to have this from you at least 10 weeks before travel.**

Please also inform us of any medical situation which may affect your enjoyment of the holiday. This is important because our leaders must consider both group and individual safety at all times.

Whilst out with the group, we respectfully request that you:

- Please listen to any safety instructions from the leader
- Keep group members in view, especially if weather or visibility is poor
- Please stay where you are if you become separated from the group. The leader will retrace their steps to find you.

Each leader carries a first aid kit but is not allowed to supply any medication including aspirin, paracetamol, antihistamines and antiseptic cream. You may wish to bring these items with you in your own kit (see Suggested Kit List).

In the unlikely event that your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack and call emergency services on 112. Please then call our emergency number and let us know there is a problem.

Dietary Requirements

Please contact us as far in advance as possible if you have any specific dietary requirements; we will do our best to accommodate you.

If you require a specific meal on the flight, please let us know as soon as possible, and no later than 96 hours before travel.

Vaccinations & Health

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This information is subject to change. In all cases, we highly recommend you consult your GP both for up to date details and for more information on what is appropriate to your situation.

As a rule, travellers should be up to date with their routine vaccinations and boosters as recommended in the UK - including, for example, the MMR and diphtheria, tetanus, polio vaccines.

Requirements can change, and we recommend you check in good time ahead of your holiday.

Please note: the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is banned in some countries.

If you will be carrying medication, please check with the country's embassy/consulate prior to travel. As an extra precaution, it is recommended to:

- Keep medication in its original packet
- Take a copy of your prescription
- If possible, ask your chemist to write the name of your medication in the language of the country you're visiting

Passports & Visas

Passports

Passports must be valid for the duration of your stay; generally, you are recommended to have at least 6 months validity beyond the end date of your holiday on your passport.

Visas

Visas are not currently required for UK travellers; however, this may change depending on the outcome of negotiations on the UK's exit from the EU. For current travel advice we recommend checking the France pages on the [FCO website](#).

Useful Information

French is Corsica's official language and is the language most widely spoken across the island. Many Corsicans are, however, often bi- or trilingual and older Corsicans may speak Corsican, which may sound very like Italian. Now part of the curriculum in primary and secondary schools, the use of Corsican is increasing. You may see it on road signs as we travel.

Luggage

Baggage Allowance

1 piece of checked-in luggage (max 23kg). Please check details of your airline's baggage allowance, as shown on your e-ticket. Remember to also check any connecting flights you may have booked.

Lost/Damaged Luggage

If your bag or its contents are damaged or lost while in the airline's care, this should be reported to the baggage service agents at the airport on arrival. They will assess the damage; in some cases, the airline may decide to settle your claim immediately.

You will be given a reference to quote to your insurance company if an immediate settlement is not possible - in many cases, baggage claims can only be accepted in writing. A baggage claim form must be obtained from the airport.

Local Currency

The local currency is the Euro (€)

Local Time

GMT/UTC +1, Central European Time

Electricity

220V, round European two-pin sockets. We recommend you take a universal plug adaptor for UK appliances.

ATM Availability

Card payments are widely accepted in Corsica and ATMs are available in all towns. Some cash is useful for small purchases.

HOW TO BOOK

When you're ready to book, you can choose to **book online** or book **over the phone**. Our website offers secure online booking for our holidays, is available 24/7, and offers more in-depth information about all our holidays. If you prefer to call us, our experienced and knowledgeable team are available to answer any specific questions you have and can offer guidance as to which holiday is best suited to your needs.

Our office is open: Monday to Friday: 9am – 7pm Saturday: 9am – 1pm Sunday & Bank Holiday Monday: closed

PAYING YOUR DEPOSIT

To secure the holiday of your choice, you will need to pay a deposit: UK & European Holidays: £150 per person and Worldwide Holidays: £250 per person. You can pay your deposit by debit or credit card with no additional card fees charged or make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account, please see details under BACS payments. You can also pay your deposit by cheque within seven days of booking. Cheques should be made payable to 'HF Holidays Ltd' with your booking reference / Order ID on the back.

NON-MEMBER FEE

Non-members can join our holidays by paying a Non-Member's fee of £30 per person per holiday. Alternatively, full membership is available from £100 – visit hfholidays.co.uk/membership for details.

BACS PAYMENTS

Please quote your booking reference / Order ID when you make your payment online: Bank Name: Svenska Handelsbanken AB (publ) Account Name: HF Holidays Ltd Account Number: 35923304 Sort Code: 40-51-62 IBAN: GB92HAND40516235923304 Swift / Bic Code: HANDGB22

Once we have received your booking and deposit, we will send a confirmation invoice to the lead name. Please check this carefully. For bookings 'with flights' it is essential that the names on your booking confirmation invoice match those on your passport for bookings overseas. Please advise us immediately of any errors. Any name changes after the balance of your holiday has been paid will be subject to a fee levied by the airline.

MANAGE MY BOOKINGS

Payments can also be made through the Manage My Booking function on our website. Click on the link at the top of our homepage. This is available to all customers who provide an email address at the time of booking.

YOUR FINAL BALANCE

The balance is due 10 weeks before departure. As with paying your deposit, you can pay your final balance by debit or credit card, make an online BACS payment directly into HF's bank account or pay by cheque.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance is an important part of any booking and essential for one of our holidays. HF Holidays works with specialist. Insurance Brokers Campbell Irvine Direct. For more information or to obtain a quote call them on 01702 427 236 or visit hfholidays.co.uk/insurance

PEACE OF MIND

ATOL:

The air holidays and flights in this brochure are ATOL-protected, since we hold an Air Travel Organiser's Licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority. Our ATOL number is ATOL 710. In the unlikely event of our insolvency, the CAA will ensure that you are not stranded abroad and will arrange to refund any money you have paid us for advance bookings. For further information visit the ATOL website atol.org.uk

MEMBER OF ABTOT:

HF Holidays is a member of ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) which provides financial protection under the Package Travel, Package Holidays and Package Tours Regulations 1992 for HF Holidays Ltd and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following: 1. non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK; 2. non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK; 3. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland, which are sold to customers outside of the UK and Republic of Ireland. 1, 2 and 3 provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled. 1 and 3 provides for repatriation. Please note that bookings made outside the UK and Republic of Ireland are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with HF Holidays Ltd.

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY

These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred.

In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary.

The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

PRICE GUARANTEE

We promise that our earliest published prices will always be the best and if we reduce our holiday price after your booking has been confirmed, we will pass this reduction on to you. Our price promise applies if any subsequent offer price is for an identical holiday, duration, location and date and does not cover any optional extras, flights or additional services.

Document produced: 21-09-2021

