

Beauty & the Beach

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Close neighbors on the Tyrrhenian Sea, and often rivals throughout the centuries, the sunny islands of Corsica and Sardinia are separated by just 8 miles of water. Their differences, however, are leagues apart. Corsica is known as the “Island of Beauty” for its rugged mountainous interior, while Sardinia is known for its beaches — over 200 of them. Both islands were important waystations for ocean journeys and were coveted by pirates and traders, with each foreign visitor leaving a little something of their heritage behind. The ancient Phoenicians coveted the large rolling landmass of Sardinia, while the Carthaginians coveted the mountainous, fortress-like Corsica. The Roman Empire ruled over both islands for hundreds of years.

Corsica is now part of France, and the stone watchtowers that once protected its shores still serve as silent sentinels. Sardinia is now part of Italy, but the prehistoric civilization of the Nuraghic people can still be found in the stone structures left across the island. This comprehensive 2-week tour traverses the entire length of both islands, offering you a taste of Italy and a taste of France.

Tour Highlights

Sardinia

- Cagliari, capital of Sardinia
- 3rd century Roman ruins of Nora
- Su Nuraxi archaeological site*
- Catalan influence of Alghero
- Historical heritage of Sassari
- Santa Teresa di Gallura port town
- Ferry crossing

Corsica

- Cliffside port of Bonifacio
- Genovese town of Ajaccio
- Train through Corsica’s interior
- Citadel of Corte

* *UNESCO World Heritage Sites*

Friday, September 1, 2017

Depart home bound for Cagliari, Sardinia

This is a travel day, with tour services beginning tomorrow in Cagliari, Sardinia, Italy. Book a flight from your home city to the Cagliari Elmas International Airport. Use the airport code CAG when searching for flights online. You will be returning from Bastia, Corsica, France (BIA). Please time your arrival no later than 4:00pm tomorrow so that you may participate in our Welcome Dinner. If you are not able to arrive by that time, we suggest you plan to depart a day early, on Thursday, August 31st, and arrive on September 1st. For those who wish to arrive a day early, please indicate this on your reservation form so that we can hold a room for you at our Cagliari hotel. *(Meals Aloft)*

Saturday, September 2, 2017

Arrive in Cagliari, Sardinia / Welcome Dinner

Your flight arrives today in Cagliari Airport on the island of Sardinia. Since many connecting flights transit through Rome, most arrivals will be in the early afternoon. Transfer independently to our hotel and check in to your room. Our group gathers for the first time in the late afternoon for a walking tour of the Castello historic center. Afterwards, we will go to a nice restaurant for our Welcome Dinner. Overnight in Cagliari. *(Dinner included)*

Sunday, September 3, 2017

Nora

This morning drive south along the coast to the ancient city of Nora, which has been under the control of various countries since the 3rd Century B.C. We will view the Roman ruins here, with the amphitheater, forum, and baths. You will have free time for lunch on your own. Return to Cagliari in the mid-afternoon. Enjoy a free evening to further explore the city's medieval center and sites of Roman antiquities. Overnight in Cagliari. *(Breakfast)*

Monday, September 4, 2017

Barumini / Su Naraxi / Nuoro

After breakfast, we check out of our hotel and drive northwest of the city. Our destination is the Su Nuraxi archaeological site, just east of the town of Barumini. The largest nuraghic fortress in Sardinia, Su Naraxi is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Lunch is included during today's drive as we continue on to Nuoro. Afternoon tour of San Pietro Old Quarter. Check in to our hotel, followed by a free evening. Overnight in Nuoro. *(Breakfast / Lunch)*

Tuesday, September 5, 2017

Alghero

After breakfast, check out of our hotel and drive to the city of Alghero. Part of its population descends from Catalan conquerors from the end of the Middle Ages, when Sardinia was part of the Kingdom of Aragon. That is why the Catalan language is co-official in the city, and local residents refer to Alghero as "Little Barcelona." Following free time for lunch, we tour the Old Fortified Quarter and check into our hotel for the first of two nights here. Free evening. Overnight in Alghero. *(Breakfast)*

Wednesday, September 6, 2017

Sassari

This morning take a half day excursion to the city of Sassari, the island's second city. Since its origins in the 12th century, Sassari has been ruled by the Pisans, the Genoese, the Aragonese and the Spanish, all of whom have contributed to Sassari's historical and artistic heritage. Tour the old medieval quarter and the Pisan city walls. Lunch

included mid-day. Return to Alghero in the mid-afternoon for a free evening. Overnight in Alghero. (*Breakfast / Lunch*)

Thursday, September 7, 2017

Santa Teresa di Gallura / Beach Day

After breakfast, check out of our hotel and drive along the northern coast of Sardinia to the port town of Santa Teresa di Gallura. Lunch included upon arrival in Santa Teresa. After checking into our hotel, the rest of the afternoon and evening are at leisure to enjoy this lovely harbor town and, weather permitting, the Rena Bianca beach nearby. Overnight in Santa Teresa. (*Breakfast / Lunch*)

Friday, September 8, 2017

Ferry to Corsica / Bonifacio, Corsica

After breakfast, check out of our hotel and transfer to the port for the morning ferry to Bonifacio, Corsica. The distance is only 8 miles and takes just 50 minutes. Upon arrival in Corsica, we meet our new driver and load our luggage into the bus or van, before taking a tour of the Haute Ville. In the afternoon we check in at our hotel and the evening is free to explore on your own. Overnight in Bonifacio. (*Breakfast*)

Saturday, September 9, 2017

Coastal Drive to Ajaccio

After breakfast, check out of our hotel and board a motor coach for the drive to the island's west coast and the largest city, Ajaccio. Along the way we stop in the resort town of Propiano for lunch. Arrive in Ajaccio in mid-afternoon and tour the old Genovese town center. Check into our hotel in late afternoon, followed by dinner at our hotel. Overnight in Ajaccio. (*Breakfast / Lunch / Dinner*)

Sunday, September 10, 2017

Ajaccio Sightseeing

This morning, take a half-day sightseeing tour of some of the historical sites in and around Ajaccio. Highlights include the Milelli House in the Saint-Antoine Quarter, Lantivy Palace, now used by the regional government, the Bonaparte family house, where Napoleon was born in 1769, and the Citadel. The afternoon is free to take a hike along the Sentier des Crêtes (Crest Trail) which starts from the city center and is an easy hike offering splendid views of the Gulf of Ajaccio. Dinner is again included at the hotel. Overnight in Ajaccio. (*Breakfast / Dinner*)

Monday, September 11, 2017

Chemin de Fer Train to Corte

After breakfast, we check out of our hotel and transfer to the train station to board the small two-car island train, Chemins de Fer de la Corse. The 75-minute train journey takes us into the center of the island's spectacular mountain landscape, traveling through many tunnels and over many bridges and viaducts. We arrive in Corte, drop our luggage at our hotel, and explore the old town center, including the Citadel. The rest of the day is free to enjoy the beautiful mountain scenery and the city's delicious gastronomy—known for its game, wild boar, and traditional cheeses. Overnight in Corte. (*Breakfast*)

Tuesday, September 12, 2017

Chemin de Fer Train to Bastia

After breakfast, we check out of our hotel and walk to the train station to board the Chemins de Fer for the hour-long train ride to the northern coast city of Bastia, situated between the mountains and the Ligurian Sea. Upon arrival, we tour some of the historical sites of the city and Old Port. In the afternoon we check-in at our hotel, and the evening is free. Overnight in Bastia. (*Breakfast*)

Wednesday, September 13, 2017

Free Day / Farewell Dinner

Today is entirely free to relax, enjoy some beach time, go souvenir shopping, or explore the city and surrounding areas on your own. We gather in our hotel lobby early this evening to toast the conclusion of our adventures on Corsica and Sardinia, proceeding to a local restaurant for our Farewell Dinner. Overnight in Bastia. (*Breakfast / Dinner*)

Thursday, September 14, 2017

Departure

The tour officially ends after breakfast this morning. Make your flight arrangements for any convenient time today. If you wish to extend your stay in Bastia, please let us know on your reservation form so that we can keep your room available for another night. (*Breakfast*)

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