

## Of Sun and Stars

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### Experience Corsica

White cliffs, azure lagoons, ultramarine blue skies and soaring mountains all welcome you to this Mediterranean island that has been a preferred retreat of celebrities since the 1950s. Not quite France and not Italy, either, Corsica's spellbinding idiosyncrasies are best experienced on foot. With the aid of B&R's charming and meticulous guides, you will have a chance to explore all of its facets—from Calvi's palm-shaded luxury to the mysterious, Bronze-Age ruins of Cucuruzzu; from the impenetrable Citadel of Bonifacio to the transcendent cuisine of Porto Vecchio. You don't need to be a star to embark on this journey—but we do recommend the big sunglasses!

#### WHY TRAVEL WITH B&R?

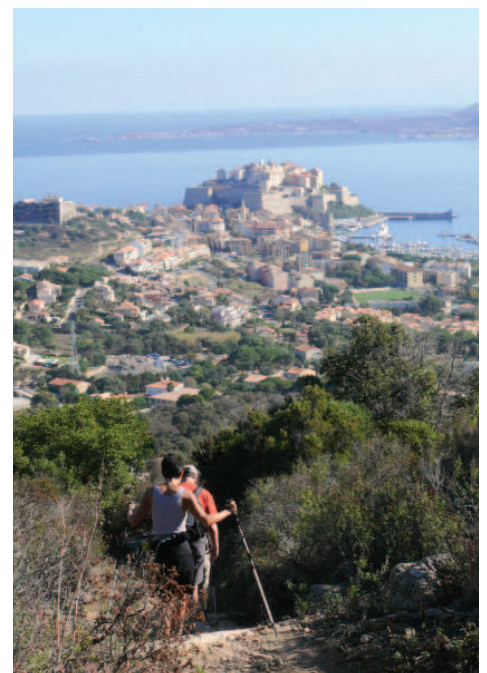
It isn't just one reason. Insider access, unparalleled service and inspired trip planning are just some of the differences that help create the magic that is a B&R trip. How better to appreciate the cliffs of Bonifacio (by private motor yacht, no less), experience the mountain hospitality of the Rocca Serra family or decipher the cultural significance of Corsica's past? B&R's personal touches are inimitable—and what make each of our departures an absolutely unforgettable one.

**Other questions?**  
Call us at 800 678 1147

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# the journey

## Days 1 & 2

### Calvi and the Balagne

This morning, we're off into the Balagne, the tranquil countryside surrounding Calvi, and its Strada di l'Artigiani artisans' towns. We'll hike from village to village along medieval trails, stopping en route to explore the gorgeous checkerboard façade of Aregno's Romanesque Trinità church. The high point of today's route is the hilltop gem of Sant'Antoninu, officially one of France's Most Beautiful Towns. Its winding cobblestone alleys were strictly meant for donkeys, while its stunning 360-degree views of the Mediterranean and Montegrossu peak may well make your head spin. We then stroll down into Pigna, another perfectly preserved town where we experience firsthand Corsica's artisan tradition, meeting craftspeople (potters, instrument-makers, painters and musicians) who chose to make the village home and to ply their age-old crafts with passion. Then it's on to Corbara and its surprisingly rich baroque treasures, or perhaps a café in the shade. In the afternoon, keen hikers can opt to continue hiking on to the picturesque village of Santa Reparata, then down to Île Rousse. Tonight, we'll gather for a Cap Corse or Muscat aperitif before our poolside dinner at our hotel's renowned L'Alivu restaurant, a proud bearer of two Michelin stars.

You're never far from the sea on Corsica, and indeed our next day is all about the coastline: sea views, coastal walking and seaside dining. We climb with the sun up to the chapel of Notre Dame de la Serra for a commanding

view of Calvi's sweeping bay... and perhaps a blessing, along the way. The trail then leads down to the tip of the Punta della Revellata, a rocky headland covered with sweet-scented wild flowers. Be sure to bring along your swimsuit; its lonely azure coves are awfully enticing! You could opt to bring along a picnic today, to snack by the sea, or continue back to Calvi for a wealth of options (perhaps on the port in the shadow of the dancing yachts?). After lunch, we'll wander through Calvi's Genoese citadel, purportedly the birthplace of Christopher Columbus. Tip your hat to the white-képiéd French Foreign Legionnaires, as the city is also home to an elite paratrooper regiment, while its palm-shaded quayside below has been a hangout for the European glitterati since the 1950s. Stroll and shop or just people-watch, then decide if you'd rather hop a van shuttle back to the hotel or complete the loop with one last climb. Tonight, we head to a hidden locals-only spot for a dinner of freshly caught seafood and fantastic meats and vegetables beside the lapping waves.

#### HOTEL

##### *Hôtel La Villa, Calvi Relais & Châteaux*

Proudly perched on the hillside above Calvi, this sumptuous Relais & Châteaux hotel is ideally situated for gazing at the mountains, bay and citadel while lounging by one of the many pools. We love the understated elegance of its lounge and bistro, while the poolside restaurant l'Alivu has earned its stars.

#### THE WALKING

**Day 1:** An 8 km (5 mi.) walk on rocky paths between villages; optional afternoon trail hike adds up to another 8 km.

**Day 2:** A 14 km (9 mi.) walk down to Calvi and beyond with some good climbs on dirt roads and narrow trails. The afternoon option back to the hotel extends your daily distance to 18 km (11 mi.).

#### Other questions?

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info@butterfield.com

### Day 3 Into the Alta Rocca

Today begins with a full morning, scenic drive via private coach inland to Corsica's heart, the 2,100-metre (7,000-foot) mountains of Corsica's Alta Rocca region and Natural Regional Park. We'll stop for lunch in the stark granite village of Zonza, nestled against a dramatic mountain backdrop. Some say the *alma corsa* (the Corsican soul) resides here. After a lunch of mountain specialties, we'll head off on a trail following a quiet river valley and then climbing gently among boulders in the forest. In the middle of the wilderness we'll rendezvous with a local guide and explore a site from the dawn of human life on the island: the mysterious Bronze-age cyclopean castle of Cucuruzzu. After a glimpse back into prehistory, a meadow stroll brings us to our mountain home for the evening. The heated indoor pool and steam room feel fantastic after a day of hiking! Our dinner tonight will be at our hotel's wonderful restaurant, known far and wide for delicious Corsican fare. Some mountain surprises are in store for this very special evening at altitude!

#### HOTEL

##### *A Pignata, Levie*

This elegant little family-run hotel perches in a tranquil mountain clearing. The simple yet elegant rooms, while of modest size, capture the sense of place with a true sense of chic. The heated indoor pool and steam room are the perfect end to a long day, while their renowned restaurant is the ideal setting for a festive Corsican evening.

#### THE WALKING

**Day 3:** A 10 km (6 mi.) gently rolling mountain trail hike at altitude, with a (pre)historic detour.



### Days 4 & 5 Bavedda to Bonifacio

This morning, we enjoy a traditional mountain breakfast and then head out for the most dramatic hike of the week, in the heart of the mountains at the Bocca di Bavedda (Bavella Pass). This pass is famous for its spectacular larch pines, which can reach six metres in circumference and 50 metres in height. Used for masts since ancient times, some are over 1,000 years old. An amazing panorama of peaks and forests acts as the perfect backdrop to our walk, not to mention the needle-like Aiguilles de Bavedda. These jagged, pink-toned rock formations that dominate the landscape are a marvel, and were a favourite subject for early landscape artists. A portion of our walk will take us along the GR20 (Grande Randonnée hiking trail) which traverses Corsica from north to south and is said to be some of the most spectacular hiking in all of Western Europe; today's hike supports the claim, with views down to the Mediterranean on clear days. After a savoury picnic lunch with our mountain guides, we'll loop back to Bavedda along a different path—and with a little luck, can spot

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the sea on both sides of the island! Winding on down to our seaside hotel, you can hardly believe that a few hours earlier we were in the mountains surrounded by granite and pines... this is the magic of Corsica! We head out to dinner in the seaside town of Porto Vecchio. Delicious, creative cuisine with the bay's twinkling lights—what a wonderful finish!

On our final day, spectacular scenery unfolds as we discover the most stunning part of the island: a coast of towering white cliffs, translucent turquoise waters and rolling green hills billowing up to pine forests. But the real gem awaits; perched on the edge of 30-metre-high white limestone cliffs overlooking the Mediterranean, the Citadel of Bonifacio—one of the Mediterranean's most impenetrable fortresses—surrounds the old town. Traced in the cliffs we see the King of Aragón's Staircase, supposedly carved out of the limestone one night when hopeful invaders thought they had found a chink in its armour. You'll reach the city in time for lunch at one of the many little restaurants in the old town—perhaps aubergines à la Bonifacienne, or Corsican soup? We'll then rendezvous with local guide Pierre for a personal visit. A Bonifacio native, Pierre is a friend of B&R who takes great pleasure in sharing his passion for his hometown—he can thank his British mother for his Queen's English, but his brooding Corsican charm is all his own. He'll lead us into the labyrinth of the town's medieval cobblestoned streets and through maze-like passageways as Bonifacio's history begins to unfold through its exquisitely varied architecture. From prehistory to the Genoese, Pisans, Spanish and then French, the story is a colourful one. If you're longing to take a dip in those inviting azure waters, consider the optional afternoon walk that travels on old footpaths out

to a secluded cove or two. Or perhaps find a café on the port where colourful boats and enormous yachts bob up and down and enjoy a cool Pietra or Colomba—Corsican beers brewed from chestnuts and wild herbs. In the late afternoon, we rendezvous with Captain Frédéric: all aboard our private motor boats for a sea-level view of this stunning town. Blowing kisses to the white cliffs of Bonifacio, we're off on a little coastal cruise back north to Porto Vecchio. After a good dose of sun, sea and maybe a splash in the protected pure-blue waters, we'll dock at our hotel in plenty of time for celebratory cocktails. Tonight we're in Chef Davide Bisetto's creative hands at the hotel's fine restaurant, a luscious finish to celebrate a week of Corsican adventures!

#### HOTEL

##### *Casadelmar, Porto Vecchio*

The ultimate in seaside class, every room in this elegant design hotel drinks in the azure bay of Porto Vecchio. With a seaside infinity pool, exclusive Carita and Decléor spa, and Michelin-starred restaurant, the Casadelmar has every ingredient for perfect seaside repose.

#### THE WALKING

**Day 4:** A 5 km (3 mi.) challenging trail hike at altitude with a professional mountain guide..

**Day 5:** An 8.5 km (5.3 mi.) rolling walk on dirt roads and trails; optional 4-to-8 km (2-to-5 mi.) rolling walk on old stone paths.

## Day 6 Homeward Bound

After a last seaside breakfast, we'll drop you off at the Figari airport for connecting flights. *Bon voyage!*

#### Other questions?

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# The Isle of Beauty

By **Marya Dumont**

Famous for their love of beauty, the Greeks so admired Corsica that they settled on its Eastern shore and named the island Kallisté or, “the beautiful.” Thankfully, it is every bit as lovely today as it was back then.

Corsica is a land apart; a mini-continent out there in the blue Mediterranean, nearer Italy than France and nearer national park than a continental Riviera. Where else do high granite peaks dazzle with wondrous rock formations—and a glimpse of sea below? Where else do pure waters meet sand in coves shades beyond turquoise—yet you’ll rarely meet another hiker on the old stone footpaths? Where else can you hike to a 4,000-year-old castle to touch stones laid by prehistoric hands—then return to your designer hotel for state-of-the-art spa-going? Where else does a shy smile represent a genuine welcome, pride and never condescension? To feel the myriad sensations of the Isle of Beauty, the magic of Corsica is best felt on foot.

The sensual experience of walking through such varied scenery—breathing in the scent of the maquis, the moisture of sea spray, the birdsong, the texture of granite and limestone, the endless vistas—all build up an appetite to taste the island’s unique cuisine. Freshness, boldness and simplicity are the hallmarks of Corsican gastronomy,

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taking shades of many conquering influences without surrendering its own identity. From fresh-off-the-boat seafood to rich, golden olive oil and herb-scented veal, the Isle of Beauty is also an island of plenty.

Corsica is a place almost outside of time: rich and complex, beautiful, tempting and ineffably different. It gives life and breath to the phrase “an island unto itself.”

## **B&R REGIONAL DIRECTOR**

### **Marya Dumont**

A native Washingtonian, Marya traded in her rainy days, Starbucks lattes to explore the world as a B&R guide. An avid cyclist, master of three languages (plus a working knowledge of three others) and adventurer par excellence, she’s led over 100 trips for us. From her home in Piemonte, Marya is our Regional Director for Piemonte, Corsica and Sicily. Why she loves Corsica: “It’s the Mediterranean’s Isle of Beauty, full of contrasts and almost outside of time.” We can’t say it better than that.



**2012 Dates**

May 20-25  
Jun 10-15  
Sep 23-28  
Oct 7-12

**Duration**

6 Days / 5 Nights

**Start**

Calvi  
Hôtel la Villa  
9:00 am

**Finish**

Figari Sud-Course  
Airport  
10:00 am

**2012 Price**

US\$6,495  
(\$1,200 single  
supplement)

## the details

**LEVEL OF ACTIVITY**

*We rate this trip Moderate to Challenging*

The terrain we cover is varied and footing is frequently rocky. We'll enjoy some rolling walks with less sustained climbs in the Balagne region, and then tackle high mountains at Bavedda with a guide; rewarding views are guaranteed! Our last day is gentler, with one good climb. Daily distances range from 5 to 14 kilometres, with options for shorter or longer walks available most days.

**WHAT'S INCLUDED**

- All accommodation
- All breakfasts, three lunches and five dinners, including wine
- Services of B&R guide(s) and support vehicle
- Use of two lightweight, telescoping walking sticks
- Detailed maps and route suggestions
- Waist pack with water bottle and holder
- All special events and private tours
- All baggage transportation
- All transportation from rendezvous to drop-off
- All gratuities for baggage, porters and hotel service

**MORE INFO**

*How do I get to Calvi?*

Your likely point of arrival into France will be Paris. Flights from Paris take about an hour and a half. There is usually one direct flight a day departing from Orly (ORY) airport. Remember to allow yourself plenty of time if you have to change airports in Paris. The Calvi airport is about ten minutes from the centre of town or our rendezvous hotel. Taxis are the best means to reach Calvi from the airport, or you can make a request to the hotel that a car and driver meet you; there will be a fee for this service.

**HOTEL LA VILLA, CALVI**

[www.hotel-lavilla.com](http://www.hotel-lavilla.com)

Our first hotel of the trip, the Relais & Châteaux La Villa is the finest hotel in the Balagne region. A mere kilometre above the citadel of Calvi, La Villa offers both a casual bistro and an exquisite Michelin-starred restaurant (where we will be dining on trip). Early reservations are advised, as Calvi is a popular weekend destination. Be sure to mention you are travelling with Butterfield & Robinson.

Other questions?  
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## your next steps

At Butterfield & Robinson, the guiding starts while you're still at home. We make sure you know everything you need to know before you've even left your living room.

### READY TO BOOK?

- Call or email a Travel Advisor (or your travel agent) with any remaining questions, and to reserve your space.  
**1-800-678-1147 / [info@butterfield.com](mailto:info@butterfield.com)**
- Reserve your flights to and from the region.
- Book your hotel accommodation for the night before your B&R trip.
- Make sure your passport is up to date.
- Enquire after travel insurance.

Once you are confirmed on a B&R trip, you will receive a Confirmation Package that contains tons of information to help you prepare for your trip. Then, about a month before you leave, we will send you a list of your fellow travellers, final rendezvous instructions and your hotel contact numbers.

### ROOM UPGRADE

If you would like to upgrade your accommodation on this trip, please enquire at time of booking to learn cost and availability.

### EXTENDING YOUR TRIP

Paris is one of the great cities in the world, so chances are you will want to spend time there either before or after your trip. There are several recommendations for where to stay and what to do and where to eat while in Paris included in the Confirmation Package you will receive upon booking. We'll also happily recommend a city guide if you want an insider's tour of Paris.

### STAY IN TOUCH!

Sign up to receive *The Slow Road* our e-newsletter that is full of travel news, unique offers and B&R insider info.

### PHOTO CONTEST

While on your trip, keep in mind you can win some great prizes with the B&R Photo Contest. We've created three categories that capture the true spirit of B&R adventure: Faces, Places and Moments. Submit your top shots and show us how you see the world with B&R. Full details are at [www.butterfield.com/photocontest](http://www.butterfield.com/photocontest).

In the meantime, if you have any questions about your B&R experience—big, small or downright quirky—please call a Travel Advisor, or contact your travel professional. We are always happy to help.

### Weather: Corsica

month	high	low
Jan/Feb	57	39
Mar/Apr	64	42
May/Jun	77	52
Jul/Aug	83	63
Sep/Oct	78	50
Nov/Dec	64	41

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