
13-DAY ULTIMATE SOUTHERN FRANCE AND HIDDEN TREASURES OF CORSICA

Trip Code: TWBOQNAO21

Duration: 14

Destination: France

Travel Dates: 2022 / 2023

DAY 1 BORDEAUX - MS Cyrano de Bergerac (D)

On arrival in Bordeaux you will be welcomed at the airport and transferred to cruise ship. Passengers are welcome to board our ship at 6:00 p.m. After comfortably settling into your cabin, we will introduce our crew at a welcome cocktail.

Tonight, we depart by coach for a guided tour of Bordeaux "by night", taking in all the main monuments. A UNESCO World Heritage site, Bordeaux has been awarded the precious label in the "cultural site" category. Half of the city, from the boulevards to the banks of the Garonne has thus gained recognition for the quality of its architectural heritage.

DAY 2 BORDEAUX - PAUILLAC - THE MÉDOC- MS Cyrano de Bergerac (B,L,D)

Today we will cruise down towards Pauillac.

In the afternoon, we depart by coach from Pauillac to discover the Médoc, prestigious wine-growing region. A corner of the world that produces the most prestigious red wines on the planet, tightly wedged between an ocean and an estuary. A mild, humid microclimate which has been favourable to the development of the vines. We will go through most of the Médoc appellations (Saint Julien, Margaux, Haut-Médoc). On the famous Châteaux Route, we will stop to taste the famous wines of the region. On the way you will see major domains such as Châteaux Laffitte-Rothschild, Latour and Mouton Rothschild.

We will return on board for dinner and an evening of entertainment.

DAY 3 PAUILLAC - GIRONDE ESTUARY - BLAYE - MS Cyrano de Bergerac (B,L,D)

We will start sailing early this morning towards Blaye, whose Citadel built by Vauban is not to be missed.

On arrival we depart by coach with a tour guide for a journey along the Route de la Corniche Fleurie. You will see the old, traditional fishing huts on stilts and the remarkable limestone cliffs. We will also stop in Bourg to

take in the impressive views and walk to the market centre where you'll be able to taste the local figs.

After we return to Blaye, we will take a guided tour of the citadel built by Vauban, including the monastery and several army barracks. We will finish up our tour with a tasting of the famous Blaye "praslines."

We will return on board and cruise on the Gironde all the way to the estuary. Enjoy an evening of dancing.

DAY 4 BLAYE - LIBOURNE - SAINT-EMILION - MS Cyrano de Bergerac (B,L,D)

We will cruise to Libourne, a town rich with history and full of character located at the confluence with the Isle and the Dordogne Rivers.

Upon arrival, we will depart by coach from Libourne for a tour of the underground monuments in Saint-Emilion village. Your guide will tell you all about the history of the medieval town. You will then visit an exceptional troglodytic site with, undoubtedly, its most original monument, the Monolithic church. Hewn entirely in limestone, it is the largest in Europe.

You will then depart for a visit of a family-owned wine-growing estate, where you will be welcomed by the owner, who will explain the stages of the wine-making process in Saint-Emilion. A commented wine-tasting session will complete the visit.

We will return on board in Libourne.

Tonight, is our festive gala dinner and evening.

DAY 5 LIBOURNE - BORDEAUX- NICE (B)

We will cruise to Bordeaux this morning. Enjoy one last buffet breakfast on board before disembarking at 11:00 a.m. You will be transferred to the Bordeaux airport for your short flight to Nice.

You will be welcomed at the Nice airport and transferred to your hotel. The rest of the day is free at your own leisure.

DAY 6 NICE- MV La Belle des Océans (B,D)

Today is a free day at leisure to rest or explore Nice on your own.

You will be transferred to board the cruise ship at 5:00 p.m. We will then depart for a tour of the city. Throughout the centuries, Nice has attracted people from all over the world because of its lovely climate and unrivalled beauty. The city has a thousand surprises in store: monuments, churches, gardens and footpaths, museums, artists, local crafts, and internationally renowned cuisine with the unmistakable flavours of garlic, olive oil, and basil. The best way to get to know Nice is by strolling through it and experiencing sites such as the great flower market in the Cours Saleya or the elegant old quarter lined with boutiques and restaurants.

We will return on board. After comfortably settling into your cabins, we will introduce our crew at a welcome cocktail. Tonight, we will enjoy dinner and an evening of activities on board.

Our ship will cruise to Corsica overnight.

DAY 7 AJACCIO- MV La Belle des Océans (B,L,D)

We will spend the morning cruising. Take time to relax and admire the red cliffs and maquis underbrush in the Scandola Nature Reserve and the Gulf of Girolata. You can also participate in a lecture about the natural beauty found on and around this Mediterranean island. As La Belle des Océans enters its first Corsican port, join us on the deck for a tasting of traditional myrtle liqueur and a pastry.

This afternoon, we will depart for an excursion to Ajaccio and the Îles Sanguinaires. Ajaccio, the birthplace of Napoleon Bonaparte, has a rich and historical past. We'll visit the city's main sites, including the high court building, the bronze monument to Napoleon and his brothers, and the Place d'Austerlitz, where legend tells of Napoleon often visiting as a child to see the statues of the glorious soldiers in battle. Our next stop will be to experience the captivating beauty found on the outlying Îles Sanguinaires.

After we will continue to the Îles Sanguinaires along the winding, coastal roads bordering the wild crags before arriving at the Pointe de la Parata. A path takes you to the splendid view from the site. From here, you can see the archipelago of four Natura 2000-classified islands. They are an integral part of the natural and cultural heritage found not only in Ajaccio but across the whole island.

After our tour, we will return on board.

DAY 8 AJACCIO - THE CALANQUES DE PIANA- MV La Belle des Océans (B,L,D)

Today we depart for an excursion to the Calanques de Piana, where the sheer cliffs and rock sculptures seem to jet up from the water and radiate a red hue along the coastline.

From Ajaccio, we will travel along the mountain roads to the Gulf of Sagone, continuing to the picturesque fishing port of Cargèse. This small sea-resort town deserves a brief visit as it was once occupied by Greeks exiled in Corsica during the Genovese era. The lovely Greek church still stands. We will continue to Porto and have lunch at a local restaurant.

In the afternoon, we will continue to the famous Calanques de Piana, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the epitome of the island's beauty. Discover the surreal world of weather-carved pink granite, an ethereal vista of strangely shaped red figures, often plunging dramatically into the turquoise sea below.

Afterwards, we will discover the village of Corgèse, picturesque fishing port and Porto, a jewel of Corsica.

Tonight's meal and entertainment will have genuine Corsican flair! Our ship will cruise to Bonifacio. Join us for dinner and an evening of entertainment.

DAY 9**BONIFACIO - MV La Belle des Océans (B,L,D)**

This morning, we will depart for a guided tour of Bonifacio. We will begin with a tourist-train tour of the city, a veritable open-air museum. Bonifacio is rich with a history told along its small streets and paths, its thousand-year old fortress, and the sturdy stone homes perched high above the sea waves. We will take a tour on foot of the citadel; whose walls fully encircle the old town. There are some stunning views from the Montee St-Roch steps, including the impressive Grain de Sable limestone sea stack. Enjoy some free time before we return on board.

This afternoon we depart for an excursion to the nature reserve on the Archipelago of Lavezzi. The islands are scattered with sculpted granite boulders and impressive cliffs. The best times in Bonifacio are spent on the sea. A scenic boat tour will take you along the cliffs and grottoes to the Lavezzi Islands.

We will head to the boat on foot, and then enjoy a guided tour of the Lavezzi Islands Nature Reserve, a small archipelago of granite islands and reefs in the Strait of Bonifacio that separates Corsica from Sardinia. We will return to the port in Bonifacio and to our ship on foot.

In the evening, we will have dinner at a traditional inn in the heart of the Corsican inland. We will be welcomed by the fireplace or under the immense cork oak trees by the owners, who will explain the history of the island to us. Dinner will be a delicious, in-season composition made of local products—will be accompanied by Corsican music and songs.

We will cruise towards Porto Vecchio.

DAY 10**PORTO VECCHIO - MV La Belle des Océans (B,L,D)**

In the morning, we will depart for a guided tour of Porto Vecchio. The old town includes the ruins of a 16th-century citadel and gorgeous views of the marina. Porto Vecchio is cut in half. Its quaint streets and castle ruins occupy the upper city, while the lower city sports more modern architecture. We will take a coach to the historical heart of the city and enjoy a tour on foot of its main attractions. Now a hub for vacationing celebrities, it has retained its charm of yesteryear. Porto Vecchio offers visitors a unique mix of both idyllic beaches along Corsica's southern coast and breathtaking mountain scenery.

We will return on board our ship.

The afternoon will be spent cruising to Bastia. There will be a lecture in the lounge.

DAY 11**BASTIA - MV La Belle des Océans (B,L,D)**

Today we depart for an excursion to Cap Corse. The Cap Corse is the northern-most peninsula on the island. Its long, windy road traverses the wild coastline offering view after view of amazing scenery: high cliffs, enchanted castle ruins, and picturesque villages. Leaving from Bastia, we will begin our journey in Erbalunga, an adorable

fishing village. We will continue to Santa Severa, a lovely port, the typical village of Luri, the Santa Lucia Pass, and the beautiful grove-lined village of Pino. We will have lunch in Nonza (or the surrounding area), located on a high cliff overlooking the sea.

After lunch, we continue towards Saint-Florent. Located on a small promontory with a backdrop of mountains, the climate, nearby beaches, and scenery make Saint-Florent a popular resort and tourist destination. We will then head to Patrimoine, the well-known wine making region near the cape. Here, we will enjoy a tasting of wine, cheese, and local cold cuts.

After our tour, we will return to the ship in Bastia.

DAY 12 L'ILE ROUSSE - MV La Belle des Océans (B,L,D)

This morning we depart for a tour of Calvi and its citadel. We will leave for Notre Dame de la Serra to enjoy some of the best views on the island. We will then head to the citadel. Crowning a lofty promontory, Calvi's massive fortified citadel offers superb wraparound views from its five watch towers. On foot, we will discover historical sites such as the Oratory of Saint Antoine and the Caserne Sampiero, military barracks that once served as the Genovese seat of power but now serve as a base for the French Foreign Legion. We will then tour the St. John the Baptist Cathedral, home to several beautiful works of art such as The Christ of Miracles. Before returning to the ship, we stop to visit the Salt Tower. Serving as storage for the salt that the ships brought in, this round tower was originally a watch tower.

We will then spend the afternoon crossing the Mediterranean to Nice. As we bid goodbye to Corsica, join us on the Sun Deck for a cocktail and take in one last glimpse of the beauty of the island.

Tonight, is our festive gala evening.

DAY 13 NICE (B)

Enjoy breakfast on board this morning before disembarking at 9:00 a.m, when we transfer you to the airport. End of our services

DAY

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