Corsica & Sardinia

September 19th - 28th 2019

Corsica is known as the "Isle of Beauty;" when Henri Matisse first visited in 1903 he was amazed by the clarity of the Mediterranean light and declared that this was where his passion for color began. It also has a thousand year old tradition of gathering and using medicinal plants. Several hundred species of plants (with 130 found nowhere else in the world) give the island its fragrant "maquis."

Sardinia offers an almost primeval landscape of rocks, sculpted by the wind and the sea, forests filled with aromatic plants, and the clear blue waters of the Mediterranean. Sardinia and Corsica are the second and fourth largest islands in the Mediterranean respectively (Sicily is the largest and Cyprus is third). Sardinia is Italian and Corsica is French – these days, but their history of human occupation can be traced back 9,000 years!

For the most part both islands have managed to escape the influx of tourism that has plagued the Mediterranean shores over the last few decades – indeed, both islands seem to have been relatively overlooked by the whole of the twentieth century! With very few mineral deposits and large inland areas of barren mountain country, Corsica and Sardinia have also been neglected by modern industry. There is a timelessness here that enables the traveler to look back though the centuries to catch a glimpse of a simpler past, albeit a fairly warlike one.

The islands have seen many invaders come and go and the legacy of their forts and castles helps to create the rich patchwork of history that unfolds here, but perhaps the most fascinating ruins are those of the earliest known inhabitants. The islands are dotted with Nuraghi, Neolithic dwellings made of huge stone blocks, left by the pre-Roman peoples.

This fall, join us for a journey back in time to *Corsica and Sardinia.*

Bonifacio

Corsica

The cost of this itinerary, per person, double occupancy is:

Land Only (no airfare included):	**$3940**
Single supplement:	**$ 690**

The following services are included:

Airfare:	Round trip air from Rome to Olbia, returning from Cagliari, including all airport taxes and customs charges
Hotels:	8 nights' accommodation in first-class hotels, including all hotel taxes and service charges
Coaching:	All ground transportation as detailed in day-by-day itinerary
Meals:	Breakfast daily, 2 lunches, 4 dinners
Guides:	Discover Europe tour guide throughout the tour, local guides at major museums and archaeological sites
Expenses:	Porterage of one large suitcase per person
Entrances:	Entrance fees to all sites included in the itinerary
Ferries:	Round trip ferry tickets from Sardinia to Corsica

Please note that travel insurance is not included on this tour. Insurance information will be mailed to each registration on receipt of deposit.

Discover Europe Ltd.
95 Adams Street
Keene, NH 03431
USA

e - info@discovereuropeltd.com
w - www.discovereuropeltd.com
t - (toll free) 866-563-7077
f - (fax) 603-563-7137

Thursday, September 19th - Departure from your chosen gateway city. **Overnight: Plane**

Friday, September 20th - Morning arrival in Rome to connect with your included onward flight to Olbia in the heart of the Costa Smeralda, the Emerald Coast. This flight departs from Rome Fiumicino Airport at 2.25 pm, so please make sure you arrive in Rome by 12.00 pm. You'll be met on arrival at the airport in Olbia and transferred to our city-center hotel. After free time to unpack and relax, your guide will lead a short walking tour through the old city to the 11th-century Basilica di San Simplicio, built on the site of a Christian church dating back to the 6th-century CE, which, in turn, was built on top of a Roman temple. Dinner at the hotel this evening welcomes the group to Sardinia. **(D) Overnight: Olbia**

Saturday, September 21st - We'll spend the morning in Olbia with a walk down to the waterfront, where we will visit the Archaeological Museum, with its fabulous collection of Nuraghic artifacts. Leaving Olbia, after free time for lunch, our first stop will be to the Giant's Tomb, just south of the city. The earliest phase of construction of the Tomba dei Giganti di Su Mont'e s'Abe predates the Nuraghic period, making it around 4,000 years old! From here we head north to Santa Teresa Gallura, on the very northern tip of the island. From here, we board the ferry for the short crossing over to Bonifacio on the island of Corsica. On arrival, we'll transfer to our hotel, check in and have dinner. **(B, D) Overnight: Bonifacio**

Corsica

Sunday, September 22nd - Our morning tour of Bonifacio includes a visit to the Citadelle and a walking tour around the old streets of the gothic city. This afternoon is free – why not take a leisurely boat ride around the harbor for views of the Citadelle, the Escalier du Roi d'Aragon, and the grottos of Sdragonato and of St. Francis. The evening is free to sample a local restaurant. **(B) Overnight: Bonifacio**

Monday, September 23rd - Heading northeast out of Bonifacio we soon reach the town of Sartène. This area contains some of the oldest prehistoric monuments on the island; we'll visit the site at Filitosa where the dolmen known as I Stantari is considered to be the best preserved of its kind in the world, with its burial chamber completely intact. We then head into the center of Sartène, where we will have lunch and take a short walking tour. There will also be time for individual exploration of this beautiful, unspoiled, hill town before we return to our hotel in Bonifacio for a free evening **(B, L) Overnight: Bonifacio**

Tuesday, September 24th- After a leisurely free morning in Bonifacio, we head back across to Sardinia on the ferry this afternoon. We'll arrive at our hotel in Alghero, a region where they still speak a native Catalan dialect, with time to explore this charming seaside town, before we gather for dinner. **(B, D) Overnight: Alghero**

Wednesday, September 25th- This morning there is an excursion to the nearby ancient rock-cut cemetery of Anghelu Ruju and the Nuraghe Palmavera. We return to Alghero for a free afternoon – boat rides are available to the fabulous Neptune's Caves, just around the coast, and the evening is free to find a local restaurant for dinner. **(B) Overnight: Alghero**

Thursday, September 26th - We head south out of Alghero today, following the beautiful coast road along the Mediterranean. We'll break our journey at a picturesque fishing village and arrive at the village of Barumini for lunch (included). This afternoon we will visit the nearby Nuraghe Su Nuraxi, the largest of the mysterious Nuragic villages on the island. These prehistoric monuments date from around 1,500 - 500 BCE. It's a fairly short drive south from here to the capital city of the island, Cagliari. On arrival we'll visit the National Archaeological Museum before we check into our hotel. The evening is free. **(B, L) Overnight: Cagliari**

Nuraghi

Friday, September 27th - This morning a scenic drive around the coast brings us to Nora, where we explore the remains of its Punic temple and Roman baths and forum. Spectacularly set on a narrow peninsula, Nora was originally a Phoenician town. We continue around the southwest coast and head back to Cagliari in the mid-afternoon, where you will be free to visit the cathedral or the National Picture Gallery. This evening we gather for a farewell dinner at the hotel. **(B, D) Overnight: Cagliari**

Saturday, September 28th - Morning transfers to Cagliari Airport for the short included flight back to Rome where you connect with your returning international flight. **(B)**

Key to included meals: B - breakfast, L - lunch, D - dinner