

On the trail of the GR20 North

7 days / 6 nights

The mighty GR20: a fantastic itinerary from the North-West to the South-East of the island! From the Balagne region to the centre of Corsica, discover stunning gorges, alpine lakes...

The "traditional" GR20 route goes from refuge to refuge (bunk houses). We use Gites (more comfortable accommodation), which means that our trip is designed around the GR20 footpath but inevitably, it diverges away from the GR20 to reach the Gites that we use. This by no means impairs the quality of the trip; on the contrary, it increases the quality of the trip.

YOUR PROGRAM

Day 1 - From Calenzana to Bonifatu

Meet with our taxi driver in Calvi in the morning for your transfer to Calenzana. This little village, surrounded by olive trees, is the official start of the GR20.

You walk through the forest of Bonifatu, past magnificent viewpoints over the villages of the Balagne.

Distance: 11km

Walk: 4 hours.

Altitude gain & loss: +700m, -450m.



Day 2 - From Bonifatu to Haut Asco

After breakfast, you will leave Bonifatu for one of the longest stages along the GR20 (timewise). Once more crossing several rivers before reaching the famous Spasimata footbridge, which is 30 metres in length and suspended above a waterfall (a great location for photos). You will arrive in the Valley of the Muvrella (mouflon) with its small lake. The viewpoints are numerous and divine from the passes. The route continues to the foot of the Monte Cinto, the highest summit of Corsica, where you will spend the night.

Food: B,L,D

Accommodation: Gite (double room available)

Distance: 9.5km

Walk: 8 hours.

Altitude gain & loss: +1300m, -598m.

Day 3 - From Ascu to Vallone

To avoid the Cirque de la Solitude, closed to the public since 2015, you cross the Great Barrier Reef by the itinerary of Monte Cintu and through the Pointe des Éboulis. From Bocca Minuta, you descend to the small valley of Straciaconne where you may have the chance to observe mouflons (a type of wild sheep).

Your accommodation, the shepherd hut in Vallone, is in an ideal setting with the backdrop of a starry sky for the night.

Dinner at the hut and night in a tent.

Walk: 8h30

Altitude gain & loss: +1200m, -800m



Day 4 - From Vallone to Verghju

Your setting for the day is the valley of the Niolu, located at the heart of the island. You walk past the foot of the most beautiful summits in Corsica, the Paglia Orba and the strange Capu Tafunatu. When the weather is good, you can get a stunning viewpoint over the gulf of Porto before plunging into the small valley of the Golo.

The shepherd's hut of Radule and a series of natural pools punctuate your walk towards the forest and the Castel di Verghio. Dinner and night at the gîte.

Walk: 6h15.

Altitude gain & loss: +971m, -1017m.

Day 5 - From Verghju to A Sega

Your journey begins between sea and sky with the crossing of Bocca San Pedru. The magic takes place once you cross the Bocca a Reta and see the jagged coastline plunging into the deep blue waters of the Mediterranean. On the opposite slope, a glacial crater conceals the lake of Ninu, a Corsican treasure nestled in a lush green setting. Bordered with pozzines (a type of peat bogs), the lake is also a sanctuary for wild horses, which can often be seen grazing peacefully around it. You then follow a little stream, which soon becomes the great Tavignanu River.

Walk: 7h20.

Altitude gain & loss: +600m, -640m.



Day 6 - From A Sega to Corti

After a final dip in the natural pools around the refuge, you begin your walk alongside the Tavignanu River, in the shade of Lariccio pines. During the walk, there are plenty of opportunities for swimming in the river. At the end of the day, you arrive in Corti.

Night in a hotel in Corti.

Walk: 4 hours.

Altitude gain & loss: +720m, -1400m.

Day 7 - Corti

Your holiday ends after breakfast.

Additional information

TARIFFS

Price from 780 euros per person.

OPTIONS

3 nights in double room : 110 euros per person.

Maps of hike 1:25000 : 42 euros per person.

INCLUDED

Accommodation.

Dinners from day 1 to day 4.

Breakfasts from day 2 to day 7 except on day 6.

Picnics from day 2 to day 7 except on day 6.
Taxi transfer from Calvi to Calenzana on day 1.
Bag transfers except on days 3 & 5.

NOT INCLUDED

Transfers not included in this itinerary (including for example transfers due to bad weather or physical ailments).
Transfer from Calvi onwards.
Breakfast on day 6
Pic nic on day 6
Dinner on days 5 and 6.
Entrance fees to tourist sites.
Optional activities.
Beverages.
Holiday insurance.
Luggage transfers on days 3 & 5.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Terrain: well-marked paths but very technical terrain (rocky and uneven). You need to be sure-footed and have plenty of relevant mountain experience.
Walking: from 4h30 to 8h15 per day.

CARRYING

The luggage transfers are included in your trip, except on days 3 & 5.

ACCOMMODATION

4 nights in gîtes d'étapes (dormitories for 5-6 people with shared bathrooms).
1 night in a tent in Vallone.
1 night in a hotel in Corte.

Please be aware that facilities will be basic and normally on a shared basis (except in hotels). Hot showers should be available at each accommodation, but water may be limited due to high demand.

Double bedroom accommodation:

Nights in rooms of two are available on this particular trip. Your night in Vallone will be spent in a private tent for two.

Single accommodation:

Nights in single bedrooms are not available on this particular trip.

Extra accommodation:

If you require additional nights before the start of your trip or after the end of your trip, then our team can book this for you (subject to availability). Please notify us (on your booking form or by email) at the time of your booking. Payment for extra accommodation should be made to us one month before the start of your trip.

SIZE OF GROUP

Minimum two.

DEPARTURES

Every sundays from the beginning of June to mid-September.

DEPARTURE

Calvi.

DISPERSION

Corte.

HOW TO GET THERE

Calvi is easily accessible by train (from Ajaccio, Corte and Bastia). There is also an airport "aéroport Sainte Catherine" and an important harbour.

EQUIPMENT TO TAKE

- A good pair of walking boots (ones that you have used before), with ankle support and non-slip soles.
- Good quality walking socks
- A comfortable rucksack (either for all of your kit or as a day sack) with plenty of plastic bags to keep your kit dry.
- If you are having your luggage transferred, please make sure that you have only one bag for the transfers, with a maximum weight of 15 kilos. It should be an easily transportable soft bag or with wheels.
- T-shirt and shorts (depending upon the likely weather)
- Light trekking trousers (not jeans)
- It is good to be able to 'layer' your clothes – with several light tops (for protection against cold, wind or sun)
- A warm sweater, polar or fleece. Beanie, gloves.
- Waterproofs – such as an anorak (Gore-tex or micro pore for example) or poncho.
- A bathing suit and towel
- Sandals or flip flops for beaches, river wading, or for wearing in the evening (it's important to be able to rest your feet from your walking boots)
- Sun cream plus sunglasses and a hat or cap
- A change of clothes
- For the picnics, you will need a small Tupperware box (for stews or salads), a plastic mug, a knife and fork. A Swiss Army knife or a pen knife is optional but can be very useful.
- Walking poles can be very useful to take the weight off the knees and to steady yourself on uneven terrain.
- A water bottle (at least one). It is preferable that you should be able to carry at least 2 litres of water at any one time.
- Camera and film, or batteries and memory cards for digital ones.
- A light torch (with spare battery)
- A small first aid kit possibly including: Rehydration salts to combat dehydration or fatigue, something for cuts, sprains, blisters, breaks, burns, stings, and pain relief. Please remember any personal medication that you may need.
- Wash bag, including: toothbrush, toothpaste, towel, toilet paper. Preferably a biodegradable soap for washing fruit, washing yourself and for washing clothes (it is possible to buy a multi-purpose biodegradable soap). Earplugs can also be useful if you are sleeping in dormitories.
- Money – make sure you have enough cash on you for your trek (in Euros), as it is unlikely that you will be able to use a card or withdraw money if you are in the mountains.
- Maps – IGN maps of a scale and quality that allow you to see the route clearly. If you are on a self-guided tour, you will more than likely be given copies of sections of maps. These should be clear enough to guide you along the route alongside

the route notes, but we strongly recommend that you have the correct maps for the area of your walk. Please contact us if you need advice.

- A compass – but make sure you are able to read it before starting on your trek
- Mobile phone and charger (it may not always be possible to get a signal or to charge it, but it can be very helpful in many circumstances).
- Snacks (such as energy bars, dried fruit).
- If you are a vegetarian, we suggest you bring a good supply of nuts or other foods containing protein. It is not always possible to get a good balanced meal, particularly in the more remote places in the mountains.
- A waterproof plastic pouch in which to put your trip documents, identity papers and insurance documents.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

We strongly advise you to buy the correct IGN maps for this trip to complement the printed map sections that we provide as part of the package.

SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

Please remember that self-guided walking requires individuals to use problem-solving skills, to be adaptable and have a keen eye. Our walking specialists also recommended that you have a good knowledge of map reading and that you have good sense of direction. Sometimes, asking, finding and/or losing your way are all part of the adventure. There is also a certain level of unknown when it comes to self-guided walking. However, with a methodical approach and good preparation on your part, you will find that potential problems can soon be averted. If you're a first-time traveller, you will see that you soon get the hang of it as the majority of our first travelers do (as long as you are well-prepared). If you are a solo traveller, using maps and directions can be more difficult as two heads are often better than one when it comes to finding your way. In the event of problems or emergencies, please remember that Europe Active provides a 7/7 hotline service.

Note: these trip notes are the most current information available for this itinerary.

All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes. When necessary, you should be prepared to be flexible. Occasionally, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to a variety of reasons (ie. climatic, political, physical or other). In these circumstances, Europe Active will try to make suitable alternative arrangements.