

Spotlight on Ajaccio



HISTORY

Corsica is a rugged island belonging to France, situated in the Mediterranean Sea. Geographically, the island lies closer to the Italian coast than France and for centuries its history was linked with Italy's. This will explain the ever-present Italian ambience in the air. Corsica is in every sense, a region apart from the rest of France.

The island offers dramatic coastlines and a wild interior of densely wooded hills. Its rough beauty has inspired lasting devotion in both visitors and those lucky enough to be born here. Still largely unspoiled, the island is an ideal escape from the Riviera scene and boasts beautiful (but rocky) beaches and some of the Mediterranean's finest deep sea diving. The island is fragrant with wild herbs and aromatic Maquis' (the scrub that gave its name to the French resistance during World War II). Economic life on the island is maintained by the main exports of cheese, wine, citrus fruit and olive oil. In recent years tourism has also become a major source of income.

Although fiercely independent, the Corsicans have an innate sense of honor and hospitality. Large smiles and a friendly reception await those who come to enjoy the wild beauties and unspoiled coastlines of their island. Ajaccio is the capital

of Corsica and the seat of the island's Regional Assembly. The image it immediately projects, is that of a French Mediterranean resort with its palm trees, narrow old streets and yachts filling the marina. Even the modern buildings climbing the mountainsides behind, are unable to diminish the visual impact of its warm rose toned buildings and majestic citadel set in a magnificent bay framed by a shadowy mountain range. Ajaccio lives mainly from tourism, thanks to a wonderful coastline and its most illustrious citizen, Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, born in Ajaccio in 1769.

Ajaccio has several enticing attractions. Two museums worth a visit are the Musee Fesch, with an impressive collection of Italian early masters, and the Maison Bonaparte, the house where Napoleon was born. There are shops, restaurants, a post office and banks in town or in the Maritime Hall. There are various public beaches with cafés and restaurants but you are unlikely to find changing facilities, showers or lounge chairs at any of them.

DOCKING

The cruise ship docks at the Cruise Ship Terminal.

SHORE EXCURSIONS

Please check your tour ticket for the correct meeting time and location for your tour. Your cruise line representative will direct you to your transportation.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is not necessary. There are no taxis available at the pier. The local bus network is geared to residents, who use it to get to and from school and work. Two buses a day connect the southern towns and the capital Ajaccio. Northern towns are connected to Bastia on the northeast coast. Corsica has a very small and simple railway network. The main line runs

out of Ajaccio to the various larger towns on the island, making stops in some of the smaller resort villages.

HOW TO GET TO TOWN

It is only a short walk into the downtown area of Ajaccio, (approximately a quarter of a mile)

SHOPPING HOURS

General opening hours for shopping are from 9:00 am to noon and from 2:00 pm to 7:00 pm, Monday through Saturday. Recommended stores are open throughout the day when the ship is in port.

BANK HOURS

France's central bank offers the best exchange rates but does not accept \$100.00 bills due to the preponderance of counterfeits. Banks are

usually open from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm and 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm, Tuesday through Saturday.

POST OFFICE HOURS

The main post office is located at 5 Cours Napoleon. It also provides foreign exchange. It is open Monday to Friday from 9:00 am to noon and 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm; Saturday from 8:30 am to 11:30 am.

TELEPHONE

Telephones or cabins, which take phone cards, are located in the terminal building.

EMERGENCY

In case of an emergency, dial 17.



AJACCIO

PORT & SHOPPING MAP



CAPITAL

Ajaccio, Corsica's largest town has been the capital since 1793.

LOCATION

Ajaccio is located on the west coast of Corsica.

SIZE

The island of Corsica is very geographically diverse, with over 600 miles of coastline, large pine forests and a mountainous continental divide.

POPULATION

Ajaccio has a population of approximately 61,000 people.

LANGUAGE

French is the spoken language throughout France though the people of Corsica speak an Italian dialect and the locals of

Bonifacio speak their own Ligurian dialect. In larger towns and cities, shopkeepers and restaurateurs may speak some English but a French phrase book or pocket dictionary will be an appreciated asset.

CURRENCY

The Euro is the national currency in Corsica. Recommended stores accept credit cards and traveler's checks.

TIME ZONE

Ajaccio is on UTC +1 hours. The ship may not always follow local time. Please adhere to ship's time while in port.

TOURIST INFORMATION

The information desk is located right on the Cruise Ship Terminal.

SIGHTS TO VISIT WHILE SHOPPING

A. CATHEDRALE

This 16th century structure is where Napoleon was baptized in 1771. It was built on a much smaller scale than originally intended due to lack of funds. There is a plaque hanging on the wall to the left as you enter, apologizing for its diminutive size. The Cathedrale contains some interesting items which include the font where Napoleon was baptized at 23 months, the great marble altar that his sister donated in 1811 and a painting by Eugene Delacroix of the Virgin holding aloft the Sacred Heart.

B. MAISON BONAPARTE

The birthplace and childhood home of Napoleon, Maison Bonaparte is located on the Rue de Letizia, just off the west side of Rue Bonaparte. It has been owned by the state since 1923 and houses a museum of Napoleonic memorabilia, period furniture and portraits.

C. HOTEL DE VILLE

Built in 1826, the Hotel de Ville is located at the northern end of Place Foch and is entered through prison-like wood doors. It is now the town hall and houses the Musée Napoleon. The Hotel de Ville contains various relics such as a fragment from Napoleon's coffin, some earth from his garden, part of his dressing case and his collection of military medals.

D. PLACE FOCH

This area, which is the city's finest square, lies in the heart of old Ajaccio. The square slopes down to the sea and is lined with cafés and restaurants. It also contains a statue of Napoleon which dominates the top end of the square, as well as a fountain of four marble lions which was created by Ajaccien sculptor, Maglioli.

E. PLACE DU GUALLE

This area, which is also known as Place du Diamant, after the Diamanti family who once owned much of the property in Ajaccio, contains a huge bronze statue of Napoleon at the southern end. It depicts Napoleon clad in Roman garb on horseback, surrounded by his four brothers.

F. PALAIS FESCH

This area is home to Ajaccio's best gallery. It contains a collection of paintings that were brought to Ajaccio from Holland, Italy and Germany by Napoleon's step-uncle, Cardinal Joseph Fesch. The area also contains the Chapelle Imperiale, which is the burial site of many members of Napoleon's family, including his parents, Carlo and Letizia.

VAT

Many stores participate in the Value Added Tax (VAT) refund program in which non-European citizens may be entitled to re-claim a portion or all of the tax paid (depending on the total purchase price). Each store participating in the VAT refund program is discretionary. In addition, regulations and conditions governing the refund of VAT are subject to change. It is the responsibility of each cruise ship guest making a purchase to inquire as to whether or not the store participates in VAT and if the purchase qualifies for a refund. For general questions regarding the participation of stores, please see your Shopping Guide.



Shop where you see the Global Refund TAX FREE SHOPPING SIGN and simply ask for your tax refund cheque. Not all stores have a visible TaxFree Shopping logo so do remember to ask for Tax Free Shopping. To qualify you must spend min. EUR 154,94 (approx. USD 196) in one shop in one day. Show your purchase receipts and passport to customs officials when leaving EU and have your Global Refund cheques stamped. Now you can collect your refund in cash at the nearby Global Refund Cash Refund Office or mail the check to Global Refund for direct crediting of your credit card.



GLOBAL REFUND

GUARANTEE

Shop with confidence, knowing that all merchants on this map have been carefully selected and each offers a 60-day guarantee to passengers. This guarantee ensures buyers that all recommended merchants will repair or replace any unsatisfactory item, excluding buyer's negligence or buyer's remorse. For purposes of determining quality and value of jewelry related to a buyer's complaint, only appraisals secured by a buyer from independent graduate gemologists, not affiliated with any retail jeweler, will be acceptable. Please inquire about individual store return policies before finalizing any purchase. The port shopping program is operated by Onboard Media, Inc. Participating merchants have paid an advertising fee to Onboard Media for inclusion in this program. Cruise Line receives a promotional fee from Onboard Media. Onboard Media handles all customer relations claims relating to the guarantee. If you become aware of a problem during the cruise, please contact the Shopping Guide onboard for immediate assistance. If a problem

arises after the cruise but within 60 days of the purchase date, contact the Customer Relations Department at Onboard Media: 1691 Michigan Ave Suite 600, Miami Beach, FL 33139, Phone: (800) 396-2999, Fax: (305) 673-2741 Email: shoppingissues@onboard.com Hours: Monday through Thursday 9:00 am to 7:00 pm - Friday 9:00 am to 5:30 pm (Eastern Standard Time)

Please send a letter and include the name of the ship, cruise date, store name and merchandise problem. Also enclose a copy of the sales receipt and any relevant documents relating to the sale. Onboard Media will contact the recommended store on your behalf for repair or replacement, and you will be notified accordingly.



Look for this banner in all recommended and guaranteed stores.

Locations found on inside map

SHOPPING WARNING: Whilst you may visit various stores during your time in port, please note carefully that the 60-day guarantee is only applicable to the stores mentioned herein. Complete details of the guarantee are found on the back of this map. Let the choice be yours and shop with confidence.

