



ACCOMMODATION

FINDING ACCOMMODATION

From great-value *gîtes d'étape* (walkers' lodges) and *gîtes ruraux* (self-catering cottages in the country) to atmospheric B&Bs and stylish hotels, there's a wide array of accommodation options in Corsica.

The smarter hotels tend to be concentrated around the coast and in a few hinterland towns; the Ajaccio, Calvi, Bonifacio and Porto-Vecchio areas have the widest choice. There are also a great deal of small-scale, often family-run, establishments – not really the period hotel you were dreaming of, but they blend in pretty well with the environment, and are comfortable and intimate.

Chambres d'hôtes, the French equivalent of B&Bs, offer a pleasant alternative to hotels. They can be found all over Corsica, but are normally tucked away in the hills or in scenic locations; options include everything from restored village houses, modern buildings or country villas to rooms in family houses. On the whole, standards are high and rooms are

generally excellent value. Many *chambres d'hôtes* also offer *table d'hôtes* (evening meals served around shared tables), but these must be reserved in advance.

Maisons d'hôtes (boutique-style B&Bs) are the latest trend. At the time of writing there were about two dozen in Corsica, but new places should have opened by the time you read this. They are normally found in the hinterland and boast wonderful locations.

Although *gîtes d'étape* are primarily set up for walkers, they are better equipped and much more comfortable than refuges; some have impeccable facilities that would put many a hotel to shame. They

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PRICE GUIDE

The following is a guide to the pricing system used in this chapter. Unless otherwise stated, prices quoted are for a double room with private bathroom.

€	up to €60
€€	€60 to €140
€€€	over €140

also welcome nonwalkers, space permitting, and usually offer doubles (with shared bathrooms). Most *gîtes d'étape* are dotted around the island's hinterland, and are accessible by car. They boast wonderful settings – think secluded hamlets and breathtaking views.

Gîtes ruraux are private houses and lodges that can be rented (normally by the week) for self-catering holidays. They are scattered all over the island, but are usually in the hinterland.

Résidences de tourisme (condominium-style accommodation) are dotted all around the coast. Most are bungalow-type self-catering options, which you can rent on a weekly basis. They are often located near the beach.

PRICES & BOOKING

The peak season is July and August, when Corsica is chock-a-block with visitors. Coastal accommodation rates hurtle through the ceiling during these two months, and can be up to triple the prices charged in the low season. Note that half board is mandatory in many hotels in Corsica at this time. It's imperative to make reservations well in advance if you're planning to visit the island in July and August, as most reasonably priced accommodation gets snapped up fast.

For the rest of the year, tariffs can be very reasonable. You'll find excellent

deals, and fewer people, in the shoulder months: April, May, June, September and October. Many resort hotels function only between April and October, but some B&Bs are open year-round, as are certain hotels in the main cities. Seasonal opening and closing dates tend to vary so, if you're planning an early or late break, do check in advance.

BASTIA & THE FAR NORTH

BASTIA

♥ **HÔTEL LES VOYAGEURS** //

BASTIA €€

☎ 04 95 34 90 80; www.hotel-lesvoyageurs.com; 9 av Maréchal Sébastiani; s €60-95, d €75-105; **P** ☒ ☑ ☎

Run by the same family for over a century, yet thoroughly modern and comprehensively renovated, Hôtel Les Voyageurs is justifiably popular with tourists and business visitors alike. The attractive lounge and reception area streams with light, and the 24 rooms have soothing pale-yellow walls, glass-and-wrought-iron furniture and sparkling bathrooms. The best of the doubles are cavernous, and come with a cosy sofa and a bath-tub.

CAP CORSE

♥ **MAISON ST HYACINTHE** //

SANTA MARIA DI LOTA €

☎ 04 95 33 28 29; www.maison-saint-hyacinthe.com; Santa Maria di Lota; s with shared bathroom €25-30, d €40-50; **P**

You don't need to be religious to enjoy a stay at this peaceful convent, which lies deep in the hills behind Bastia. Run by Polish nuns, it offers 45 basic but impeccably maintained single and double rooms (13 doubles have their own bathroom) in a modern, motel-like building