

MEDITERRANEAN

# Sardinia & Corsica Kayak Odyssey

*Kayak / Walk Adventure*



# Sardinia & Corsica Kayak Odyssey



## **11 day trip** Seven days kayaking and two days hiking

Explore the stunning coastlines of Sardinia and Corsica on this unique hotel-based itinerary.

Sardinia is the second largest island in the Mediterranean and although part of Italy, fiercely maintains its own identity with distinctive culture, food and traditions. The island's mountainous interior provides a stunning backdrop to the exquisite northern archipelago of smaller offshore granite and sand islands. Our paddles will be concentrated around three areas; the Gulf of Orsei on the east coast, the remote Sinis Peninsula and the Maddalena Islands, a quiet place of spectacular beaches.

Although Corsica has been part of France for over 200 years, it has its own distinctive culture, food and traditions. The diversity in scenery is amazing, with beautiful beaches, hilltop villages and historic ports. Our paddles are centred around Bonifacio and Santa Manza Bay, a remarkable coastline of chalky cliffs and azure waters.

During our Mediterranean journey, we'll stay in small hotels or farmhouses and enjoy dinner in local restaurants, sampling the regional wines and reliving the day's activities. We complement our paddling exploration with hikes through local vineyards, rugged hinterland, olive groves and colourful fishing villages. Enjoy picnic lunches and a daily gelato on this brand new adventure!

## **A Quick Itinerary**

B = Breakfast • L = Lunch • D = Dinner

**Day 1:** Meet in Olbia, Sardinia. Afternoon trip briefing at the group hotel. D

**Days 2-3:** Exploring the east coast of Sardinia. Overnight Oliena. B • L • D

**Days 4-5:** Paddling the west coast of Sardinia. Overnight Bosa. B • L • D

**Day 6:** Visit Alghero old town. Transfer to Bonifacio, Corsica. B • L • D

**Days 7-8:** Explore Bonifacio and Santa Manza Bay. B • L • D

**Days 9-10:** Transfer to Palau, Sardinia. Paddle the Maddalena islands. B • L • D

**Day 11:** Transfer to Olbia. Trip concludes. B

## Meeting Place and Time

We meet at our group hotel in Olbia, Sardinia, at 5pm on Day 1. Hotel details will be advised closer to departure.

**We highly recommend you arrive in Italy the day before the trip begins in case of airline delays.**

## How to Get There (and Back Again)

There are numerous flight connections to Olbia from various points in mainland Italy and other European countries as well as the UK.

Ferries: There are overnight ferries to Olbia from Livorno and Genoa in Italy.

## Paddling and Hiking Experience

It is important to recognise that the weather will greatly influence our itinerary and adjustments may be made in accordance.

As with most activities, the fitter you are, the more you will enjoy the trip. It's a good idea to take some regular exercise like paddling, walking, jogging, cycling, or swimming ahead of the trip.

This trip is designed for people with some previous paddling experience and an interest in walking. You do not have to be an expert paddler or know how to roll. However, you should have practiced a wet exit and assisted re-entry before the trip. This can be practiced in waist deep water at home, with a friend's help or under tuition. We are always happy to discuss your experience and can often suggest how beginner paddlers may gain the necessary experience at home to prepare for the trip. We require all participants to complete and return our kayak experience form on booking.

The degree of difficulty of the trip will depend on the weather we encounter. The wind normally picks up along the coastlines in the afternoon and causes small waves. We paddle for up to three hours per day and balance that with some spectacular walks. It is important to realise that the group will kayak at the speed of the slowest members. All participants should feel confident in swimming.

The kayaks we use are stable, easy to paddle and control. We have a mix of double kayaks and singles with rudders or skegs. Our guides are highly experienced sea kayakers and professional guides. You will be given a thorough briefing on sea kayaking techniques with ample time to practice and familiarise yourself with your kayak.

The kayaks will be lightly loaded with your personal clothing and items needed during the day. Extra luggage not required when paddling will be stored in the transport van. A day pack is useful for our hiking sections.

## Proposed Itinerary

The following itinerary should be seen as an approximate guide only. Our aim is to have a real Mediterranean adventure rather than being governed by a rigid schedule. Our program may change to take advantage of opportunities as they arise, to suit local conditions and according to the preferences of the group. Please note that weather conditions, breakdowns and other factors can cause alterations and delays to our itinerary.

**Day 1:** Your guides will meet you in Olbia at the group hotel at 5pm for the trip briefing. The old town of Olbia has a historic centre dating back to Roman times and well worth a stroll. After our briefing, we'll enjoy our first experience of fine Sardinian cuisine.

D / HOTEL

**Day 2:** We transfer down the coast to the azure bay of Cala Gonone, situated at the base of 900 metre mountains. We'll paddle the Bay of Orosei with its secluded coves, brilliant white beaches, towering cliffs and hidden caves. After paddling, we drive to a mountain hideaway beside Gennargentu National Park, our base for the next two nights is in the countryside near Oliena.

B • L • D / AGRITURISMO ACCOMMODATION

**Day 3:** Today we exchange our paddles for our boots and explore the Supramonte mountain range and Gorropu Gorge, known as Europe's Grand Canyon. The 400 metre canyon walls tower far overhead as we work our way into the inner sanctums and wind through gnarled oaks before descending the deep ravine. Transfer back to our accommodation for a relaxing evening.

B • L • D / AGRITURISMO ACCOMMODATION

**Days 4-5:** We transfer to the west coast and our delightful accommodation at Bosa, a colourful town on the banks of the Temo river. Date palms line the river with an old Spanish castle towering over the town. We will base ourselves here for the next two nights and explore the stunning west coast. Spectacular beaches such as Arutas with its colourful quartz grains are a highlight.

B • L • D / LOCAL GUESTHOUSE

**Day 6:** Heading for Corsica, we stop at the delightful fishing port of Alghero to explore the car-less centre of the old town, dating back to the 16th century. We travel by ferry from Santa Teresa di Gallura in Sardinia to Bonifacio in Corsica, about a 50 minute journey. On arrival into Corsica, and depending on the weather, we'll either paddle under the cliffs of Bonifacio or hike along the upper cliffs for superb views of the town perched high above a sparkling harbour. Our accommodation this evening offers extraordinary views across the Straits of Bonifacio to Sardinia.

B • L • D / AGRITURISMO ACCOMMODATION

**Days 7-8:** We'll enjoy two days exploring to the north and south of Bonifacio, taking our picnic lunches with us. Our paddling will centre around the cliffs of Bonifacio and the beautiful sandy beaches of Santa Manza Bay. We return to our accommodation each afternoon and enjoy sampling local cuisine each night.

B • L • D / LOCAL GUESTHOUSE FOR TWO NIGHTS

**Days 9-10:** This morning we farewell Corsica and catch the ferry from Bonifacio to Santa Teresa di Gallura in Sardinia. We drive to the summer resort town of Palau and weather permitting, paddle across to Isola della Maddalena. The Maddalena Archipelago is located off the Costa Smeralda and was declared a National Park in 1994 (Parco Nazionale dell'Arcipelago di La Maddalena). La Maddalena is the biggest of the 60 islands that make up the archipelago and

this is where we base ourselves for two nights. We explore the archipelago, heading off in a different direction each day. Our island stops may include Caprera, Santa Maria, Razzoli, Budelli and Spargi: each with their own beauty. There are many fine sand beaches and granite outcrops surrounded by patches of turquoise sea "as blue as the mantle of the Madonna".

B • L • D / LOCAL GUESTHOUSE FOR TWO NIGHTS

**Day 11:** Our adventure ends today with breakfast and then a transfer to Olbia where we'll say our farewells.

B / END OF TRIP ARRANGEMENTS

## End of Trip

The trip finishes with a morning transfer from Maddalena to Olbia arriving around lunchtime. Please allow enough time on this day if you are booking onward travel. We can drop you at the airport or in town.

## Accommodation

We will have simple twin-share bed and breakfast accommodation in Bosa, Corsica and Maddalena. In Olbia, we stay in a beautiful 4 star hotel and in Oliena, a delightful agriturismo. Single rooms may be requested for an additional charge.

## Climate

The climate of Sardinia and Corsica is generally mild. The average temperature range for May is from a minimum of 12C to a maximum of 22C. Rainfall can occur, but showers are generally brief in duration. The sea temperature is an average of 20C.

## Trip Organisation

### Paddling segment

Our paddling days will start after breakfast and espresso, never too early in Italy! It's a good idea to pack your dry-bag before breakfast and prepare your personal items for the day so that loading for departure can be organised.

### Walking Segment

Where we have the option to walk you should carry a daypack with all the items you may need, including a rain jacket and warm sweater or pile jacket in case it gets cool.

### Food

Food is a highlight on this trip! We'll enjoy sampling the local produce in each location. Corsica's cheeses, charcuterie and seafood are superb. In Sardinia, try the pasta dishes with clams or sea urchins. Breakfasts are provided by our accommodation. Lunches are included in the trip cost and are picnic-style and generally not sit-down restaurant meals. Dinners are sit down and restaurant quality and usually at our accommodation.

We are happy to cater for vegetarians and other special dietary requirements but it is important to let us know at the time of booking.



\*\*Alcohol is not included in the trip cost. A group "kitty" for alcohol can be useful but this is up to the group to organise.

## **Expedition Staff**

Your guides will accompany you on the entire trip. Should you have any inquiries during the trip, feel free to ask your guide.

## **Conservation**

It has always been our motto that "we take only photographs and leave only footprints". We are keenly aware of the ecology of the areas we visit and try to limit our impact on them. We ask that each person takes out everything they bring in including sweet wrappers, batteries, etc.

## **Photography**

We are paddling in a salt-water environment and the delicate electronics in digital cameras can be damaged. You might consider a waterproof camera or a small plastic waterproof case or dry-bag with a supply of silicon packs. Ensure you have sufficient memory storage and batteries for a digital camera and charger with euro two plug converter. One variable lens will reduce your load and the amount of your equipment that can be damaged. If you are buying a new camera, consider a waterproof one and get it well before departure so you can practice with it.

## **Travel Arrangements**

Should you voluntarily decide to alter your travel arrangements after commencement of your trip, Southern Sea Ventures is not responsible for any additional charges involved. Our staff will assist you if possible but you are responsible for organising these arrangements yourself. Delays may occur due to weather or transport difficulties and Southern Sea Ventures will do its best to rectify the situation. We are sure you will appreciate this and accept it as part of the whole Italian experience.

## **Travel Insurance**

It is necessary to take out a personal insurance policy to cover yourself against sickness, accident, loss of baggage, trip cancellation due to weather or other reasons and in the unlikely event that you need emergency evacuation by plane or helicopter due to illness or accident. Ensure you have read the policy thoroughly and are familiar with the claim process in case it becomes necessary to make an emergency claim. We will require proof of your insurance prior to departure.

## **Money Matters**

### **Your tour cost includes:**

- Bed and breakfast accommodation in all guesthouses/B&B's (twin share).
- Equipment transfer between accommodation as per itinerary.
- Expedition kayaks, paddles, sprayskirts and life jackets.

- Watertight dry-bags for your personal gear while kayaking.
- Professional guides.
- All meals from dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 11.
- Entrance fees to parks.
- Transfer to Olbia at the conclusion of the trip.
- Group first aid kit.

**Your tour cost *does not* include:**

- Any flights and airport taxes.
- Entry fees into historic sites or museums.
- Items of a personal nature such as postage and laundry.
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Single room hotel supplement.
- Travel insurance.
- Tips.

## Money to Bring With You

There are ATM machines in the main centres and this is the most efficient way to obtain euros. Credit cards or debit cards are accepted in larger stores or hotels but don't rely on being able to use one everywhere. Cash can be changed at banks in the larger towns and cities but it can take time.

During the trip you will need money for extra bottled water, soft drinks and alcohol, entry fees to a few historical sites and any shopping you intend to do.

## Passport

Make sure that you have a valid passport and that its validity will extend to six months after the date of your return.

## Visas

At the time of writing Australian, Canadian, New Zealand, UK and US passport holders currently do not require a visa for Italy or France for stays up to 90 days in length. For other nationalities, please check with your nearest Italian and French consulate.

## Excess Luggage

Luggage not required while kayaking will be stored in the transfer van.

## Security

Before leaving home, photocopy your passport, ticket details and make a note of your credit card and ATM card numbers in case you lose or misplace them. All passports, airline vouchers, valuables, excess cash and travellers cheques are better carried with you in a dry bag in your kayak. Theft is a consideration in Italy (like at home) so it's always a good idea not to leave things unattended. Do not carry large amounts of cash with you and always be aware of what you are carrying, especially personal valuables like cameras, jewellery and watches. Do not display valuable items or leave them lying around in such a way that might tempt a thief. It is a good idea to use a money belt or neck wallet.



## Medical Matters

All participants are required to provide us with a medical questionnaire filled out completely and accurately. For all those aged 65 years or over, a doctor's certificate clearing you for the trip is required. Please check with your doctor or medical centre whether you require any vaccinations or boosters.

### Medical Supplies

On our trips we carry a comprehensive medical kit. However, it is your responsibility to bring sufficient quantities of any specific medications you require and a small first aid kit for your own personal use. In addition we suggest that each passenger bring:

- Sun screen (water resistant variety at least SP15)
- Lip protectant
- Band-aid strips
- Insect repellent
- A mild anti-nausea drug if you are concerned about sea sickness

## Equipment & Clothing: What You Need to Bring

The list below should be used as a guide when packing. On the water you should carry a rain jacket and a light fleece each day in case of bad weather.

### Gear List

#### Essential Items:

The following checklist is a guideline for your trip. The dress code overall is casual but you may like to pack one set of smarter clothes for some dinners. Contact us if you have any questions.

- A wide brimmed hat for protection from the sun is essential. Visors are inadequate. A hat with a stiff brim that will hold rigid in a breeze, e.g. straw hat with a strap to put under your chin is good. A scarf made from a light material like silk to protect your neck can be useful too.
- Sun-glasses with a cord to prevent them from falling into the water. Side flaps are a good idea, in particular the type that can be added to conventional sun-glasses by slipping them onto the arms.
- Light weight rain jacket or spray jacket.
- One to two long sleeve lightweight synthetic shirts. This is highly recommended for sun protection while paddling. Cotton is not very suitable

for paddling as it gets stiff with salt and can irritate the skin. A lightweight capilene or polypropylene top may be suitable.

- Two or three T-shirts or short sleeved shirts.
- Two pairs of light-weight trousers.
- Two pairs of paddling shorts and swimwear.
- Light-weight fleece jacket (not a heavy jacket), i.e. Polartec 100 is sufficient, or a sweatshirt.
- One pair of comfortable hotel/town shoes and one pair of comfortable lightweight boots.
- Reef shoes for paddling or a good fitting pair of sports sandals that attach solidly.
- Lightweight socks.
- Kayak cag or paddling jacket is highly recommended.
- Toiletries.
- One pair of light thermal leggings.
- One or two 1-litre water bottles—the type used by cyclists are fine and inexpensive.
- A small dry bag is good for holding things like sun screen, glasses, water bottle, etc.
- Lightweight cycling gloves can ease blistering if you are not used to paddling.
- Good waterproof sun cream and lip balm.
- Small daypack.

**Optional items:**

- Camera. If your camera is not waterproof, bring a waterproof container .
- Power points require a plug with two round pins (these will fit in the three vertical round pin sockets seen in some hotels.) Voltage is 220V AC.
- Book.

## Delays or Problems

In case of last minute delays or problems, contact Southern Sea Ventures in Australia on +61 2 8901 3287. Your guides' contact number will be noted on your final itinerary.

**SOUTHERN SEA VENTURES**

HEAD OFFICE — SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

PO Box 641, St Ives, NSW 2075

Ph: (02) 8901 3287 Fx: (02) 8901 3297

International phone inquiries: 61 2 8901 3287.

[ssvtrips@southernseaventures.com](mailto:ssvtrips@southernseaventures.com)

[www.southernseaventures.com](http://www.southernseaventures.com)

MG 13/7/18