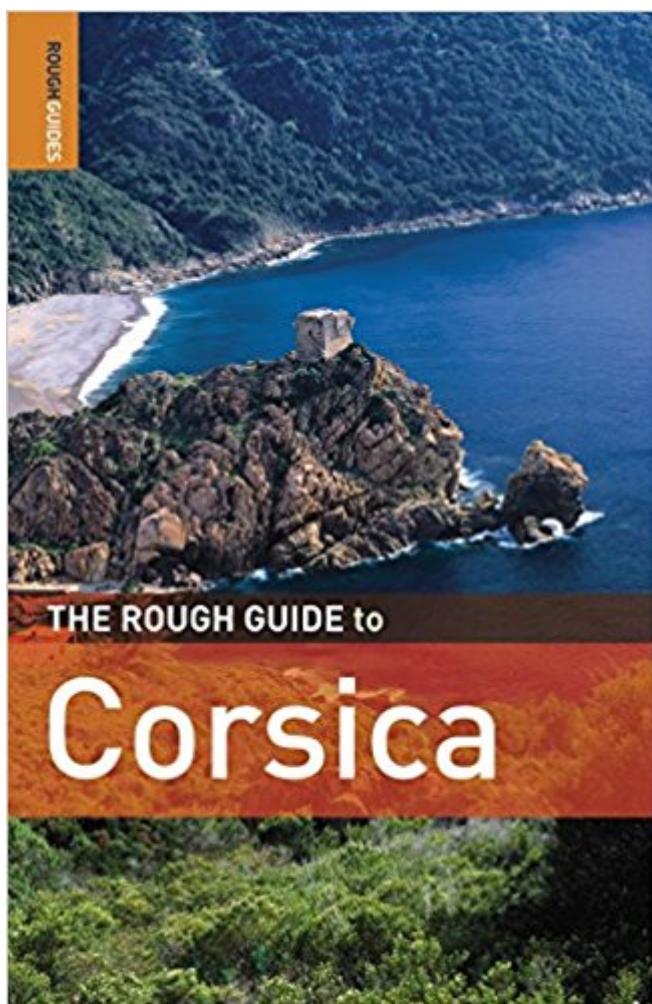


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The Rough Guide To Corsica 6 (Rough Guide Travel Guides)



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Customer Reviews

I bought this guide in the early fall of 2009, and took it with me to Corsica, where I spent a week split between Piana (near Porto, near les Calanches) and Erbalunga, near Bastia on Cap Course, in October 2009. The writer has a great depth of knowledge about the Island of Corsica, which I explored quite a bit in addition to having stayed in the two areas listed above. I didn't find any significant errors in the book and the information was very much up to date. Knowing nothing of Corsica, and never having been there before, I found the book to be a very good introduction to the island and it helped me very much in planning my trip. NO matter what sort of activity you plan, from cultural exploration up to and including long distance trekking, this book gives a lot of details and pointers that will help you to do whatever it is that you want to do on this island. I have to admit to some bewilderment at the review written earlier on this book. I never thought that the title "Rough Guide" indicated anything more than that it was published as a part of the "Rough Guide" travel book series, and never expected that it would be a guide to "roughing it" in Corsica. Perhaps the other reviewer was confused by the title. Finally, I do spend 2 months a year in France and I do speak French. I could easily have purchased a guidebook to Corsica in French, but decided in the end to buy this book, and I am not sorry that I did. It was a very good purchase and well worth 2x the purchase price.

Excellent and informative guide book

Interesting and informative even though now it's a bit dated. Easy to read with lots of information, pictures and maps.

I had forgotten that I do not like the Rough Guides' format. The print is small and crowded onto the pages, with very little evaluative material. One of the values of a guide book for me is some sort of opinions, a few recommendations, from which I can more easily gauge where I'd like to stay and what to see. Just having a bit more room between topics would have helped me. All descriptive makes my head spin and invariably leads me to the conclusion that I'd just as well not go. I wish Frommers' or Rick Steves would write a guide to Corsica.

My used copy came with a post-it note with a big smiley face and the comment that "this book went to Corsica". I looked at a few travel guides covering Corsica, and this is easily the best. It has a much better coverage of Corsican culture and history than the other books I have seen.

Abram writes, "...the GR20 should always be approached with respect," but shows to my reading and experience little respect for either the route or the fit English speakers who might want to trek it. The times estimated for each stage appear to be for either super goats, the legionnaires who race the route, or people with no pack on their backs. The stage splits, at the very least, are ridiculously off (and sometimes don't even add up) for anyone except people deeply accustomed to climbing up and down Corsican mountain terrain (scree, steeply inclined granite slabs, messy boulders, etc.), out for speed alone, never stopping to eat something, and carrying little to no pack weight. When Abram macho-ly writes with regard to the Cirque de Solitude that most people end up wondering what all the fuss is about... well: really? It's a pretty serious undertaking, particularly in early-mid season, when naïves still spot the Cirque. If you're not accustomed to using a chain to walk up or down vertical slabs (and maybe you ought to be for stage 4), the Cirque, for one of several tricky GR20 stretches, will strike you as something to fuss about, as it does "most people." Relying on this guide alone, you could get into serious trouble: if, as I and virtually everyone I witnessed did, you take an hour or two or longer than the times indicated in this book and leave one refuge for another late, thinking, for example, it will, as indicated, take you only 6.5 hours to get from Asinau to Usciolu or vice versa (stage 14), you could find yourself on either a sharp arête or very steep incline in the dark. Not good. No one on the GR20--French, Swiss, army, whatever--talks about it as dismissively as Abram too often does. If his description were published by a mountain trail running organization, it would make some sense. But this is a Rough Guide, not an alpine club pamphlet.

Last and most importantly, the GR20 section is missing vital altitude and topographical charts and maps that GR20 guides in every other language contain. Get the French IGN maps for the sections you want to do (at the very least so that you know what "steep" means in Abram parlance--the descriptions can be pretty, but hardly useful). And, if you're not fluent in French and thus unable to work with the excellent French guides, most definitely get another English language guide for the GR20, maybe Cicerone. But hey! If you're just chilling in Corsica, this book could serve you well!

For a "rough" guide, especially to a place as wild and rugged as Corsica, this guide book had little to offer. If you're interested in historic churches, this has plenty of advice, but if you're into hiking, biking, camping, etc., don't let the title fool you. For best outdoors results, if your French is up to it, the Guide Routard can't be beat. It has virtually every campground in the country, key if you're like me and are anti-itineraries.

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