RAILWAY ADVENTURES AND PTG TOURS PRESENT

Wonders of Sardinia and Corsica
By Rail, Road & Sea

WITH ANGELINA PONS
31ST AUGUST - 17TH SEPTEMBER 2020

• PALAU • SASSARI • ALGHERO • ARBATAX • CAGLIARI • PORTO VECCHIO • BASTIA • PISA •
INTRODUCTION

In the heart of the Mediterranean lie two fascinating islands, characterised by wild and mountainous scenery, multi-layered histories, rich cultures and a wonderful collection of extraordinary little railways. Heritage, narrow-gauge, local and private trains ply their way through these rugged landscapes, past hill-hugging mountain villages, along dramatic coasts and into historic character-filled cities. Come aboard this fascinating journey to discover what makes these central Mediterranean islands so unique. It was easy enough to build a standard gauge railway along the wide north-south valley of Sardinia, but the towns in the hills either side of it, or the ports and fishing villages, could only be reached by narrow-gauge feeder lines. Our tour of Sardinia gives you the chance to travel over almost every open railway line on the island, both standard and narrow-gauge, and includes the two new tramway systems.

Corsica, the fourth-largest island in the Mediterranean is also called “The island of beauty,” a veritable mountain rising out of the sea, an island blessed with a stunning contoured coastline, remote valleys and villages and a captivating cross island mountain railway. We end our adventure in Pisa, a town that draws its fame from an architectural project gone wrong, but now boasts a vibrant university scene dotted with Romanesque buildings and Gothic churches.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Travel on the picturesque Trenino Verde, or “Little Green Train”
- Embark on guided city tours in iconic cities, including Cagliari, Bastia and Pisa
- Explore Napoleon’s birthplace, Ajaccio
- Take the option to join railway enthusiast excursions or cultural excursions, including a visit to the ancient Roman town of Nora
- Enjoy comfortable coach transfers and luggage transport on main legs
- Multiple nights in 4- and 5-star, centrally located hotels
- Savour delicious welcome and farewell dinners with drinks included

Bastia

MEET YOUR TOUR LEADER

ANGELINA PONS (PTG TOURS)

Angelina is a native of Catalan. After living some years in England and Italy she is now based in Spain and has been retired for two months. She has recently worked as a barber shop and restaurant owner and is our tour manager in Italian- and Spanish-speaking countries, as well as our Sardinian and Corsican adventure.
WHY TRAVEL WITH US

Railway Adventures offers a truly unique perspective on some of the world’s most spectacular holiday destinations, with the assurance that the journey is just as magical and unforgettable as what is discovered at the end of the line.

WITH US, YOU CAN CONFIDENTLY EXPECT:

- **Small group sizes** — a small number of passengers per trip guarantees an intimate experience with less time spent queuing, more time with your guide, and better access to sightseeing destinations.

- **Unique itineraries** — each itinerary has been meticulously developed by a team with great cultural awareness and many years’ knowledge of each destination. You are guaranteed to experience the best that each destination has to offer.

- **Authentic local experiences** — whether it’s a little-known yet impressive steam railway, a small boutique hotel or an authentic restaurant, we know that you will experience something special on our tours.

- **Expert local guides and local operators** — we employ local guides to share their passion and knowledge of the places they call home, while our partners on the ground offer us support and backup all the way.

- **Customer satisfaction** — our testimonials speak for themselves. Thousands have travelled with us over the years and many come back year after year, often bringing friends along! On our customer satisfaction ratings over 97% would recommend us to others and/or travel with us again.

- **Fully-escorted** — our team of tour leaders is experienced and capable, entertaining and considerate, and together with our local guides, have your needs well covered. They will help with everything along the way, giving you the peace of mind you need to soak up your surroundings. And you’ll find them jolly good company too!
Day 1 • Monday 31 August: ARRIVE OLBIA, SARDINIA
Arrive in Sardinia; the oldest landmass in Europe. Transfer by road in our luxury bus and settle into our centrally located hotel in Palau, a well-to-do resort with lively streets lined with surfing shops, boutiques, bars and restaurants.
Overnight: Hotel Palau or similar

Day 2 • Tuesday 1 September: PALAU
Enjoy a free day to relax by the sea or enjoy any of the many natural attractions around Palau, including La Maddalena or Capo d’Orso. Later on, we’ll enjoy a special dinner with the whole group.
Overnight: Hotel Palau or similar (B, D)

Day 3 • Wednesday 2 September: PALAU – SASSARI
Palau’s surrounding coast is famous for its intriguing, weather-beaten rocks, some of which we’ll view from our narrow-gauge, loco-hauled and chartered passenger train, the “Trenino Verde.” We travel from Palau to the little town of Tempio Pausania, where we’ll enjoy free time for lunch by the Nuraghe Majori. Following this, we’ll board our train for a trip to Sassari, Sardinia’s second-largest city and a bustling university town. Settle into your hotel, located in the heart of the city, and enjoy the rest of the evening at leisure.
Overnight: Hotel Vittorio Emanuele, Sassari (B)

Day 4 • Thursday 3 September: SASSARI – ALGHERO
Today our train enthusiasts will have the option to visit the Sassari workshop and enjoy some free time to ride the Sassari tram system end-to-end. You can also travel the lines to Porto Torres Marittima and the Sassari to Sorso narrow-gauge branch. The cultural group can choose to join a professional guide for a trip to Santissima Trinità di Sarcargia, the most important Romanesque site on the island, dating back to 1116. We’ll re-group in Sassari for a two-hour guided city tour and free time for lunch. In the afternoon we’ll travel by rail along the branch line to Alghero, one of Sardinia’s most beautiful medieval cities, and the main resort in the northwest. The city boasts a proud and independent spirit, and its historic centre is a great place to relax and explore with a multitude of charming restaurants, bars, shops and a thriving nightlife. There is also an unmistakable Spanish atmosphere in this quaint town, a trace of the city’s rich past.
Overnight: Hotel Alma di Alghero, Alghero (B)

Day 5 • Friday 4 September: ALGHERO
Enjoy a free day today. You might like to relax by the sea, pay a visit to visit Alghero’s old town, or explore some of its natural attractions, including the Grotta di Nettuno.
Overnight: Hotel Alma di Alghero (B)

Day 6 • Saturday 5 September: ALGHERO – ARBATAX
This morning we’ll transfer by coach southwards along the spectacular coastal road to Bosa Marina, a quaint town dominated by an imposing medieval castle. This is the departure point for our loco-hauled, narrow-gauge charter train, travelling along the Bosa line to Sindia. The journey begins virtually “on the level” along the coast before twisting and turning for a considerable distance to gain height, showcasing splendid views of the coast all the while. On arrival in Sindia we’ll continue by coach to Macomer, where we’ll enjoy a local lunch, before boarding a chartered train to Nuoro, the largest city in the interior of the island. For our final leg of our journey today we’ll travel by coach to Arbatax, stopping to visit the Arbatax Red Rocks along the way.
Overnight: Hotel La Bitta, Arbatax, (B, L)

Day 7 • Sunday 6 September: ARBATAX – MANDAS – CAGLIARI
During recent years the Trenino Verde, or “Little Green Train” line from Arbatax to Mandas has only been accessible on certain sections due to refurbishment. We’ll travel the spectacular section from Arbatax to Cairo (we will travel on another section tomorrow), enjoying the pristine and unique scenery along the way. We will have a delicious lunch at Turri and a guided tour in Giara Park, the realm of the last wild horses in Europe. We return to Arbatax for the night.
Overnight: Hotel La Bitta, Arbatax, (B, L)

Day 8 • Monday 7 September: ARBATAX – MANDAS – CAGLIARI
After breakfast we’ll be able to ride on another fine section of the Arbatax to Mandas line. Our train will take us from Seui to Mandas. We’ll continue to Cagliari by bus and check in our hotel for the next three nights.
The capital city of Sardinia for over 2,000 years, Cagliari is a web of golden-hued palazzi, domes and elegant arcades. As you roam through the city you will find its prosperous history spelled out in its Roman ruins, museums, churches and galleries. Today it has a bustling port and a large student population, grand boulevards, neo-Gothic palaces and art-nouveau cafés.
Overnight: Hotel Regina Margherita, Cagliari (B)

Day 9 • Tuesday 8 September: CAGLIARI
There are two railway museums in Cagliari, the FdS and FS, however sadly the FdS (narrow gauge) museum is closed to the public due to serious damage. We therefore start today with a visit to the FS (or standard gauge) museum and afterwards ride the FS lines in the area, using service trains Cagliari – Carbonia – Villamassargia – Iglesias - Cagliari. We arrive back at Cagliari station in time to join the guided city tour.
The Culture group in the morning will visit the archaeological site of Nora, 40 kilometres from Cagliari. Nora is an ancient Roman town located on a peninsula and the ruins function as an open-air museum with mosaics and the remains of the amphitheatre and several buildings. We return to Cagliari for lunch and then a guided tour of the old city with a professional local guide.

Overnight: Hotel Regina Margherita, Cagliari (B, D)

Day 10 • Wednesday 9 September: CAGLIARI
After breakfast, our bus takes us to Mandas where we board a diesel loco hauled train. We take the old narrow-gauge line which used to stretch as far north as Sorgono. Nowadays we can only go as far as Lagona as beyond there the line is completely abandoned. We have time to enjoy lunch, so we have arranged a full rural meal with the typical local dishes at Lagona. We return on our train to Mandas, take our bus to Dolianova from where we take a service train to Cagliari Montserratino then our bus to the hotel. Enthusiasts have the option to ride the new tram system on their own.

Overnight: Hotel Regina Margherita, Cagliari (B, L)

Day 11 • Thursday 10 September: CAGLIARI – PORTO VECCHIO
We take the FS service train from Cagliari to Golfo Aranci, a four-hour ride from the south to the north of the island, then take a bus up the coast to Santa Teresa di Gallura, taking the ferry across the Bocche di Bonifacio strait to the French island of Corsica. Crossing time is 50 minutes. Our ferry arrives in Bonifacio and we stop for a guided tour of the old town built on a promontory of white rocks. Before our coach takes us to Porto-Vecchio, where you’ll find pure white sands lapped by brilliant turquoise water. The busy beaches are the top attraction in this port town, which caters to the lively tourist trade. Sample fresh seafood in the local restaurants.

Overnight: Hotel tba, Porto Vecchio (B)

Day 12 • Friday 11 September: PORTO VECCHIO – BASTIA
Porto-Vecchio was once the terminus station of a railway line which ran down the east coast of Corsica. Sadly, it closed in 1943 due to the damage suffered in the Second World War when the retreating German army blew up eighteen bridges and destroyed the rolling stock. Before we leave, we will seek out the old station building which still survives before we head up the coast, close to the route of the old railway to Bastia the principal port of the island. Enroute we will stop to see a few other remnants of the old line. In Bastia the city centre is mainly composed of the “Citadelle”, the stronghold, also called Terra-Nova, the Genoese Governor’s Palace, the old port and its popular quarter and the market plaza. We stay in Bastia for the next 4 nights.

Overnight: Port Toga Hotel, Bastia (B)

Day 13 • Saturday 12 September: BASTIA
In the morning we have a guided tour of old Bastia. The afternoon is free.

Overnight: Port Toga Hotel, Bastia (B)

Day 14 • Sunday 13 September: BASTIA – CALVI – BASTIA
Today we travel by train to Calvi, so covering the upper branch of the Corsica railway. From Ponte Leccia the train goes up a dry and uninhabited valley but soon we have a view of the sea in the distance and before long we are travelling alongside the sea stopping at seaside villages. In Calvi we have a guided tour of the city, built on a promontory in a beautiful bay. We have time for a lunch break before taking our charter bus back to Bastia through the Balagna which is considered to be the most pleasant region of the island. Those who want to can of course return to Bastia by rail.

Overnight: Port Toga Hotel, Bastia (B)

Day 15 • Monday 14 September: BASTIA – AJACCIO – BASTIA
Today we travel by service train from Bastia to Ajaccio, the Corsican capital city. The train crosses the island, winding round the mountains, crossing some superb bridges and passing through magnificent forest before reaching the tropical atmosphere of the Gulf of Ajaccio, one of the most beautiful locations in Corsica. Leaving Bastia at 08.55 we arrive in Ajaccio in time for lunch and a free afternoon exploring this pretty town before we return to Bastia by rail.

Overnight: Port Toga Hotel, Bastia (B)

Day 16 • Tuesday 15 September: BASTIA – PISA
This morning we take the ferry from Bastia, for a four-hour crossing, to the Italian mainland port to Livorno. From Livorno we catch a train up the coast to the city of Pisa. Free time to relax.

Overnight: Hotel Pisa Tower, Pisa (B)

Day 17 • Wednesday 16 September: PISA
Pisa straddles the River Arno just before it empties into the Tyrrenian Sea. Although known worldwide for its Leaning Tower, the city of over 90,000 residents contains more than 20 other historic churches, several medieval palaces and various bridges across the River Arno. Much of the city’s architecture was financed from its history as one of the Italian maritime republics. We have a guided tour of the main sites in the morning leaving the afternoon free for your own exploration.

Overnight: Hotel Pisa Tower, Pisa (B)

Day 18 • Thursday 17 September: PISA – DEPART
Today we say farewell. Following breakfast this morning, we check out and transfer to the airport for flights home or onward to other travels.
WHAT’S INCLUDED

• 17 nights’ accommodation in a mix of modern and boutique hotels/motels
• Daily breakfast at hotels, two lunches and two dinners
• Arrival transfer from Olbia airport to Palau hotel on day 1
• Chartered private coach
• Comprehensive sightseeing with your expert tour leader
• All excursions and entrance fees to attractions, as listed in the itinerary

WHAT WE DON’T INCLUDE

• Flights
• Airport transfers on departure
• Meals and services not mentioned in the itinerary
• All other personal expenses, such as drinks, phone calls, laundry services and camera fees where applicable
• Excursions listed as optional and extra in the itinerary
• Tipping and gratuities

FITNESS RATING

Two ‘Locos’ - fitness rating
SOME PLACES YOU’LL STAY

Hand-picked hotels and resorts based on location, customer feedback, value and atmosphere.

Hotel Pisa Tower

Hotel La Bitta, Arbatax

Hotel Alma Di Alghero

Hotel Regina Margherita, Cagliari

HOW TO BOOK
Download a booking form from our website and follow the easy steps to getting on board. Alternatively, contact us on 1300 800 977 or info@railwayadventures.com if you’d prefer a form be sent to you. Complete the form and submit it, along with your $1000 pp deposit to secure your place on the tour.

DETAILS SUBJECT TO CHANGE
We endeavour to have all the details of our tours correct at the time of printing. However, sometimes factors beyond our control may affect the final inclusions and prices. These factors may include, but not be limited to: significant fluctuations in currency exchange rates, individual hotel/restaurant decisions that may affect bookings; weather events forcing a change of itinerary; unexpected trackwork on rail lines, unexpected closure of site attractions and so forth. Therefore, items mentioned in the brochure such as quoted prices, hotels and inclusions are subject to change. If a change is imposed on us, we will endeavour to ensure the substitute is of the same quality that you’ve paid for.

TOUR PACE / LEVEL OF FITNESS:
Our itineraries are designed to make the most of each destination, so a reasonable amount of activity is built into most days, which is why we call them adventures. Our philosophy is to offer you the best experience possible, while leaving you, our guest, the flexibility to pace yourself and choose how much or how little you want to do. Each Railway Adventures tour incorporates periods of free time for your own exploration and relaxation.

While you don’t need to be a ‘gym junkie’, a reasonable level of fitness is required for most of our tours. The ability to manage your own luggage, get on and off all manner of trains and coaches, walk for extended periods, stand comfortably, and climb steps and stairs will ensure you get the maximum enjoyment from your adventure.

ADDITIONAL TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS AND INSURANCE
In addition to assisting with flight suggestions and bookings, we can also give you some ideas of what you could do before and after your Railway Adventure. We can also organise your all-important Travel Insurance for you. Call our office on 1300 800 977 if you would like to discuss options.

SUGGESTED FLIGHTS
We have suggested flights for this itinerary from our preferred airline partners, depending on your departure point from Australia, any preferred stopovers en route and/or your planned pre- and post-tour activities. Contact 1300 800 977 to discuss your options.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS
For more information on factors such as travel insurance requirements, fitness levels, fees and charges, tour cancellations, payment schedules and so on, please refer to our Terms and Conditions, which accompany the booking form. They can also be found on our website.

PRICE
Per person twin share.................................. $5,795
Single supplement........................................ $1,198
Deposit (per person)............................... $1,000 at time of booking
Final payment due by......................... 30th June 2020
THE RAILWAY ADVENTURES STORY

Railway Adventures was launched in 2012 by well-known Australian TV personality and self-confessed rail fan, Scott McGregor. A lifelong passion for travel has taken Scott to scores of countries and his preference for rail has seen him exploring many of the world’s great train journeys, confirming his belief that the most relaxing, romantic and engaging way to see a country is by rail. He even has his own life-sized, fully restored opulent train accommodation atop the Great Dividing Range near Mudgee, offering guests a rare and special bush retreat experience.

Since 2012 Railway Adventures has thrilled and delighted more than 1200 travellers on over 100 tours from Sweden to Sri Lanka, Tasmania to Transylvania, Britain to Burma, Venice to Vietnam and all manner of shorter adventures in our own wonderful country. Scott’s numerous rail-themed TV documentaries, his ongoing involvement in rail heritage and his extensive connections with private train owners around the world, guarantee that every Railway Adventures tour is exclusive, entertaining and authentic.

MEET OUR TRAVEL PARTNERS

“PTG tours: unique holidays since 1998”- PTG Tours have an unrivalled reputation as one of the world’s leading companies offering rail-based holidays full of Culture and Heritage. Their customers travel with them time and time again, knowing that they will have a “holiday of a lifetime” every time. For a number of years now Railway Adventures has partnered with PTG tours on successful tours to Cuba, Alaska and Southern France. 2020 will see Railway Adventures and PTG expanding their collaboration with several new destinations including the Western USA, a repeat of the popular Southern France tour and now this revealing and unusual adventure to Sardinia and Corsica.

YOUR TRAVEL AGENT

1300 800 977  railwayadventures.com

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