



Life in the French Foreign Legion: How to Join and What to Expect When You Get There

Evan McGorman

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Forget all your preconceptions about the French Foreign Legion. Many of the legends you grew up with no longer apply, so whatever you've heard probably does not reflect the reality of service today. Evan McGorman explains in detail how to apply to get into this elite corps, what to expect if accepted, and how to make the most of the experience.

Life in the French Foreign Legion: How to Join and What to Expect When You Get There Details

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Tom says

Evan McGorman spent 5 years with the French Foreign Legion. He had researched this military unit extensively and yet when he enlisted it was not exactly what he expected.

His book tells how to join and what to expect, as the title indicates. But he adds the daily, mundane, tidbits the one can expect. You will learn where to join, what to pack, what you can expect to be taken from you. He details the basic training and goes through the rank structure and the makeup of the various divisions within the Legion.

Don't expect Beau Geust because you will not get it.

BT Yates says

Enticing read

Written as a "How To" mingled with a collection of military stories, this book is directed to the few that choose to wander off in search of excitement under a kepi blanc.

Bukhari says

A very eye-opening first-hand experience of an American's five years in the French Légion Etrangère (FFL). He recounts the process of joining in, the initial probation, training period, assignation into a regiment, and overseas posting. I find it to be honest, very informative (one of their main songs is about blood sausage which they sing before eating every day), humorous and rather detailed. The author compares with his experience in the army of his country, and finds several points that he has a hard time dealing with in the FFL. This was all based on experience in the early 90s so things might have changed then. Even if you're not familiar with military jargon, he keeps it simple and gives several tips for those wanting to join or even desert once they're in (apparently it's a recurrent problem in the FFL). He tells it how he sees it, often portraying the harsh reality on an otherwise rosy and pristine picture many people have of the French Foreign Legion.

Jim says

Tres bien!

The author just does an outstanding job. I had a friend who tried and failed to join the legion in the mid 90's. He should be glad he failed, he would never have made it. This book covers everything in outstanding detail. If you have any interest in the legion, this is a must read.

Brian Leet says

Easy to read and comprehend. Once you start reading, it is hard to put down this book.

This is definitely in the list of required reading for anyone interested in the FFL or thinking about the joining the FFL. McGorman also included his experience as an UN peacekeeper in Yugoslavia and in Africa; primarily Chad and Djibouti.

Michael Romo says

McGorman describes how to join the Legion and what you can expect when you join. Clearly, the Legion is not a picnic nor is it for the faint-hearted!

Noah says

Knowing little about the FFL, curiosity pulled me to this book and I couldn't have found a better initiation into the world. Having been in the Legion, McGorman gives you a blunt, informative, and equally entertaining layout of what to expect if you're even considering joining.

And per his advice, I think I'll not join.

Tyler says

As someone who is strongly considering joining the Legion, I found this book very helpful, enlightening, and entertaining to read. You follow the author from his initial consideration to join at home, until some time after he left his service after his initial 5 year contract.

The book is filled with adventure and grueling misadventure from the dreaded corvée (chores), to being stranded in the deserts of Africa, to coming under attack during his time in Sarajevo. The author seems very trustworthy, in that he doesn't make unbelievable claims and seems very genuine about his time spent in the Legion and how he feels about his service there.

He also, perhaps, most importantly, takes the time to tell you everything the hopeful seeking to join the Legion would want, or need to know, and even provides some tips on how to keep in line and enjoy yourself.

I would recommend this book to anyone interested in joining the Legion, or anyone who is simply curious about how the Legion operates, though some practices may be outdated since the author's time spent there.

Overall, I found it hard to put down (Though I was often forced to). Very enjoyable and I'm very grateful that the author took the time to write down his experiences and give insight and advice to those considering.

Derek Perumeau says

What a great book! Author had a nice style that made it easy to read and very enjoyable. Plus you can clearly see the author's point: DO NOT join the French Foreign Legion. It was nice to have someone pull back the curtain and give you a look at what goes on rather than just another history book. And after reading this I'd also want to give up french fries, french toast, french literature . . . you get the point. It seems more like daycare for soldiers than actual military life: endless duties (based on the adage "idle hands are the devil's workshop" that would infuriate even the Amish) broken up by brief moments of military training. Plus there are also inane french customs that would foster a lot of *ennui* and *ressentiment*. Just stay home and play Memoir '44 or Call of Duty instead.

Robert says

Five stars for delivering exactly what is promised: an instruction manual on joining and living in the FFL. The only book of its kind. Includes desertion tips in case you change your mind.

John says

Hey, you never know.

Jim says

Nothing but informative, not for someone looking for endless adventure and firefights however. This is very much a manual for the perspective volunteer, I found it very useful
