‘A respected, safety-conscious company, specialising in rides around the world’

The Telegraph

Guide to Travel on Horseback
311 rides in 59 countries

For enquiries or to book...

Email us at ride@unicorntrails.com
Or call
UK +44 (0)1767 600606
Sweden +46 (0)708 435282
USA/Canada 1-437-371-282 or 1-888-420-0964

or visit us at www.unicorntrails.com
Explore the World on Horseback with us

Who has not dreamed of leaving behind the tedious routine of life, the boredom of a job, the constraints of a daily routine. Or wished to rediscover a simpler way of life, in harmony with nature, in rhythm with the world around us, to breathe air that is clean and free, meet people from other cultures and explore other shores. Or even take a complete break from life to a simpler way of living. These adventures, where horses become your passport to freedom and discovery, are a good start to realising this dream. In this brochure the horse opens the door to freedom and carries you around the world.

The destinations and itineraries are carefully chosen and, in each instance, offer a compelling reason to travel on horseback. Some of the places we ride are simply inaccessible in any other way – there is no other practical way of crossing the Himalayas; for other destinations there is such a strong horse culture that riding is the only real way to immerse and gain admission – take the gaucho and cowboy traditions; sometimes being on horseback contributes immeasurably to the experience of nature such as on a horseback safari. Practically travelling on horseback not only allows travellers to cover a larger distance each day than walking but also spend more time enjoying the scenery and surroundings from the elevated saddle height as locally trained horses take care of negotiating the trail safely. Riding becomes a way to travel to places off the beaten track not available to other travellers and meet people one could not encounter in any other way.

Many of our programmes are suitable for travellers who have never ridden before. If you have a sense of adventure, some outdoor experience, and a reasonable sense of balance your carefully chosen local mount will negotiate the trail and take care of you. For those wishing to learn to ride we offer ideal places and different methods to learn this surprisingly accessible sport: warm, sunny, friendly and with willing and reliable horses in excellent condition.

For riders we offer the best selection of riding programmes on well schooled healthy horses adapted to local conditions in the most beautiful locations worldwide. There is something for every rider: from classical dressage in Portugal to fast riding on warm-blooded Marwari horses in India. Riders are usually separated in groups so they can ride with like-minded people at a pace suitable for their ability and wishes. In this brochure you will find excellent riding and cultural experiences to suit. We invite you into the very special world of travelling on horseback.

Our Experience & Professionalism

• Our local partners are selected for the quality of their horses, guides and logistics
• We pay close attention to ensuring a riders equestrian skills match those required by the holiday
• Carefully planned routes and itineraries to take in all the highlights which are improved every year
• A fair price reflecting the quality of service and incorporating a fair rate of pay for our local partners
• Financial security - your money is completely secure as we are fully insured and licensed, member of industry associations ATOL, ABTA and ABTOT and comply with all relevant UK and EU laws
• We offer a complete travel service including booking flights, transfers, additional accommodation and non-riding extensions
• 24hr phone backup in case of problems

Our History & Philosophy

Unicorn Trails was born in 1998 after veterinary surgeon Wendy Hofstee returned from four months riding in the Ecuadorian Andes with two friends.

It soon became apparent that there would be no returning to a regular job, even one as interesting as veterinary, and she created Unicorn trails to continue and share her passion for travel and exploration. From this start Unicorn Trails has pioneered horseback adventures all over world. Wendy’s sense of adventure, depth of knowledge and love of animals underpins the philosophy of Unicorn Trails today and we have a dedicated team as enthusiastic as our founder ready to share their knowledge.

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CO of Chino Valley

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"I find Unicorn really take the time to understand what we are looking for and provide a good range of options for us to choose from based on what we are looking for. We always 'shop around' when booking a holiday and keep coming back to Unicorn."

MC of Dublin

Each horse culture offers its own unique methods and perspectives, from the rope bits used by the Oromos of the Ethiopian Highlands to riding only stallions in North Africa. By exploring and learning we broaden our view of the world. In respecting other cultures we can retain the best and export new ideas in turn. A rich exchange ensues very unlike the regular voyeuristic tourism.

Come with us to ride the horses of 5 continents, meet their owners, riders and breeders, find out how they see the world, how horses shape their lives and their methods of training, riding and breeding.

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A Team of Riders & Travellers

The Unicorn Trails team is composed of experienced rider-travellers who are experts in the selection of good horses and partners in each country, creating exciting itineraries and using this knowledge to plan the perfect trip for you. Meet the team and some of their favourite destinations...

Wendy Hofstee
While a safari in Botswana is impossible to dislodge from the top of my list, this year my latest favourite addition was Japan: not for the fairly standard riding but for the completely amazing experience of being invited into Japanese lives by riders both in Hokkaido and Kyushu Islands. Outrageously expensive but impossible to recreate in any other way.

Mary Wright
I have ridden in many incredible places all over the world and made numerous friends along the way. Some of my favourites are Ireland, South Africa, Argentina, Jordan, Botswana, Namibia and Italy.

Rachel Presnail
Makgadikgadi salt pans – vast, open, desert-like terrain, fast riding on outstanding horses and loads of fascinating game! Riding has allowed me to experience the cultures and customs of local people around the world, and never have I felt as welcomed into a community as I was in Cuba.

Jo Bambra
Since joining Unicorn Trails, I have certainly broadened my horse-riding horizons and have visited some truly spectacular rides. My favourite so far must be the beautiful Tuscan Hills... and of course the fine wine that must be sampled after a day in the saddle!!

Bridget Walker
Although not a rider or big horse fan, Bridget recently enjoyed spending a few days in Andalusia with one of our partners, she even got close to a horse!!

Gill Hawkins
Gill is a new recruit to Unicorn Trails - she loves riding and has two of her own horses. She is very much looking forward to planning her first riding holiday, but with so much choice she is finding it hard to narrow it down! A safari is high on the Wish List...

David Smith
My best adventure by far was seven days spent crossing the highest pass in the Andes from Chile to Argentina, which can only be achieved with horses. Exploring the Yukon wilderness on a pack trip this summer comes a close second.

Sarah King
My favourite ride has to be Wadi Rum - the fast riding on fit Arabs balanced by unequalled peace and tranquility makes for priceless memories. There is something very special about the desert and Petra is breathtaking.

Sarah McLaughlin
Riding the responsive Lusitano stallions in Golega, Portugal was a wonderful experience. These horses are trained to advanced level at dressage and make your average enthusiast look as good as Charlotte Dujardin!

Sarah Glogowska
Spending time with the Barb Arab horses in Morocco was a highlight for Aleks who used to ride and compete in her home country of Poland.

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Anyone Can Learn to Ride

Standard
Learn to ride English style, the most flexible riding style allowing you to move onto dressage, jumping and other disciplines easily. This is also an ideal base for other riding styles such as Spanish or Western Riding or sports such as polo.

Western Style
Riding western is often described like learning to drive an automatic: easier to learn with a lot of possibilities, an ideal way to explore riding outdoors. Comfortable western saddles are safe and ideal for long hours.

Alternative Methods / Just Do It!
One can also “learn by doing”, riding out in nature on a co-operative horse with tips given by your guide. Ideal for men learning to ride!

Different Ways to Enjoy Horses

Gaited Horses
Many breeds have the ability to perform one or two gait other than the usual walk, trot, canter and gallop. These gaits are usually fast and comfortable making it easy to cover ground without jarring. For example, Icelandics have a tol and Peruvian Pasos have a paso llano gait.

Drifting
Controlling a horse and carriage with the reins only is a special challenge for beginners, coach drivers with experience or those looking for a change from the saddle.

Riding and Other Interests

Enjoy more than only riding on your holiday, include activities of interest to you and your travelling companions

Tips for Travel on Horseback

Traveling on horseback is a lot of fun and it helps to be correctly prepared. Here are a few tips to help you make the most of your riding holiday.

Equipment for the rider

Footwear
Walking riding boots with a heel and some grip on the sole, along with a set of light half leg chaps are perfectly suited to most situations. Both Ariat and Mountain Horse make good riding/walking boots. Traditional riding boots with smooth soles should be reserved for arena work and dressage training.

Riding Helmet
This is highly recommended and, in some cases, compulsory. Many locations offer a good selection however, if possible, we recommend you take your own. It will be perfectly comfortable and you know its history. Look for a light weight vented helmet with a minimum standard of EN1384 (Europe), the Kitemark (Britain) or SEI quality mark (USA). Covers with a wide brim can be bought for protective helmets and are recommended for sunny conditions.

Waterproofs
We always recommend taking a water and wind proof jacket on all riding holidays. Only those totally impervious to water such as marine waxed jackets, Barbour or Gore-tex are suitable. For certain destinations waterproof over trousers are also recommended. Ponchos are not suitable as they flap and can scare the horses. Always dissuade to put on your waterproof clothing if you do not know your horse well, check with your guide if you are unsure how your horse will react.

Riding Trousers
Jodhpurs, riding breeches or trousers without inside seams are suitable for English style riding. For western style riding stays jeans are the norm.

Saddle bags
These are usually provided by our local teams and fixed to the saddle. They can be used to carry small items, water bottles and rainwear. If you provide your own choose soft material, lightweight and waterproof. Strong laces to attach warm clothing to saddles are also extremely useful to bring along.

Camera Equipment
Bring the smallest and most lightweight equipment for the job. Secure it to the front of your saddle protected by rigid foam or recombine inside a waterproof casing.

Camping
Bad equipment can ruin the best camping trip. Take a sleeping bag suitable for -5C to -10C in a waterproof cover, a fleece sleeping bag liner and if necessary a high tech lightweight camping mattress for comfortable nights. Don’t forget a torch. Wet wipes are unmissable but do take a waste bag and dispose of them responsibly.

Environment
Choose a dynamo torch if possible over disposable batteries, take nature friendly soaps and shampoos to protect rivers, use solar chargers for camera equipment where possible.

Before your trip

Holiday Insurance
When booking your holiday, protecting yourself is important, once you leave the UK the free Health Service you receive will stop, if you travel without insurance and suffer from an accident or injury there is a possibility of a large bill for treatment. Travel Insurance not only covers medical costs but also provides additional covers for cancelled holidays, delays, lost luggage, etc. Cover may also be considered for pre-existing medical conditions.

Cover should cover the type of riding you will be doing and can be arranged based on your own individual requirements: individual traveller, couple, family and group cover for Single trips, Annual multi-trip or even Long Stay trips.

Fitness
Maintain your physical and riding fitness. If you are not a regular rider we recommend spending at least 8 hours in the saddle in the 2 weeks before your holiday with at least one ride of a continuous 4 hours the week before departure. Seat savers are invaluable to irregular or novice riders - the best ones are made of memory foam with a suede covering. Alternatively schedule a short break riding holiday in the weeks before you head off.

During your trip

Remember that your local horses, while they may not look like your horses at home, are perfectly adapted to their environment. In many areas you will encounter different customs such as riding horses unhod, cantering on ground you may not at home or allowing foals to accompany ridden mares. In addition different equipment - curb bits in western riding, rope bits in Ethiopia - and different riding styles - loose rein western riding - may be customary.

Try to approach these differences with interest and respect as this is part of your trip. Be prepared to adapt your riding to suit local conditions. Riding schools may disagree but we maintain there is a huge amount of equestrian tradition and expertise in the world we can learn from and it is a privilege to be able to exchange ideas on an equal basis with other horsemen and women worldwide.

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10 Tips for taking photos from Horseback

These come from Shawn Hamilton, a professional equine photographer who has ridden all over the world in her quest for the perfect picture as well as covering many competitions to Olympic level. Shawn also runs some photography special rides, so if you have ever wanted to come back with better pictures from a riding holiday, why not join her on the next photography ride?

It is great to be able to take photos while you are in the saddle but there are a few precautionary safety tips to follow.

Safety First

1. Always have at least one hand on the reins - never drop the reins to take a photo. The horse may put his head down leaving you with zero control.
2. If you have a longer camera strap put it over your neck so that if the horse does spook you will have both hands to control the horse. If it is a small camera make sure you at least have a strap that will fit over your wrist. This way you will not drop the camera when it is necessary to have both hands on the reins.
3. Use only reins that are tied at the end so you can slip your hand(s) through to make sure you never lose them. If they are not long enough, ask for, or bring, a short piece of leather, string or lace to attach to the end to make them long enough.
4. Ask the outfitter or another rider to hold your horse while you shoot.

For Sharp Photos

5. Your horse is never really standing perfectly still so you will need to use a fast shutter speed. A 500th of a second or faster will be necessary, especially if you are shooting other riders who are moving which may require you to use the ISO.
6. Clean your lenses and sensor(s) regularly between rides as dust will affect your images.
7. Charge your batteries every night and have extras on hand. Be aware of different electrical plugs and voltages for your battery chargers.
8. Make sure you have empty cards, enough room on your card or extra cards so you not fill everything up on the first few days.
9. Protect your equipment by having a well cushioned bag to put your camera in so it to avoid it jiggling around all day.
10. Protect your equipment from the elements. Store your camera in a place that is relatively the same temperature as the outdoors to avoid condensation.

 Responsible Travel

Here at Unicorn responsible travel is a strongly held passion of all the staff. We encourage our explorers to travel with sensitivity and minimal impact and here’s just a small taster of what we believe and what we do.

The preservation of the natural environment and respect of local communities

- Leave only footprints behind! We’ll let you know what can be bought or discarded in the various destinations e.g. camera batteries or medicines
- Respect for local customs. Always keeping an open mind and an awareness of different dress codes is one example.
- An understanding of the value of money, goods and food in each destination. Our knowledge means we can provide accurate guidelines on bargaining and appropriate tipping.

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Riding the Horse
Breeds of the World

On a riding holiday you will almost always ride a local breed of horses. Not only are they the best adapted to the terrain and conditions, but they will be a link to the culture and traditions of the local horsemens and women. Below are some of the breeds and countries you can ride them in represented in this catalogue. Challenge yourself and see how many of the countries and breeds below you can tick off!

- **East Bulgarian** (Bulgaria)
- **Lippizaner** (Croatia & Eastern Europe)
- **Oromo/Abyssianian** (Ethiopia)
- **Selle Francais** (France)
- **Anglo Arab** (France and all over)
- **Kisberi** (Hungary)
- **Icelandic** (Iceland/Scandinavia)
- **Spiti** (India Ladakh)
- **Marwari** (India Rajasthan)
- **Connemara** (Ireland)
- **Irish Draft** (Ireland)
- **Maremma** (Italy)
- **Donskaya** (Kyrgyzstan, Russia)
- **Kyrgyz** (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan)
- **Basuttho** (Lesotho)
- **Mongol** (Mongolia)
- **Barb** (Morocco)
- **Fjord** (Norway)
- **Peruvian Paso** (Peru)
- **Silesian** (Poland)
- **Lusitano** (Portugal)
- **Huzul** (Romania)
- **Semigreu** (Romania)
- **Otrov** (Russia)
- **Boerperd** (South Africa)
- **Criollo** (South America: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Uruguay, Ecuador)
- **Andalasian/PRE** (Spain)
- **Tibetan** (Tibet)
- **Welsh** (UK)
- **Appaloosa** (USA)
- **Mustang** (USA)
- **Paint** (USA)
- **Arab** (Worldwide)
- **Thoroughbred** (Worldwide)

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Use these keys to select your perfect holiday. Our website offers further tools to help you choose: ride reviews from people who have been there, detailed day by day itineraries, an extensive ride finder and up to date searches by availability.

Even better, call, wechat or email the friendly and knowledgeable travel advisor team at Unicorn Trails to choose and plan your holiday.

**Riding Experience**
For optimal enjoyment of your riding holiday it is imperative to give us complete and up to date information about your riding experience and expectations. A multi-day trail on horseback and a dressage holiday will make different demands of the rider. See below to work out your riding ability, if in doubt, there is no substitute for talking it over with one of our experienced travel advisors either by telephone or on our wechat.

**Riding Ability**

Each ride has a Unicorn symbol indicating which riding level they are suitable for.

- **Level 1** - You’ve either never ridden or may have had a few lessons. You may be able to trot or ride out at a walk.
- **Level 2** - You’ve mastered the basics in walk, trot and canter. You’re confident on a well-schooled horse in walk, rising trot (posting), and for short periods of canter in a school or even outside.
- **Level 3** - You’re a secure and confident rider on a well-schooled horse at all paces including a fast canter in open country. You’re happy to ride for several hours and may have some jumping experience.
- **Level 4** - You’re an experienced rider, confident and relaxed on horseback. You ride regularly, have an independent seat and soft hands. You’re capable of handling a spirited horse in open country and are happy to jump. You have experience of riding a variety of horses.

Rides which are indicated as suitable for many levels of rider often separate riders into groups according to their experience level. This ensures everyone rides at a fun but safe pace.

‘Highly highly recommended! I’ve now done 3 trips with Unicorn and they’ve been extremely happy times!! Brilliant company - make everything very easy and safe, super responsive/helpful/flexible when organising a trip, all trips thoroughly tested and familiar to the team. I’m already plotting my next adventure...’ - ZO from Essex

**Comfort Level**

- **Level 1** - Basic accommodation, may be shared with 3 or more beds in a room and have limited facilities on some or all nights. This would include basic camping holidays, some gites and some mountain refuges.
- **Level 2** - B&B style home stays or basic hotels, twin or triple rooms, usually family run, may have shared bathroom on some or all nights, camping with some bathroom/toilet facilities. A bathroom means toilet and shower or tub bath.
- **Level 3** - Larger B&B or boutique hotel rooms with private or en suite bathroom, often individually decorated with good size rooms and quality furnishings. Private bathrooms may not be adjoining to your room. Camping at this level would usually provide largish tents with mattress, toilet tent, hot showers each night, meals seated at a table in a dining tent.
- **Level 4** - Hotels with extra service and luxurious rooms, en suite bathrooms, luxury camping with walk in tents and made up beds, own bathroom with hot water and dinner service at the table.

**Swimming Pool**

This symbol indicates a swimming pool is available on some or most nights on this ride.

**Adventure Rating**

This indicates how “different” a ride is from riding at home. This includes physical challenges such as high altitude or long hours in the saddle, cultural challenges such as language and meal times or different ways of doing things. Increasing adventure levels require increasing flexibility and an adventurous nature. For a more relaxing experience pick levels 1 and 2, to experience something different choose 3 or 4.

- **Level 1** - Like riding at home, rolling countryside, full service, everyone speaks English, similar standards and comforts to home.
- **Level 2** - A little different from home, there may be language barriers or different ways of doing things, still quite comfortable, may be unpredictable parts or some rugged terrain.
- **Level 3** - Different accommodations, attitudes or methods of riding are used to normal riding at home, may have challenging terrain, long days or itinerary changes, may involve camping or not so comfortable accommodation. An appetite for exploration and new experiences is required.
- **Level 4** - Extreme adventure, very challenging terrain and possibly extreme or fast changing weather requiring adaptation of the itinerary, must be very flexible, good humoured and fit.

**Price Guide**

Based on £1 = €1.15 = US$1.30

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<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>£1,000 - £1,600, €1,150 - €1,840, $1,300 - $2,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>£1,600 - £2,200, €1,840 - €2,630, $2,100 - $2,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
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Please see our website for exact current prices as these are dependent on currency rates which fluctuate. Once booked in your currency of choice the price of your holiday will not change. See www.unicorntrails.com for up to date prices.

The price of the holidays reflects the various levels of accommodation, logistics, facilities and rider participation required. The horses, riding and scenery are always of an excellent standard. All our rides offer great value for money at their different price levels.

**More Resources to Help you Choose**

**Excellent Super Hosts**
These are destinations where hosts reach our top level of quality and hosting as evidenced by the feedback we receive. Guests return again and again.

**Special Interest itineraries**
Programmes that offer something special on one or more areas: trails of culture and history, unparalleled adventures, the highest level of equestrian training, sophisticated residential or cuisine

**Live Availability**
Indicates programmes confirmed in real time with online bookings. Ideal if you need to take advantage of last minute flight deals or need immediate confirmation outside office hours.

**A to Z**
Please read all the important information which may affect your booking on pages 285-291.

**Riding Experience**
For optimal enjoyment of your riding holiday it is imperative to give us complete and up to date information about your riding experience and expectations. A multi-day trail on horseback and a dressage holiday will make different demands of the rider. A more complete description of the riding abilities can be seen on p.14 (opposite). If in doubt, there is no substitute for talking it over with one of our experienced travel advisors either by telephone or on our wechat.

**Photos/Videos Reviews & Blog**
Reviews from past guests as well as pictures, videos and detailed ride reports are available.

www.unicorntrails.com

Here you can find: up to date programme descriptions and prices; full itineraries, special offers; new rides added since the catalogue publication; live webcam with experienced, friendly travel advisors; real time availability and booking options.

‘I am a novice rider and the hosts were really supportive, friendly and encouraging. I rode two horses who really looked after me and they were wonderful.’
K R of Halifax
Riding in Europe is generally of a high standard and offers great value for money. Travelling on horseback allows one to appreciate the cultural, historic and natural highlights of Europe while staying off the beaten track and meeting the real people who live on the land. There are many protected natural areas, beautifully preserved and well maintained trails not to mention plentiful guest houses and small hotels to choose from. The regions, even within a country, are quite distinct and vary greatly in a small geographical area meaning you can go back again and again and feel like you are still exploring. The opportunity for a city break before or after a ride is very tempting with many of the access cities being destinations in their own right.

Many countries have strong equestrian traditions e.g. Denmark and Finland and very distinctive breeds such as the Icelandic horse in Iceland, the Andalusian of Spain, the Lusitano of Portugal, Irish hunters in Ireland and many more. What better way to discover the country and its roots than from the back of a horse completely adapted to the country.
Riding in Iceland

Known as the 'Land of Ice and Fire', Iceland is the place to ride if you are looking for stunning scenery from snowy mountains and huge icy glaciers to volcanoes and boiling geysers. The native breed is the Icelandic, also known as "Viking Horses". The riding is at all paces, including the legendary soft tölt.

Iceland is home to the world’s first parliament, set up in Norse times. This parliament banned the import of horses which has resulted in over 1,000 years of pure breeding of Icelandic horses. Even today horses can never return once exported. Horses were greatly respected in Norse mythology and Icelandic horses still play a large part in Icelandic life today.

The Icelandic horse is just how Iceland likes to perceive itself: little but strong. They are squat and muscular and in winter they have long shaggy fur. Icelandic horses tend to be around 140cm tall, technically a pony but never referred to as anything but a horse. They are also exceptionally hardy and strong, with 40 years being an average age. There are over 100 names for various colours and colour patterns in the Icelandic language and the colour is thought to be linked to the temperament of the horses.

One of the Icelandic horse’s most notable attributes is its five gaits. Other equine species typically possess the three general gaits of walk, trot and canter/gallop, while the Icelandic horse possesses the two additional gaits of tölt and skeið. The tölt is a four-beat lateral ambling gait, known for its merger of speed and exceptional riding comfort. This is similar to the rack of Saddlebreds or the running walk of a Tennessee Walker. The skeið is a pace, a fast two-beat lateral gait which can reach up to 48 kmh and truly feels like flying.

We offer nine different itineraries to suit all riders; while all riding in Iceland is adventurous, the challenges of the Northern Exposure and Volcano Trails on the north of the island are more so than the more comfortable Canyon Trail and short breaks in the south. The northern trails are suitable for intermediate riders happy to share basic dormitory accommodation and wishing to ride in the traditional manner – with a herd of horses running loose. Ride over lava fields, through green valleys and visit waterfalls at a fast tölt. Rest aching bones in hot springs after a long day’s ride. Of course, a trip to Iceland is not complete without stopping off to experience Reykjavik or the famous Blue Lagoon, both of which can be organised along with a whale watching trip into the Norwegian sea.

Loved it - amazing riding terrain, beautiful sights and scenery. We did so much in such a short space of time! Icelandic horses are now my favourite breed.”
Programmes

Lagoon Trail

5d/4n 4 days riding.  
Set dates June to August

Hvammur farm is located in Vatnsdalur Valley, an ancient extinct volcanic crater. Incredible panoramic views are on your doorstep and the outdoor hot tub is a welcome place to relax after a long day in the saddle. From this stunning location you begin the trail, riding out through the valley and getting used to the special gait and riding style of the Icelandic horse. You will ride alongside the rest of the herd, with some of the group in the lead and others at the back to herd the horses along to their overnight stop. In the following days you will ride a wide loop around the surrounding countryside, traversing rivers, crossing mountains and riding through a huge lagoon. The terrain throughout is a mixture of volcanic sand and soil - perfect for riding.

Getting there: Reykjavik (KEF) Airport. Transfers included at set times.

Volcano Trail

8d/7n 6 days riding.  
Set dates June to August

The national park of Snæfellsnes Peninsula is where you find one of the most recognised sights in Iceland; the glacier covered cone volcano Snæfellsjökull. Its mythical atmosphere became famous through Jules Verne’s novel “Journey to the Centre of the Earth”. Many of the famous Sagas unfolded in this spectacular area; a home to elves, trolls and ancient sorcerers. Today rich bird life attracts visitors from all over the world. The peninsula itself is often called “Iceland in a Nutshell” because of its diversity of landscape. You will ride through mighty lava fields, craters and ashes of ancient eruptions enjoying wide-open stretches of light-coloured sand whilst Hítardalur Valley comes as a surprise with its multicoloured mountains.

Whether you like an easy-going horse or a more spirited one, you can be sure to find the right horse here. Experiencing “tölt”, the unique gait of the Icelandic horse is made easy for you since you follow excellent riding tracks. A fast-paced point to point trail riding with a free herd of horses.

Getting there: Reykjavik (KEF) Airport. Transfers included at set times.

Glacier Trail

8d/7n 6 days riding.  
Set dates June to August

Move back in time and ride along the historic Kjölur Trail as Icelanders did throughout the centuries when travelling to the annual summer parliament at Thingvellir. You will visit this historic place (which is now a National Park) either at the start or end of the trail. Travelling from south to north or vice versa right across the heart of Iceland you will pass extinct volcanoes, glacier lakes and across wild glacial rivers and admire the majestic Gulfoss Waterfall along the way. Riding up into the highlands, the green meadows in the south change to barren sand-deserts close to mighty Langjökull and Hofsjökull Glaciers. Sheltered green valleys come as a surprise in this rugged terrain. This trail is suited to experienced riders who want to view the unspoiled Icelandic highlands with long days in the saddle.

Getting there: Reykjavik (KEF) Airport. Transfers included at set times.
Northern Exposure

6d/5n 5 days riding.
Set dates June to August

Nominated by the Sunday Times as one of the 10 best trails in the world.

After a short internal flight (included), this tour begins at Bjarnastaðir Farm near Húsavík to the Lake Mývatn area, famous for its volcanic features and rich birdlife. Ásbyrgi Canyon, Dettifoss (Europe’s largest waterfall) and the strange rock formations at Hljóðaklettar are just some of the gems of nature you’ll see on this amazing tour. This ride is suitable for advanced riders who are in control at all paces and fit enough to be in the saddle for up to 7 hrs a day. You will see the most spectacular natural sites and diverse landscape Iceland has to offer.

From rich green pastureland head towards the mountains, sleeping in basic mountain huts with shared facilities. Through an area scarred with cracks and fissures from earthquakes and volcanic activity, the route will then take you to Lake Mývatn where bubbling mud pools and eerie lava formations are a reminder of the powerful energy right beneath your feet. Bathe in the warm geothermal water of the outdoor pool at the Mývatn Nature Baths. An optional whale watching tour concludes the selection of natural attractions on and off shore.

Getting there: Reykjavik (KEF) Airport. Transfers included at set times.

Traditional Horse Round Up

5d/4n 4 days riding.
Set dates in October

Join the farmers in this great autumn adventure. Ride along when they drive the herd, sort the horses and celebrate the successful return of horses and men. The varied terrain on this horse riding holiday includes the highland moors, green valleys, just turning into their autumn colours of burning red and yellow, deep blue lakes and rivers and Kolugljúfur gorge where a troll woman is said to have resided in the old days.

A short first ride is already scheduled on the arrival day in Hafnarfjörður. This is a good opportunity to get to know the Icelandic horse and prepare for the coming days. From Bjargsnóól Farm in the North you follow good riding tracks until you meet the Icelanders who will have been gathering horses for some days. You join them and help drive the herd down to the Víðidalstungurétt corral. When this task has been fulfilled the locals celebrate the successful round-ups with a ball “réttardansleikur” and you are welcome to join in the fun.

Getting there: Reykjavik (KEF) Airport. Transfers included at set times.

Autumn Sheep Round Up

7d/6n 6 days riding.
Set dates in October

Join the farmers as they gather thousands of sheep from the mountains. This adventure has been privileged to farmers and their friends until recently. Learn from them how to manage the flock, drive sheep down hillsides, across rivers and out of sheltered valleys to their resting place for the night. Enjoy the singing all night in the cabins when the farmers celebrate a successful day in the mountains.

Getting there: Reykjavik (KEF) Airport. Transfers included at set times.
Northern Lights Short Break

3d/2n 2 days riding.
Set dates in March, September and October

Autumn in Iceland means colourful countryside and the Northern Lights dancing in the black night sky. Enjoy visiting the best-known sights in Iceland, riding the Icelandic horse along fine bridle paths and, weather conditions permitting, see the dazzling Northern Lights after a good day in the saddle.

You will visit the magnificent sights of Iceland, the Blue Lagoon, Geysir Hot Spring area and Gullfoss Waterfall. During two riding days the tölt, the special gait of the Icelandic horse, will be introduced to you. Accommodation for most nights is at Kjóstaðir Farm. All nights in the countryside are spent in cozy summer cottages, each sleeping two to four people with shared bathroom facilities.

Getting there: Reykjavik (KEF) Airport.
Transfers included at set times.

Icelandic Farm Stay

Min 4d/3n.
Open all year

Stay on one of our Icelandic horse breeding farms where guests are welcome to take part in the day to day farm activities alongside trail rides in the beautiful remote countryside giving a real insight into the life of a traditional Icelandic farmer. Our friendly hosts take care to select the correct horse for each rider, meaning that novice and experienced riders alike are sure to have a great experience. The horses are easy to ride, with a good trot and nice temperament. There are miles upon miles of great riding tracks and a welcoming warm outside hot tub to greet you at the end of your riding day. Guests are spoiled with great food and great horses; a winning combination for a great riding holiday!

Getting there: Reykjavik (KEF) Airport.
Transfers included at set times.

Canyon Trail

7d/6n 6 days riding.
Set dates June to August

There is no better way to visit the hot springs area of Geysir and the Golden Waterfall – Gullfoss – than by riding through the lovely countryside of South Iceland. On our way to the farm we witness the great scenery at Thingvellir National Park. This popular tour is ideal for families and those who do not have the required riding experience for our highland tours. Still riding days can be long so you should be in good physical shape and have a basic knowledge of horsemanship. On the first riding day you get acquainted with the Icelandic horse and its special gait on a relaxed ride along majestic Þjórsá River. We then ride towards magnificent Gullfoss Waterfall and the hot springs area of Geysir. After a relaxed riding day in that area we experience riding along the edge of civilisation. We cross the highland moor of Hrunaheiði and enjoy good riding tracks when riding past Hrepphólar basalt columns on our way back to Kálfhóll Farm.

Getting there: Reykjavik (KEF) Airport.
Transfers included at set times.
Riding in Norway

Norway is one of Europe’s least densely populated countries making it ideal for a horse riding holiday. The nature is truly unspoilt here where you can experience mountains, remote valleys, high plateaus and vast lakes. We offer riding, driving and snow sledding in the central portion of Norway with its famous Rondane National Park, Røros UNESCO Heritage town and an abundance of reindeer.

Today there are four different Norwegian horse breeds: The Norwegian Fjord horse, the North Norwegian mountain horse, the Norwegian work horse and the Dolahest heavy horse. In addition to these four horse breeds, the national horse breed of Iceland, the Iceland pony, descends from the Norwegian Viking horse. The Fjord Horse is one of the world’s oldest horse breeds, and it is probably quite closely linked to the ancient North Asian wild horse and has a distinctive dorsal stripe. They are utilised equally for driving and riding and are incredibly surefooted on steep mountains slopes and rough ground.

Norway

Size: 385,199km²
Population: 5,515,736
Languages: Norwegian
Currency: Norwegian Krone (NOK)
Time zone: GMT +1 / +2 in the summer
When to go:

Interesting fact: From late May to late July, the sun never completely descends beneath the horizon in areas north of the Arctic Circle (hence Norway’s description as the “Land of the Midnight Sun”), and the rest of the country experiences up to 20 hours of daylight per day.
Programmes

**Norwegian Heritage Farm Stay**

7d/6n.
Set dates June to August

Kvebergstøya is a beautifully restored traditional 16th century farm with a unique atmosphere, where you can feel the soul and peace of times past in the old buildings surrounded by pine and birch forests, small lakes and streams, and meadows. It is one of the few Heritage listed farms in Norway. Your hosts Martin and Erif are very warm and welcoming. Martin is a true carriage driving enthusiast and highly qualified instructor. The farm Norwegian Fjord horses can be driven by all levels with tuition given for beginners. There are also both Fjord and warmbloods horses for riding out into some of the most beautiful high mountain landscapes of Scandinavia including Rondane National Park. Of course traditional seasonal farming activities such as feeding lambs, making hay and driving instructors are enjoyed and the atmosphere is full of fun. The islands are famous for staggeringly beautiful scenery; majestic mountains, deep fjords, huge seabird colonies and long, white sand beaches.

**Blue Mountain Carriage Trail**

7d/6n.
Set dates July to September

Starting from Kvebergstøya, a beautifully restored traditional 18th century farm in the high mountain area of Norway. Learn to harness and drive horses before setting out on an adventurous 3-day trail. Your host and driving instructor, is a true expert with high level instructing qualifications and competition experience. His warmth, patience and obvious love for the horses and country shine through making this a wonderful experience for everyone. There are 6-8 Fjord horses and a variety of carriages for driving single, pairs or four in hand depending on the expertise of the guests. Training is given from complete beginner onwards. On the trail we drive through mostly forest paths along the foothills of the Blue Mountains with superb views to Rondane National Park. En route we stay in small farms or hotels. Traditional Norwegian dishes are enjoyed and the atmosphere is full of fun. The comfortable carriages and reasonable pace (covering about 40km/day) mean you have time to enjoy the rich details of plant and animal life along the way.

**Lofoten Islands Northern lights**

6d/5n/5 days riding. Set dates March to May and September and October

Experience the extraordinary natural beauty. Viking culture and history of Lofoten, a remote Norwegian archipelago, 95 miles north of the Arctic Circle with an exceptionally mild climate. Ride on hardy Icelandic horses under the northern lights or midnight sun and stay in warm and cozy lodges.

**Journey to Røros**

4d/3n.
Set dates February and March

This is a completely unique holiday to Unicorn Trails which we have put together especially for our clients. It is an exciting holiday where no riding is necessary, as you will be riding in the sled as well as experiencing other traditional winter activities.

The UNESCO heritage town of Røros was once the main trading city between the coasts of Scandinavia and the inland countries. In the winter, once the rivers and lakes had frozen over and the farm and fishing work came to an end for the year, hundreds of families and traders’ sleds descended on Røros to trade. This traditional winter sled drive and market is still very much alive in Røros today.

On this ride you head to Røros in a sled. This is a very traditional and quintessentially Scandinavian experience. The trail master has undertaken this journey yearly for more than 40 years. The starting point for this adventure is right on the Norwegian/ Swedish border, en-route we stay in a historical sled drivers lodge, then a nice hotel in Røros to soak up the atmosphere.

Getting there: Transfers are included from Røros (RRS) Airport at set times.

In all my riding holidays I have never come across a more beautifully cared for set of horses and tack’.

CB of Abergavenny
Sweden

Size: 449,964km²
Population: 10,036,738
Languages: Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Finnish
Currency: Swedish Krona (SEK)
Time zone: GMT +1 / +2 in the summer

When to go:

Interesting fact: About 15% of Sweden is north of the Arctic Circle and around 65% of the total land area is covered with forests.

Riding in Sweden

Sweden is ideal if you’d like to ride deep in nature through wildly unspoilt wilderness with endless forest and bountiful lakes. This is a large country, about twice the size of the UK, but sparsely populated leaving an unspoilt wilderness of endless forests and bountiful lakes (96,000!) to discover on your horseback holiday riding local Swedish cold blood horses. We can offer you a trail ride with camping or a based stay and can accommodate the heavier rider, single riders, families, mixed groups of riders and non-riders.

Thanks to the Gulf Stream, Sweden has a warmer climate that most people expect. In fact the resorts on the south coast can be as hot as those in Southern Europe. The summers in Sweden may be rather short but north of the Arctic Circle is the land of the midnight sun where it never gets dark. Midsummer’s Day, June 21st, is celebrated throughout Sweden. Winters may seem long and dark but they are also very beautiful with crisp snow, frozen lakes and air so clean and, if you are lucky, regular sightings of the spectacular Northern Lights. Swedish winters provide a paradise for winter sports enthusiasts - particularly cross country skiing and ice skating.
Four Day Riding Break in Lapland Summer Trail
Set dates in July and August

This fabulous tour on well trained and even-tempered Icelandic horses is a perfect way to see the Kebnekaise mountains of Lapland in the far north of Sweden and Norway. You are north of the arctic circle and will get to know the Icelandic horse, have an adventure, be out in nature, sit round a campfire, learn about the Sami culture and sleep in a Sami tent (lávvu). The focus of this trip is the Icelandic horse, the riding, nature, weather and food, and a stress-free experience.

This trail is for those who want to ride up in the mountains with great views, close to nature in an area very few people ever see. You will mostly ride on pathless terrain so the pace can be quite slow. This trip is suited to those who enjoy helping with camping and don’t mind being without luxury to experience the purest way of being out in nature.

Getting there: For the Lapland Summer Trail transfers are included from Kiruna Airport (KRN)

Winter Wonderland Short Break Trail
4d/3n/2 days riding.
Set dates January to March

This is a great winter adventure in the north of Sweden, encompassing all the best activities. Go reindeer sledding, ride Icelandic horses, learn about the Sami culture and visit the famous IceHotel all on this fabulous horseback-holiday. This is the ideal holiday for all the family, beginners and non-riders can join in all the fun!

Your Sami guides are very familiar with this area of Sweden and its culture and know the best places to find wildlife such as reindeer and moose, and the elusive Northern Lights. You will feel true peace and quiet and be very much out in nature. What you will experience on this short break is both genuine and exciting.

Getting there: Transfers are included from Kiruna Airport (KRN)

‘Reindeer sled riding was simply amazing as was learning about the Sami culture!’ NR of Leeds
Finland

Size: 338,424km²
Population: 5,557,073
Languages: Finnish, Swedish, Sami
Currency: Euro
Time zone: GMT +2 / +3 in summer

When to go:

J | F | M | A | M | J 

Interesting fact: Finland holds world championships for wife carrying, mobile phone throwing, mosquito catching, swamp soccer, boot throwing, sauna and air guitar.

Riding in Finland

Finland is a country of thousands of lakes and islands—about 186,000 lakes (larger than 500 m² or 0.12 acres) and 179,000 islands. Its largest lake, Saimaa, is the fourth largest in Europe. The area with most lakes is called Finnish Lakeland. The greatest concentration of islands is found in the southwest in the Archipelago Sea between continental Finland and the main island of Åland.

Finnish cuisine is notable for generally combining traditional country fare and haute cuisine with contemporary style cooking. Fish and meat play a prominent role in traditional Finnish dishes from the western part of the country, while the dishes from the eastern part have traditionally included various vegetables and mushrooms. Finnish foods often use wholemeal products (rye, barley, oats) and berries (such as bilberries, lingonberries, cloudberries, and sea buckthorn). Milk and its derivatives like buttermilk are commonly used as food, drink or in various recipes.

Lapland, where you will find our Autumn highlights holiday, is the largest and northernmost of the regions of Finland. It is the least densely-populated region being home to only 3.4% of the population. The nature of Lapland is varyingly diverse. The hills and the coastal area of the sea form great differences in altitude. The highest point of Lapland, and indeed the whole of Finland, can be found in Enontekiö - Halti Fell rises from the ground to an altitude of 1,328m. Eight national parks are located in Lapland’s vast area. They are valuable and conserved natural attractions where the richness of nature is emphasised.

The seasons in the northern climate are clearly distinguishable from each other. Nature lives and changes according to the seasons, which in turn increases possibilities for recreation and activities. Enjoy the spectacular autumn colours of magical Lapland. Ride Finnish horses on this exciting trail in the Arctic Circle.

Autumn Highlights in Lapland

7d/6n/5 days riding.
Set dates July and August

The Autumn leaf colour or ‘ruska’ to the locals, is a spectacular phenomenon in Finland, painting the landscape in deep and soft tones. The colours get more vibrant the further north you travel and what better way to see the onset of ruska than on a horse-riding trail within the wilds of the Arctic Circle. On this trail discover the delights of the outermost northwest of Finland, sparsely populated, geographically and scenically different to the rest of the country with mountains, fells, lakes and tundra-like vegetation. This is the only area in Finland with a Sami majority.

This ‘treeless’ topography is explored on this trail ride for wilderness lovers. Ride the Finnish horses by day and nights are spent in basic wilderness cabins or camping in tents; riders are asked to help look after their own horses and to help with camp/cabin chores too so a certain level of fitness and enthusiasm for the outdoors is required for this ride. Enjoy typically Lappish food dishes, and the sauna – a central feature of any Finnish home!

Getting there: Kittilä (KTT) Airport, Finland. Return transfers included.

J F M A M J 

J A S O N D
Denmark

Size: 42,933km²
Population: 5,775,586
Languages: Danish
Currency: Danish Krone
Time zone: GMT +2
When to go:

Interesting fact: Denmark is reported to be the Happiest Country in the World!

Riding in Denmark

Denmark is one of the most popular destinations for riding in Europe and popular for a reason. With over 15,000 miles of coastline, it’s the perfect place for discovering on horseback. Riding on the Icelandic horses is extremely well suited to comfortable travel in the local conditions.

Jammerbugten, situated in The Bay, in the northwest of Denmark, has miles of windswept sandy beaches edged with grassy dunes and the brisk waves of the North Sea. Inland you can expect to find wild moorland, sandy paths, forests and lakes - not only are these perfect for horse riding but also an abundance of other activities such as hiking, mountain biking, canoeing and geocaching. This area is perfect for riders and non-riders alike.

Gourmet Spa Break

6 days/5 nights/4 days riding. Set dates available April and August and others on request.

Enjoy a unique short break in this special part of Scandinavia riding on top-quality Icelandic horses across vast open landscapes and beaches, enjoy boutique accommodation, feast on gourmet home-cooked cuisine and revel in the relaxing spa facilities. This short break is an ideal holiday to escape everyday life; start your day with a lavish buffet breakfast before saddling up and enjoying a tølt covering endless sandy beaches, over moors and through scented forests with birds of prey circling above. The ride also discovers Hjardemål, one of Denmark’s biggest wilderness areas with its large herds of deer and many species of birdlife.

The food is a highlight on this trip; expect delicious regional specialities such as freshly prepared fish and seafood. We also can’t forget the drinks! Relax with a post-ride drink on the patio or candlelit wine cellar, enjoy the pre-dinner cocktails and take part in an evening of wine tasting on Saturday night.

Getting there:

Aalborg Airport, Denmark (AAL)

Transfer payable on site.
Ireland

Size: 84,421km²
Population: 6,600,000
Languages: Irish and English
Currency: Euro
Time zone: GMT
When to go: 🌞🌞🌞🌞🌞🌞🌞

Interesting fact: Ireland is a snake-free island. Due to its isolation from the European mainland, Ireland lacks several species common elsewhere in Europe, such as moles, weasels, polecats or roe deer.

Riding in Ireland

Ireland is famous for its love of all things related to horses. Almost everyone will have a horse, be able to ride or know someone who has something to do with horses. Breeding the next Derby winner or Olympic champion is a national obsession. From the ubiquitous Irish Draught to the Connemara pony the Irish are rightly proud of their equestrian legacy and depth of knowledge. Despite its small size Ireland also produces some of the best racehorses in the world, such as Rock of Gibraltar, Yeats and Montjeu, who have all gone on to sire the next generation of champions.

The main riding attractions of Ireland are the instruction on first rate horses, especially cross country but also show jumping, polo and various other disciplines, and the magnificent beach riding. Ireland has 3,519 miles of glorious sandy coastline with no part of the country more than 70 miles from the sea. Of course, there is no better way to experience true Irish hospitality than to ride from place to place on a horse. You will be welcomed with warmth at every turn, from home cooked meals to good craic (Irish colloquialism for fun, banter and general good time) at the pubs.
Programmes

West Coast Trail
7d/6n/5 days riding Open from April to October
A complete Irish Experience riding Irish Hunters and Connemara ponies with the chance to stay in an authentic Irish castle. No trail ride offers such a variety of riding terrain.

The West Coast Trail explores the unspoilt coastline, sandy beaches, deserted islands, mountains and forests of the most beautiful area of Western Ireland. The riding is suitable for riders of intermediate ability.

Getting there: Dublin (DUB) airport, transfers included.

Castle Leslie
Various packages from 4-8 days available. Open all year round
Castle Leslie in County Monaghan, is an idyllic setting for horse riding in Ireland. Imagine over a thousand acres of rolling hills, parkland and lakes to explore on horseback. In addition tuition with frequent clinics by top competition riders and 300 cross country jumps are part of a top-quality range of facilities. Accommodation is in the four-star Lodge right next to the riding centre with its own bar and restaurant, and an organic victorian spa with treatment rooms. This is truly the perfect setting for a luxury riding holiday in Ireland.

Getting there: Transfers available from Belfast (BFS), Dublin (DUB) or Shannon (SNN) airports, payable on site.

Instruction in Ireland
8d/7n/6 days riding. Open May – September
A family run establishment with a wide range of horses to provide the ideal mount for you to improve your riding skills. Great facilities on site so you can work on cross country technique, show jumping and dressage or take it easy riding out on the 380 acre farm. There is en-suite farmhouse accommodation onsite. The riding varies from an easy hour a day for novices to intensive 3hrs of instruction daily. You can end the day with a meal in the dining room, followed by a drink by the fire.

All ages are welcome and the centre caters for all ranges of horse-riding ability. Whether you’re a complete novice and have never ridden a horse before or a seasoned horseman looking for something more challenging, you will find the experience here both rewarding and highly enjoyable.

Getting there: Transfers from Kilbeggan Bus Station included. Direct bus from Dublin (DUB) or Galway (GWA) airports to Kilbeggan are available. Kilbeggan is on the Dublin to Galway route.

Donegal Beach & Mountain Ride
8d/7n/6 days riding. Open May – September
Along Ireland’s northwest coast in County Donegal, long stretches of stunning sandy beaches are interspersed with towering cliffs that plunge dramatically into the foaming sea. This is perhaps the most beautiful part of the country, far from the well beaten tourist paths. Climb high into the hills overlooking the mighty sea and cross the deserted beaches as you explore this wild and beautiful area atop your trusty steed. Each day you will take a different trail where you will discover contrasting landscapes; climb the impressive Muckish Mountain and of course there will be fantastic gallops in the tidewater. The horses are mostly Irish Hunters and native Connemara and mountain ponies, all safe and sturdy with excellent stamina and gentle natures. The hotel is a delightful family-run property with everything one would expect in terms of amenities and stylish decor.

This is also an excellent place to visit with friends or family who do not ride as there are many things to see and do in the area, from hiking, swimming (in season) and biking to golf as there is a golf course just nearby.

Getting there:

Donegal Beach & Mountain Ride
8d/7n/6 days riding. Open May – September
Along Ireland’s northwest coast in County Donegal, long stretches of stunning sandy beaches are interspersed with towering cliffs that plunge dramatically into the foaming sea. This is perhaps the most beautiful part of the country, far from the well beaten tourist paths. Climb high into the hills overlooking the mighty sea and cross the deserted beaches as you explore this wild and beautiful area atop your trusty steed. Each day you will take a different trail where you will discover contrasting landscapes; climb the impressive Muckish Mountain and of course there will be fantastic gallops in the tidewater. The horses are mostly Irish Hunters and native Connemara and mountain ponies, all safe and sturdy with excellent stamina and gentle natures. The hotel is a delightful family-run property with everything one would expect in terms of amenities and stylish decor.

This is also an excellent place to visit with friends or family who do not ride as there are many things to see and do in the area, from hiking, swimming (in season) and biking to golf as there is a golf course just nearby.

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Getting there:
The Clare-Burren Trail
8d/7n/6 days riding.
Every Saturday April to September.

Discover the Emerald Isle’s beautiful nature and colourful history on horseback. Cover 140 miles of the west of Ireland, from County Galway, through the rural areas of County Clare, into the unique Burren region and on to the rough Atlantic coast overlooking the spectacular Cliffs of Moher.

The word “Burren” comes from an Irish word “Boíreann”, meaning a rocky place. The Burren is one of the finest examples of a Glacio-Karst landscape in the world, with rich flora and fauna despite the rugged and bleak terrain. It also has a wonderfully vibrant culture, possibly captured best in the fascinating agricultural traditions that have evolved in the area over thousands of years. Steady riding on safe horses with good accommodation, suited to intermediate riders, comfortable being in the saddle for 5 hours a day.

Getting there: Transfers available from Shannon Airport (SNN).

‘The experience was fantastic. Be assured of a warm welcome with fun and laughter if you want to get to know the wonderful Irish people’. EM of Maidstone

Kerry Trail Ride & Kerry Short Break
7d/6n/5 days riding and 4d/3n/2 days riding.
Every Saturday May to October

Enjoy good paced riding through the Killarney National Park, exploring the highlands, riding over mountain passes, beside lakes, galloping along miles of golden beaches and walking over Irish bog lands: the classic Irish scenery of the South. Experience the renowned charm of the region and the tranquility of some truly impressive and beautiful scenery.

The Irishbred horses are willing, reliable and safe allowing you to take in the sights. Knowledgeable, experienced guides lead all the trails and riders are split by ability so no-one’s enjoyment is spoilt and everyone eats up for dinner in the evenings. Accommodation is in comfortable twin bedrooms in B&B’s along the way. Dinners are not included in the package.

Getting there: Transfers available from Kerry (KIR), Cork (ORK) or Shannon (SNN) airports.

Wild Atlantic Way
7d/6n/5 days riding.
Set dates May – October

Small groups of experienced riders are taken along part of Ireland’s Wild Atlantic Way, a 2,500km touring route that runs the length of Ireland’s west coast, from Derry in the north to Kinsale in County Cork. Riders can enjoy wild landscapes of breathtaking sandy beaches, small villages, sea and off-shore islands, country lanes, mountain tracks and local heritage sites, stopping each day for a picnic along the way. Your host is a qualified riding instructor, a Monty Robert’s Certified Instructor and an accomplished Irish horseman whose family have been involved with horses for generations.

Accommodation is in comfortable Irish guesthouses in the traditional town of Westport with generous picnic lunches on the trail. All this combined with the spectacular Clew Bay region, quality Irish horses and fast beach riding ensures an unforgettable horse riding adventure holiday.

Getting there: Transfers are available from Knock (NOC) (best), Shannon (SNN) or Dublin (DUB) Airports.

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
Riding in the UK

The United Kingdom is Unicorn’s home territory so naturally we are the experts here!

The UK is well known for its excellent horses and native breeds ranging from Welsh Cobs, Dartmoor and Fell ponies to Clydesdale and Shire heavy horses. Britain also takes great pride in its competitive Olympic team and many international riders base themselves in the UK to take advantage of the training and facilities available here.

We offer riding for all levels of rider: training, trails, very popular short riding breaks or well as longer rides covering all the “must-see” parts of Britain.

Discover the traditional UK from horseback: ride through all the best and most famous scenic areas from the Lake District in England to Scotland, the Brecon Beacons in Wales, the private estates and typical villages, beaches, fells and moors, and meet fellow riders well away from the bustle of its large cities and in the gentle green rural lanes, meadows and villages which typify most of the UK.

‘Delightful! Spectacular scenery, lovely horses, and very comfortable accommodations with excellent meals’. WJ of Newport
Programmes

England: Cambridgeshire, Lake District, Dartmoor and Wiltshire

Lake District Mountain Trail

5d/4n/5 days riding, Set dates May and June

Join this 5-day trail over the Lake District, for fit and competent riders who have experience riding in open ground. A true adventure over the mountains rediscovering the ancient routes of the Lakes. Pass by Rydal Mount and Dove Cottage, two of Wordsworth’s former homes where riders can appreciate the magnificent views that inspired the most famous of the Lake poets. Enjoy fresh, hot, home-cooked food at one of the many cozy inns along the trail before resting up for the night in a traditional pub or guesthouse. Riders will enjoy a comprehensive tour of the Lakes; this trail offers spectacular views of Scafell Pike, England’s highest mountain, and Lake Windermere, England’s largest natural lake. Expect reasonably long days in the saddle crossing mountain passes and fells, enjoying canters through dense forests as well as on open ground. Your hosts for this trail have lived in the area for many generations and as such have an intimate knowledge of the countryside and surroundings.

Getting there: Manchester (MAN) Airport, direct train to Oxenholme, taxi to riding centre, payable onsite.

Cambridgeshire Short Break

3d/2n/3 days riding, Open all year round

Enjoy this short riding break in the Lake District, one of England’s most dramatic natural landscapes. Escape the tourist trail by exploring this UNESCO world heritage site on horseback; travel over craggy hilltops and through ancient forests before refuelling with a traditional pub lunch. Riders will follow in the footsteps of William Wordsworth and Beatrix Potter, just two of the many poets and writers who have come to the Lakes to be inspired by the dramatic scenery and slower pace of life. This trail allows riders to get a taste of the mountain tams and wooded valleys which make up the UK’s most popular national park. Riders undertaking the 3-day trail will also be able to admire England’s highest mountain, Scafell Pike.

Getting there: Manchester (MAN) Airport, direct train to Oxenholme, taxi to riding centre, payable onsite.

Dartmoor Crossing

8d/7n/5 riding days or 4d/3n/3 riding days on set dates May to October depending on programme

A truly English experience in Dartmoor National Park, where herds of cattle, sheep and wild Dartmoor ponies still roam. Climb up to the open moors riding western-style on well-schooled forward going Quarter horses along the forests, rivers, wetlands past typical round tors (rock formations), dipping down into small villages and picturesque hamlets sheltering along the lower edges of the moor and stopping for lunch on the top contours with spectacular views across the south of England. Ride past prehistoric settlements, Bronze Age stone circles and ancient tin mines. There are 3 programmes: a progressive Dartmoor Crossing stopping at different B&B’s each night, a monthly cattle drive in season gathering, moving and working the Aberdeen Angus and Highland cattle on the moors and tailor made shorter stay.

Getting there: Exeter Airport (EXT) or train station transfers payable on site

Wiltshire Estate Ride

8d/7n/5 riding days or 4d/3n/3 riding days on set dates May to October depending on programme

From the beautiful chalk downs to ancient woods, discover one of England’s richest landscapes; riding on this 8,000 acre private estate. Explore a nationally protected landscape, the 6th largest in the Country and one of the most rural. You’ll be riding out in small groups, heading in a different direction each day exploring wild open spaces, beautiful chalk down land, and ancient woods rich in history and wildlife.

This destination offers riding for all levels including beginners. More experienced riders can ride ex-eventers (some of which have even been round Badminton!). You’ll be riding for two hours in the morning and afternoon and can enjoy home-cooked meals in your accommodation as well as visiting a traditional Wiltshire pub for dinner. Accommodation is provided by either a luxury cabin or rooms are also available in your hosts’ B&B. Larger groups can book to stay in the spectacular and historic King John House, perfect for a special occasion.

Getting there: Bristol (BRS) Airport, train to Salisbury train station, payable on site
## Brecon Beacon Trail

**Short Break**

*4d/3n/3 days riding.*

April to October, subject to availability

Get away from it all for 3 days in the saddle climbing high into the mountains descending through valleys and woods at a good pace. Let the experienced cobs show you how to cope with the Welsh mountains and tracks, while enjoying spectacular scenery. Very comfortable en-suite overnight accommodation with fine food are available in the evenings. If you cannot manage a weekend, don’t panic - this short break is also available as a mid-week break.

**Getting there:** Transfers included from Abergavenny train station

### Welsh Borders Trail

*5d/4d/3 days riding.*

Set departures subject to availability.

If you are looking for the ultimate exclusive exploratory trail riding holiday in the United Kingdom then head for Wales and explore the truly magnificent remote Black Mountains on horseback. Come with friends or on your own, and join a small group travelling at a good pace through stunningly rugged scenery, travelling along carefully researched routes which provide the best views of the dramatic scenery. Comfortable en-suite accommodation in welcoming farms and hostelries with fine food are available each evening. We highly recommend this UK horse riding holiday.

**Getting there:** Transfers included from Glasgow (GLA) or Edinburgh (EDI) Airports

*‘The horses were really fit and well suited for the hilly country’*  
HL of Chochrane

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## Scottish Castles Trail

*5d/4d/3 days riding.*

Set departures subject to availability.

This is a fantastic trail ride through the Scottish Borders visiting historical sites and enjoying stunning scenery along the way. Starting from a highly respected riding centre, the ride takes you to the Falls of Clyde, the hidden homes of the Border Reivers, Teviot Castle and the Bowhill Estate to name but a few. The trails run from April to October, giving a spectacular array of colour as the seasons change, each with its own selection of flora and fauna to enjoy. Out on the trail, the full-board accommodation is in a variety of inns and castles, each with their own history and character to enjoy. Most have beautiful grounds to explore and many also offer spa treatments to help you relax after a long day in the saddle.

**Getting there:** Transfers from Glasgow (GLA) or Edinburgh (EDI) Airports payable on site

### Caledonian Tuition & Trails

*7d/6n/5 days riding.*

Other length stays available.  
Open all year

Discover the lush valleys and rolling mountains of the Welsh Borders on this 5-day trail ride suitable for novice riders onwards. Overlooking the Ceiriog Valley, you’ll be riding through ancient woodlands, past crumbling castles and into deep valleys. Visit Britain’s highest waterfall; the enchanting Pistyll Rhaeadr Falls explore part of Offas Dyke, an Anglo-Saxon earthwork that travels from Liverpool in the North to the Severn Estuary in the South. You’ll be staying at your hosts farm (the second highest farm in the country) on the first and last nights and at traditional Welsh inns while out on the trail. Wake up to incredible views and explore this undiscovered region on fit and responsive horses. Spring is one of the best times of the year to visit Wales and the greenery in this rural region is spectacular. After a long days riding, you’ll spend the night in a quintessentially Welsh village, where you can sample local culinary specialties.

**Getting there:** Transfers included from £70 each way from Manchester (MAN) or Liverpool (LPL) Airports

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## General

Go to [www.unicorntrails.com](http://www.unicorntrails.com) for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606

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**Scotland, Scottish Castles and Caledonian Tuition and Trails**

- [www.unicorntrails.com](http://www.unicorntrails.com)
- +44 1767 600606
When to go:

Interesting fact: French cuisine is considered one of the best cuisines in the world, good food is a national obsession and an average of 2 cooking books are published every day in France.

Riding in France

Apart from a good sporting horse industry, from racing to competitive show jumping France is the home of the Anglo-Arab performance breed. Anglo Arab horses excel at show jumping and long-distance riding. French riders are also huge fans of Randonnée, or riding out in the countryside and randonées can be found throughout France. Horse riding in France explores the huge diversity of landscapes, from the beaches of the north via gourmet Perigord to the spectacular Southern Alps and everything French in between. Historic tours of the Loire Valley Châteaux, wine tours of Bordeaux and Medoc, Pyrenean Castles and Atlantic Coast beaches all enable you to experience the real essence of France.

France is a farming nation and produces more food for export than any other country in the European Union and good food remains a national obsession. Whether it’s melting croissants with steaming coffee for breakfast, cordon bleu meals for dinner or something in between - French food is sublime with great attention paid to fresh ingredients and proper time for appreciation of meals.

You will of course need something to wash it down and what could be better than a glass of French wine, internationally recognised as the best in the world. You’ll be hard pressed not to ride through the French countryside without coming upon a vineyard or two. All the famous varieties can be found here, from Cabernet Sauvignon to Chardonnay, Merlot to Médoc. Then of course there is the king of them all - bubbly Champagne. Nothing rounds off a day’s riding better than a delicious French meal and a glass or two of local French wine. Even on the most basic ride in France the food will be well above average.

If you are travelling from elsewhere in Europe then France will be almost on your doorstep and you will be spoilt for choice with many airlines, including the low-cost budget carriers, competing for your custom.

‘An absolutely fabulous holiday! Our trek on horseback was a magnificent way of experiencing the majestic views of the mountains and lakes, and the wilderness of the Mercantour National Park’.

SC of Balmain
Programmes

Mid France

9 Chateau in France

from 4d/3n/3 days riding. Anyday arrival March to December

A typical French chateau set in 100 acres of rolling grounds with on-site stables and training center. The chateau dates from the 19th century and its original features have been lovingly preserved. Modern comforts are blended seamlessly with antique furniture and original art making for a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere. Glorious views from all the windows over rolling countryside or the schooling arenas and all-weather gallop. Rooms are individually decorated. The riding is suitable for all abilities and levels with some super schoolmasters. Spend the morning exploring the miles of beautiful rolling countryside interspersed with cool woods and use the afternoon to relax in the on-site spa. The food is above average with a choice of menus ranging from “market” to “gourmet”.

Getting there: Taxi transfer from Moulins sur Allier train station which is 2hr20min fast train from Gare du Lyon, Paris (CDG) Airport

9 Endurance Trail: Morvan National Park

Join one of the fastest-paced trails in Europe through the beautiful setting of the Morvan National Park in Burgundy, home to verdant scenery, great lakes and lush forests. You’ll be riding specially-trained endurance horses from France’s first endurance stud and will be accompanied by a qualified equestrian guide who knows both the region and the horses extremely well. The stages on horseback are often quite long at between 40 and 60 km in a day and the pace is very fast, based on an average of about 10 km/h. This is an exhilarating trail which includes long and frequent canters, steep downhill descents and lake crossings. Accommodation is provided by a variety of two-star hotels in the Morvan and you’ll spend one night in a 13th century castle. Your hosts on this trail will be more than happy to help you discover the local cuisine. Regional picnic lunches are provided while on the trail and dinner is taken at the hotel each night.

Getting there: The equestrian centre in the Morvan National Park. Transfers can be arranged, payable on site. Paris (CDG) Airport

9 Chateaux of the Loire

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates June and July

Take a leap into the history books on this riding holiday, travelling into the Middle Ages and visiting several of the most important castles of the Renaissance including Chavennay (17th century), Chambord (16th century), Chaumont sur Loire (15th century), Amboise (15th century) and finally, Chenonceau (14th century). Along with faster than average riding on fit Anglo Arab horses, this is a journey of discovery not to be missed. Accommodation is in local B&Bs or small hotels with fresh home-cooked meals sourcing local specialties. Of course, the delicious wines of the region will also be on hand at the end of a good day in the saddle!

Getting there: Montrichard train station, a 2hr train journey from Paris Montparnasse station. Paris (CDG) Airport

9 Bordeaux Wine Trail

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates May to October

This special trip is ideal for lovers of fine wines with faster than average riding amongst some of the great names of Bordeaux Wines. During the tour you will have the opportunity to taste white, red and rosé wines: Médoc, Côte de Blaye, Côte de Bourg, Bordeaux Supérieur, Lalande-Blaye, St Émilion, Entre-Deux-Mers, Graves and the famous sweet and strong white Sauternes.

You will also get to know the Citadel of Blaye, the Medieval City of St Émilion, the feudal Castle of Rauzan and the medieval fortified town of Cadillac. Overnight accommodation is in comfortable hotels, B&Bs and castle.

Getting there: Transfers payable from Bordeaux Airport (BOD) at set times

‘Fit forward thinking horses, friendly guides, great food, lovely going through the vineyards’.

AA of Chilton
Perigord & Atlantic Coast Combo

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates March to June, Sept and October

Combine the culture and history of Perigord and the wild beaches of the Atlantic Coast, great riding with a cultural emphasis. The first 4 nights are spent in Perigord and the last 3 on the Atlantic Coast.

This trail is steeped in the history of the Aquitaine region and passes through walled towns and fortified castles. You will ride through beautiful valleys, leading you into the magnificent forest which was a refuge for the local people during the 100 year war, returning to the same Manor House/Gite each night where you can enjoy delicious food and wines of the region. The final few days of the trail allow some fantastic beach riding.

Getting there:
Transfers from Bordeaux (BOD) Airport or Morcenx train station.

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606

Atlantic Coast Trek

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set date February to September

Ride along the Atlantic Coast of France with 250km of protected beaches and one of the largest forests in Europe. There is access to miles of open beaches all year round and cool, sandy paths to gallop along in the forest. This programme is a point to point trek for fit intermediate riders onwards.

The accommodation and organisation leave something to be desired, the location and riding is top class and is what people come here for. Be prepared to compromise on other things.

Enjoy fast and exciting riding up to 6 hrs daily covering 40km each day on very fit but beautifully schooled and easy to ride Anglo Arab horses.

Accommodation is in basic but comfortable hotels, homestays or gîte and there are three nights of camping on trails in July and August. The food is typically French with multiple courses and plenty of red wine. This is an ideal riding holiday for good riders.

Getting there:
Transfers from Bordeaux (BOD) Airport or Morcenx train station.

‘This was a wonderful fast ride, with very very fit and well looked after horses riding through lovely countryside and the beach. Fantastic indeed!’ DW of Bridges

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
Valley of Wonders

6d/5n/6 days riding, set dates in July and August

Combine a riding holiday in the Southern Alps with a visit to Europe’s largest collection of bronze age engravings. This trail takes riders through the spectacular scenery of the Vallée des Merveilles (Valley of Wonders) in the Mercantour national park, crossing the Italian frontier with views of the highest and most beautiful summits of the Southern Alps, passing mountain lakes and spotting local wildlife throughout the trail.

This ride would suit fit, adventurous riders who have an interest in seeing the unique, Bronze Age petroglyphs scratched into the rocks in this mysterious valley. Accommodation is in comfortable guesthouses and hotels along the route; lunches are picnics using local produce enjoyed in picturesque spots along the trail.

Getting there: Transfers from Nice (NCE) Airport payable on site, or the village of Saint-Martin-Vésubie for free (direct bus from Nice Airport: Ligne D’Azur N°730).

The High Liguria

8d/7n/6 days riding, set date April

Discover the wild Ligurian mountains and coastline on this 8 day, point-to-point trail crossing from France into Italy on willing, sure-footed horses. Ride through mountain passes and pine forests before visiting ancient, medieval villages. This trail is for adventurous riders who want to get away from it all. Riders should look forward to enjoying spectacular views of the sea as they ride through the Alps that border France and Italy. Accommodation is in small hamlets along the trail, generally hotels or agriturismos where riders will be able to refuel with authentic Ligurian meals made with local produce.

Getting there: Transfers from Nice (NCE) Airport payable on site, or the village of Saint-Martin-Vésubie for free (direct bus from Nice Airport: Ligne D’Azur N°730).

Great Transhumance

7d/6n/6 days riding. Set date in September

Take part in the ancient tradition of transhumance (moving livestock between summer and winter pastures) on this 6-day trail through the French and Italian Alps, where we move horses to their summer grazing. Riding from the sea up into the southern Alps, the trail passes through the lush Italian pastures of the riviera dei fiori (riviera of flowers), famous for its azure waters, alpine and medieval towns. Riders will be able to enjoy the remarkable landscapes of this part of the Italian rivieras before reaching the steep pastures of the snow-capped Alps. Suitable for fit intermediate riders onwards who like long riding days.

Getting there: Transfers from Nice (NCE) Airport payable on site, or the village of Saint-Martin-Vésubie for free (direct bus from Nice Airport: Ligne D’Azur N°730).

Crossing the Mercantour

7d/6n/6 days riding. Set dates June, July and August

This point to point trail follows the ‘Via Alpine’, an extensive route which stretches from the Mediterranean to the Adriatic Sea, crossing 8 countries along the way and following the curving chain of the Alps. This particular trail travels along the section through the Mercantour National Park from Saint-Dalmas-le-Selvage to Estenc. Pass through traditional villages and hamlets that have stood for centuries in this wild place as you ride up to the reaches of the High Alps. It feels like you’ve stepped back in time as you discover the heritage of ancient pastoral farming on the mountain slopes, and the scenery is simply stunning.

Accommodation is in a variety of hotels, guesthouses and B&Bs. This ride operates in reverse on alternate dates.

Getting there: Transfers from Nice (NCE) Airport payable on site, or the village of Saint-Martin-Vésubie for free (direct bus from Nice Airport: Ligne D’Azur N°730).

‘Great to be there again and can’t wait to go back next year’.
PK of London

‘An absolutely fabulous holiday. Our guide created a lovely atmosphere of camaraderie for the group’
SC of Balmain
The South

Haute Languedoc

8d/7n/5 days riding. Saturdays between May and October

This is a beautiful location situated high up in the unspoilt countryside of the Haut Languedoc Natural Park. The varied terrain of pine forests, heather moorland and steep, craggy hillsides makes for exciting riding country. The riding is western style with tuition available for intermediate riders as well as trail riding in the surrounding area.

The ranch is 3,200 ft above sea level with views to the Pyrenees and the Mediterranean Sea on a clear day, making it a pleasant temperature even in the heat of summer. Accommodation is in comfortable en suite rooms on site, with a western bar and dining room in the lodge.

A welcoming atmosphere combined with fun filled riding days create a wonderful holiday experience with a high level of returning guests.

Getting there: Transfers from Beziers (BZR) Airport payable on site.

Carcassonne

Pyrenean Trail & Short Break

8d/7n/6 days riding. 4d/3n/3 days riding. Guided, set dates April to September. Unguided any day start April to September.

Set in the rugged red Pyrenean Mountains with panoramic views en route is an adventurous week-long trail exploring this mountainous area replete with history. Ride past a series of Cathar castles such as Puilajauers and Puivert Castle and across the Occitan speaking valley of Fenouilledes with its smaller castles. Accommodation in chambre d’hote farm houses or small guesthouses along the way. This trail can be done guided or unguided by experienced riders who are prepared to take full responsibility for themselves and their horses. Set departure dates guided by a qualified, experienced and able to ride in all paces for up to 7 hours a day. You may be required to walk with your horse over more challenging terrain. The accommodation and organisation are not amazing, the locations and riding are top class and is what people come here for. Be prepared to compromise on other things.

Getting there: Transfers available from Carcassonne (CCF) Airport or the medieval walled town of Carcassonne.

Pays Basque & Atlantic Coast Combo

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates April, May, June, Sept and October

This is an exhilarating trail with varying terrain. During the first 4 days of the trail you will be far from civilisation, taking advantage of the opportunities to approach herds of wild horses of the Basque country (the Pottok), covering high peaks with spectacular views, leading into deep, wild valleys where eagles and vultures soar above you in beautiful blue skies. The final 2 days of the trail are spent riding on the endless beaches of the Atlantic Ocean. If the weather allows you may swim with your horse.

The trail requires riders to be fit, confident and experienced and able to ride in all paces for up to 7 hours a day. You may be required to walk with your horse over more challenging terrain. The accommodation and organisation are not amazing, the locations and riding are top class and is what people come here for. Be prepared to compromise on other things.

Getting there: Transfers from Bordeaux (BOD) Airport or The medieval walled town of Carcassonne.

Armagnac Trail Unguided

7d/6n/5 days riding. Sunday to Sunday from April to October.

A few hours south of Bordeaux you pass through the Armagnac region, this sleepy and undiscovered part of rural France offers a quiet getaway from April to November. The countryside is full of vineyards, natural forests, sunflower fields, hidden lakes and pine plantations. There is hardly any need to ride on the roads except to admire the traditional local villages. The riding is at your own pace on well schooled and reliable horses.

This is an exhilarating trail with varying terrain. During the first 4 days of the trail you will be far from civilisation, taking advantage of the opportunities to approach herds of wild horses of the Basque country (the Pottok), covering high peaks with spectacular views, leading into deep, wild valleys where eagles and vultures soar above you in beautiful blue skies. The final 2 days of the trail are spent riding on the endless beaches of the Atlantic Ocean. If the weather allows you may swim with your horse.

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Getting there: Fly to Bordeaux (BOD) Airport and train to Mont de Marsan train station.
Spain

Size: 505,992 km²
Population: 46,432,433
Languages: Spanish, Basque, Catalan
Currency: Euro
Time Zone: GMT +1 / +2 in summer

When to go:

Interesting fact: There is no tooth fairy in Spain but rather a tooth mouse called Ratoncito Perez.

“The holiday was amazing as every other one has been, weather fantastic, great horses, good food and hotels”

KF of Burnoffield

Riding in Spain

Unicorn’s horse riding holidays are located in the most beautiful areas of Spain, some famous and some undiscovered. Andalusia, Catalonia, Castile & Leon, the Gredos Mountains, Extremadura, Pyreneen Mountains, Asturias and Mallorca. On horseback one rides far off the beaten track through stunning scenery and can easily escape from the hoards of summer tourists.

Spain is steeped in history and its cultural heritage includes flamboyant flamenco dancing, lively fiestas, bullfighting, opera, literature and sport. Horses play an enormously important role in the culture and history of the country. The pure Spanish, or Andalusian, horses are very much loved by the Spanish people and make the perfect companion on a riding holiday in Spain.

For those riders travelling from within Europe, Spain is just on your doorstep. There is a large range of flight options including low cost budget airlines. See below for a selection of rides from our large range of holidays in Spain. They are guaranteed to whet your appetite.
Programmes

Catalonia and the Pyrenees

Catalonia is a culturally rich and scenic region with long beaches along the Costa Brava leading into the Pyrenean Mountains which stretch all along the border with France. Long acclaimed for its trading empire, the Catalonia region has many local food specialities while the Pyrenean region offers superb scenery.

Our programmes in these regions are best suited to intermediate riders onwards.

Catalan Based with Mini Trail

From 5d/4n/3 days riding. Set dates Feb, Mar, May, Jun, Sept, Oct and Nov

Ride to medieval cobbled and walled villages and enjoy the famous Catalan cuisine and wines from the Empordan region which are served throughout the ride. The diverse range of dishes, tapas and picnics making this a gastronomic way to discover the local area with opportunities to take days off or ride every day. A more relaxed experience than the trails with no pressure to ride each day or pack your bag each night.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Barcelona Airport (BCN) or Girona Airport (GRO)

The Holiday was perfect. The guides were great, the group of people that I rode with were amazing. I fell in love with my horse. Exceptional vacation and I will definitely return.

BK of Ramat Gan

Catalan Culture & Beach Trail

8d/7fn/6 days riding. Set dates Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Sept, Oct and Nov.

This ride has it all: fit and forward going Andalusian horses, beaches, sand, natural dunes, precious villages, castles and churches. Discover small medieval sites such Peratallada and Torroella de Montgri.

Experience the most exciting gallop on the fringe of the sea and overnight in small friendly hotels and guesthouses sampling the fine cuisine of the region. A bottle of local wine or cava is never far away of course!

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Barcelona Airport (BCN) or Girona Airport (GRO)

Catalan New Year

8d/7n/6 days riding. December

Why not choose an exhilarating and unforgettable way to see in the New Year? Here we offer a gateway like no other, five days of riding through the beautiful Alt Empordan region with its medieval villages, castles and churches. Enjoy the rolling hills whilst riding fit and forward going Andalusian horses and make new friends along the way. Great company, comfortable accommodation, regional cuisine and a fun New Year’s Eve party make this horse riding holiday an exceptional trail for competent riders who like to ride fast. What better way to blow the Christmas cobwebs (and mince pies) away?

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Barcelona Airport (BCN) or Girona Airport (GRO)

Smugglers Trail

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates Jul, Aug and Sept

Forget everything you think you know about mountain riding – this is faster and more varied than you would think. Ride along old smuggler’s routes on this linear trail through the heartland of Catalonia where the red and yellow flag flies proudly with many opportunities to swim/cross and play in the rivers and lakes along the way. This trail is also a gastronomic experience – food in the mountain hotels is of a high culinary standard and many different typically Catalan dishes are served.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Barcelona Airport (BCN) or Girona Airport (GRO)

Catalan Long weekend Two Beaches

5d/4n/3 days riding. Set dates in April and May
Catalonia Extreme Trail
5d/4n/4 days riding. Set dates Mar, Apr, May, Oct and Nov
This is the perfect trail for fit riders and certainly not for the faint-hearted. Here we can offer 5-7 hours of riding per day covering a total of 170km over 4 days of riding. Enjoy long canters along the paths, plains and beaches of the Alt Empordà region combined with nights in Betsalu and Sant Pere Pescador, sampling the nightlife after a day in the saddle.
Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Barcelona Airport (BCN) or Girona Airport (GRO)

Catalonia Wild Coast
8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates Apr, May and September
This is an exhilarating ride for confident riders wanting a bit of luxury and Catalan culture. Ride, relax and sunbathe on this horse riding holiday which starts off in Empordà with rolling foothills heavily forested with oak, cork and beech, and visits the most spectacular part of the Catalan coast.
Canter and gallop your way through forests of rosemary and thyme by the river Fluviá and out of the rolling hills onto the plains to visit Sant Martí de Sarroca- an incredible XII century church and rectory on this good paced ride.
Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Barcelona Airport (BCN) or Girona Airport (GRO)

Catalonia Lakes Trail
5d/4n/4 days riding. Set dates June and July
A short break which includes four nights in hotels, four full riding days and an evening departure after the last day to maximise riding time. Visit Catalonia's largest natural lake as well as fantastic scenery, great Spanish food and an optional spa experience. This trail is run by knowledgeable, experienced guides using fit and forward-going Andalusian horses.
Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Barcelona Airport (BCN) or Girona Airport (GRO)

Route of the Cathars
8d/7n/6 days riding. June and Oct other on request.
An exciting mountain trail through the Pyrenean Mountains following Cathars exile paths from the Inquisition. Comfortable accommodation and dramatic landscapes for intermediate riders onwards.
Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Barcelona Airport (BCN)

Canyon Trail
Sierra Guara
8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates in May, Jun, Sept and Oct
‘Very good. Loved the landscape and the horses. We felt happy after our 4 days’.
HK of Palma de Mallorca

Pyrenean Cattle Drive
8d/7n/6 days riding. Set date May/June
A real cattle drive in Europe, join the adventure! Get ready for some intense days filled with nature, team work and interacting with our horses, dogs and of course, cows. We move a herd of cattle from the coast high into the Pyrenean summer pastures on a one way trail. Here they can enjoy an ideal environment and good weather conditions. This journey is filled with challenges typical of any cattle drive. Therefore everyone has to be prepared to collaborate and to work as a team. This is not just a simple tourist trek through the mountains. This special trek only takes place once a year. Accommodation is a mix of hotels and a few nights camping.
Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Barcelona Airport (BCN) or Girona Airport (GRO)

Mountain to Sea Trail
8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Sept, Oct and Nov
Picturesque Catalan villages, varied scenery and the gallop of your life on a deserted beach through crystal surf. Continue along rolling hills and fields of wheat, poppies and sunflowers with opportunities for faster riding to the coastal plants and on to the beach. The Alt Empordà region is just brimming with culture, history and natural diversity. Good company, great riding, Andalusian X horses, comfortable accommodation and regional cuisine; this horse riding holiday has the classic formula for an unbelievable and unforgettable ride for competent riders who like many fast canters.
Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Barcelona Airport (BCN) or Girona Airport (GRO)
Western Gredos Mountains

7d/6n/5 days riding. Set dates June to October

This trail takes you through the Gredos mountains with its beautiful nature and many charming villages. Your guide Emilio knows every stone along the path of the ride and is dedicated and enthusiastic about this trail, a route he has ridden since childhood. His warmth and care bring to life the contrasts and different landscapes during the week, all contributing to an all round experience.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Madrid Barajas Airport (MAD)

Crystalline Waters of the Gredos

7d/6n/5 days riding. Set dates July and August

A relaxed and comfortable ride, great for families and less experienced or fit riders. You stay at the same hotel most nights, but ride out daily on different itineraries through the wild landscape of the Gredos Mountains, where you can see Iberic Goats, golden eagles or black vultures. In the middle of the week, you will travel to another town located in the Tormes valley to spend one night out.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Madrid Barajas Airport (MAD)

Gredos Four Valleys

7d/6n/5 days riding. Set dates Sept and Nov

Ride through four valleys with very different landscapes, from flat fields with holm oak riding by the very well preserved Roman road from the second century, through gardens to mountain valleys with pine trees, bathed by the clear, clean waters of Gredos. On this ride confident riders can appreciate the aptitude for adaptation to different terrains of the pure hispano-arab horses.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Madrid Barajas Airport (MAD)

Gredos Salamanca Ride

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates June and September.

The ride to the charming town of Salamanca with the oldest university in Spain, starts in Navarredonda de Gredos. You ride in the Sierra de Candelario and Sierra de Bejar, a very lush area with its microclimate, then follow the Tormes River further north. The predominant landscape is holm oak where you will see black bulls.

Getting there: Return transfers included at set times from Madrid Barajas Airport (MAD)

Andalusia

Andalusia, although historically poor, has always had a very strong cultural identity. It was ruled by the Moors from the 8th to 15th century. Many cultural phenomena that are seen as distinctly Spanish are largely or entirely Andalusian in origin, including the Andalusian horse (originally a war horse), flamenco, bullfighting and Moorish-influenced architectural styles.

Alpujarras Trail

8d/7n/6 days riding or 6d/5n/4 days riding.
Set dates April to October.

On this trail, which runs for seven or five nights depending on the date, you ride deep in the heart of this region, an experience not much different from that in Spain of the 19th Century. Here time stops for travelers, who wonder at the changing landscapes and vegetation of the different microclimates. Your charming host Rafael, has run trail rides in these mountains for 30 years and knows the routes like the back of his hand. Pure Andalusians are well loved and very sure footed mounts on the steep trails. Without a doubt you will make many new friends on this trail.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Granada Airport (GRX)

Andalusian Hacienda

Min 3 nights. Open February to November

Based at a beautifully restored hacienda in the heart of Andalusia all levels of rider can enjoy a mix of lessons and riding out. There is scope for long trots and canters for better riders on good ground through acres of olive groves, vineyards and pine forests with far many reaching vistas. Ideal for families in holiday time the hacienda offers riding for children from 4 years onwards and there are many activities for non-riders including swimming, hiking, cycling, Spanish cooking lessons.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Malaga Airport (AGP)

Alpujarras Mountain Retreat

Min 3 nights. All year round on request

East of Malaga deep in the mountains the Parque Natural Sierra Nevada, Compeida is the peaceful setting for a wonderful retreat. The beautiful Finca is set deep in the National Park and surrounded by nature. The original farmhouse is 500 years old and has lovingly restored. The views from the terrace to the ocean, peaceful terraced gardens and swimming pool make this a delightful retreat with horses on your doorstep. Most of the food at the Finca is home grown organic with fresh eggs and vegetables daily. Donna was a chef at the Grosvenor Hotel in a previous life, so the food is outstanding.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Malaga Airport (AGP)
Finca Alcadeisa
8d/7n/6 days riding. Open all year with some restrictions on beach riding

Set in the hills only 20 min from Gibraltar we find a traditional Spanish Cortijo situated in a large private estate. Formerly a royal hunting lodge, the beautifully restored main house is set in 320 acres of natural cork forests, an area ideal for riding with many sandy tracks. The owners ride endurance and have a stable of fit, forward-going yet good-natured horses. General tuition is offered onsite. There are nearby beaches, castles and white Moorish villages all connected by miles and miles of riding tracks through natural forests. Every day we explore in a different direction. This destination offers fast riding and high service levels.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Gibraltar Airport (GIB)

Donana Trail
8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates March and November.

A week-long trail through the Doñana Natural Park taking in the best of the surrounding landscapes and riding across a diverse range of terrain.

Getting there: Return transfers included at set times from Sevilla Airport (SVQ)

Fiestas of Andalusia
6d/5n/4 days riding. Set dates May to October

Andalusia is famous for its colourful festivals. Throughout the year, but particularly in the spring and summer, every local village will stage a ‘Feria’. Each feria also has a ‘Romeria’ which is the mounted display. Horses are beautifully turned out, their traditional tack is gleaming and everyone puts on their party clothes - black trousers and white shirts with traditional hats for the ladies. These very special rides offer an opportunity to participate in local festivals on horseback, preparing the horses the day before, riding to (or boxing if further away) the horses to the villages and taking part in the displays. There is a carnival atmosphere and anyone on a horse is especially welcome! The traditional feria offers riding for all levels, but to participate in the mounted display, general tuition is offered onsite. There are nearby beaches, castles and white Moorish villages all connected by miles and miles of riding tracks through natural forests. Every day we explore in a different direction. This destination offers fast riding and high service levels.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Gibraltar Airport (GIB)

Ride to Jatar
8d/7n/5 days riding. All year round on request.

Come and enjoy the real Andalusia on this week which includes a trail across the Sierra Nevada mountains to Jatar. You will relax for a few days getting used to your horses and exploring the area before setting off on a challenging trail to Jatar along steep routes across the mountains that have been used for centuries by muleteers to transport fresh goods from the coast to the interior. On arrival at Jatar we have a day to relax and enjoy the healing hot springs - or undertake more strenuous explorations - before returning via another spectacular route.

This is a very traditional part of Spain and traveling on a beautiful Andalusian in comfortable local saddles (or English if you prefer) is still undertaken as matter of routine by the friendly inhabitants. This is an amazing experience not to be missed.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Malaga Airport (AGP)

‘The riding was relaxed, with some faster paced rides and the picnic ride was an absolute treat!’
MB of Norwich

Forest and Beach Andalusia
8d/7n/5 days riding. Open February to November.

This horse riding holiday is a great introduction to the delights of riding abroad and will leave you with fantastic memories; galloping along unspoilt beaches, through forested national park, and quaint white-washed villages. Meals are provided in a variety of typical Spanish restaurants. The town is lovely and the friendly local people will soon make you feel very welcome. As well as providing a great horse riding holiday Barbate also has lovely walks available and shopping in the town centre. The town also has a lovely old quarter that takes you back to how Spain used to be.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site at set times from Malaga Airport (AGP)

Tabernas Desert Route
8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates in May and October.

This horse riding holiday in Spain offers a one way trail through the mountains into the Spanish Tabernas Desert, the home of Spaghetti Westerns. On this trail you will see a variety of scenery from very steep mountain villages to wide open dusty desert. On the occasions when these rides are run back to back, on the second date, the itinerary is reversed and the route ridden from the desert to the mountains.

Getting there: Return transfers included at set times from Granada Airport (GRA)

Trail to Jimena
Min 3 nights. Dates available on request year round.

Get away for a short break with lots of fast riding! Riding from a secluded valley on responsive endurance trained horses. This is an ideal break for those wishing to pack the maximum riding into a short time along carefully thought out routes to historic locations. With luxurious accommodation and excellent food, this is a high quality break with lots of riding for experienced and reasonably fit riders.

Getting there: Return transfers included at set times from Gibraltar Airport (GIB)

Don Manuel of Norwich

Trail to Tarifa
8d/7n/6 days riding. Dates available on request, year round.

The traditional Spanish Cortijo, Finca Alcadeisa, is situated 20 minutes drive away from Gibraltar in a large private estate. This will be the base from which you will ride a mini-trail down the coast to the seaside town of Tarifa. En route you and your horse will discover beaches, castles and white Moorish villages all connected by miles and miles of riding tracks through natural forests. This is the perfect riding holiday for strong intermediate riders onwards who are looking for a fast paced, cultural adventure in rural Spain.

Getting there: Return transfers included at set times from Gibraltar Airport (GIB)

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
Majorca

Majorca is the largest of the Balearic Island archipelago located in the Mediterranean Sea. The ease of flying to Palma has opened up Majorca and we offer riding for all levels based on a finca in the peaceful south east of the island.

Beginners Programme

8d/7n/6 days riding.
Every Sunday March to November.

A great introductory riding holiday, typical day would offer lessons or riding out in the beautiful Majorcan countryside. Complete beginners will learn the basics of control and more experienced riders will decide along with the instructor what they would like to work on for the week. There is plenty of relaxation time either by the pool or exploring the on site working stud.

Getting there: Return transfers included at set times from Palma Airport (PMI)

Tuition and Trails

8d/7n/6 days riding.
Set dates March to November

This horse riding holiday in Spain is based in a finca situated in the Levante hills on the island of Majorca, with two rides each day. The finca is especially dedicated to the world of horses. It has become a compelling visit for horse riders and lovers of the peaceful Majorcan countryside. As well as the trail centre, the finca also houses a thriving Andalusian stud and you are welcome to walk around the paddocks of the mares and foals. There is a comfortable and rustic-style country farmhouse (finca) which has all the necessary facilities including an outside swimming pool for a relaxing and unforgettable stay. You can learn to jump or improve your technique and learn dressage basics or improve on the Andalusian stallions.

Getting there: Return transfers included at set times from Palma Airport (PMI)

Dressage & Show Jumping Programme

8d/7n/6 days riding.
Every Sunday March to November.

The surrounding landscape of the Levante hills, and the quality of the horses make for enjoyable and exciting trail rides. The horses are highly schooled Andalusian and cross breeds, kept in peak condition by a caring team. The guides and instructors are very experienced and speak several languages. This a la carte riding programme gives the rider maximum flexibility on their riding holiday. It consists of a trial day with a 1hr lesson and 1hr trail ride, 2 full days trail riding, a free day and 2 days where either trails or lessons can be chosen and 2hrs of spa. This holiday is ideal to bring non-riding partners and friends along as there are many activities on offer, it also caters well for families.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Palma Airport (PMI)

Castille and Leon

Located in north-western Spain Castille and Leon encompasses a large portion of Spain’s Meseta Central, surrounded by mountainous regions. Historically rich, the region contains six UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The region produces high quality wines including Ribera del Duero which are increasingly known beyond the borders of Spain. The Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route also passes through Castille and Leon on route to Santiago de Compostella.

Camino de Santiago

8d/7n/6 days riding.
Every Sunday March to November.

This adventurous journey covers the Camino de Santiago pilgrimage route in Spain from the Pyrenees to Santiago de Compostella in 4 distinctive stages. Choose from one or a combination of these week-long point-to-point trails to follow part or the whole pilgrimage route on horseback, discovering the beauty and history of northern Spain along the way. Accommodation is in comfortable guesthouses and the food is hearty and homely, showcasing local dishes and produce.

Getting there: Return transfers included at set times from Madrid Airport (MAD)

Gourmet Wine Route

8d/7n/6 days riding.
Set dates in June and August

On this riding holiday in Spain you will explore the vineyards of Ribera Del Duero on superb pure-bred Spanish horses. Stop off to taste fine wines at some of the oldest and most iconic wineries in Spain. You will stay overnight in excellent hotels and dine in some of the finest restaurants, sampling fresh local cuisine: wine and meat and good horses are the focus of this ride.

Getting there: Return transfers included at set times from Madrid Airport (MAD)
Green Mountain Trail

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates in June

This trail rides along the nature reserve of high peaks of the Sierra de la Demanda while not neglecting to visit the many historic and cultural highlights en-route. There is much wildlife to be seen on this horse riding holiday in Spain: Wolves, deers, otters, royal eagle, falcon and a lot more.

The horses are beautiful Pure Spanish, very responsive and a pleasure to ride. Overnight accommodation is in a variety of characterful small hotels and guest houses.

Getting there: Return transfers included at set times from Madrid Barajas Airport (MAD)

Roots of Castilla

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates in June and September

Explore the spectacular scenery on magnificent pure Spanish horses, the pride and joy of their owner. Ride along routes taken by the Spanish hero as El Cid in the times of the Moorish occupation. Overnight accommodation on this ride is in very comfortable hotels with en suite bathrooms. The riding, food and wine is all above average, this riding holiday is highly recommended for good riders wanting to experience true Spanish culture in comfort.

Getting there: Return transfers included at set times from Madrid Airport (MAD)

Trail to the Atlantic

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates in April and September

Excellent point to point trail horse riding holiday in Spain. Ride north from the small white-washed villages of Burgos to the Atlantic Ocean at Santander and enjoy the fast beach riding along the Atlantic Coast. The horses are all Pure Spanish (PRE), forward-going, very responsive and ridden in Spanish style saddles. Accommodation on each night is in comfortable small hotels and guest houses, with food typical of the region.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Madrid Barajas Airport (MAD)

Guadalupe Ride

7d/6n/5 days riding. Set dates Feb, March and April

A week-long horse riding holiday through Villuercas National Park to the Guadalupe Monastery for experienced riders. Discover the Extremadura region with its culinary specialties, especially jamon ibérico and crisp white wines and enjoy comfortable lodgings in stunning countryside on this cultural tour.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Madrid Barajas Airport (MAD)

Asturias Cider Trail

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set date in September, other available on request

Ride through the Asturias region in far north-western Spain famous for its apples, cider and regional food. The horses are sure-footed and trustworthy - you'll travel to areas inaccessible by vehicle. Accommodation is provided by small hotels and guesthouses along the route. As well as riding this holiday includes a visit to see how local Spanish cider is produced (complete with tasting!) and a 9th century monastery. An ideal riding holiday for riders who want to explore the high mountain ranges as well as enjoy beach riding and gourmet culture in this hidden corner of Spain, untainted by mass tourism.

Getting there: Transfers included from Oviedo (OVD), Bilbao (BIO) or Madrid (MAD). Airports at set times
Riding in Portugal

One of the oldest nation states in Europe, its territory includes the sub tropical Atlantic archipelagos of the Azores and Madeira. With a warm and sunny climate outside of the cities, Portugal remains a very traditional society with equestrianism still highly regarded. Blessed with 850km of splendid beaches and an exceptional range of different landscapes in a short distance, hospitable people, excellent cuisine, fine wines and Lusitano horses, it is a natural place to visit on a riding holiday.

Horses have been present on the Iberia Peninsula as far back as 20,000BC and by Roman times the Lusitania region (roughly corresponding to modern Portugal) was famous for its war horses. When the Muslims invaded the region in 711AD they brought Barb horses with them which were crossed with the native war horses, developing a horse that became famous excellent for use in war, dressage and bull fighting.

Historically Portugal pioneered travel of the world with such famous explorers as Vasco de Gama. However, Portugal hasn’t done so well at attracting today’s travellers to its own country with large areas remaining quite undiscovered. It is one of the least spoilt corners of Europe - ideal to visit on a horse riding holiday.

Interesting fact: After Manuel II, Portugal’s last king, was deposed in 1910, he lived in exile in Twickenham, UK.
Dressage Rides

The Portuguese Lusitano breed is an Iberian horse closely related to the Spanish Andalusian. By 800 BC war horses from the Lusitania region were in much demand. When the Muslims invaded Iberia in 711 AD, they brought Barb horses with them that were crossed with the native horses, developing a horse with a convex profile, heavy muscling and intelligent and willing nature. These horses then went on to excel in dressage - which has its origins in training for the battlefield - and bull fighting.

In 1966, the Portuguese and Spanish stud books split. Lusitanos have competed in several Olympic and World Equestrian Games as part of the Portuguese and Spanish dressage teams. For those interested in Dressage, or classical equitation, riding a well-schooled Lusitano is a must.

"The horses are absolutely fantastic. They are very highly trained and super talented, so it is possible to do things you usually can’t do with most privately owned or riding school horses”

AH of Dublin

Alcancia Classical Dressage

Suggested 8d/7n/6 days riding minimum 3 nights. Available all year round.

Visit this world renowned riding school for top-level dressage tuition on majestic pure and part-bred Lusitano horses. Operating for over 30 years, Escola de Equitação de Alcainça welcomes riders from all over the world and offers top-level classical dressage tuition for all riders from novice to experienced.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Lisbon Airport (LIS).

"A completely new experience to ride classical dressage but made easy on such well schooled horses”

AL of Co Waterford
Golega Dressage & Trail riding

Recommend 7 nights, min 3 nights. Open all year.

Travel to Golega, the horse capital of Portugal, to brush up on your dressage skills aboard highly-trained Lusitano stallions. Programmes available include intensive dressage, a combination of dressage and riding out or a more relaxed dressage in the morning with cultural activities in the afternoon. Stay on site in a former water mill and take part in a yoga class or venture into the local area for golf, hiking or fishing.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site from Lisbon Airport (LIS).

‘Amazing holiday, wonderful accommodation, excellent instruction!’
PW of Farnham

Classical Equitation in Lisbon

7d/6n/5 days riding or 4d/3n/2d riding.
Open all year.

Superb dressage tuition on beautiful Lusitano horses given by a Master Rider of the Portuguese School of Equestrian Art. There is no other way to learn! All levels of rider from beginner to Prix St Georges, close enough to Lisbon centre to combine with city visit, the centre with cottages, swimming pool and stables/arenas is an oasis of peace.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Lisbon Airport (LIS).

‘Trip of a lifetime. Antonio has a natural gift with training horses and coaching his students. He is very humble given his many accomplishments and vast knowledge..... I felt extremely welcome at their farm. We became fast friends during the week we were there’. IB of Enderby

Trails

Trail riding holidays are 'point-to-point' rides. With these itineraries you ride from A to B, each day you will set off from one location and finish in a different place to where you will spend the night, perhaps in a local guesthouse or under canvas.

Trail rides are a good way to cover ground and often allow you to explore different areas, eco systems and cultures. Riders confident in all paces are best suited to these rides along with a degree of fitness as trails often involve 4-6 hours in the saddle daily.

Some trails are circular, bringing you back to the place you started, whereas others are linear and will finish in a totally different area. These are top quality rides in every way and very popular, so book early.

Blue Coast Trail

8d/7n/6 days riding.
Set dates May, June and September.

Set in the most beautiful location, the Costa Azul, also known as the Blue Coast, the ride encompasses the southern stretch of Portugal’s west coast. It is remote and unspoilt with deserted beaches and pristine countryside even during the summer months.

From beaches to small fishing lagoons and villages, inland explore the Mountain of Cercal with its green hills covered by forests of eucalyptus and cork trees. Magnificent horses and above average accommodation.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Lisbon Airport (LIS) at set times for point to point trails and take about 2 hours.

‘I felt it was a perfect ride. It had very long canters, which were exactly what I was hoping for’.
SM of Fitzroy Harbour
**Bottlenose Trail**

8d/7n/6 days riding. 
Set dates February to November.

Ride along remote and unspoilt deserted beaches and pristine countryside all along the coast, even during the summer months. The area around the mouth of the river Rio Sado is a sanctuary of 57,500 acres. Dolphins play in the mouth of the river. Ride from the lush and green coastal mountains of Grandola, overgrown with pine and cork-oak forests, to the inviting beaches of turquoise waters. In a similar area to the Bottlenose trails, this ride has better accommodation including an historic Pousada for 3 nights.

**Getting there:** Return transfers included from Lisbon Airport (LIS) at set times for point to point trails and take about 1 hour on day 1.

**It was a really wonderful holiday. My only wish is that it was longer! I have never felt so totally safe at speed and gone so fast so happily.**

JM of Patchway

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**Dolphin Coast Trail**

8d/7n/6 days riding. 
Set dates March to October.

The area around the mouth of the river Rio Sado is a sanctuary of 57,500 acres. Dolphins play in the mouth of the river. From here on south you’ll find 36 miles of deserted beaches only interrupted by lagoons and little fishing villages. Discover this jewel on the back of a first class Lusitano. Ride from the lush and green coastal mountains of Grandola, overgrown with pine and cork-oak forests, to the inviting beaches of turquoise waters. In a similar area to the Bottlenose trails, this ride has better accommodation including an historic Pousada for 3 nights.

**Getting there:** Return transfers included from Lisbon Airport (LIS) at set times for point to point trails and take about 1 hour on day 1.

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**Alentejo Estate Ride**

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates April and May.

The Alentejo area of Portugal is home to two of the National Portuguese stud farms and is the largest breeding area for fighting bulls in Portugal. This is wonderful horse country with soft trails through pleasant countryside. You will stay in beautifully renovated private estates whose previous inhabitants were noblemen. Beautiful antique furniture and art create a special atmosphere that makes the accommodation a highlight of this trail. You will visit one of the headquarters of the two National Portuguese Stud Farms, which will be a highlight for lovers of Portuguese horse breeds.

**Getting there:** Return transfers included from Lisbon Airport (LIS) at set times for point to point trails and take about 1 hour on day 1.

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**Panoramic Plateau**

8d/7n/6 days riding. Saturday departures all year.

Centre based riding holiday in beautiful mountainous natural park just north of Lisbon. The riding centre offers trails in different directions each day as well as tuition and jumping. Accommodation is in a nearby 4* B&B surrounded by beautiful nature.

**Getting there:** Return transfers payable on site from Lisbon Airport (LIS).

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‘**An outstanding experience – ride through spectacular countryside on beautifully schooled horses**’

AS of South Africa
The Algarve

The most popular destination in Portugal is easily accessible with multiple, excellent value flights daily into Faro airport. There has never been a better time to make your dream into a reality!

The hosts can’t do enough for you, good accommodation, Great food, as much as you can eat anytime of the day or night. These are the best trained horses I’ve ever found on a holiday, for any level of rider. Stunning countryside and fun. I’d recommend to anyone.

JP of Kingsbridge

Monty Roberts Join Up Course

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates in April.

Complete a Monty Roberts Join Up course, a gentle method of communicating with and training horses, while enjoying all the services of a welcoming Western Ranch situated in 12 hectares of good rugged riding country in the beautiful Algarve.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site from Faro Airport (FAO).

Western Style Algarve

From 8d/7n/6 days riding. All year round except January, February, November and December.

In the heart of beautiful Algarve riding country lies a very popular ranch holiday offering twice daily trail riding building up to one full day out on the week-long stays.

Trails pass through scented macchia, trees and shrubland, over hills and dales and along paths that are only accessible on horseback, by mountain bike or walking. You may not see another soul, meaning you are free to enjoy the magnificent views and the peace of the countryside around you, just horse and rider. All the horses are schooled in Western style using natural horsemanship, where a closeness and trust is developed between horse and rider.

Beginners and experienced riders are catered for and short breaks are available. Wake up to a view of grazing horses and smell the freshly brewed coffee. On return to the ranch in the evenings you can sit around the fire and enjoy some drinks relaxing under the beautiful Portuguese night skies.

Getting there: Return transfers payable on site from Faro Airport (FAO).

This was our second stay at the Ranch... Stephan and Lana make you feel at home and the rides are very enjoyable. The Join Up course by Anna was very interesting and informative, it was rewarding to be able to experience personally the Join Up and other theoretical notions.

GD of Winnipeg
Riding in Italy

Where better for Unicorn to locate horse riding holidays in stylish, cultured European Italy with its wonderful sunny climate and good-humoured volatility!

Few countries have such a long and distinguished history as Italy. We all know about the Romans of course, but the Etruscans settled long before in northern and central Italy, way back in the sixth century BC. Then approximately 500 years ago Italy was at the heart of the Renaissance with such legendary names as Leonardo de Vinci, Michelangelo, Botticelli and Raphael.

Its geography is well known. Most school children learn that Italy, because of its shape, is ‘the Boot’ of the Mediterranean with ‘Italy kicking Sicily’. There are miles and miles of glorious beaches and riding programmes to satisfy all levels of rider: western riding, spectacular nature, medieval castles, monasteries and dressage lessons are all on offer.

So, come on a horse riding holiday in Italy and link culture, style and history with sun, beaches and mountains. Not forgetting wonderful food and excellent local wines.

**Italy**

- **Size:** 301,338 km²
- **Population:** 59,230,560
- **Languages:** Italian
- **Currency:** Euro
- **Time Zone:** GMT +1 / +2 in summer

**When to go:**

![Map of Italy](image)

**Interesting fact:** There are thousands of traditional and regional Italian desserts. However, the most famous one abroad, the tiramisu, was only invented in the 1970's. The name literally means "pick-me-up" (metaphorically: "make me happy"), due to two of its ingredients: coffee and cocoa.
Programmes

Tuscany

Tuscany is in Central Italy with the Mediterranean Sea running down its west border. Most of the region is either hilly or mountainous with over 120 protected nature reserves and 7 world heritage sites including in Florence, Siena and Pisa. Combined they produce the typical Tuscan landscapes.

Toscana Cucina

7d/6n/3 days riding. Set dates March to November

Toscana Cucina is a perfect combination of horse riding, genuine Italian cookery classes and cultural and historical sightseeing around Siena. This is a great choice for riders and non-riders looking to enjoy a holiday together!

The circular stone walls of the Castello, a medieval hamlet built on the foundations of a 12th century castle, serve as a hospitable central base. After your superb ride or excursion, you’ll return to the convivial atmosphere of the Castello’s spacious dining room and Tuscan kitchen.

Accommodation is in lovingly restored suites which have retained their atmosphere while offering every modern convenience. Apart from the cookery classes, there are fine wine tastings in medieval cellars, city tours, visits to local food producers and to a shepherd’s farmhouse to assist in the making of pecorino cheese.

This is an exceptional itinerary with above average service levels for lovers of food, fine wine and fantastic riding.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Siena train station at set times. Collection from Rome (FCO), Bologna (BLQ) and Pisa (PSA) Airports can be arranged, payable on site.

Castellos of Tuscany

7d/6n/5 days riding. Set dates April to October

Discover Italian history, nature and La Dolce Vita (the good life), in a castello perched high above Siena with spectacular views. Your warm-hearted host Vittorio is incredibly knowledgeable about the culture and history of the area and a great believer in living closely aligned with the land. This destination offers top class guiding, service levels and accommodation. The food is a feature with local seasonal dishes and the best wines from the area are constant companions as you make your way through the countryside on fit, substantial, responsive and impeccably schooled hunter-type horses. Non-riders are also welcome and have plenty of options to keep them entertained while the riders are out. Each year there is one special Palio Week centred around The Palio of Sienna, an ancient Etruscan tradition of running down its west border. Most of the region is either hilly or mountainous with over 120 protected nature reserves and 7 world heritage sites including in Florence, Siena and Pisa. Combined they produce the typical Tuscan landscapes.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Siena train station at set times. Collection from Rome (FCO), Bologna (BLQ) and Pisa (PSA) Airports can be arranged, payable on site.

Heart of Tuscany

8d/7n/6 days riding. Saturday to Saturday March to December

Situated in a peaceful, picturesque valley in the heart of Chianti and within easy reach of Florence, this holiday combines riding through classical Tuscan countryside with empathetic instruction and offers riding for all levels of rider from beginner onwards at their own level. Ideal for families in holiday times. Accommodation is in an 18th century country villa featuring terra-cotta floors, wooden beamed roofs and arched ceilings and a swimming pool with glorious panoramic view over the Tuscan hills.

Getting there: Florence (FLR) or Pisa (PSA) Airport transfers payable on site.

Equestrian Traditions of Maremma

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates May and October

Join the Butteri (Tuscan cowboys) at work with their Maremma cows in their traditional way of working on several days and enjoy a mini trail in the area along ancient Etruscan roads, the Lamine Forest Nature Reserve and the medieval village of Sorano en-route. Ride western style on well-schooled horses with accommodation in typical agriturismos (farmhouses) each night in twin or double rooms.

Getting there: Transfers payable on site from Chiusi Station, Rome Fiumicino (FCO) or Ciampino (CIA) Airport.

Taste of Trekking & Western Tuition

8d/7n/6 days riding. Weekly March to October

This western centre offers a range of riding through the south of Tuscany, Italy. For beginners to experienced riders there are lessons in western riding aimed at developing and deepening the knowledge of ‘natural western’, ‘collaboration between horse and rider’ and ‘guidance’. Mini Trails are available for novice onwards to increase confidence on super horses and through peaceful nature. Offering excellent value, super fresh Tuscan meals and years of experience in horse trekking, there is a large range of horses with western tack. This centre has a relaxed informal atmosphere and is especially recommended for those coming alone. A warm welcome and fun holiday is assured here and for a nature loving rider this is an excellent way to get started in western riding.

Getting there: Transfers payable on site from Chiusi Station, Rome Fiumicino (FCO) or Ciampino (CIA) Airport.

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
**Magic of Tuscany**

8d/7n/5 days riding. Set dates April to October

Ride at a small family run hotel based on the slopes of Poggio di Monteri situated between Siena and the Mediterranean coast. Your hosts have over 40 years of experience of providing activity holidays including mountain biking, riding and hiking.

A variety of riding is offered by the on-site stable: half or full day trail rides, lessons for beginners and 6 night trails to the coast for more experienced riders. The riding offers something for everyone. Rolling hills with woods, tracks and views which are typical of Tuscany. There is a large stable of good sized wel-schoolxed horses.

**Getting there:** Pisa (PSA) Airport then train to Follonica.

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**Winter Culture & Riding in Tuscany**

8d/7n choose riding days. From November to March

Based at a 13th century villa, this trip will give visitors a memorable Tuscan experience. Your host believes that in winter, Tuscany shows her true self, abandoning the stereotypes she represents to millions of summer-time tourists every year. It is a secret, quiet time; the olive leaves turn from green to silver, wildlife thrives in fields.

This holiday is aimed at those wishing to experience all aspects of this region; ride through hidden villages, relax at a spa, visit the museums without the queues, cook up a storm with culinary tuition or simply sit back and sample some of the region’s finest wines. There is no set itinerary; you decide which activity you would like to do on a day to day basis.

**Getting there:** Sienna train station, set times, transfers included. Collection from Rome (FCO), Bologna (BLQ) and Pisa (PSA) Airports can be arranged, payable on site.

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**Medieval Castle and Spa**

From 3 to 7 nights. Open March to October

Great riding for all abilities and lots for non-riders at this enchanting 17th century castle; immerse yourself in the peaceful Italian countryside and stay in the carefully restored farmhouse. There are lessons available as well as riding with an onsite spa for relaxing treatments to help you recover.

**Getting there:** Orvieto train station, Rome Termini train station, Rome Ciampino (FCO) or Fiumicino (CIA) Airports, transfers payable on site.

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**Umbria**

Umbria is one of Italy’s smallest regions and less crowded than its famous neighbour, Tuscany. It has rolling hills, mountains, river valleys, chestnut tree groves and elm tree forests as well as super wines. The hills are dotted with small villages, watchtowers, fortresses, castles and monasteries.

**Umbrian Short Break in the Saddle**

5d/4n/3 days riding. Set dates March to October

Short break set in unspoilt countryside, surrounded by woodland, overlooking mountains and valleys on all sides. This ride caters for everyone with spectacular riding and hosting, highly recommended!

**Getting there:** Spoleto train station, transfers included. Perugia (PEG) and Rome (FCO) transfers can be arranged, payable on site.

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**Umbrian Adventure & Trails**

7d/6n/5 days riding. Set dates May, June, Sept and October

Warm hosting and riding in hilly Umbrian countryside make this ride perfect for almost anyone. The riding centre, with onsite swimming pool and accommodation, is set on a hilltop with far reaching views on all sides. This ride caters for everyone from beginners to experienced riders. Programmes include the Umbrian Adventure based stay (beginner and experienced versions), an Umbrian Summer Adventure which includes an optional night camping out next to Roman Ruins and a week long trail. If time is constrained all programmes can also be shortened on request, with its based stay and trail itineraries. This riding centre will also give you the opportunity to experience a magical night ride lit by the full moon and fireflies.

**Getting there:** Spoleto train station, transfers included. Perugia (PEG) and Rome (FCO) transfers can be arranged, payable on site.
Showjumping Combo

8d/7n/6 days riding.
Set dates March to October

There are excellent facilities at this riding centre to enable this special Show Jumping tuition and trail riding combination to take place. Lessons are taught by either Count Adolfo Poli or the Centre’s main instructor Andrea Bevilacqua, both trained FISE instructor with years of experience teaching show jumping and dressage. In addition to the invaluable lessons you will also have the chance to ride out and explore the beautiful surrounding countryside. Beginners and novice riders can also receive lessons appropriate to their level as can children, and dressage tuition is also available.

Getting there: Spoleto train station, transfers included. Perugia (PEG) and Rome (FCO) transfers can be arranged, payable on site.

Benedictine Monastery & Chariot Trail

6d/5n/4 days riding. Set dates June and September, others on request

Discover the extraordinary natural beauty of Umbria, Italy’s green heart, on this six day trail. Ride through ancient chestnut forests, to hidden medieval villages and learn the story of Umbria’s ‘stolen’ chariot. Stay at a converted former monastery as well as a luxury agriturismo. For riders who want to see an undiscovered side of Italy on board high quality, responsive horses.

Getting there: Spoleto train station, transfers included. Perugia (PEG) and Rome (FCO) transfers can be arranged, payable on site.

“Fantastic holiday, great horses and lovely people”.
MR of Newcastleston

Sicily

Cefalu to Etna Trail

8d/7n/6 days riding.
Set dates May, June, August and October

Highly rated trail for strong intermediate riders wanting to discover the ancient culture and history of this island. Ride through 4 national parks finishing at the lip of a live volcano. Above average accommodation and food in agriturismos.

Getting there: Palermo Airport (PMO) transfers payable on site at set times.

‘First time to Sicily and absolutely loved the country and even better to see it on horseback. The horses are beautiful and very well behaved.’
SM of Reading

Coast to Coast Trail

8d/7n/6 days riding.
Set dates May, June, September and November

An exciting adventure for experienced riders which allows you to travel all the way from the north of Sicily to Agrigento on the south coast. Learn more about this stunning island from friendly and knowledgeable guides. Expect comfortable accommodation, delicious Sicilian food and, of course, the company of a trustworthy horse who will be your partner all the way from one coast to the next!

Getting there: Palermo Airport (PMO) transfers payable on site at set times.
Riding in Greece

Greece is a wonderful choice for a horse riding holiday - a collection of sun-kissed islands surrounded by clear blue sea and spectacular mountains rising to 7600 ft. inland. Here there is still unlimited space to ride horses in the peace and beauty of nature. Ride in a land dotted with olive groves and ancient sites, way up into the rough mountains with breathtaking views, swim in the clear blue waters and dry at an abandoned beach. Be prepared for numerous surprises and for a strong sense of daily rhythms, for honest and warm hospitality. These characteristics are best discovered, not in seaside resorts, but mainly in the remote seaside and mountain villages. We offer six programmes in Crete and Rhodes.

‘Really enjoyable holiday. An exceptionally friendly atmosphere has been created at the hotel. Lovely horses, lovely countryside, great food. Perfect.’
HC of Crediton

Greece

Size: 131,957 km²
Population: 11,127,044
Languages: Greek
Currency: Euro
Time Zone: GMT +2 / +3 in summer

Interesting fact: Greece is also called the Hellenic Republic and it has more than 2,000 islands, of which only 170 are inhabited.

When to go:

- March
- April
- May
- June
- July
- August
- September
- October
- November
- December

When to go:

Greece

Heraklion Airport

Rhodes Airport

Crete

When to go:

Interesting fact: Greece is also called the Hellenic Republic and it has more than 2,000 islands, of which only 170 are inhabited.

When to go:

Greece

Heraklion Airport

Rhodes Airport

Crete
Programmes

Lassithi Trail
8d/7n/6 days riding. Guided trails run on set dates March to December. Unguided trails available when guided trails are not running

Cover 100 miles on this journey across the island and, in the mountain villages, encounter the true Cretan ‘filotimo’ – the famous Cretan hospitality. This truly is an opportunity to explore another culture on good horses with secure back-up.

Guided trails are offered on set dates and unguided trips can be done by riders with experience of looking after their own horse during unguided trips. Most people in Crete speak some English and welcome riders arriving on horseback in small villages.

The countryside lends itself to good riding with many dirt tracks winding through olive groves and mountains. As well as experiencing all of what rural Crete has to offer, every other night you will return to the stunningly appointed hotel whilst the horses stay out along the trail.

Getting there: Return taxi transfers payable on site from Heraklion Airport (HER)

Panoramic Rides
8d/7n/6 days riding. Anyday arrival from January to July and September to December

In the Langada area of Crete there is unlimited space for horse riding. Each day you set out on a different track, through beautiful landscapes, meeting no traffic. You take lunch in saddlebags which is enjoyed in a quiet spot under the olive trees.

Accommodation is in a lovely hotel next to the stables with an infinity swimming pool and stunning views over the valley. This active holiday combines all the good things of Cretan life; relax on the beach or swim in the pool, visit an ancient site, meet the friendly locals and enjoy the Greek food. Ride along a land dotted with olive groves and ancient sites holding timeless myths, take amazing paths way up into the rough mountains enjoying breath-taking views on the way.

Getting there: Return taxi transfers payable on site from Heraklion Airport (HER)

‘A fantastic experience, beautiful hotel, lovely landscape and delicious food. Horses and riding outstanding’. SK of Woodbridge

Beginners Riding Course
8d/7n/6 days riding. Available throughout the year apart from when the Guided Lassithi Trail is running

This is the perfect way to incorporate learning to ride into a general holiday. This programme teaches the new rider the English riding style. By the end of the course the rider will be able to walk and trot independently, feel secure on and around the horse, tack-up their horse and be able to take a slow hack out in the Cretan countryside. Many are able to learn to canter during this week too. The week finishes with some hacks out into the beautiful countryside - use your new-found skills to steer your horse past olive groves, watching the birds soaring above and taking in the peaceful nature of all that is around you.

Getting there: Return taxi transfers payable on site from Heraklion Airport (HER)

Treasures of Southern Rhodes
8d/7n/5 days riding. Open April – October

Explore this picture-perfect Greek island on horseback by visiting a friendly Western ranch. Experience wild swimming, mountain panoramas and delicious Mediterranean food. You’ll discover ancient Byzantine treasures and hidden waterfalls on this week-long based stay. Ideal for those seeking a relaxing holiday who want to combine easy western style riding with days on the beach.

Getting there: Return taxi transfers payable on site.

Sun and Riding
8d/7n/6 days riding. Anyday arrival from June to September.

Do you want to be a little bit more active on your beach holiday? Enjoy the Greek life, relax on the beach or explore the island visiting ancient sites during the day and in the cooler evening hours go on a 2 hour trail through the beautiful area of Langada. This is full week holiday, 6 riding days, with 2 hours in the saddle each day.

Accommodation is in a lovely four star boutique hotel next to the stables with a swimming pool and stunning views. Children aged 8-12 can enjoy a separate children’s programme and make great horse friends on this fun holiday.

Getting there: Return taxi transfers payable on site from Heraklion Airport (HER)

Rhodes Beach & Mountain Trail
8d/7n/5 days riding. Open April – October

Head to Rhodes for this circular trail taking in beaches, wooded valleys and ancient history. Confident riders can discover hidden villages, mountain trails, wine tasting and monasteries. There’s also beach riding and the chance to swim with your horse in the sea, all rounded off by delicious Mediterranean meals.

Getting there: Rhodes International Airport (RHO) transfers available and payable on site.
Turkey

Size: 783,562 km²
Population: 75,627,384
Languages: Turkish, Kurdish
Currency: Turkish Lira
Time Zone: GMT +2 / +3 in summer
When to go:

Interesting fact: The Turks answer their phones with "My Master?" instead of "Hello?"

Riding in Turkey

Our horse riding holidays in Cappadocia, Turkey offer a truly unique trail through the most magical scenery. For clients in Europe, Turkey is not far to travel but a different world and Cappadocia is one of the most spectacular regions of Turkey with a history stretching back 3000 years.

Turkey is an amazing country with a history to rival any other country in the world. This is the homeland of the Byzantine and Ottoman Empire and it's here that Florence Nightingale nursed the soldiers in the Crimean War. Turkey is one of those rare countries that span two continents and its capital Istanbul (or as it was once known, Constantinople) is the only city in the world that has this honour. Istanbul is a wonderful vibrant city and makes an excellent add-on to Unicorn riding holidays. The section of the city on the western shore of the Bosphorus lies in Europe while the section on the eastern shore falls into Asia. Its illustrious history has left a legacy of fantastic museums, mosques and palaces. The streets are bustling and the Grand Bazaar is THE place to shop. You'll need to barter for a bargain!

Turkey has very diverse scenery. Firstly there are the coastlines; a Mediterranean Coast, an Aegean Coast and a Black Sea Coast. The sparsely populated area now called Anatolia, previously Asia Minor, is huge and 97% of Turkey falls into this area. Two mountain ranges, the Taurus and the Black Sea Mountains run west to east finally meeting to create one enormous mountainous area where two ancient rivers - the Euphrates and the Tigris spring. The most amazing scenery is in the area called Cappadocia and it truly defies description. It's here that Unicorn offers a fabulous and totally unique horse riding holiday - our Cappadocia Trail.

"Great horses, beautiful unique scenery, brush up on your French language skills before travelling!"

LW of Duleek
Programmes

Cappadocia Trail

Discover the silent beauty of Cappadocia’s extraordinary landscape of fairy chimneys and volcanic formations. Whether negotiating the narrow paths, galloping through the steppe or along the lush canyons, you will enjoy exhilarating riding along deserted nature trails. Visit cave villages, troglodytic monasteries and ancient frescoed churches where you will discover the historical and cultural wealth of this region - a UNESCO World Heritage site.

There is a choice of accommodation: small simple guesthouses or comfortable boutique hotels. The riding allows for long and faster canters over the open plains but slows down amongst the rock formations. Optional hot air balloon flights can be arranged.

This ride falls within our adventure rides category. In groups of no more than 8 people, you will spend 3-6 hours per day in the saddle, exploring a rural way of life where old traditions are still alive, and experience the legendary Turkish hospitality.

Guesthouse Trail

8d/7n/6 days riding
Set dates April to October

The traditional habitat of Cappadocia is mainly troglodyte: rooms are carved into the rock. Most of the guesthouses are beautifully restored old houses and offer cave rooms so there are not many windows and there is of course a rough finish to the walls.

Comfort Trail

8d/7n/6 days riding
Set dates April to October

This trail combines quality accommodation in luxury hotel (selected for their historical architecture like cave hotels), special atmosphere, high quality of service and attention to detail. During the week there is an option for a hot-air balloon flight over Cappadocia’s surreal landscape at sunrise; a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Kayseri Airport (ASR) at set times.
Riding in Croatia

The diverse landscape of Croatia lends itself perfectly to outdoor sports, especially horse riding. There is a long standing horse tradition here, and the lush green terrain offers some fantastic riding opportunities for experienced riders.

Croatia is located in central and southeast Europe, sharing its borders with Hungary to the northeast, Serbia to the east, Slovenia to the northwest and Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro to the southeast. Croatia also has a long sea-coast to the west, where it borders the Adriatic Sea. This location means Croatia benefits from a warm continental climate, with some areas of the country recording 2700 hours of sunshine per year.

Since the conclusion of the Croatian War of Independence the tourist industry has grown rapidly, with many people flocking to experience the culture and climate of this beautiful country. The combination of tranquil landscapes, clear sparkling sea and buzzing cities means Croatia is hugely popular among visitors from a wide range of backgrounds; there is something of interest for everyone. A horse riding holiday is the perfect way to get an authentic insight into Croatia and see things that are missed by the wider tourist industry.

The varied terrain of Croatia offers perfect riding country; there are large flat plains with dramatic mountain backdrops, long stretches of pristine beaches with crystal clear water, and acres of deserted ancient forestland. This combination of landscapes results in different weather depending on which area of the country you visit. The west coast, bordering the Adriatic Sea, experiences a warm Mediterranean climate with high temperatures being regulated by the sea breeze, whereas the inland areas are cooler and wetter during some parts of the year.

Interesting fact: The White House in Washington, D.C. was built with the stone brought from the island of Brac in Croatia.

‘Fantastic ride for the price! The accommodation was simple but very nice, the hosts unfailingly kind and helpful, the horses excellent and the variety of trails incredible.’

KV of New York
Dalmatian Mountain Explorer

8d/7n/6 days riding  
Set dates April to October

Explore the Dalmatian countryside in the south of Croatia on this centre-based budget-busting break for experienced riders. Enjoy delicious homemade food and wine, fast, thrilling riding and friendly and knowledgeable hosts on this delightful based stay. Escape the summer crowds and see a side of Croatia rarely explored by travelling to the spectacular, mountain interior of the Dalmatia region. Accommodation is in simple double rooms with shared bathroom and home cooked food. The riding is super: on Roman roads and cattle paths through this beautiful, rural area. The terrain is mountainous, with gentle slopes and wide valleys. Over the six days of riding you’ll reach the summits of mountains Svilaja and Mosec and experience Croatian hospitality first-hand, riding through villages where tourism is still rare.

Getting there: Return transfers from Split airport (SPU), bus or train station payable on site.

Istria: Land & Sea

8d/7n/6 days riding  
Set dates April to October

Discover the lush green landscapes of northwestern Croatia on horseback on this point to point trail. With forward-going and well-mannered horses this holiday is a perfect escape for riders looking for a re- vitalising holiday. Istria, close to the borders of Italy and Slovenia, is renowned for being the largest green oasis in the Northern Adriatic, there are large forests of pine woods along the coasts and surrounding islands, while inland you will find streams flowing through deep valleys, vineyards and olive groves. Accommodation is in comfortable twin or single rooms with shared bathroom on some nights. This riding holiday is suitable for intermediate to advanced riders who are confident at all paces on horseback.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Pula Airport (PUY) or from Trieste Airport (TRS), Italy, for a supplement.
Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606

Bulgaria

Size: 110,994 km²
Population: 6,995,319
Languages: Bulgarian
Currency: Lev
Time Zone: GMT +2 / +3 in summer

When to go:

Riding in Bulgaria

A horse-riding holiday in Bulgaria is without doubt a perfect way to discover one of the best kept secrets in Eastern Europe. Bulgaria is changing from its communist past and associations with Russia / Soviet Union and tourism is expanding, so now is the perfect time to come before the crowds arrive. If you really want to go far away and forget all about traffic, budgets and time, head to the mountains with the freshest air and the clearest rivers. There are not a lot of places like this left in Europe but we know a few of them in Bulgaria.

Although around 80% of the population is urbanised, Bulgaria has a very strong equestrian tradition and vast open spaces ideal for riding. The country is dominated by several mountain ranges including the central Balkan range, which crosses the entire country from the western borders to the Black Sea in the east. Each region still clings to its own customs, dialects and folklore. Most of our rides are centred around the Balkan Mountain range. The scenery is incredible with fresh mountain air and spectacular views. Another good place for riding is in the Rhodopes Mountains to the south, near the border with Greece. Our riding holidays here are mainly trail rides with some centre based rides. Some of the rides also cater for novice riders onwards, unusual in Eastern Europe. There are, of course, some fast trails suitable for confident riders only, as seems to be common in Eastern Europe where the horsemanship is generally superb.

Bulgaria offers great value for money and whilst you can pay in the official currency of the Bulgarian ‘lev’, euros are also accepted. English is widely spoken, especially in the cities and large towns. You’ll have fun trying to decipher the cyrillic alphabet though when you see it written on things such as road signs or in shop windows!

The culture of horsemanship, pleasant climate, the super Balkan cuisine, the good wine and the famous Bulgarian hospitality are all waiting for you.

Interesting fact: The Bulgarian folk song ‘Izlel e Delio Haydutin’ has been flying around space together with Bach’s and Mozart’s greatest works since 1977, when the Voyager 1 and Voyager 2 probes left the Earth.

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Programmes

Bulgarian Trail
8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates April to October

This trail ride follows the ancient trails that for hundreds of years have connected north Bulgaria with the south. It starts from a small town on the north side of the Balkan Mountains, and brings you to the highest point in the Balkan Range, Mount Botev (2376 m).

You’ll ride through small villages with interesting architecture and old monasteries, and spend the night there. It continues through the Valley of Roses to the Sredna Gora mountains where you will stay in a mountain chalet Svezhen 1100m high. The views of the valley of the Thracian Kings are impressive and after having entered the check-point the ride continues through the Central Balkan National Park before returning back to base. Accommodation is in local guesthouses, the rooms are neat and clean with twin/ double or sometimes 3 beds in a room. Bathroom and shower facilities may be shared between several rooms but there is plenty of hot water for showers each night. The western style riding is at a steady pace in the mountains with some trotting and cantering on good horses and there are some long days in the saddle.

Getting there: Sofia Airport (SOF) It is also possible to fly to Plovdiv Airport (PDV)

Mountain & Wildlife Trail
8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates June to September

The trail ride takes you through the northern side of the Balkan Mountains. The first 2 days are ridden near to the small mountain villages and explore life near to the fields. You’ll ride on the top of the mountains next to a protected reserve high up in the mountains which is characterised by singing rocks - a set of unique natural formations that crown the ancient beech forest. Along the hilly paths and the open land rare animals such as the chamois, the brown bear and the golden eagle can be found as well as doe deer, red deer, wild boar, wild cat and a large amount of rare birds. The top of the mountains are just perfect for big riding experiences. The pace is mixed on this western style ride. There are opportunities to trot and canter but you will need to walk on the steep and stony paths. The hours are longer than average – some with 6 up to 8 hours over hilly and mountainous terrains. The accommodation varies from guesthouses to mountain refuges on the trail with twin, triple or multi bedded rooms and shared bathrooms.

Getting there: Sofia Airport (SOF) It is also possible to fly to Plovdiv Airport (PDV)

Land of the Gods
8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates in June and September

Experience first-hand the hospitality and life of Bulgarian villages. With their warm welcome and the surrounding beauty of the towering Rhodope Mountains, with its untouched nature, rare birds, wildlife and rich flora. En route we visit Bulgaria’s second largest monastery, the Bachkovo Monastery. Eastern Europe and Bulgaria have a tradition of excellent horsemanship and on this riding holiday the riding is for good riders at all paces where the terrain permits on responsive, fit horses bred in the area. Accommodation in guesthouses and small hotels with en-suite facilities.

Getting there: Sofia Airport (SOF) by 12 noon on Day 1. It is also possible to fly to Plovdiv Airport (PDV). Please enquire for transfer information

Rhodopes Mountain Trail
8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates in July and August

Combine the pleasure of riding through one of the most picturesque of the Balkan Mountains – Sredna Gora with the healing power of the mineral water that springs out of its depths. Ride back in time to the mystical world of the Thracians and the great Roman Empire, the heroism in Bulgarian history and the Renaissance spirit. Excellent and fairly fast riding on superbly trained and conditioned horses with warm hospitality and a choice of three different levels of accommodation based on budget: luxurious hotel with spa, more basic hotels with shared bathrooms on some nights or camping with facilities. Ride past the aromatic fields of oil-bearing rose and lavender before enjoying spa procedures and relaxing treatments using these natural products. Ideal for good riders.

Getting there: Sofia Airport (SOF) by 12 noon on Day 1. It is also possible to fly to Plovdiv Airport (PDV)

Balkan Riding Week
8d/7n/6 days riding. Open all year with Saturday arrivals

This riding centre is nestled on the northern side of the Balkan Range in the outskirts of the mountain village Apriltsi in the heart of Bulgaria and with the most fantastic panorama of Mount Botev, right next door is the Central Balkan National Park. Here day rides out from the base are available for novice riders onwards. The large stable of 40 horses is surrounded by picturesque fields and has a welcome bar where you can relax with a drink in hand as you gaze out at the horses grazing and the mountains beyond. With the green meadows blooming with wildflowers surrounded by ancient trees, it really is an idyllic setting. Accommodation is in the village, walking distance in twin or double rooms with shared facilities, or an upgrade to small hotels with swimming pool can be arranged.

Getting there: Sofia Airport (SOF) by 12 noon on Day 1. It is also possible to fly to Plovdiv Airport (PDV). Please enquire for transfer information
Albania & Montenegro

Size: 28,748 km²
Population: 2,938,147
Languages: Albanian
Currency: LEK
Time zone: GMT +1 / +2 in the summer

When to go:

Interesting fact: Although it has 276 miles of coastline 70% of the country is mountainous with abundant water and 100% of Albania’s power is hydroelectric.

Riding in Albania

Albania is one of the last European countries to shake off the legacy of communism and embrace democracy. It is still largely undiscovered as a tourism destination despite having been crossed by almost every army in the world since Alexander the Great. With its unpopulated mountains and dramatic coastline Albania still offers a wild and untamed beauty that is a rarity in Europe today. It is much as Byron described it on his travels many years ago.

Incredible. The country, the people, the horses just blew me away. The passion the owners have for their country and their horses is very evident in every aspect of the holiday and it was a real pleasure to see a little of the ‘real’ Albania.
SD of Freckenham
Ancient Pathways

8d/7n/6 days riding. 4-6 hours riding per day.
Set dates March to November

Travel back in time following the medieval Zagoria caravan pathways into a land of myths, tales and ballads. Starting in Gjiroksater, the circular mountainous route passes through ancient ruins of the Illyrian civilization, medieval villages and many remote churches and monasteries. You will soak in rural Albanian traditions by staying with local people and riding through vibrant, unspoilt natural landscapes.

The horses used on this ride are local breed mix of Tarpan and Arab horses. They are small but perfectly suited to the rocky terrain being surefooted and accustomed to trekking long mountainous routes, allowing riders to feel confident, relaxed and free to enjoy the stunning views.

Getting there: Tirana (TIA) Airport or Saranda Port (CFU) – fly to Corfu, transfers payable on site.

Kings Army Route

8d/7n/6 days riding. 6-9 hours riding per day.
Set dates April to September

This is a mountainous trail ride with around 6 hours riding on surefooted Arab and Tarpan cross horses and some walking every day. Starting in Gjiroksater we head out on a circular route to the Ionian Sea and back, following in the footsteps of King Ilirian Skerdlad, on his way to conquer Kaonia 2,300 years ago. Experience unspoilt nature, colourful culture heritage, welcoming people and ride reliable, strong horses. We find ancient ruins, castles, churches and monasteries sitting adjacent to the bunkers and military infrastructure from communist past. During this period of isolation and militarization, communist leaders built around 750,000 bunkers of defense in case of attack from western “enemies”. Accommodations is in local or family guesthouses every night where your host families will provide a delicious local meal and conversation is enjoyed by all over dinner.

Getting there: Tirana (TIA) Airport or Saranda Port (CFU) – fly to Corfu, transfers payable on site.
Riding in Montenegro

This little perfect unspoilt jewel of a country lies nestled between Albania, Bosnia and Serbia. It has a gorgeous coastline on the Adriatic Sea. Further inland you will find huge mountain landscapes of breath taking beauty and unspoilt pristine wilderness, emerald clear mountain lakes, National Parks and the largest Canyon in the world next to the Grand Canyon. Explore summer pastures, riding through meadows full of wildflowers and berries, with a new dramatic view around each new corner, or cresting each new ridge. Ride in big sky country which offers great night sky viewing due to the remote location and unspoilt National Parks. Along the way you will visit ancient Monasteries, pure lakes and stay with friendly local people or in eco cabins only accessible in the summer months.

‘A very forward thinking team, supplying an excellent customer service’.
JJ of Kelsall

Programmes

Mountain & Lake Ride

8d/7n/6 days riding. 4-6 hours riding per day.
Set dates June to September

This well thought-out route traverses the National Park of Biogradska formed by glaciers and crisscrossed with rivers as well as the dramatic Tara River Canyon. You will ride across mountain summer pastures full of indigenous flora, medicinal herbs and mountain berries. You will be truly awed by the majestic mountain ranges, crystal clear mountain lakes. Whilst this is not a fast-paced ride it will give you the opportunity to really enjoy the amazing scenery. It is also a good choice for adventurous novice riders who have good balance and confidence. Riders will stay overnight in eco lodges and cabins only accessible during the summer months, with your horses loose in the summer pastures next to the simple cabins. The night skies in this remote region will offer fantastic starscapes.

Getting there: Podgorica (TGD) Airport, Montenegro, transfers included.
Hungary & Romania

Size: 93,030km²
Population: 9,942,000
Languages: Hungarian
Currency: Forint
Time zone: GMT +1 / +2 in the summer

Interesting fact: Hungarian language is known to be one of the hardest to learn; it is a Uralic language unrelated to any neighbouring language and distantly related to Finnish and Estonian.

When to go:

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Riding in Hungary

Hungary has a long equestrian tradition and its citizens have retained their individual culture, customs and language through many invasions and occupations by the Mongols, Turkey and then Austria, followed by communist domination.

Horses and horsemanship still play an important role in the lives of many Hungarians today. There are many stud farms scattered throughout Hungary. Carriage driving is also very popular both as a leisure activity and for farming activities. Horses are still commonly seen in rural areas pulling wagons and ploughs.

The diverse scenery and numerous national parks enhance all horseback holidays. If you want to find authentic Hungarian cowboys then head for the huge prairie (the Puszta). Stunning Lake Balaton is Europe’s largest freshwater lake. You’ll also discover the many vineyards which produce the most wonderful wines. Like Ireland, Hungary places no restrictions on riders.

Budapest, the capital of Hungary, is one of the world’s most beautiful cities and we highly recommend to add a few days here. The river Danube flows through the city dividing the historic hilly Buda from the modern commercial Pest. The city is steeped in the arts and you’ll discover glorious architecture and spas, particularly in Buda.

‘Like riding through a Capability Brown landscape each day.’
SN of London
Programmes

**Puszta Trail**

8d/7n/6 days riding.

Every Saturday March to October

This is a full service trail ride through the puszta (or great plains) of Hungary. Conveniently located not far from Budapest, this trail is ideal for nature and animal lovers. The terrain includes open plains, ideal for long canters, forests with shady sandy paths and meadows of brightly coloured flowers. We explore hidden tracks and small traditional farms in the Kiskunság National Park (a World Heritage site) with its pastoral life and cattle breeding customs. The well-schooled and willing horses are ridden in English tack. They are forward-going and love their job, happy for the thrill of galloping over the Plains or just as comfortable walking along the sandy paths of the forests. Riders need to be experienced in handling their horse in open countryside and be riding fit to enjoy this adventure.

Comfortable overnight accommodation in local guesthouses completes the picture - all have double rooms with en-suite bathrooms, on-site restaurant and swimming pool every night. All in all this is an ideal trail for those who like forward going horses, comfortable accommodation and freshly homecooked traditional fare.

**Getting there:** Return transfers payable on-site from Budapest Airport (BUD) or town.

*‘A totally amazing, fun, extraordinary and wonderful week. If you like wildlife, peace and quiet, amazing cooking, good horses and lovely people you will like it here.’*

TH of Taunton

**Puszta Based Stay**

From 7d/6n/5 days riding, shorter stays available.

Dates available on request March to October

Daily trail rides offer the opportunity to explore the puszta (or great plains) of Hungary. There is also an option to have lessons in the sand arena during the stay. The well-schooled and willing horses, a mix of Hungarian Half-breed, Kisbéri and Arab/TB are ridden in English tack. This based stay is ideal for riders looking for a more relaxing holiday than the Puszta Trail, with less riding hours and optional sightseeing tours. There are optional excursions to Budapest and the Bábolna National Stud Farm as well as wine tasting. This is a good option for those who wish to do a bit more than ride. Lessons are aimed at intermediate level riders who want to develop a more advanced partnership with horses using good technique rather than force. Comfortable overnight accommodation is at the farm, with double rooms with en-suite bathrooms. There is a pond suitable for swimming on site for those who would like to take a cooling dip.

**Getting there:** Return transfers payable on-site from Budapest Airport (BUD) or town.

*‘A wonderful holiday, with well educated horses and very friendly, helpful hosts and guide’*

EB of Humbeek
Riding in Romania

Romania is the largest Balkan state and is a fabulous country for a horse riding holiday. It falls within our Eastern Europe range and sits at the crossroads of Europe. In Romania you’ll discover the beautiful, dramatic Carpathian Mountains, glorious sandy Black Sea beaches and the Danube Delta which is the largest wetland in Europe. Romania is bordered to the north and east by Moldova and Ukraine, the southeast by the Black Sea, the south by Bulgaria, the southwest by Serbia and in the west by Hungary. During its history Romania has been ruled by the Romans, the Ottomans and Austro-Hungary. The fall of Communism came with the dramatic overthrow of Ceausescu. Since then it has become a member of the European Union. Romania’s capital is Bucharest which, whilst splendid, does not compete with Sibiu – the European Capital of Culture in 2007. Sibiu is located in the Transylvanian region where you’ll find many lovely Saxon towns. Of course, Transylvania is probably best known for Count Dracula and his home Bran Castle!

The rolling grasslands and complete lack of fences mean that everything is accessible, and you have complete freedom to ride where you like.

Programmes

The Carpathian Estate Ride

7 days/ 6 nights/ 5 days riding.
Departures April to October

Transylvania is not only famous as the homeland of Bram Stoker’s fictional character, Count Dracula, but is also associated with the dramatic history of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, well preserved Medieval homesteads, and excellent Romanian wines. On this ride we offer a point to point trail hosted by a local Count whose estate is dispersed over several villages and preserves values still largely unaffected by modern society. The history of the family reaches back to medieval times. The current 25th generation returned after 50 years of exile in the West and are now reshaping their lost heritage. Around 3-5 hours are spent in the saddle daily on this horse riding holiday and a variety of terrain is traversed as you travel through wild hills and forest landscapes. The horses used are substantial, fit, capable of jumping a reasonable size and of various local breeds: Lipizzaner, Huzul, Shagya Arabian, Semigreu crosses. Overnight accommodation usually includes the Prince of Wales’s guest house at Zalanpatak as well as private villas.

Getting there: Bucharest Henri Coanda (OTP); Bucharest Baneasa (BBU), Targu Mures (TGM) or Sibiu (SBZ). Transfers can be arranged from Bucharest, payable on site.

“It was my perfect idea of a holiday because it was the perfect mix of fun, excitement and relaxation.”

KK of Cotati
Russia

Size: 117.1 million km²
Population: 144,500,000
Languages: Russian
Currency: Ruble
Time Zone: GMT +3

Interesting fact: Padlock trees can be found in Moscow - couples place them here to prove their love.

Riding in Russia

Unicorn Trails is delighted to offer an exclusive horse riding holiday in Russia. The Cossacks have long roamed Russia on hardy horses. With the country’s vastness comes diversity and what better way to discover its hidden treasures than from horseback on native breeds. Currently our riding is centered in Siberia, around Lake Baikal although many other parts of Russia from St Petersberg, through the Ural Mountains to Kamchatka offer good riding. Logistically travel in Russia remains challenging, the scenery is vast and its people are generous and hospitable.

‘Wide open spaces and some lightly wooded areas, great horses, picturesque coves and campsites, good food, friendly people, some walking, and some steep ascents and descents: a great experience’.
AH of Carmarthan
Programmes

Baikal Lake

14d/13n/7 days riding or 9d/8n/7 days riding.
Set departures from June to September.

Join us for an exciting and exclusive new horse riding holiday to Baikal Lake in the wilds of Siberia. There is an optional possibility to start in Moscow with an overnight and tour before taking the legendary 3 day rail journey on the Trans-Siberian Railway to Irkutsk. Alternatively it is possible to fly to Irkutsk and take part in riding portion only. The itinerary has been designed to include all the best sights of the area. We start on the shores of Baikal Lake near Orkhon Island. The locals used to call Baikal Lake a place of power, and it is easy to see why. Formed 25-30 million years ago, the largest freshwater lake in the world contains 22-23% of the world’s fresh surface water. The water is also unbelievably clear and clean.

We travel by ferry, jeep and on foot to explore the sights on Orkhon Island one day - you may be lucky enough to swim with the only freshwater seals in the world here. There is also a boat trip on the Sacred Sea (the area between Orkhon Island and the lake shore) and learn more about the ecology and wildlife of the lake. We visit Buddhist, Buryat and Shamanist sites in incredible locations.

Then we head out on horseback. Reliable and responsive locally bred Orlov and cross horses make easy work of the rolling grassy terrain, leaving no lasting impact on this remarkable environment. Ride along the Tazheran forest-steppes which rise up from shores of Baikal Lake to cover picturesque hills and cliffs, and even the peaks of the Baikal Mountains. The ride takes you through this endemic Godlevsky Larch and up into the Tazheran Massif. Try to spot some of the 150 different minerals present between Olrog Bay and Ulan-Nur bay, or simply marvel at the ancient caves and mineral lakes that can be discovered on this ride. Locals believe the lakes have medicinal properties and will bathe in the waters to cure all manner of ailments.

Accommodation is in twin person tents for most of the trail, with a few nights in local guesthouses at the beginning and end. The riding is not fast but includes walking, trotting and cantering. A good level of fitness is needed as a camping trail is always more challenging and there is a significant amount of walking on foot required to make the most of this trip.

Getting there: Irkutsk (IKT) or Moscow DME/SVO, transfers arranged on request.
Riding in Poland

Poland has, quite remarkably, transformed itself from being a communist state to having a successful parliamentary democracy in just twenty years. It led the way for the collapse of the communist block in Eastern Europe.

Eastern Europe, and Poland in particular, boast a strong equestrian tradition. Poland has many local breeds such as the Molopolski, Silesian and Konk, and the standard of horsemanship and riding is high and usually English style. This makes Poland an ideal destination for good riders.

‘The accommodation was excellent, decent sized rooms, great food, good wine. A sauna by the lake and the weather was good so we had a dip in the lake highly recommended. I mustn’t forget the carriage ride, very good, cantering at dusk to get through the forest before it went dark Brilliant’.
JJ of Kelsall

Drawski Lake District

8d/7n/6 days riding – shorter or longer on request.
Set departures from March to September

Discover the green and rolling landscapes of the Drawski Lake District on horseback based at a 19th century manor house. Here you can enjoy harmony with nature and celebrate peace and serenity, far away from the stresses of civilization. The entire estate is engaged in the “slow food” movement: you can see plants and local breeds of livestock here, all producing healthy and organic food which is transformed into traditional regional cuisine in the kitchens.

There are two riding options: a full riding programme with 4-6 hours riding daily and a 2 day mini-trail or a less strenuous programme of 2 -3 hours riding daily with time to relax and enjoy the lakes, water activities, massages and sauna. The riding is on Anglo-Arabs and Silesians (a Polish heavier warm-blood breed) and at a varied paces, over rolling hills. Riders should be confident at a canter in open space. The Drawski Landscape Park is where most rides take place; it is known for rolling terrain, rich flora and fauna, numerous lakes and rivers and clean, unchanged environment. You may encounter wildlife such as boar, deer, eagles and European bison.

Getting there: Airport of Szczecin (SZZ), Poznan (POZ), Gdansk (GDN) or Berlin (SFX and TXL). Transfers can be arranged, payable on site.
North Africa and the Middle East share a very strong equestrian tradition based around the prized Arab barb war horses and deserts. Although the horse as we know it originated in central Asia, it was perfected in this region with warm-bloods being carefully bred over centuries to create the fast and sensitive pure Arabian, Barb and later thoroughbred breeds.

A man’s horse was as important to him as his family and would share the desert tent with them on many occasions. Traditionally male horses are used for riding and are not gelded while the mares are highly prized and reserved for breeding. The riding in this region is all on warm-blooded Arabian and cross horses, usually at a faster pace and aimed mostly at good riders.

Ride from the stony desert of into the High Atlas Mountains of Morocco along routes pioneered by the nomadic ancestors of your Berber guides. Ride in Tunisia to discover the Sahara with its high dunes and Roman ruins.

Jordan offers riding in the amazing red rock formations of Wadi Rum as well as Petra, the Nabataean caravan city inhabited since prehistoric times situated between the Red Sea and the Dead Sea. This was once an important crossroads between Arabia, Egypt and Syria-Phoenicia.

If you’re in the mood to relax head to the sparkling Red Sea at Sharm Al Sheik in Egypt. Israel and the Negev desert offer excellent riding opportunities for good riders and in Oman we offer a fantastic overview of this stable and welcoming country. A region that offers much and is close to home.
Riding in Morocco

Morocco offers a huge variety from the beaches of Agadir and Essaouira to the Atlas Mountains and the Sahara Desert. Easily accessible with many low-cost flight options from Europe and an all-year-round sunshine destination it is ideal for an adventure, a short break or a city/riding combination. It has a politically stable government and is a safe place for female tourists to travel to. With a short flight of a few hours you could be on another continent with a very different lifestyle and culture and a huge amount of open space and a long-standing Berber connection to horses.

The rides are mainly for intermediate to advanced riders, many are trail rides with a few centre based holidays. Combine with a visit to Marrakesh and its famous medina, a densely packed, walled medieval city dating to the Berber Empire, with maze-like alleys where thriving souks selling traditional textiles, pottery and jewelry and a 12th century Moorish minaret.

When to go:

- April: Springtime
- May: May Day
- June: Ramadan
- July: Hot Summer Months
- August: Summer
- September: Autumn
- October: Autumn
- November: Winter
- December: Winter
- January: Cold Months
- February: Winter
- March: Early Spring
Programmes

Agadir Beach Ranch

8 days/7 nights/6 days riding open all year.

In the south of Morocco this Hacienda style ranch offers fantastic centre-based riding for confident riders, including exciting beach riding. Explore the rugged coastline, wide sandy beaches and local Berber culture as you meander through small fishing villages all on pure bred fit and lively Arabs and Barb Arabs.

Even in the middle of the summer the temperatures remain pleasant for riding with the fresh ocean breezes. Accommodation in spacious twin or double rooms with own shower.

Getting there: Fly into Agadir (AGA) Airport transfers included for week-long ranch stays.

Sahara Desert Trail

‘The ride was excellent, a perfect way to spend Christmas and New Year with great horses, in the middle of nowhere amongst the spectacular scenery’.

EW of London

Central Atlas Mountain Trail

8 days/7 nights/6 days riding.
Set dates June to September.

Starting a few miles from Marrakech this point to point camping trail will take you through the central part of the High Atlas Mountains with splendid views over the Haouz Plain and Toubkal summits.

The responsive but sensible Barb Arab stallions are perfect for intermediate riders onwards. The terrain varies from mountain trails to bigger paths and allows riding at all three gaits each day.

This is the perfect way to discover the unspoilt authentic Morocco, riding from village to village with incredible views in the summer when the snow has retreated from all but the highest peaks.

Getting there: Marrakech Airport (RAK) included from meeting point.

Essaouira Beach Trail

8 days/7 nights/6 days riding.
Set dates February to December.

This week long trail along the coast from Immesouana to picturesque laid back Essaouira features plenty of riding along endless beaches interspersed with date palms and sand dunes and rocky peaks with views over the ocean.

The horses are fit Arab X Barb stallions, responsive and ridden in English tack - an ideal summer break for good riders. Accommodation includes one night in a riad in Marrakesh at the start, comfortable camping on the trail and a night in a small guesthouse in Essaouira at the end.

Getting there: Marrakech Airport (RAK) transfers included or Agadir (AGA) can also be arranged.
Marrakech Short Break

4-7 nights. Open all year.

Set in the foothills of the Atlas Mountains we offer a comfortable, sustainable lodge with activities for everyone, less than an hour’s drive from Marrakech.

Explore the marvellous landscapes in the foothills the Atlas Mountains and parts of the forests of the Toubkal National Park on this horse riding holiday. You will ride superb Barb-Arab horses who are very surefooted, reliable and responsive. The location is below the High Atlas and the foothills are draped with green forests interspersed with open spaces and marvellous views. It has a perfect temperature for maximum riding in spring and autumn, and in winter the sun in the day warms the air.

Your accommodation offers high levels of comfort, either in lodges or tents, whilst reflecting traditional Berber styles and techniques.

Getting there: Marrakech Airport (RAK) included from meeting point.

‘I think this holiday was perhaps the first one that I have been on where I have met an amazing range of people (not exclusively in the riding party) who had amazing stories to tell, which only added to a very memorably and exciting time’. HM of Woking

Sahara Desert Trail

8 days/7 nights/6 days riding. Set departures Jan-Mar and Oct-Dec.

Enjoy the incredible variation of desert landscapes and meet the Berber people that have adapted to these harsh conditions. We ride from the stony deserts near Zagora all the way to the big sand dunes of the Sahara at Chegaga overnighting in distinctive small hotels.

There are many opportunities to gallop in open spaces. The Barb Arab stallions are the true highlight of this ride, strong & well trained, they will accompany you all along this trek. These beautiful horses will allow you to get to magnificent remote places, barely touched by tourism.

Getting there: Ouarzazate (OZZ) transfer included or Marrakech Airport (RAK) at extra cost.

Valley of the Roses

8 days/7 nights/5 ½ days riding. Set departures in April and May.

On this point to point camping trail you will discover the most beautiful, natural and cultural wonders of unspoil authentic Morocco. We start from the Skoura palm grove, one of the most beautiful oases of southern Morocco with its impressive Kasbah citadel. You will cross the high plateaus of the southern side of the Atlas Mountains where the summits reach 4,000m to finally enter the immense Valley of the Roses along the M’Goun River. Here roses are cultivated for their essence which is used in perfume blends and is exported worldwide. The best season to see the roses in blossom is from March to May.

There is one long day of riding, but in general this trail is not as challenging as the other Sahara trails. Riding is on beautifully schooled Barb Arab stallions who are a delight to ride. You are sure to find a much-loved companion who will take you to the remote places untouched by tourism.

Getting there: Ouarzazate (OZZ) transfer included or Marrakech Airport (RAK) at extra cost.
Tunisia

Size: 163,610 km²
Population: 11,778,798
Languages: Arabic, Tunisian Arabic and French
Currency: Tunisian Dinar
Time Zone: GMT +1
When to go:

Interesting fact: Carthage is currently a suburb of Tunis, but it was once one of the most important and prosperous cities of the ancient world founded in the 9th century BC by Phoenician and Cypriot settlers.

Riding in Tunisia

Tunisia is home to over 3,000 years of history ranging from the Phoenicians, who founded the ancient city of Carthage, via the Romans to the French in recent times.

Ride to the heart of the Sahara on these unusual and adventurous camping trails set in the west and south of Tunisia passing many Bedouin with their flocks as well as old Roman sites en route. The Arab X Barb horses are well-schooled and ridden in English or trail saddles.

Programmes

Magic of the Desert
8d/7n/6 days riding.
Set dates in October, November and December.

Oasis to Oasis
8d/7n/6 days riding.
Set dates in February, April, October and November.

This itinerary, set in the far south of Tunisia, offers an opportunity to ride along huge sand dunes of the Big Erg region with a morning camel trek to watch the sunrise from the top of the highest dunes. Camp beside your horse in the desert each night and watch the Bedouin pass with their flocks. Enjoy the magnificent sunsets while the camp staff prepare delicious meals each day. The horses are Barb and Arab Barb crosses, sure-footed and used to the terrain and pace of riding.

Getting there: return transfers included from Djerba (DJE) Airport (4-5hrs)

This camping trail in the west of Tunisia starts in the oasis town of Nefta that sits at the western end of the giant green strip of palms that stretches all the way from Tozeur. It’s hugely important locally as the home of Sufism in Tunisia. We ride via Ong Jemel, an arid mountain landscape where the original Star Wars was filmed, and Chebika oasis, once a Roman outpost, ending in Tamerza, the largest mountain oasis in Tunisia. Bathe in a natural hot spring, visit a Tunisian Hammam and enjoy canters along the dried riverbeds. Camp out with your horse in a palm groves, and dine under eucalyptus trees.

Getting there: return transfers included from Djerba (DJE) Airport (2-3hrs)
Jordan

Size: 89,342 km²
Population: 10,063,010
Languages: Modern Standard Arabic and Jordanian Arabic
Currency: Jordanian Dinar
Time Zone: GMT +3

Interesting fact: One of the Seven Wonders of the World, the city of Petra was literally carved into rock 2000 years ago yet it was only in the 19th century that the Western world discovered it. This city has to be entered through a narrow gorge that is only 1.25 km wide.

Riding in Jordan

Jordan is largely desert, with some breathtaking scenery from the dramatic red sands and towering cliffs of the far south to the endless stony plains of volcanic basalt in the east. Arabian horses are deeply embedded in the Bedouin culture and you will see Bedouin tents and horses as well as camels all over the desert. Jordan is most famous for: Lawrence of Arabia, Petra, Wadi Rum, Bedouin culture, the Dead Sea resorts, fishing and reefs of the Red Sea in Amman and crafts with a conscience. Jordan is a stable kingdom which extends a warm welcome to tourists of all nationalities and religions and a great destination for good riders to explore on horseback.

Wadi Rum

10d/9n/6 days riding and 9d/8n/6 days riding. Set dates January to May and September to December.

The horses used on this horse riding holiday in Jordan are Bedouin Arabs, Pure Arabs and Anglo Arabs, ideal for the climate and terrain. Incredible riding and basic camping trail in the middle of the Wadi Rum desert surrounded only by towering granite formations and desert sand. Your luggage is transported for you.

Depending on the time of year you go, the programme includes an opportunity to spend a full day in Petra and one full day to swim, float & relax at the Dead Sea.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Amman (AMM) Airport at set times.
When to go:

### Interesting fact:
Ancient Egyptians needed to predict when the Nile would flood, which led to the development of the world’s first calendar.

Egypt

- **Size:** 89,342 km²
- **Population:** 10,063,010
- **Languages:** Modern Standard Arabic and Jordanian Arabic
- **Currency:** Jordanian Dinar
- **Time Zone:** GMT +3

Red Sea Desert & Beach Ride

8 days/7 nights/5 days riding. Dates available on request between April and December.

The ideal break for families or groups of riders who want time to relax pool side or traveling with non riding companions, this destination offers luxury 5 star hotel accommodation alongside beach and desert rides on spirited Arab horses. You’ll explore the landscape of the Eastern Desert in the Egyptian hinterland, far from the tourist centres and fit in plenty of beach gallops along the shoreline of the Red Sea. You’ll be mainly riding at sunrise or sunset, both of which offer spectacular views. With guaranteed sun year-round, this holiday is perfect for families or those with non-riding companions as a whole host of other activities can be arranged from diving, snorkeling and parasailing to beach volleyball, to fishing and bike tours there’s no shortage of activities.

The programme also gives you the chance to try your hand at camel riding and includes both a full day boat trip to the white beach of Mahmya, which offers fantastic snorkeling and diving opportunities and a city tour. Accommodation is provided by a 5-star hotel directly on the beach. The hotel offers a huge array of facilities including 3 restaurants with a large outdoor dining area, various bars, 2 heated outdoor pools, a fully-equipped spa, a gym, various shops, and free WiFi in the lobby and pool area.

As well as riding you can relax on the beach and enjoy the weather or take part in other activities such as diving, fishing or walking. This is the perfect holiday for those who want shorter hours in the saddle, luxury accommodation and the opportunity to take part in other activities or simply relax in the sun.

Getting there: Hurghada International (HRG) Airport transfers included.

Riding in Egypt

Egypt is a fascinating country in Africa with a rich history embodied not only by the Pyramids and tombs of the pharaohs, but also by the oldest recognised horse breed - the Arabians. Although mainly desert Egypt is blessed with the mighty Nile River which drives agriculture all along its banks. Egypt has long been a tourism destination easy to reach and welcoming to visitors.

In our case the problems have been to find a horseback adventure holiday where we can confidently assure you that the horses are beautifully looked after and treated as we would at home. Luckily we have now found such a place and are delighted to be able to open the joys of discovering Egypt on horseback available. As you will find, a horse riding holiday is the ideal way to discover the beach and desert riding in Egypt the only way to really understand this country. You will stay in 5 star luxury accommodation and have the opportunity to try a whole host of resort activities such as camel riding, boat trips or relax in one of the 2 heated outdoor pools!

Egyptian Orientation

- **Hurghada (HRG)**

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Horse Riding Holidays in Israel can be in a range of environments, though desert riding is often a major feature. The history, geology and ecology of Israel make it a fascinating place to visit no matter what your interests. It’s a year-round destination, with warmer winters than the UK (although nights can get cold) and hot summers.

Even low-cost budget airlines fly here now so whatever your budget, you can have a very special horse riding holiday. In addition, you can easily take in the incredible historical and natural sites of Israel before or after your stay. From Jerusalem to the Red Sea, Israel is full of interesting places to go and things to see. It is perhaps at its best in Spring (mid-March to May) when the temperatures are warm during the day and evenings are balmy. In the summer it is very hot, often too hot to ride during the day. Autumn is very pleasant after the heat of the summer.

Israel is a melting pot of cultures with sites of historical and religious interest for 3 major religions – Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Most areas are open and welcoming to tourists, and there is a relaxed attitude towards clothing and self-expression.

Riding in Israel

‘Great holiday if you like fast riding. Very peaceful atmosphere at the Alpaca farm with lots of animals! April was the perfect time to go, sunny warm weather and many flowers in the desert’. SD of Zurich
Programmes

Desert Farm Long Weekend

4d/3n/3 days riding. Open February to June and September to November.

A tailor-made short break in Israel staying on a friendly farm in the Negev desert with lots of faster riding available for confident riders. Accommodation is in comfortable cabins on the farm.

The large herd of Arab horses ensures there are always plenty of fit and energized horses ready to take guests out to explore the unique surroundings of the Negev desert and the Makhtesh Ramon crater. Your hosts know this area intimately and can take you on rides to see all the most interesting points.

Getting there: Tel Aviv Ben Gurion (TLV) Airport, transfers payable on site.

Holy Land Explorer

8d/7n/6 days riding. Open September to June and on request.

An excellent horse riding holiday discovering the diversity on offer in Israel. This trip includes riding both in the Negev desert in the south and around the Sea of Galilee in the north as well as a visit to the Old City of Jerusalem which is host to some of the most important historical and spiritual sites in the world. Riding is usually fast past but can be adapted to accommodate other levels of riders on separate dates. Accommodation is in comfortable cabins on farms.

Getting there: Tel Aviv Ben Gurion (TLV) Airport, transfers payable on site.

Makhtesh Ramon Trail

7d/6n/6 days riding. Open between February and November but not July and August.

An exciting and fast ride in the Negev Desert of Israel, an adventurous task for experienced riders. The riding includes a two day 100km round-trip to Makhtesh Ramon, a unique geological feature only found in a small area of Israel and the Sinai peninsula in Egypt. Accommodation is in comfortable cabins with one night camping inside the heart of the crater.

Getting there: Tel Aviv Ben Gurion (TLV) Airport, transfers payable on site.

‘Brilliant! Loved it. Extremely hospitable. All the staff went out of their way to make sure we had a good experience. Horses well able to cope with the tough terrain. Guide happy to discuss which horse would suit us best and change a horse that was unsuitable’. KB of Spalding
Oman

Size: 309,501km²
Population: 5,002,041
Languages: Arabic
Currency: Omani Rial
Time Zone: GMT +4

Interesting fact: Oman is famous for its pure-bred Arabian horses and has a centuries-old horse breeding history. The horses are quite expensive and sold throughout the world.

When to go:

J F M A M J J A S O N D

Riding in Oman

The Sultanate of Oman is a country of enormous diversity and natural beauty with a rich history of horse riding. This is evident in the way they treat their horses and the importance placed on horse riding events, including flat and endurance racing. Fire and ice, fashioned from the desert wind, gift of god, horse that can fly without wings...these are just some of the euphemisms given to Arab horses, known for their endurance, strength, beauty and grace. Experienced riders will take up the challenge of riding spirited Arabian horses, with exhilarating gallops over the rugged terrain which encompasses the sand dunes of the desert, mountains, and the powder white sands of the beaches.

The Sultanate of Oman is a very stable country and the fastest growing tourism destination in the Middle East. An Islamic country which is welcoming to foreigners and respectful of women tourists. Oman has one of the most diverse environments in the Middle East and is particularly well known for adventure and cultural tourism. Muscat, the capital of Oman, was named the second best city to visit in the world in 2012 by the travel guide publisher Lonely Planet.

Beach and Desert Ride

8d/7n/5 days riding available October to March.

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Beach and Desert Ride

8d/7n/5 days riding available October to March.

This ride is for those who like adventure, riding sensitive and forward going Arab horses and are curious to explore this new and exciting country in our selection. Enjoy faster riding along the beach at Barka and through the Wahiba Sands desert dunes. The riding is a mixture of half and full days in the saddle, covering up to 30 km in a single day on a mix of horses, mostly Arabian thoroughbreds. The tour also explores some of the best cultural and historical sites of Oman as well such as the Grand mosque, Nizwa Souque (market), Misfat al a Breem, Wadi Bani Khalid and Jabrin Castle. This is a great compilation of adventurous riding on forward-going horses for competent riders and cultural exploration of this Arabian Jewel.

Getting there: Muscat (MCT) Airport, transfers payable onsite.

‘The arrangement was more wide-ranging than described and gave an in-depth experience of Oman, its culture, politics and people. Great riding in the desert. Simply a fantastic and exceptionally fun riding holiday. Very knowledgeable and wonderful tour leaders and staff’. PJ of Stockholm
South and East Africa offer the best safari experiences in the world. Safaris on horseback have some important advantages to vehicle safaris: you are at one with nature and part of the ecosystem, your horse acts both as a spotter of game (follow the ears) and as a warning of possible danger and at a pinch a fast vehicle for escape. Seated up high with no noise you can fully appreciate the interaction of nature and animals. Should you not be a rider with a secure seat, choose safaris with plains game such as giraffe, zebra, antelope, cheetah, etc. who are no danger to walkers. For secure riders who are able to follow their backup rider out of trouble at a good clip if necessary the delights of viewing big game such as elephant, buffalo and black rhino from horseback is an addictive pleasure.

However, to focus only on game in this fascinating region would be a real disservice. From the underground churches of Lalibela in Ethiopia, the stark and beautiful deserts of Namibia to the deserted beaches and breakers of the Wild Coast and Cape Winelands of South Africa this region has far more natural beauty and experiences to offer than safaris on horseback.
Botswana

Size: 581,730 km²
Population: 2,374,211
Languages: Setswana and English, plus 5 other official languages
Currency: Pula
Time Zone: GMT +2
When to go:

Interesting fact: Botswana’s former Head of State, Sir Seretse Khama, was one of the greatest African leaders of 20th century. After leading the country to independence from Britain in the mid-1960s, he and his wife Lady Ruth Khama, a white Englishwoman, set up a “democratic revolution”, where blacks and whites worked together for a new country without violence. Khama’s legacy has allowed the country to maintain and conserve its liberal democracy in the last decades. His policies remain much admired worldwide.

Riding in Botswana

Botswana is truly big game country and offers magical horseback safaris. The riding is fast and exciting, mostly aimed at experienced riders with many options for non-riders to enjoy their own overlapping itineraries.

We offer riding in these remarkable areas of Botswana: the famous Okavango Delta in the north, the vast Makgadikgadi Pans further south and the Tuli Block beside the great Limpopo River on the eastern border with South Africa. Most are easily combined with a visit to the Victoria Falls on the Zimbabwe/Zambia border.

The mighty Okavango River empties into the Kalahari desert and sinks into the ground at the bottom end of the Rift Valley, creating the largest inland delta in the world, the Okavango Delta. This watery paradise in the desert is home to a huge diversity of game and bird species and was never occupied by humans in any significant way. The scenery is as it was 5000 years ago. This vast network of water channels and open floodplains form one of the premier wildlife conservation areas in the world. To protect this unique environment, the Botswanan government has adopted a policy of minimal infrastructure and limited numbers of visitors. With no roads and lots of water, horses are the ideal way of getting around. Safaris here are expensive, reflecting the very exclusive and luxurious experience.

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The Mkgadikgadi Pans change dramatically depending on the season: from November to March the Pans are one of Africa’s largest ephemeral wetlands, drawing huge numbers of game and birds, in particular flamingos and zebra. In November about 55% of all zebra in SE Okavango Delta migrate to the Pans where huge herds remain until March. Then the water all disappears and, from May to September, the Pans turn into a blindingly white desert with the permanent varied game retreating to the grass islands and easily spotted. This is the time for incredible gallops, including into the night towards a distant campfire with a campout and unrivalled star gazing. An extraordinary experience ideal to combine with a visit to the Okavango Delta particularly in April to September, but a unique habitat well worth a visit in its own right particularly from November to March.

The Tuli Block is totally different, a much drier area with cliffs along the banks of the great Limpopo River and untouched by man. Large herds of elephant roam this area and the “great, green, grey, greasy Limpopo” (in the words of Rudyard Kipling) meanders, where the mighty baobab stands tall and lions and hyena serenade you under the starry African night sky. The riding here is a fast and exciting, a mobile tented safari in the “Land of the Giants”.

These rides present some of the best game viewing that Africa has to offer and horseback safaris second to none. Botswana will deliver a horse-riding holiday of a lifetime.

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Programmes

Makgadikgadi Pans

The Makgadikgadi Salt Pan in the Kalahari, is one of the largest salt flats in the world. The pan is all that remains of the formerly enormous Lake Makgadikgadi, which once covered an area larger than Switzerland, but dried up several thousand years ago. Lying southeast of the Okavango Delta and surrounded by the Kalahari Desert, Makgadikgadi is technically not a single pan but many pans with sandy palm islands in between, and offers some of the most exciting and unusual riding terrain in Africa, as well as a huge zebra migration.

‘The riding was amazing across the pans, flat and no holes’.
SS of UAE

Kalahari Zebra Migration

6d/5n Set dates all year round

Experience a huge zebra migration and flamingo herds November to March in Africa’s largest ephemeral wetland, or from May to September, a blindingly white desert with game easily located on grass islands with permanent waterholes. All year round interaction with a habituated meercat colony, tracking with the San and baobab trees.

An extraordinary riding adventure ideal to combine with the Okavango Delta for the ultimate safari.

Getting there: Maun (MUB) Airport, private air transfers not included

Go to www.unicentrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
Kuujwana Camp

Set dates all year round, 5, 7 or 10 nights

Arguably the best ride in the world for good riders. Frequent big game sightings, fantastic riding on an unbeatable team of horses, luxury accommodation and 3 different overnight camps allowing riding in a large area. The guiding is very empathetic with an emphasis on nature and the ecosystems.

Getting there: Maun (MUB) Airport. 20min light aircraft or helicopter flight. Road and boat transfers may be possible depending on flood levels.

Macatoo Camp

Open all year round, 3 nights or more

Luxurious Big Game safari based in one exclusive tented camp. There is a social atmosphere and the camp boasts excellent service levels. Good horses with some exciting riding galloping alongside all sorts of game on flood plains.

Getting there: Maun (MUB) Airport. 30 min light aircraft transfer.

Okavango Delta

The Delta offers one of the best and most exclusive game experiences in the world and is a mecca for wildlife enthusiasts. The experience differs according to whether you visit in the green/wet (November to April) or the flood/dry (May to October) season. There are 2 riding camps accessible only via light aircraft transfer inside the Okavango Delta, one accessible by vehicle from Maun and riding along the edges suitable for all levels of rider which can be combined with a jeep safari in the Big Game area. All are luxurious adventures. Riders should have a secure seat at a walk, trot and canter to ride with Big Game. Non riders are welcome and will enjoy their own programme of traditional open jeep and mokoro (canoe) safaris during the days.

We really enjoyed the trip very much! My husband who was a non-riding companion really enjoyed having a private game drive every day! I think this is a perfect combo for families with non-riders, and it gives riders an option to switch to a game drive to get up close and personal to the predators.

CW of Singapore

Okavango Delta Ride

8days/7nights/6days – Set departures throughout the year

This Delta Ride is unlike any other. Rather than a permanent riding camp, a lightweight mobile camp is transported by a flotilla of mokoros (traditional dugout canoes) polled by members of the local community, who live on the fringes of the Delta and know it intimately. When the water levels are too low for the mokoros to navigate, a train of pack donkeys takes over. This camp is set up in variety of beautiful locations, how often camp is moved depends on the length of ride and game movements/weather.

Getting there: Maun (MUB) Airport. 45min road transfers included.

Okavango Delta

‘Absolutely amazing and fantastic!! Loved it!! I will be back!!’

SS of London

Thamalakane River Ride

Flexible minimum 3 nights - Open all year round

Safari for all levels of rider set in a luxurious lodge along the Thamalakane River near the Okavango Delta and Maun, a full service safari with riding adapted to the ability of the riders. Long fast canters for riders, or more gentle rides for beginners take you through the endless acacia woodlands and past the local cattle posts before stopping for a sumptuous picnic breakfast under the magnificent jackal-berry trees overlooking the river. Soaking water rides keep us cool on the way home.

Getting there: Maun (MUB) Airport, transfers included.

Tuli Safari Trail

8d/7n/8 days riding - Open all year round

The Tuli Block is found along the banks of the great Limpopo River bordering South Africa and is relatively untouched by man. This is an area of great diversity, magnificent vistas, ancient civilisations and dramatic rock formations. Here, amongst those baobab-studded plains, you will find large herds of elephant, a variety of wildlife species including lion, cheetah, leopard, African wild dog, a multitude of plains game such as zebra, wildebeest and grraffe, as well as over 350 species of birds. Exciting riding for confident intermediate riders onwards with comfortable overnights in 3 different semi-permanents camps with hot showers.

Getting there: Johannesburg (JNB) Airport, South Africa. Return transfers by charter flight (1hr) or road (8hrs).
Kenya

Size: 581,309 km²
Population: 52,185,728
Languages: English and Swahili
Currency: Kenyan Shilling
Time Zone: GMT +3

Interesting fact: Kenyan environmentalist Professor Maathai won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004. She was the first African woman to do so.

When to go:

J F M A M J J A S O N D

Riding in Kenya

Horseback safaris in Kenya are truly thrilling and utterly luxurious. Along with the Okavango Delta in Botswana, we consider the Masai Mara in Kenya the top destination in the world for a horseback safari.

The Masai Mara in Kenya has a huge density and diversity of game, not seen anywhere else in the world, as well as a yearly wildebeest migration, usually in late July/August, where tens of thousands of wildebeest cross the Mara River en masse from the Serengeti plains in Tanzania to the Masai Mara. They remain until November when they drift back gradually.

When to go: the short rains come in November/early December and April - early June herald the long rains. Anytime outside those months are perfect.

Although many programmes are for the daring, confident rider who relishes the element of excitement, there are some rides catering very well for less experienced riders and families of varying abilities. Both based and trails are available, the one item not found in Kenya is the value or budget safari. For this one must head to South Africa.

Riding in the Masai Mara differs from the Okavango Delta in a few key ways. The colourful Masai tribe are an integral part of the riding experience in Kenya. They believe they own all the cattle but not the game which they allow to move freely without interference.

In addition, the Mara landscape is far more varied than the Okavango Delta. The Mara is not nearly as exclusive with a far larger concentration of tourists although travelling on horseback minimises the interaction with mini busses to a large extent.

Other parts of Kenya offer good riding too: The Lolldaiga Hills, a quiet destination with lots of game locals keep to themselves, Amboseli National Park and the Chyulu Hills in the South with the biggest tusking elephant on the continent and the Mount Kenya/ Laikipia plateau areas north of the capital Nairobi all offer excellent riding safaris.
**Programmes**

**Lolldaiga Safari Adventure**

8d/7n/5 days riding Open all year round.

In the foothills of Mount Kenya, lies an authentic farmstead which provides horse-riding, walking and driving safaris into the Lolldaiga Hills. This area is considered by many to be the most beautiful in the whole of Kenya, with breath-taking scenery and abundant wildlife and best of all, very few tourists due to its historic isolation. This magic, forgotten land awaits you. Ride, walk and drive amongst herds of zebra, impala, eland, gazelles and hartebeest. Come almost within touching distance of the many reticulated giraffe and slowly approach a herd of elephant or buffalo. Witness the rock art of the ancient peoples and, if you are really lucky, you may even stumble upon a pride of lion or track down a leopard, even find wild dogs out hunting.

The horses are mostly a mix of thoroughbreds and polo ponies with a couple of local breeds thrown in for good measure, all responsive and good-natured as well as sure-footed and accustomed to game. Both flycamps within the Lolldaiga Reserve and less demanding farm stays at the ranch are available so there really is something for everybody; if you want to do the trail but do not want to camp it is also possible to stay at the Lolldaiga Farmhouse within the reserve.

With a maximum group size of 8 the atmosphere is personal and the hosting genuinely welcoming.

**Getting there:** Nairobi International (NBO) Airport. Road transfer (a 4.5 hour journey).

**Sosian Lodge Stay**

Any length stay can be booked (recommended 3 nights). Open all year round.

Sosian is a 24,000 acre private wildlife conservancy which prides itself on managing a unique blend of tourism, conservation and traditional cattle ranching in Laikipia’s highlands. Accommodation manages to be extremely comfortable, almost luxurious, while maintaining a warm and homely atmosphere making for an extremely relaxing stay.

Riders wishing to have a relaxed adventure, travelling with non-riding companions or families in school holiday season will find few better places in Kenya.

**Getting there:** Nairobi International (NBO) Airport. Road transfer (a 6 hour journey).

**Masai Mara on Horseback**

11d/8n/9 days riding or 8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates January to March and June to December.

This is probably the best known national park in Kenya and is named after its inhabitants - the Masai tribe - and its river - the Mara. It lies to the south-west of the country and is virtually a continuation of the Serengeti eco-system in Tanzania. It is famous for both its game and also for its people. The game and safaris here are superb; you will find plenty of big game and a fantastic array of birdlife. The Great Migration which takes place between mid-July and October is one of the world’s greatest natural spectacles.

Here we offer truly thrilling and utterly luxurious point to point classical safaris in Hemingway style for good riders. Non riders can enjoy a parallel jeep safari. We ride through classic African scenery with vast open plains and an amount and variety of game that has to be seen to be believed. Each night we enjoy large walk-in tents, beds and shower toilet tents. The catering is superb from the freshly baked bread to banquet dinners served under the stars. The horses are mostly hardy bush Somali X and some polo ponies which are strong and sure-footed. Here there is plenty of space and you can take your own line at a gallop following herds of zebra, wildebeest or giraffe at will. The option of a shorter 7 night itinerary is also available. Riding on the Masai Mara is a lifetime experience for any rider.

**Getting there:** Nairobi (NBO) Airport then internal flight transfer to the Mara.

‘There were some long hours on horseback & wonderful long canters across the plains requiring a certain amount of fitness. The horses are great’. BK of Boca Raton

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
Tanzania is a peaceful, stable country even though some neighbours have a more turbulent reputation. The warm waters of the Indian Ocean lap on to its beautiful beaches. To the north, near the border with Kenya, there are two famous areas it is possible to ride: the Serengeti and Mount Kilimanjaro.

Game roams freely in Tanzania, just like Kenya, and follows well established migration routes. Unlike Kenya, hunting is legal in Tanzania and poaching is rife. Outside the reserves the game is rightly elusive, inside the reserves the game relaxes. There has been a crackdown on poaching since 2016 and the elephant population has rebounded.

Mount Kilimanjaro is Africa’s highest mountain at 5,900m and the snow-covered peaks of this dormant volcano dominate the landscape. Climbing Kilimanjaro is a popular challenge and we can arrange this as an extension to any holiday. If you are considering climbing we highly recommend the slightly longer but beautiful and more reliable Machame route to the top. The slower ascent allows adjustment to the altitude and makes altitude sickness less likely.

Tanzania offers some good possibilities for horse riding holidays in the region of Kilimanjaro Mountain. Choose from a riding holiday based on a beautiful coffee farm which can be tailor made to riders of any ability and extended with a short trail to a hot spring, or a Big Game Safari or a combination of game and seeing the country its colourful people.
Programmes

Kilimanjaro Safari Trail

8d/7n/8 days riding. Set dates January to March and June to December.

Here, between the highest point in Africa, Mount Kilimanjaro and Mount Meru, we explore Arusha National Park and the West Kilimanjaro Wilderness, encountering amongst others; elephants, buffalo, zebra, giraffe and hundreds of different antelope.

We ride, at all paces where the terrain permits, from the “little Serengeti” through Masai land to the edges of the Kilimanjaro National Park.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Kilimanjaro (JRO) Airport

‘The horses were great! I was able to ride a number of different horses and all were fun! The food at the farm was excellent!!’
LK of Norwood

Coffee Farm Stay

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates January to March and June to December.

A great riding holiday where you will spend a week on a 358-acre coffee farm set at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania riding every day.

Accommodation is in a chalet with beautiful views of the snow-capped Mount Kilimanjaro from private balconies. All rooms have en-suite hot showers, basin and toilet. Meals at the farm are taken on a large netted veranda with views of Kilimanjaro. There is a large living room with a fire lit every night in the colder months.

The riding, which can be tailored to all riding abilities, takes place on the slopes of the coffee farm and plains below. Non-dangerous plains game is encountered on your rides. Here you are free to relax between your twice daily rides or you can take part in many activities.

Getting there: Return transfers included from Kilimanjaro (JRO) Airport

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
South Africa

Size: 1,221,137km²
Population: 58,072,162
Languages: English and Afrikaans, plus 9 other official languages
Currency: South African Rand
Time zone: GMT +2

Interesting fact: The world is divided into six floral kingdoms. All these kingdoms encompass several countries, and in some cases, several continents. South Africa, which has a floral kingdom wholly contained within the country, is the one exception. The Cape Floral Kingdom has 9,600 plant species, 70% of which are not found anywhere else in the world.

Riding in South Africa

Unicorn Trails is in a unique position to advise you on horse riding holidays in South Africa. Our Managing Director, Wendy Hofstee, grew up in South Africa and throughout her 20 years of living in England, has continued to visit South Africa at least once or twice a year. She knows Southern Africa like the back of her hand and just about every riding opportunity south of the equator. With 21 National Parks and hundreds more private reserves, many with open borders to the National Parks, South Africa offers excellent game viewing in all seasons and areas. In South Africa, unlike Botswana, Kenya and Tanzania, game reserves are all fenced and the game is actually owned. There are no large migrations and you know what sort of game is in a reserve. As most reserves range in size from around 20,000 acres to the Kruger Park which is 4 million acres, there are no safari park rides! Our South Africa horse riding holiday products are carefully selected, not only for the first time visitor to South Africa, who may wish to focus on game viewing and a visit to Cape Town/beaches, but also the best off-the-beaten-track experiences to reflect South Africa’s incredible natural landscapes, welcoming hospitality, customs, traditions, histories, and wildlife. Nelson Mandela coined the phrase “rainbow nation” to describe this outstanding diversity and we are proud to reflect this in our selection of riding holidays and specialist advice. Come on some of the best value safaris in the world and then look further to some of our hidden gems. You’re sure to want to return to South Africa!

Riding with game

Almost everyone asks “Isn’t this dangerous?” or “Won’t I be eaten by lion?”. In a nutshell, no, this is not dangerous and you won’t be eaten by a lion but make sure you are accompanied by an experienced guide. Riding safaris and horse riding amongst game have some incredible advantages over vehicle based safaris: you are at one with nature and your environment, seated up high with a good view. Not only is your horse watching his feet, but he is aware of all the smells and sounds of the bush around him at all times. And the horse you ride, being local and experienced, will know how to process this information. Have a look at his ears – that bush he is staring at intently probably hides a well camouflaged antelope. If he drops his head to graze you can be pretty sure there is no danger in the area. If he becomes uneasy or refuses to advance, look again for any danger. Your horse is experienced at preserving his safety, all you have to do is stay with him.

Of course your guides know the areas and habits of the game like the back of their hands and will be looking at spoor (footprints), observing the behaviors of the wildlife and horses, so any warning signs of unease or aggression can be acted on. There is always a lead guide (sometimes armed if there is dangerous game present) and a backup guide. In the event your guide thinks there may be an unsafe situation developing, you all turn round and follow the backup guide away. At all times there is a guide between you and any wildlife. This safety relies on two things: the ability of your guide to keep you away from dangerous situations (almost foolproof on our rides) and your ability to stay on your horse. So although you may never have to gallop out of danger, if you do not have a secure seat we suggest you stick to riding with non dangerous game (no lion, elephant or buffalo) where falling off does not matter.
Programmes

Waterberg Mountains

The Waterberg UNESCO Biosphere is handily located, 3 hrs drive north of Johannesburg and is not only beautiful with sandstone jutting mountain ridges but is home to many game reserves and teaming with wildlife. It is on the “highveld” at around 1800m and thus is malaria free all year round.

Ants Reserve

Open all year round from 3 nights

This is a 5-star safari in the African bush with superb horse riding for all levels with no dangerous game, as well as all the usual game activities. Stay in the old colonial homestead, with its classic furniture crafted from local timbers, its warm fireplace and crisp plunge pool or alternatively opt for a deluxe lodge or private cottages. Venture out on horseback, foot or jeep, close to game such as rhino, giraffe or eland. Enjoy the magnificent vistas created by the mountains and gorges of the Waterberg, at surprise bush breakfasts or traditional sundowners. Ideal for families in school holidays and anyone looking for a relaxing luxury safari. The yearly Game Census week is usually sold out far in advance.

Getting there: Johannesburg International Airport (JNB).

Horizon Ranch

Open all year round, 3 night min stay

A must do horse riding holiday! This 22,000 acre ranch with some game is set deep within Waterberg Mountains and offers varied and exciting riding for riders of all levels. Everyone leaves with their confidence boosted, there is a huge herd of top-quality horses. Go for long rides at varied paces, exploring the furthest reaches of the ranch, gather beneath the eucalyptus trees to join an exciting game of polocrosse (Warning: this is addictive), ride with game such as giraffe, zebra, eland, wildebeest, impala, kudu, hippo and many other species. Experience nights under African stars at their stunning luxury camp, ‘Camp Davidson’, telling stories around the campfire, nights under African stars at their stunning luxury camp, ‘Camp Davidson’, telling stories around the campfire, picking up tips from the most savvy horsemen around. Horizon is most well-known for its relaxed atmosphere and sunny hospitality; everyone feels welcome and at home in the shortest time and almost everyone returns.

Getting there: Johannesburg International Airport (JNB).

Entabeni Reserve

8 days/7n/ 7 days riding Set dates year round

View the Big 5 on this ride set in the popular Entabeni Reserve in the Waterberg Mountains with spectacular cliff views. Stay in a variety of accommodation including luxurious tented chalets, a tented campsite beside a river and a classic raised, wooden lodge surrounded by majestic mountains and striking natural rock formations. Game drives included at the lodges, and offering varied and exciting riding for riders of all levels.

Getting there: Johannesburg International Airport (JNB).

African Explorer

8d/7n Set Dates all year round

Combine 4 nights under canvas in the South African bushveld with 3 nights in the Tuli block, Botswana. Starting at Camp Davidson on the Horizon ranch in South Africa, the safari tents are on platforms nestled in the heart of the wooded mountains of the Waterberg and commands a panoramic view of the central highlands of the Waterberg massif. Camp Davidson has captured that early explorer camp atmosphere beautifully. After our riding and game viewing in the Waterberg, we take a 5 hr drive to the vast Mashatu Game Reserve in the Tuli Block of south eastern Botswana.

The Tuli Block is an area of great diversity, magnificent vistas, ancient civilizations and dramatic rock formations bordered by the great Limpopo River in the south. Aptly named the “Land of the Giants” for its backbuck studded plains and large herds of elephant, the land remains largely untouched by man and is home to a wide variety of wildlife species including lion, cheetah, leopard, African wild dog, a multitude of plains game like zebra, wildebeest and giraffe, as well as over 350 species of birds. Accommodation throughout is in tented sites with en suite facilities.

A great combination, 2 countries in one ride with a huge diversity of wildlife and landscapes, our top recommendation and the best value safari available today.

Getting there: Johannesburg International Airport (JNB).

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606

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The Escarpment and Lowveld

In Mpumalanga province the highveld ends abruptly at the escarpment of the Drakensberg Mountains and descends over 1,000m in a spectacular few miles to give way to the lowveld. Early settlers soon realised that tick-borne diseases made cattle farming almost impossible in the lowveld area and the first protected area was proclaimed here in 1898 leading to the establishment of the Kruger National Park in 1926. Today game viewing is what the lowveld is all about. The escarpment is a tourist draw in its own right with such vistas as God’s window, Blyde River Canyon, the Panorama Route and the charming Goldrush town of Pilgrim’s Rest, now a historic monument.

Drakensberg Escarpment & Kruger Combo

7d/6n/4 days riding Open all year round

This is one of our off the beaten track gems. Enjoy superb riding at all paces on beautiful responsive horses along the edges of the escarpment with spectacular views, followed by a jeep safari in the famous Kruger Park to see the Big 5 or a visit to the Panorama route. Accommodation is in historic forestry cottages and lodges with one optional night camping. No riding with dangerous game but all the excitement of fast riding and big game by jeep in the Kruger Park.

Getting there: Kruger Airport (KMIA) transfer included or can be arranged from Johannesburg (JNB) for extra cost (4hrs drive).

Beach and Game Trail

‘Lots of horse riding plus swimming, viewing of wild animals and camaraderie with the other riders and the trip leader, Jono’.

FG of Belmont

8d/7n Every Saturday all year round

The “Big 5” is what everyone dreams of seeing on an African Safari. Lion, elephant, buffalo, rhino and leopard. For experienced riders here is an exclusive safari with in the Karongwe and Makalili Reserves on the Big 5 dates or only Karongwe on the big 5 Camp safaris dates. Experience an exclusive luxury safari with no more than 7 experienced riders in a week, riding on choice of superbly schooled horses. The riding here is fast and exciting and everything is top quality from the tack to the luxury tented camps. A must for anyone serious about game viewing.

Getting there: Hoedspruit (HDS) or Johannesburg (JNB), South Africa

8d/7n Set dates February to November

Combine up close game viewing from horseback with gourmet food cooked right in front of you at 3 luxurious safari camps on the Karongwe and Makalili Reserves. This programme offers more relaxed riding than the full Big 5 itinerary. Again no more than 7 experienced riders on this luxury safari.

Riding out into the bush each day gives you exciting close encounters with game such as lions, giraffe, zebra, nyana, rhino and hippo. Most days start with a long ride in the morning and, after enjoying an extensive lunch, experience one of the other activities on offer in the afternoon: a game drive which allows you to get closer to predators, a guided walk, or simply relaxing by the pool.

Getting there: Hoedspruit (HDS) Airport or Johannesburg (JNB), South Africa
Cape
The Western Cape and Cape Town is one of the most visited areas of South Africa along with the lowveld. The winelands, rugged coast and incredibly beautiful city of Cape Town are perennial winners. The Garden route is a spectacular 300km stretch of coastline from Cape Town to Port Elizabeth, ideal for a self-drive or see the internet for new rides in this area.

The Eastern Cape is famous for its deserted and wild beaches, a favourite holiday destination for locals. We have fantastic riding in this area with unbeatable beaches, game and Xhosa culture. Another fantastic off-the-beaten-track destination, largely undiscovered by international tourists. We are always happy to arrange or give advice on arranging your own extensions in South Africa.

Wild Coast Beach Trail
5d/4n All year round, dates on request
The Wild Coast is a province on the Eastern Cape of South Africa named for the sudden storms, wild winds and heavy seas with the occasional freak wave that have haunted mariners throughout the ages. Many rivers cut deep into the land on their journey towards the sea and the surrounding plains are rich with fresh green plant life. The coast itself stretches out for miles in long white sandy beaches. This area is also the home of the Xhosa tribe who’s most famous son Nelson Mandela was born here. Rural life continues often unchanged in the interior.

Beach and Game Trail Eastern Cape
8d/7n Set Dates all year round
The ultimate South African trail - combine beach and game viewing in one itinerary, riding forward-going Arabian X horses. Gallop for miles along the pristine beaches beside Indian Ocean, visit the remote Diaz Cross planted by early Portuguese explorers, cross rivers on horseback, spend an evening on a river cruise, ride with big game and enjoy a day at the famous Addo Elephant park by vehicle. An excellent combination of beach and game with a chance to see the Big Five. An unforgettable and affordable, off-the-beaten-track break, available year round for intermediate riders onwards. You’ll feel welcome and have a chance to experience the real South Africa here.

Getting there: Port Elizabeth (PLZ) airport, South Africa

Zululand Private Game Reserve
7d/6n Open all year round
Situated in the rolling hills of KwaZuluNatal province, far above the sugar cane producing fields bordering Swaziland and Mozambique. This is a five-star lodge with magnificent accommodation, excellent gourmet food and all the usual safari activities such as guided jeep trips and night drives is an off-the-beaten-track gem. The owner breeds Arab horses and the reserve boasts a stable of over 20 Arab and cross horses, all in prime condition.

Plentiful plains game on the reserve includes: the elusive Nyala antelope, giraffe and zebra as well as cheetah. A vehicle excursion to a nearby reserve with Big Game including elephant can be booked on site.

There is no dangerous game present so it is possible to walk freely along the many self-guided trails on the reserve and beginners can be accommodated separately on riding trips.

Getting there: Richards Bay Airport (RCB) 2hr drive, or Durban (DBN) 3 hr drive, or Johannesburg (JNB) 5hr drive

Getting there: East London (ELS) Airport, South Africa
Trans Lesotho Expedition

10d/9n/8 days riding Set dates May and Sept

Cross the entire country of Lesotho starting in the north crossing the highest peaks of the Drakensberg around Katse Dam and crossing to South Africa on horseback at Soshlabaatho Nature Reserve on the southern border at the lower Drakensberg.

This is possibly one of the toughest rides in the world. In between steep rocky passes covering over 8,000m of ascent and descent in 350km the ride moves on at a fast, almost endurance pace along tracks and dirt roads. Crossing the small landlocked country of Lesotho on is a real feat and you will be astounded by the fitness and abilities of your boerperd and Arab cross horses.

En-route accommodation is the best available staying in lodges, cottages and rondavels at strategic points along the way with hot showers every night. Taking each day as it comes and making the most of the terrain when there is the opportunity for faster riding, this is an incredible chance for the intrepid rider to challenge themselves and truly discover what a partnership between horse and man can achieve.

Pony trekking on the hardy local Basotho ponies is widely available across the country and of differing quality. Usually local horses are rented and accommodation is in village huts.

The remote and rugged landscape is impressive, at times awe-inspiring, and the ideal playground for anyone who likes outdoor pursuits and for adventurous horse riding holidays. As one of the highest countries in the world, Lesotho is known for having crisp clean air and the mountains have an almost transparent blue tone. Large swathes of untouched countryside hold countless treasures including Bushman rock art, pristine dinosaur remains and fossilized footprints. Star viewing is breathtaking at night with the milky way clearly visible.

Lesotho is a beautiful and challenging environment with wild mountains and flowing rivers. There are no fences in Lesotho, allowing horse riding trails in any direction at any time as well as a whole host of other activities. It even boasts the world’s longest commercial single-drop abseil alongside the Maletsunyane waterfall – a cool 204m.

Tradition plays a large part in Lesotho life. Farming processes such as threshing can involve a whole village, with each person taking an important role, baskets are hand-woven with intricate skillful designs, and tribal dances or stick fighting are regular leisure time activities.

En-route accommodation is the best available staying in lodges, cottages and rondavels at strategic points along the way with hot showers every night. Taking each day as it comes and making the most of the terrain when there is the opportunity for faster riding, this is an incredible chance for the intrepid rider to challenge themselves and truly discover what a partnership between horse and man can achieve.

Transfers are from Johannesburg to the start and from the finish to Durban where a flight can return you to Johannesburg.

Getting there: O R Tambo Airport, Johannesburg (JNB). Transfers is payable onsite.
Namibia

Size: 825,418km²
Population: 2,642,466
Languages: English and many regional languages including Afrikaans and German
Currency: Namibian Dollar
Time Zone: GMT +1/+2

When to go:

Interesting fact: The name Namibia is derived from the Namib Desert, thought to be the oldest desert in the world. With the Namib Desert stretching all the way along the coastal side, and the Kalahari Desert on the eastern side, Namibia is the country with the least rainfall in sub-Saharan Africa.

Riding in Namibia

Riding in Namibia is ideal for fit, adventurous riders and will reward them with a holiday of a lifetime. In addition, Namibia has fascinating programmes for non-riders, most especially those interested in nature or photography.

Namibia is county of wildlife, vast tranquil wilderness and dramatic desert scenery. It is the least densely populated country in the world with huge open spaces. It is a former German colony and has a stable democratic government. Its Atlantic coastline on the west has almost 1000 kilometres of desolate beaches. It’s here you’ll find the much-documented Skeleton Coast and the remarkable desert elephants that, largely thanks to David Attenborough, Namibia has become famous for.

Wildlife viewing is best in the northern parts with the Etosha Pan, Damaraland and the Caprivi Strip all worth visiting. Wildlife viewing here is excellent, virtually guaranteed as the waterholes attract many animals. We offer riding in the Damaraland/Elephant Skeleton Coast area. Further game viewing and good riding is offered near Windhoek, the capital.

In the centre of Namibia deserts takes over and stretch all the way to the south. We offer the classic Namib Desert Crossing in the south, riding from the centre, across a mountains range and through the deserts to the coast. Sossusvlei in the Namib Desert has immense sand dunes, deep apricot in colour and high as mountains. Despite its desolation you’ll spot birds and the odd oryx or two. A real treat is to set out before dawn to climb a dune as the sun rises, then slide down to a champagne breakfast in the shade of a thorn tree.

Another desert, the Kalahari, lies in the east of Namibia and then in the south the majestic Fish River Canyon is located. The canyon is second in size to the Grand Canyon. It is 93 miles long, up to 17 miles wide and over half a mile deep. The Quiver Tree - a member of the aloe family grows here. Another wonderful ride for good fit riders wanting a fast-paced ride.

The overriding feature of this wonderful country of Namibia is its vast and dramatic emptiness, such wonderful landscapes for exhilarating horse riding adventures.
Private Game Lodge

8d/7n Open all year round

Located just 40 minutes from Windhoek in a malaria free area, this private game reserve of more than 40,000 hectares with an abundance of game, is the ideal choice for confident riders wanting comforts at night and no camping. For non-riding partners the lodge offers multiple activities: lion feeding, game drive, mountain drive, sunset drive, tennis, swimming and 2 hiking trails to observe the animals and birds.

The lodge offers en-suite rooms with private verandahs, sauna, tennis court and swimming pool. The restaurant specialises in game dishes based on Namibian and European cuisine with top quality South African wines. The daily riding programme is tailored to suit and utilises the large herd of fit Arab and Arab X horses who are forward going, fun loving and responsive. The variety of topography, from plains through bushveld and onto mountainous plateaus with sweeping views, allows for riding at varying paces. A correspondingly large variety of game flourishes in the different eco-systems and riding guests are kept to a maximum of 6 for a personal experience. A week here will only leave you wanting more! There is also the opportunity to enjoy a mini-trail into the mountains for good riders.

Getting there: Windhoek International Airport (WDH), Namibia

Namib Desert Trail

11d/10n/8 days riding
Set dates March to September

On this tough and challenging 11-day holiday you cover 300 km across the desert. You have the opportunity to see all of Namibia’s landscapes, from the highlands and semi-desert sheep farms, through stony and mountainous desert, red sand dunes and finally the beach at the Atlantic Ocean. Not for the faint hearted, this is a long distance adventure. Sooner or later all serious riders end up here!

Getting there: Windhoek International Airport (WDH), Namibia. Transfers included.

The Namib Desert

The Namib Desert – thought to be the oldest desert in the world – offers breathtaking views over miles of endless sand dunes and the chance to see thousands of stars in the un tarnished night sky.
Fish River Canyon

The Fish River Canyon, second in size only to the Grand Canyon, is the most visited attraction in Namibia. Over 160km long and 550m deep, the range of colours in the rock formations are breathtaking especially at sunset.

You could hike the famous Fish River Canyon Hiking Trail with a lot of effort or ride across these dramatic landscapes in some comfort ending at the Ai-Ais hot springs for a well deserved soak.

Fish River Canyon to Orange River

11d/10n/9 days riding
Set dates August to September

This horse riding safari holiday in Namibia has a combination of dramatic canyon landscapes, spacious desert planes and the mighty Orange River. This offers both inaccessible countryside and real wilderness areas as well as fast riding without limitations. The Fish River Canyon area is internationally recognised as one of Africa’s most magnificent sites and is the second largest canyon in the world. This trail crosses over three parks: Fish River Canyon Park, Gondwana Park and Aussenkehr Park, which is home to a small Namib Feral Horse population. Less onerous than some of the other Namibian trails, this ride has lodge accommodation on some nights and less km of riding to allow you to enjoy leisure time in the dramatic locations. The riding is at all paces and this is for adventurous and fit riders with a love of nature and camping.

Getting there: Cape Town International (CPT) Airport. Transfers can be arranged, payable on site.

Damara Elephant-Skeleton Trail

11d/10n Set dates June to August

This is a truly exceptional Namibian trail for any fit experienced riders up for a challenge! Where else can you expect to see elephant, giraffe and rhino in a desert habitat? And you will be surprised at how they have adapted. Damaraland is a very spectacular part of the country, almost inaccessible, with amazing colours and vast open spaces, ancient craters and remnants from prehistoric times, not to mention the forbidding Skeleton Coast. We may encounter elephant, rhino or lion, all of which combine into a tremendous adventure. Each and every Damaraland Trail so far has been an experience of a lifetime!

Getting there: Windhoek International (WDH) Airport, Namibia. Transfer included from meeting point.

‘A true adventure, just you, the wild Namib desert and a fantastic herd of horses, a small team who work so hard to make it an unforgettable experience and incredible wildlife and landscapes on a scale I’ve never experienced before’.
IC of Bury St Edmunds
Mozambique

Size: 801,590km²
Population: 21,397,000
Languages: Portuguese and many regional native languages
Currency: Mozambican Metical
Time Zone: GMT +2

When to go:

Interesting fact: Mozambique has rich and extensive natural resources and the economy is based largely on agriculture. Major exports include: cotton, cashew nuts, sugarcane, tea, corn, coconuts, exotic fruits and potatoes.

Riding in Mozambique

Ride your horse on the fabulous beaches of Mozambique! Unicorn is delighted to offer the ultimate horse riding holiday in Mozambique - the latest ‘must see’ destination in Africa. If you want to feel the sun on your back in the long cold northern hemisphere winter, then this is the place to head for. The best time to visit any country is before tourists ‘discover’ it. Having emerged from a long civil war, just 15 years ago, the country is now bursting with potential and developing its tourism infrastructure rapidly, but it is still unspoilt with beautiful natural wonder. Horse riding holidays in Mozambique are not really suited to safaris as most of the game has still to come back after the war. However, the beach riding is superb and the lodges on the Bazaruto archipelago such as Benguerra lodge, are amongst the best in the world. All levels of riding are catered for on this horseback vacation even beginners. Bring the family – children will love it.

Mozambique is located in south east Africa. Despite bordering 6 other African countries - Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and South Africa - it still manages to have approximately 2,500 kilometres of gorgeous coast on the warm Indian Ocean.

Programmes

Paradise Beach Week & Short Break

Open all year round, any day arrival or departure

The hottest new destination in Africa with unmatched beach riding on fit and well-loved horses. This is an unmissable extension to any African holiday or a riding holiday in its own right. The tropical colours of the sea must be seen to be believed. Relax and enjoy activities from fishing, through to snorkelling on world class coral reefs or scuba diving. This is when you’re not exploring the coastline on horseback, visiting the local markets, swimming with your horses or sailing to Benguerra Island to ride there.

Your hosts Mandy and Pat Retzlaff are people with a passion for life and great stories to tell. The spirit of fun and adventure runs deep here and the care and love for their horses is second to none. Suitable for all levels of riding and with enough activities to keep non-riders happily occupied for weeks, this is an all ride destination with great riding and luxury accommodation right on the beach.

Getting there: Vilanculos (VNX) Airport, Mozambique. Transfer included from meeting point.
Ethiopia
Size: 1,104,300km²
Population: 112,047,494
Languages: Afroasiatic language of the Cushitic or Semitic branches; includes Oromiffa, spoken by the Oromo people, and Somali, spoken by the Somali people.
Currency: BIRR
Time Zone: GMT +3
When to go:

Interesting fact: All of Ethiopia uses a Coptic calendar unlike the rest of the world which uses the Gregorian calendar. The Coptic calendar is behind the Gregorian calendar by more than 7 years due to an alternate calculation in determining the date of the Annunciation of Jesus. It has 13 months: 12 months of 30 days and a 13th month with 5 or 6 days. Each new year starts on September 11th of the Gregorian calendar.

Riding in Ethiopia

Travelling in Ethiopia is for the adventurous who don’t mind a limited tourism infrastructure in return for discovering ancient Abyssinia: source of the Great Rift Valley; the origins of mankind, the marvels of ancient Christianity and the wild highlands and semi nomadic Oromo people. Famous for its underground churches in Lalibela in the north, Ethiopia also has unique wildlife and beautiful national parks. Amongst the many ecosystems of Ethiopia that of the Highlands of the Bale plateau is one of the most diverse, and offers us 8 days on horseback with the Oromo people. Formed of great volcanic masses thrown up before even the African Rift was formed, remodeled by glacial periods, isolated and scarred by deep valleys, the Bale plateau is a natural sanctuary for numbers of endangered plant and animal species such as the rare Abyssinian fox. All in all the landscape is splendid, the people are welcoming, the sense of history is tangible and you won’t have to worry about crowds of tourists.

Abyssinia Explorer
15d/14n/8 days riding. Set date in November.

Discover the Ethiopian Highlands on horseback. Riding in traditional style on local horses we ascend from a starting point of 2400m through various eco systems and dramatic scenery. As we climb the vegetation changes and gradually we leave behind the traditional villages that characterise the lower slopes until we enter the National Park which is inhabited by many rare endemic species of wildlife and traversed by the semi nomadic Oromo people. Here we can see the rare Abyssinian Wolf, Menelik’s Bushbuck, Mountain Nyala and many more. We encounter nomadic Oromos with their herds of cattle, goats and sheep. Draped in capacious white shawls, they cross the vast horizon on their inexhaustible horses. Slender and fine featured, they were semi nomadic pastoralists, traditionally horsemen who use their horses as mounts or as draft/pack animals.

To complete our visit of Ethiopia we visit Lalibela, a religious treasure unique in the world, the spirited high place of Abyssinia. The site embraces several dozen churches cut into the rock, still frequented with fervour by Coptic Christians. This is an adventure of a lifetime for intermediate riders onwards.

Getting there: return transfers included from Addis Ababa Airport (ADD).
African Extensions

There are many sights that one might wish to see after a week on a horseback safari and some time relaxing on the beach can also be very appealing. We can arrange a large selection of extensions in Africa according to your wishes. Below are some ideas that combine well with our horseback safaris in Africa.

Johannesburg

If you need to overnight in Johannesburg on your way to or from a safari we can arrange overnights and some fascinating tours: Half day Johannesburg City Tour; half day gold mine tour; half day Soweto tour or a full day world heritage and wildlife tour.

Cape Town

There is so much to see and do in Cape Town. Cape Town may not be time to lounge on some of the best beaches in the world. Some highlights include Chapman’s Peak drive, a boat trip to Robben Island and a visit to Nelson Mandela’s cell, ascend to the top of Table Mountain for sunset, visit the wine lands of Stellenbosch and Paarl, visit fashionable Camps Bay and Clifton beaches to name but a few. Should you not wish to drive yourself we can pre-arrange tours, or if you wish we can tailor some recommendations for you to see at leisure with your own car.

We offer a choice of accommodation in Cape Town from boutique to 5 star hotels, spa or beach villas. We can also arrange transfers, car rental or private tours to fit in with your schedule.

Victoria Falls

One of the wonders of the world, this spectacular destination is perfect for a few days before or after any of the Botswana or South African safaris. A visit to the Victoria Falls can also easily be combined with any of the southern African riding holidays.

Mozambique

We highly recommend the islands of the Bazaruto Archipelago (a national park) and Vilanculos town in the south of Mozambique as an idyllic beach destination after a safari. The whole area boasts palm-fringed white beaches, numerous coral reefs suitable for snorkelling and diving, a large variety of water sports and is also world renowned for deep sea angling.

The area is easy to access from Johannesburg or from the even closer Kruger Park area with regular direct flights. We offer a choice of accommodation in the area and can tailor make any combination.

We have a particular expertise in Africa. From Tanzania and Zanzibar Island, to Kenya and Namibia, we know the best places to combine with your riding holiday as we have done exactly that when visiting these destinations. This experience is invaluable and the extensions we recommend to our riding holidays are always perfectly judged. Please see our website for more options or contact us to tailor make your perfect holiday in Africa.

‘The most amazing experience I have ever had!’
JE of Truro
Riding in North America

Riding in North America is ingrained in the psyche and popular culture of its people. From the pioneers who trekked west to the native Indian populations who lived on the land to the current-day cowboy, all are inextricably tied to the horse. Apart from the cowboy lifestyle of the west there are also many trails in spectacular parts of the US on the native breeds.

The two most popular native breeds of North America and the Quarter horse and the Appaloosa. The Nez Perce people of the Pacific Northwest developed the spotted Appaloosa breed which was once referred to by settlers as the “Palouse horse” after the Palouse River, which ran through the heart of Nez Perce country.

The quarter horse evolved when the Colonists’ English stock were crossed with Spanish Barbs obtained from the Chickasaws to produce heavily muscled, compact horses that could run a quarter of a mile faster than any other horse. Pioneers heading West crossed these quarter running horses with feral descendants of the Spanish Conquistador stock known as mustangs and produced a hardy horse with innate cow sense.

Ranches developed the breed to the modern quarter horse which is now the most popular breed in the world. Fast and agile, it is a true working horse, docile to ride yet very quick and responsive. The skills needed by cowboys and their horses became the foundation of the rodeo.

Guest ranches arose in response to the romanticisation of the American West that began to occur in the late 19th century. Ranchers quickly spotted the opportunity for additional income. The first guest ranch charged an all-inclusive $10 fee per week for each guest for a program that included ranch chores, such as roping, cattle drives, rounding up stray cows and riding as well as dramatic scenery, hunting and fishing. Since then guest ranches have become a well-established tradition. Guest ranches usually are more set up for leisure and entertainment and may not have cattle programs while working ranches make a good deal of their income from traditional ranching activities and offer fewer luxuries.

“The ranch was fantastic, everything was superb, the accommodation in log cabins, the food, the scenery, the staff, the horses, nothing was too much trouble and they would modify the activity to suit, better that our best expectation. Would highly recommend to anyone.....12/10”

DB of Moffat
Canada

Size: 9,984,670km²
Population: 37,289,947
Languages: English and French
Currency: Canadian Dollar
Time Zone: GMT -3.5 to -8

When to go:

Interesting fact: In 1915, a bear cub named Winnipeg was exported from Canada to London Zoo. A little boy called Christopher Robin Milne loved to visit Winnipeg (or Winnie for short), and it was his affection for the bear that inspired his father A.A. Milne to write the world famous children’s stories about Winnie the Pooh.

Riding in Canada

Unicorn has horse riding holidays in several areas of Canada: with an office in Canada we have our ear to the ground and offer a super selection. This is a country known for its mounties, maple syrup and lumberjacks and has a cowboy culture similar to the USA. Canada is a perfect blend of the best of Europe mixed with the best of the United States.

The first thing to remember is that this is a truly huge country: Canada is the second largest country in the world by area after Russia and occupies almost 7% of the world’s land mass. It spans 6 time zones and has the longest coastline of any country in the world. The endless great prairies are situated in the centre of this vast country with the Rocky Mountains to the west and the Great Lakes to the south east. It is sparsely populated with most people gathering in cities such as Vancouver, Toronto, Quebec and Montreal. English and French are the two joint official languages. Canada has a series of National Parks and pack trips are one of the best ways to explore the incredible scenery.

Pack trips are mostly offered in the extensive Rocky Mountains range, flights to Calgary for the Eastern side of the Rockies and to Vancouver for the western side. We offer a whole range of accommodation from comfortable lodges to wilderness expeditions in remote parts of British Columbia and the Yukon. Either way you can ride all day without seeing another soul. In addition cattle ranches, often remote, with a cowboy culture and cattle work are a draw. We offer riding holidays for all riding abilities from beginners to advanced and those who love a challenge or want to ride fast. Non riders and families, particularly in holiday times, are welcome on some of the destinations.

All the riding in Canada is western style and strong horses are available for heavier riders. All in all the perfect destination.

‘Beautiful experience in an amazing location’.
WK of Amsterdam
Wild River Lodge Trail

From 2-5 night stays.
Set dates May to October

Explore the backcountry of Banff National Park on this pack trip with comfortable remote lodge accommodation inside the park. Sure-footed horses take riders of any level through the wilderness around Bow River and up into the mountains (up to 2,500m), with gourmet food, a cracking fire and comfortable beds each night. Pack horses carry your belongings to the accommodation.

Getting there: Transfers from Calgary International Airport (YYC) to the stables payable onsite

"Fantastic holiday, the horses were looked after well and knew their jobs, the guide was knowledgeable and friendly and the scenery was just amazing!" RB of Nottingham

Programmes

Alberta Rockies Trail Ride

8d/7n 7 days riding June to October

Ride into the Alberta Rockies on horseback crossing alpine meadows, turquoise lakes and ancient glacial valleys. This is an 8-day trip where you will venture deep into the mountains and stay at two different camp sites. Food, camp and duffel bags are transported by teams of draft horses and covered wagons. This leaves the riders free to pick up the pace at a trot and canter in between the steep terrain over high mountain passes. Discover the hidden trails that take you high above the timberline, past tumbling mountain streams and through stands of virgin timber.

Getting there: Transfers from Calgary International Airport (YYC) payable onsite
Wilderness Pack Trips

7 and 10 night trips, Set dates May to September

Pack trips through the Canadian Rockies - the real deal with awe-inspiring scenery and remote camp sites. Join with a small band of fellow adventurers and athletic, sure-footed horses to explore some of the most wild and beautiful places in Alberta. Trips are offered in both the Canadian Rocky Mountains and, for those looking for a faster riding holiday, the Great Plains.

Getting there: Transfers from Calgary International Airport (YYC) or Calgary town included.

‘Breathtaking scenery, lovely horses and fantastic company. I’d do it again in a heartbeat!’
AW of Bottesford

Wildlife Research Trips

4d/3n or 7d/6n May to October

Pack trips through the pristine wilderness of Southwestern British Columbia tracking native wildlife including bears, eagles, mountain goats, moose, cougars and wolves depending on the time of year. Knowledgeable guides take every opportunity to show off the incredible ecosystems in action as you ride through the wilderness, making this a more interesting and meaningful holiday than simple wildlife viewing. Ride up as high as 3,000m enjoying incredible views. The local area also hosts Native Indian pow-wows and villages, a historic mining town, many cattle ranches and a small rodeo in town every weekend through the summer. If you like a little more comfort please pick the ranch stay.

Getting there: Transfers from Vancouver Airport (YVR) payable onsite.

Ghost River Pack Trip

8d/7n/6 days riding between June and October

A stunning pack trip through the wild mountains of Alberta for riders of all levels. Stay in cozy cabins as you explore the unspoilt Ghost River area on this adventurous ride. This trek is suitable for all levels of rider, more important is an appreciation for natural splendour and an enjoyment of the outdoors!

Getting there: Transfers from Calgary International Airport (YYC) payable onsite.

Yukon Expedition

13d/12n/10 days riding.
Set dates in June – September

A rare chance to experience from horseback the pristine natural beauty of the Yukon territory that borders Alaska. The Yukon, or “Great River” in the old language, is supplied by the great lakes that characterise the landscape along with the ancient glacial valleys, volcanoes, alpine meadows, forests and tundra.

On this 2 week trip we head far into the wilderness, bringing all supplies on packhorses with only one resupply by float plane halfway through the trip. This enables us to explore deep into the wilderness, a world away from the usual day trips from Whitehorse.

Getting there: Whitehorse Airport, Yukon (YXY). Transfers from airport to ranch are payable on site.

Yukon Mountain Explorer

5d/4n/5 days riding or 3n/4d/4d riding.
Set dates in August and September

Shorter pack trips into Yukon territory, one of the few pristine wildernesses left in the world. You’ll enjoy breathtaking views of the mountains, camping accommodation and untouched wilderness. This is a ride for adventurous riders from beginner level onwards.

Getting there: Whitehorse Airport, Yukon (YXY). Transfers from airport to ranch are payable on site.

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606.
Banff, Cascade Valley Pack Trip

3d/2n/3d riding or 6d/5n/5d riding from June to September

Explore spectacular trails through the deep wild forests of Banff on this relaxed pack trip horse riding holiday with camping accommodation in A frame tents on wooden platforms at 2 different sites in Banff National Park. Experienced guides and sensible horses free you up to focus on the incredible scenery all around. Guides entertain you along the ride with colourful tales of local history and life in the rugged Canadian backcountry. The riding is all at a walk and allows access to areas of the National Park that cannot be reached by vehicle.

Getting there: Transfers from Calgary International Airport (YYC) to the stables payable onsite

British Columbia, Coast Mountains Ranch Stay

8d/7n and 6 days riding from May to October

Experience Canada’s wild west on this working guest ranch at the foot of the Coast Mountains in western Canada. Guests can relax and get away from modern life in this uninhabited landscape, riding out in small groups aboard quality horses. Non-riders can relax in the hot tub, go fishing or even try their hand at gold panning in the creek that runs through the ranch. This destination offers the tranquility of a remote location, comfortable accommodation and riding for all levels.

Getting there: Transfers from Lake Williams Airport (YWL) payable onsite

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
British Columbia, Cranberry Lake Ranch

8d/7n/6 days riding from May to September

This ranch, nestled between Jasper National Park and Cariboo Mountains Provincial Park, is ideal for a horse riding holiday. No matter what your riding experience, you will find something to love here. Lessons are available with highly experienced and knowledgeable trainers, or the guides can take you out on one of any number of trails in the Canadian countryside. With three mountain ranges, forests and open plains all around you, there will be no shortage of adventures!

Getting there: Edmonton Airport (YEG), transfers can be arranged, greyhound possible or car hire is recommended (5hr drive).

British Columbia, Northern Rockies Pack Trip

15d/14n/9-10 days riding join the trail for 2 weeks from June to September

Journey to the Muskwa-Kechika in the northern part of British Columbia’s Rocky Mountains and join a full-on wilderness expedition into this remote region. In 2019, the expedition will leave the Alaska Highway in mid-June at Mile 172 and emerge near Mile 400 in mid-September, with riders joining for 2 week jaunts along the way.

This is remote wilderness riding, as wild as it gets. Participants do not need to be experienced horse riders but must be physically fit and able to cope with up to ten hours riding along river valleys, alpine ridges, and high mountain passes.

Getting there: Via Vancouver (YVR) to Fort St John (YXJ), Fort Nelson or Muncho Lake depending on expedition number. Taxi or carpool can be arranged.

Saskatchewan, Prairie Working Ranch Stay

2 nights minimum from May to October

This relaxed working cattle-guest ranch in Saskatchewan has plenty to explore with nine miles of waterfront and more than 5,000 acres of rolling pasture and a herd of two hundred and fifty cows and calves.

Experience the cowboy way of life under the endless sky of the Canadian prairies and ride where the Blackfoot Indians once camped as they hunted bison across the vast plains. Overnight in simple log cabins with en suite rooms, relax in the hot tub after each day.

Getting there: Saskatoon Airport (YXE) transfers payable onsite.

Northern Rockies Pack Trip

‘Holiday of a lifetime. Once in a lifetime experience.’

AM of Ashford
USA

Size: 9,826,675km²
Population: 329,387,000
Languages: English
Currency: United States Dollar
Time Zone: GMT -5 to -10

When to go:

Interesting fact: The rural landscape of the USA is home to more than 2.2 million farms and ranches, 97% of which are family owned or run. Cattle ranches, where horses are still utilised for herding work, are a big part of the US economy.

Who has not dreamt of being a cowboy on a ranch? Guest ranches got their start in the West in the 1880s. Writers and painters brought the fabulous romance of cowboy life to millions throughout the world. Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show was an unprecedented success in Europe and the East leading to the romanticising of the West and the cowboy way of life. This continues to this day, aided in no small part by Hollywood movies.

Western ranchers began to take paying guests for $10/day. They would share their homes and their lives; ride horseback, herd cattle, hunt and fish. Guests came with their steamer trunks and often spent the whole summer. Today the classical guest and working ranch survives and remains true to most of the old traditions.

We offer a large selection of ranches, mostly family owned and run. All our ranches are carefully selected to offer really good riding for the more experienced rider, as well as catering for all levels from beginner onwards. They range from guest ranches with luxurious facilities to very basic working ranches. In school holidays ranches make for super family destinations with a variety of child programmes and options. Almost everyone returns.

However to limit horse riding holidays in the USA to ranch holidays would be underselling the amazing variation of scenery and possibilities in the USA, so we offer riding from trails along the Oregon coast in the west, through the spectacular Canyon Country of Utah to comfortable Inn in Vermont on the East Coast. These riding holidays offer an insight onto different parts of the USA best explored on horseback.

There is so much wonderful scenery and nature, away from the crowds, to discover in the USA we highly recommend a combination of a week classical road trip exploring with a week riding, or a combination of riding and city break. We can help you arrange this.

There are thousands of dude ranches and riding possibilities in the USA. We focus on quality of the riding, the condition of the horses and choose locations which are not only spectacular in their own right, but can easily fit into a complete US trip.

I would highly recommend to anyone wanting a relaxing holiday in the most beautiful surroundings complete with horse riding of course. It was my holiday of a lifetime”, CG of Belper
Montana

Montana Working Ranch

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates April to Sept

Come and experience a truly authentic working ranch in Montana, around 32,000 acres in size. You are hosted by the family who have been ranching in the Pryor Mountains for five generations. The landscape is big and includes Big Horn Canyon and the Pryor Wild Mountain Wild Horse Range, territory of the last few wild mustangs. The ranch runs 1,000 cows and their calves and have 100 horses to move them about as well as trailers to take them between far flung sections of land. Here you will have the chance to truly learn about the cattle work done in the west. The daily activities on offer are dictated by the needs and requirements of the cattle, horses and range pasture conditions. Guests have the freedom to ride and participate with as much or as little as desired. Activities include herding and moving cattle and horses from pasture to pasture, searching for lost calves, checking fence boundaries and in the corrals branding animals, vaccinating and castrating. Accommodation is in very simple ‘cow camps’ with basic shared bathroom facilities and the chef provides hearty fare from the wooden cook houses. This is in no way luxurious but it is the real deal, be sure to book up early as places go fast!

Getting there: Billings Airport (BIL), Montana. Transfers included from meeting point.

Bridger Ranch

8d/7n/6 days riding. Sunday to Sunday April to September

If you are interested in improving your riding skills, especially western and horsemanship, this is the place to come with regular clinics organised throughout the year and one day or more a week set aside for natural horsemanship clinics on demand. Cattle work is also done for all the neighbouring ranches.

Getting there: Bozeman Airport (BZN), Montana. Transfers included from meeting point.

Sunrise Ranch

8d/7n Open June to September

Set at 2,200m altitude next to Yellowstone Park and surrounded by 2 million acres of wilderness. Family run & offers a great children’s programme for all ages as well as having adult only weeks. Close enough to visit Old Faithful geyser in Yellowstone, pack trips into the wilderness available on request.

Getting there: Bozeman Airport (BZN), Montana. Transfers payable onsite.
Wilderness Trips

7d/6n Open June to September

This ride takes you through the open tracks of wild Wyoming, close to Yellowstone National Park, Tetons National Park and Jackson Hole. There are no set routes here, allowing those with an adventurous nature to pick a direction and ride in the wild, wide open country. Head towards the Red Desert, the Great Divide Basin or the Wind River mountains through sub alpine aspen groves, cedar and pine trees, across rivers and grass plains. Overnight in comfortable individual tipi tents.


Black Mountains Working Ranch

7d/6n other length stays available on request May to October, min 3 nights.

With 1,000 cattle in 10,000 acres of land this is the perfect place to experience life on a real working ranch. The pine forested mountains, grassy meadows, red-rock canyons and clear spring-fed streams make this a coveted destination for outdoor lovers and adventure seekers.

Family run for over 30 years, the comfortable accommodation and home cooked food at the ranch allow guests to relax amid the breathtaking scenery. In the evenings at the dining table the wranglers tell stories from their fascinating lives and really build the anticipation to get mounted and get riding! Choose between trail riding and cattle wrangling on horseback and various other activities including fishing and kayaking, to create the perfect holiday in the Black Hills of Wyoming.

Getting there: Rapid City Airport (RAP), Wyoming. Transfers payable onsite.

Lakeside Ranch

Min 3 nights. Open April to October

Head to north east Wyoming for a real life ranch experience at this Italian-American working ranch. Herd cattle, explore the mountains, streams and forest, help with round-ups and branding and visit a local rodeo. This is an authentic ranch for intermediate riders who are looking for a friendly and welcoming ranch experience with excellent horses. Unguided riding available for good riders.

Getting there: Rapid City Airport (RAP), Wyoming. Transfers payable onsite.

Klondike Ranch

8d/7n/6 days riding (shorter stays can be arranged) June to September


Getting there: Natrona County Airport (CPR), Casper, Wyoming. Transfers payable onsite.

Moose Ranch

8d/7n/6 days riding June to 15 September

Beautiful remote wilderness setting, log cabins, barrel racing, quarter horses, fishing and wildlife. A first class ranch with something for all abilities. In addition to the extensive horse riding programme there is a fully supervised children’s programme from infant onwards, outdoor heated swimming pool, hot tub, guided and unguided fly fishing and lots of evening fun with singing around the campfire, square dancing and cookouts. Expertly guided hikes are also available into the surrounding wilderness areas.

Getting there: Sheridan (SHR), Gilette (GCC), Casper (CPR) or Billings (BIL) airports, Wyoming. Transfers payable onsite.
Rocky Mountain Ranch

7d/6n (other trip lengths available on request)
Open May to September

Set on the continental divide at 2,500m, 100 miles west of Denver, every ride from this ranch has a view to write home about. Excellent riding and lots of fun team penning the cattle each week. A family run ranch surrounded by millions of acres of wilderness and forest. Here you ride on trails often travelled by deer and elk, wind through stands of native aspen, lope over rolling hills of sage brush and cactus and meander across meadows of wildflowers all the while surrounded by endless vistas of the majestic Colorado Rockies, that are simply spectacular.

Getting there: Denver (DEN), Colorado. Then shuttle to Granby and free transfer or car rental suggested.

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606

Idaho Horse Drives

7d/6n/5 days riding Set dates May to September

For experienced riders, this popular holiday will be one of the most exciting things you’ve done on horseback – with long trots and canters most days it can be wet or dry, cold or warm, dry or dusty, fast or slow... in fact anything can happen because this is the real thing! The holiday starts and ends at the ranch house, in simple yet comfortable rooms which are lit by traditional lamps as there is no electricity at the ranch. The hot outdoor shower is a favourite with guests! On the horse drive you will camp each night, bathing in natural springs and eating hearty meals around the campfire before retiring to your tent or to sleep under the bright starry night.

Getting there: Idaho Falls airport (IDA), Idaho. Transfers payable on site.

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
Utah

Utah Canyon Country Trail

7d/6n/5 days riding. Set dates in May to October

Inn-to-inn trail exploring Utah’s unrivalled national parks. Peace, solitude and plenty of wildlife spotting in this off-the-beaten-path destination with highly experienced guides. Ideal for novice to experienced riders who want to see the breathtaking scenery, ancient petroglyphs, slickrock mountains, canyons, rock arches, buttes and spires of this region.

Getting there: Salt Lake City (SLC) then transfers to Torrey, Utah payable on site or car hire is recommended (4hr drive).

Utah Wilderness and Canyon Ride

7d/6n/5 days riding. Set dates in May to October

Multi-day horse riding trips in Utah, exploring the distinctive red-rock landscape filled with cliffs and canyons. Small group size, experienced hosts and comfortable, camping accommodation. Escape the desert heat by exploring the plateau tops where the San Rafael Swell, Capitol Reef National Park and Grand Staircase make their dramatic break towards the Colorado River. A ride for adventurous travelers keen to get off the beaten path.

Getting there: Salt Lake City (SLC) then transfers to Torrey, Utah payable on site or car hire is recommended (4hr drive).
Arizona

**Tombstone Monument Ranch**

Any length stay, Saturday arrivals min 2 nights

Three miles from downtown Tombstone, famous for the OK Corral shootout, surrounded by miles of rugged, open country, with views of the Dragoon Mountains, this ranch offers a varied riding programme suitable for all levels of riders and families as well as a variety of other activities in the heart of Cochise County.

**Getting there:** Tucson, Arizona (TUS). Transfers included for 7+ nights or can be arranged and payable on site for shorter stays.

‘Amazing. A place to totally relax and learn how to breathe, relax and have fun again’. JB of Chesterfield

**Tucson Ranch**

Any length stay from 3 nights, 8d/7n recommended. Open all year round except July and August

This riding holiday is based at a family run ranch set in 5 square miles of desert adjacent to the Saguaro National Park. The True family have lived here for 50 years and their personal touch and hospitality of a traditional dude ranch is carefully blended with the service and amenities of a fine resort.

Reconnect with nature, family, friends and serenity. Ride through the unspoiled desert, rugged mountains and cactus that have brought Hollywood filmmakers to the ranch for over 70 years. Almost everyone returns!

**Getting there:** Tucson International Airport (TUS), Arizona. Transfer included for stays of four nights or more.

**Two Ranches Combo**

From 8d/7n to 15d/14n

This ride combines two of our popular Arizona ranch holidays, Tombstone and Tucson, to give guests the full range of ranch experiences and a great variety of landscapes to explore. From the rugged open country edged by mountains which is the Apache Territory of Tombstone Monument Ranch, to the Hollywood- esque deserts bordering Saguaro National Park near to Tucson Ranch, this holiday provides a true taste of the ‘real West’.

**Getting there:** Tucson International Airport (TUS), Arizona. Transfer can be arranged, free 10+ nights.
Oregon

Oregon Coastal Ride

7d/6n/6 days riding. Set dates from May to October

A six day riding holiday in three distinct regions of the Oregon Valley covering vineyards, mountain forests and Pacific Coast beaches. Riding through the lush fertile vineyards, traversing rugged pine clad mountains and fast riding along beautiful golden beaches in small, intimate groups. Comfortable accommodation with fresh local and often gourmet food and two vineyard wine tasting trips for good riders who are riding fit.

Getting there: Portland International Airport. Transfers payable onsite.

Excellent....... probably my best holiday ever. Justin and Lindley are great in every way: their professionalism with horses is incredible. The lunches, dinners and accommodation were also very high quality. I'd recommend this holiday to anyone, who's an advanced rider.

TN of Hellerup

Texas Horsemanship Ranch Stay

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates Jan to Nov.

Head to Texas and visit this small, family-run, ranch for an authentic and welcoming Texan cowboy experience. Learn natural horsemanship techniques, there are programmes for starting colts, confidence building and children. Work with colts and difficult horses or build your confidence riding in small groups. This destination offers an all-inclusive ranch holiday for riders of all abilities making it ideal for groups of mixed ability or families who can take advantage of the children’s riding programmes the ranch offers.

Getting there: Houston George Bush International Airport (IAH). Transfers payable onsite.

Vermont Inn

5d/4n or per day. Any day departure between May and October

Historic Inn set in forests with beautiful views over lake, good riding programme out in forests or tuition including entry level cross country. Western or English tack, many other activities, ideal for families in holiday times, spectacular fall foliage in September and October, great combination with New York or Boston city visit.

Getting there: Boston, Logan International Airport (BOS) and then fly to Rutland Regional Airport in Vermont (RUT) or we recommend car rental and drive (3.5hrs).
Latin America offers some of the best and most varied riding in the world. Many countries maintain strong cowboy traditions and horses are still central to their way of life. In the pampas of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay, they are known as gauchos, chagras in Ecuador, Chilean huaso, Cuban guajiro or Mexican charro and everywhere the lifestyle is fiercely traditional. Riding the local criollo horses allows travellers to be part of this lifestyle and learn about the country as no other method of travelling can.

The other major feature of Latin America is the Andes Mountain range. Ride across them on a historical journey in the footsteps of San Martin, or on the Avenue of the Volcanoes high plateau in Ecuador or on the Argentinean or Chilean sides, every time the sweeping scenery, deep peace and swooping condors take you to another place.

The islands of the Caribbean do not have a traditional horse culture, the riding there offers a way to get off the beaten track and meet real people.

Mexico offers something for everyone from the basic trips in the dramatic Copper Canyon in the north, the cultural delights of Oaxaca and its surroundings, the comfortable trails of the traditional Central Highlands with its silver mines or the tropical delights of the coast in Chiapas.

‘The ride really gave us an insight into another way of living, milking cows, eating cheese butter etc which had been produced on the farm, cooking by wood burning stove, a unique experience in beautiful countryside’. JS of Wakefield
Interesting fact: Mexico ranks first in terms of biodiversity of reptiles with 707 known species. It is also ranked second in biodiversity of mammals with 438 species. The discovery of Mexico introduced corn, chocolate and chilies to the rest of the world.

Riding in Mexico

Horse riding holidays in Mexico are the ideal way to meet the people and explore the more remote and spectacular areas of the country. Mexico has many indigenous people and was home to Olmec, Mayan, Teotihuacan, Toltec and Aztec empires before the Spanish colonial era began in 1521 and ended with independence in 1821. Major silver deposits in the North of Mexico (as well as Peru) helped elevate Spain to be the dominant colonial empire in the 1700s. Today Mexico is a Spanish speaking nation and many Spanish influences remain as well as indigenous peoples who have held onto their beliefs and many historic sites.

The Mexicans have always loved their horses. The main breeds ridden are quarter horses, Mexican criollos, Appendix (an elegant cross between the quarter horse and thoroughbred) and the native Azteca (originating from Andalusian and Quarter Horse stock). Mexicans have a big interest in equine sports and many wealthy Mexicans continue to ride at every opportunity. In addition the horse is widely used in cattle ranching and vaqueros (cowboys) have a proud tradition.

Our rides in Mexico cover all aspects: from spectacular mountains, canyons, old silver mines and colonial era haciendas in the north and central parts via the indigenous peoples further south surrounding Oaxaca and San Cristobal to the Pacific beaches and bioreserves of the Chiapas tropical coastline with its marine reserves, turtles and mangrove swamps teeming with bird life.

The climate in Mexico is tropical with a rainy and dry season and little temperature fluctuation from season to season. The mountains and plateaus are generally colder and less humid in winter than the coast. The dry season starts around November and the rainy season starts around June.
Programmes

Central Highlands Adventure
9d/8n/6 days riding. Set dates July to October

Discover the Central Sierra on this horseback expedition that takes you through mountains, majestic landscapes, small mining towns, abandoned mines, typical Mexican villages, farms, forests, valleys, enjoying traditional food and the biodiversity area of the state of Guanajuato.

This unspoilt and protected area is relatively unknown. Ride through these unexplored and long-abandoned yet beautiful natural environments and encounter typical, rural communities of the mountains far off the beaten track. You will have the chance to learn about their culture and experience the genuine warmth of the people. Accommodation is in hotels, comfortable camps and a mountain retreat.

Getting there: Transfer from Leon (BJX) Airport, Mexico, payable on site

Silver Mines Expedition
9d/8n/6 days riding. Set dates throughout the year

Another expedition in the central highlands following the old Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, the “Silver Route”. See ghost towns, Indian chapels and sites of great historical importance and encounter the unseen, forgotten Mexico: colonial cities, majestic shrines, traditional Mexican rural communities. We use the same paths crossed by the Aztec messengers and pre-Aztec nomadic tribes, which were reborn and expanded by the Spanish. You pass through beautiful natural landscapes, from semi-desert to oak forests, wetlands, rugged mountains to valleys of cactus, but stay in a comfortable hotel with en suite accommodation each night. This is undoubtedly the best way to discover the hidden treasures of 500 years of history, through ancient trails, haciendas and colonial heritage sites.

Getting there: Transfer from Leon (BJX) Airport, Mexico, payable on site

Hacienda to Hacienda Trail
9d/8n/7 days riding. Set dates throughout the year

This is a point to point trail overnighting at a different carefully selected historic haciendas and hotels. Your host Juan-Alfonso has lived in the area all his life and is well acquainted with all the surrounding haciendas ensuring you are warmly received as honoured guests everywhere. This ride is a great way to see the real Mexico; from family-run working cattle hacienda’s, exploring the local scenery, heading through the mountains and stopping en-route in small historic towns and villages. One thing is for sure on this trail, the atmosphere will be fun with the tequila flowing, excellent Mexican food and superb riding!

Getting there: Leon (BJX) Airport, Mexico. Transfers included.

Luxury Spa Hacienda
9d/8n/7 days riding. Open all year.

Discover authentic Mexico as a guest on a historic horse and cattle hacienda which has been upgraded to a boutique spa. There are fit Mexican Criollo’s to ride and many non riding activities. The hacienda is also a working cattle ranch, and is strategically positioned in an area with little rainfall and many hours of sunshine all year round, perfect for both summer and winter getaways.

Getting there: Leon (BJX) Airport, Mexico. Transfers included.
Mexico City Ranch Stay

Enjoy an active ranch holiday at this authentic Mexican ranch not far from Mexico City, well known for its quality local horses and Friesian stallions. You can explore the surrounding mountains and national parks on horseback, visit local volcanos and indulge in all-you-can-eat Mexican cuisine with complimentary beer and wine. As well as riding, the ranch offers a swimming pool, jacuzzi, basketball courts and a games room making it an ideal destination for groups of riders and non-riders.

Getting there: Mexico City (MEX) Airport, Mexico. Transfers payable onsite.

Minimum 3 night stay. Open all year round.

Oaxaca Discovery

8d/7n/6 days riding Set dates May to October

Oaxaca is the cultural centre of this southern state, filled with pre-Hispanic ruins such as Monte Alban, Baroque churches and monasteries, indigenous markets and villages devoted to various crafts. These cultures have survived better than most others in Mexico due to the state’s rugged and isolating terrain and they are at the heart of the vibrant traditions and craft culture. Based at a small farm in the central valley, your guide is incredibly knowledgeable about the cultures and crafts of the area and an excellent rider.

Getting there: Transfer from Oaxaca (OAX) Airport Mexico, included to hotel.

Chiapas Adventure: San Cristobal to the Pacific

9d/8n/8 days riding. Set dates throughout the year

Combine adventure and eco-exploration with relaxation in comfortable charming hotels and historic haciendas, from the highlands of San Cristobal ending at a unique eco resort on a private island at the edge of the Pacific Ocean. Swim with horses, ride on the beach, enjoy the natural beauty and wildlife experience in comfort with good fast riding for strong intermediate riders onwards.

Getting there: Tuxtla Gutierrez (TGZ) Airport, Mexico. Transfer by taxi to first hotel, payable onsite.

Mixteca Trail

8d/7n/6 days riding.
Set dates in February or March each year

Ride through the Mixteca region of Oaxaca and experience a land of contrasts from ethereal plains of red, maroon and white earth to dense oak forests. Experience the traditional way of life, staying in remote villages and visiting local artistic studios.

Getting there: Oaxaca (OAX) Airport, Mexico, transfers included.

This week-long trip combines plenty of riding with visits to ancient sites and is suitable for fit, competent riders who want to experience one of Mexico’s most diverse regions.

Getting there: Oaxaca (OAX) Airport, Mexico, transfers included.

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
Costa Rica is a stable democracy with educated people and, despite its small size, one of the most biodiverse countries in the world due to the altitude variation and abundance of bird species.

In the Guanacaste region, dry, flat plains merge with tropical dry forests to create landscapes akin to the American “wild west” and African savannas. This region supports Costa Rica’s beef and sugarcane production, and has several national parks and wildlife reserves. It also boasts glorious palm-fringed beaches with miles of open space to ride.

Costa Rica possesses the greatest density of species in the world due to the altitude and climate difference so one can see amazing, diverse flora and fauna in a small space. Costa Rica protects approximately 23% of its territory in conservation areas - which is the highest percentage of any country in the world.

Programmes

A Taste of Guanacaste

8d/7n/6 days riding. Flexible dates year round except October

In the north of the country we find the ranching region of Guanacaste, where breeding the local Costa Rican Criollo is both a passion and a long-standing tradition. Here we have a based stay where both riders and non-riders alike will enjoy the relaxed environment on the 50 acre family-owned ranch, an oasis of giant tropical trees and dry forest flora and fauna and a short distance from the beach. Wake to monkeys calling from the trees and horses nickering in the pastures. Ideal for small groups of friends or families.


Silver Saddles Riding weeks

8d/7n/6 days riding Flexible dates year round except October

Superb getaway incorporating all the cultural aspects of the Guanacaste ranching region in Costa Rica for horsemen and women over 50 that want small, individually designed tours that offer some of the best riding in Costa Rica on comfortable, well-trained horses with professional guides.

Cuba

Size: 109,884km²
Population: 11,492,395
Languages: Spanish
Currency: Cuban Peso
Time zone: GMT -5/-4

When to go:

Interesting fact: Cuba’s literacy rate is 99.6%, the tenth highest globally, mainly due to the provision of free education at every level, including university. This high standard of freely available education means Cuba has the highest doctor to populace ratio in the world, and the same healthcare standards as any progressive country.

Riding in Cuba

Cuba is a Caribbean island nation under communist rule. It has sugar-white beaches and is dotted with tobacco fields, which play a part in the production of the country’s legendary cigars. The capital, Havana, is lined with pastel houses, 1950s-era cars and Spanish colonial architecture in the 16th-century core, Old Havana. Music and dancing can be found everywhere. Our different rides cover the whole island and includes historical, natural and cultural highlights.

‘I enjoyed visiting this beautiful Caribbean island immensely. The experience of this different and unique culture and lifestyle will stay with me for a long time’. RL of St Austell
Programmes

**Havana Experience**

5d/4n/3 days riding.
Set dates February, March and November

An excellent short break for those looking to mix horse riding with experiencing the local culture. After riding in the mornings, the afternoons are given to learning the national dance of Cuba, ‘Son’, with a professional dance teacher. There are plenty of other activities for non-riding friends and family making this a really inclusive break.

Getting there: Jose Marti International Airport, Havana (Havl), Cuba. Transfers payable on site.

‘The horses and local guides were the high points of the trip. The guides were knowledgeable and friendly. They went out of their way to make us feel welcome.’
VC of Columbus

**Tabaqueros Trail**

9d/8n/6 days riding.
Set dates February and November

A rich cultural and natural ride through Pinar del Rio, the westernmost and one of the most beautiful provinces of Cuba. Within these valleys grow the tobacco leaves used to produce the Habanos, the finest cigars in the world. The lush and tropical vegetation in the “garden of Cuba” is also home to the stunning mountainous landscapes of Viñales and Ml Cumbres with its ‘mogotes’ - a rare geological feature and Unesco designated World Heritage Site. The valley is justly ranked among Cuba’s most beautiful landscapes.

Getting there: Jose Marti International Airport, Havana (HAV), Cuba. Transfers payable on site.

**Ingenious Valley**

11d/10n/6 days riding.
Set dates February and November

This ride in Cuba’s Central Region gives us the opportunity to visit the most beautiful colonial towns of Cuba and swim in the crystalline waters of the Caribbean Sea. Ciego de Avila is also a green province where tobacco and coffee are grown in the extraordinarily fertile lands and valleys. We get to enjoy Cuban hospitality, sleeping in the guajiros (field workers) houses in the countryside, having lunch together or drinking and dancing with them during the evening.

Getting there: Jose Marti International Airport, Havana (HAV), Cuba. Transfers payable on site.

**The Revolution Trail**

9d/8n/4 days riding.
Set dates February and November

Follow in the footsteps of Cuba’s revolutionaries, visit the historical sites of the Cuban Revolution in the Oriente (Eastern) region and experience the beauty of the National Park of Sierra Maestra on horseback. Ride on the mountain pass routes used during the revolution and over the grounds where the historic battle of Sierra Maestra took place. Stop for a coffee at a local coffee farm and enjoy meals with the locals sampling Cuban cuisine and beverages – followed by live music and dancing of course!

This point to point trail offers plenty of activities out of the saddle making it suitable for accompanying non-riders. Accommodation is in casas particulares (homestays), guesthouses and farmers accommodation along the route.

Getting there: Jose Marti International Airport, Havana (HAV), Cuba. Transfers payable on site.
Dominican Republic

Size: 48,422km²
Population: 9,445,281
Languages: Spanish
Currency: Dominican Peso
Time Zone: GMT -4

Interesting fact: The capital of the Dominican Republic is Santo Domingo. It is the oldest permanent settlement in the Western hemisphere, having been founded in 1496.

When to go:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Riding in the Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic is well known for its white sandy beaches, towering palm trees, fascinating history, vibrant culture and adventure tourism. The country boasts some of the most incredible natural scenery anywhere in the world, perfect for you to enjoy your holiday with your horse. It has five mountain ranges, including the majestic Baoruco Mountain Range - part of which forms the stunning Sierra de Bahoruco National Park - in the south of the country, countless rivers (at some 296 kilometres long, the Yaque del Norte is the most significant river in the Dominican Republic and perfect for white water rafting), spectacular waterfalls, sweeping valleys and luscious sugar cane plantations.

And all this surrounded on three sides by pristine golden beaches and crystal turquoise seas. On our riding holiday in the Dominican Republic you can swim with your horse in the waters, gallop along the beaches and through the surf and meander through villages and terrain few foreigners have the good fortune to experience.

Your days in the saddle can be rounded off with a delicious meal of freshly caught fish, grilled on the beach, perhaps a cool locally produced rum or even a world famous Dominican cigar! The perfect end to a perfect day, one of many we hope on this holiday of a lifetime.

Caribbean Adventure

8d/7n/6 days riding
Set dates all year round

Here we offer a real rider’s itinerary, a point to point trail, not too strenuous but with some fantastic riding, swimming with your horses in crystal clear waters and beach riding. En route you’ll stay in a combination of small hotels or local Dominican home stays, and wherever you go you can be sure of a warm welcome. You’ll have a chance to experience the best of this exotic location: ride through the tropical surroundings with sugar cane fields, mango and coconut plantations, and clear waterfalls all around. Try the local coco loco rum based drink, cuisine such as freshly grilled fish, octopus or shrimp on the beach. Experience canters through rice fields, banana plantations, cacao groves, and coffee plantations, canoeing amongst mangrove swamps and visit the Paradise Island coral reef for snorkeling. Discover a new way of life and a different culture on this unmissable adventure.

Getting there: Puerto Plata (PUJ) Airport, Dominican Republic. Transfer included from meeting point.
Riding in Colombia

Colombia is enjoying peace after many years of civil war and with it a resurgent interest from tourists all over the world. It is a country of lush rainforest, towering mountains and coffee plantations. Horses are part of the fabric of Colombian culture and history. Almost all Colombians are mad about horses. Fairs, festivals and horse parades are common all over the country. The Colombians also have their own breed: the Colombian Paso Fino.

On his second trip to America, Christopher Columbus (who the country is named after) brought some horses with him. These horses were a mix of Andalusian, Berber, and the extinct gaited Spanish horse the Jennet. They formed the basis for the horses with which the Spanish conquered the Caribbean and South America, ancestors of the current Criollo breed, the stock horse of Latin America.

Hundreds of years breeding with those bloodlines, especially in Puerto Rico and Colombia, optimized the gait, endurance and strength. This is how the Paso Fino, literally translated as The Horse with the Fine gait, endurance and strength. This is how the Paso Fino, literally translated as The Horse with the Fine gait, was created. The Paso Fino Colombiano has a smooth and natural gait were much appreciated.

Hacienda Horse Trail

8d/7n/ 6 days riding.
Set dates Feb, Jun, Jul, Aug

An authentic trail ride through the Eastern Highlands of Colombia exploring one of the most appealing horse cultures in the world. Ride on Colombian criollos through the mountain landscapes of the Cordillera Oriental, crossing the desert of La Candelaria, through the province Cundinamarca to the tropical province of Santander. Ride way off the beaten track, discovering hidden places, stopping from time to time to share a refreshing beer in a picturesque village with the most friendly Latin Americans of the continent. You will soon understand why they say, “Colombia, el único riesgo es que te quieras quedará” meaning: “Colombia, the only risk is that you want to stay.”

Stay in traditional haciendas, guest houses and hotels and, one night, in a monastery. You will meet many horse enthusiasts on your trail. One highlight is the opportunity to ride a pure Paso Fino Colombiano at a renowned breeding stable and experience the smoothness of the gaited Colombian criollo horse, the Paso Fino Colombiano.

Getting there: Bogota Airport (BOG)
Transfer payable on site.

Mayan Tropical Explorer

8d/7n/ 6 days riding.
Set dates all year not June or July

This fabulous ride will thrill your senses with lush tropical landscapes, fascinating Mayan ruins and fantastic wildlife. On this ride you will really experience the true Belize. You will be riding along pride tracks in the tropical forests, visiting the Mayan ruins of Xunantunich and unexcavated ruins whilst also being able to appreciate the wonderful bird and animal life along the way. Throughout the whole trip you will be able to experience this fascinating country with its friendly people, rich history and Mayan culture.

Getting there: Philip Goldson International Airport (BZE) Transfer included from meeting point.

Riding in Belize

Belize has a population of about 400,000 making it the lowest population density in Central America. It is a diverse society, composed of many cultures and languages that reflect its rich history. English is the official language of Belize, with Belizean Kriol being the unofficial language. Over half the population is multilingual, with Spanish being the second most common spoken language. Belize is a Commonwealth realm, with Queen Elizabeth II as its monarch and head of state.
Ecuador

Size: 283,520km²
Population: 17,088,481
Languages: Spanish
Currency: US Dollar
Time Zone: GMT -6/-7

When to go:

Interesting fact: Ecuador is listed as a ‘megadiverse’ nation by Conservation International, and has the most biodiversity per kilometre² of any nation in the world. The Galapagos Islands, famous for the number of endemic species that live there, are part of Ecuador, as is part of the Amazon basin and the high Andes Mountains.

Riding in Ecuador

Although small by Latin American standards, Ecuador offers an incredible diversity of landscapes making it ideal for combining a once in a lifetime horse riding holiday with a non-riding extension. The avenue of volcanoes in the mighty Andes is home to the world’s highest non-extinct volcanoes and makes for magical horse riding.

Then you can take in the incredible Amazon jungle, or the swirling cloud forest which is a paradise for bird lovers, or perhaps a relaxing stay on the beautiful Pacific coast or - surely the icing on the cake - the truly magical Galapagos Islands. How can a single country hold so many jaw dropping locations and experiences? We offer some fantastic opportunities for you to extend your holiday here in Ecuador by visiting the amazing Galapagos Islands.

Ecuador spans the equator and visitors delight in having a photograph taken with one foot in the Northern Hemisphere and the other in the Southern Hemisphere. It has land borders with Peru and Colombia and a superb Pacific coastline.

Horse riding is based at haciendas. These are the equivalent of family run ranches or farms. Accommodation and food are always excellent and apart from horseriding you may be able to participate in the day to day farming activities. The surrounding scenery will always be magnificent.
Programmes

Hacienda La Alegria

Per night can be arranged, we recommend a 7n stay. Dates available all year round

Historical Hacienda set in the Andean Mountains surrounded by snow capped volcanoes, riding for all abilities and mini trails into the cloud forest. The modern accommodation is excellent and the view from all the bedrooms and the guest lounge is quite stunning. Snow capped Cotopaxi, one of the highest active volcanoes in the world, can be seen from the grounds and Antisana, just a little lower but still snow capped, is visible when you ride out just behind the farm.

Getting there: Quito (UIO) Airport, Ecuador. Transfers payable on site.

Trail to Pinan Lake

8d/7n Set on request May to November

Join this pack trip as personal guests of the owners of a large working hacienda. They will accompany you on this adventurous trek and explore the Andes mountains on horseback following remote valleys and over high passes until you reach the isolated and pristine Lake Pinan camping en route.

Getting there: Quito (UIO) Airport, Ecuador. Transfers included.

Avenue of the Volcanoes

9d/8n/7 days riding.
Set dates monthly January to October

Experience the beauty and grandeur of the Ecuadorian Andes on horseback starting in the verdant valley of Machachi, to the south of Quito. Surrounded by eleven volcanoes, this region is often referred to as “The Volcano Avenue”, including Corazon, Illinizas and Quilotoa volcanoes. The only form of transportation during your trek will be your horse. Accommodation in several different haciendas and hostels, one of which is situated next to the Quilotoa crater lake. Friendly Chagras (Ecuadorean cowboys) usually pause from their work to greet you, to exchange news, or even to offer a drink as they wish you luck on your travels.

Getting there: Quito (UIO) Airport, Ecuador. Transfers payable on site.

Wild Andes Expedition

12d/11n/10 days riding.
Set dates in February, August and November

This ride is specifically designed for those looking for cultural immersion and adventure, with long journeys and amazing scenery. The route takes you close to the Illinizas, Quilotoa, Chimborazo, Carahuira, Igualita and Tungurahua volcanoes, the last of which has been active for the last 16 years. During the ride you also have the opportunity to enjoy two thermal springs. The horses used on this ride are exceptional - you will find your perfect partner to take on this exciting and challenging ride.

Getting there: Quito (UIO) Airport, Ecuador. Transfers included from meeting point.
Uruguay

**Size:** 176,215km²
**Population:** 3,483,547
**Languages:** Spanish
**Currency:** Uruguayan Peso
**Time Zone:** GMT -3/-2

**Interesting fact:** Uruguay is situated entirely within the temperate zone, so the weather there is fairly uniform throughout the year and freezing temperatures are almost unheard of.

When to go:

- **J F M A M J**
- **J A S O N D**

**Estancias and Beaches**

8d/7/7 days riding. Set dates February, March and November

The itinerary explores not only working estancias but also tropical palm groves, protected wetlands, beaches, shipwrecks and marine life such as dolphins, whales and seals. The Criollo horses are reliable and responsive mounts and the traditional saddles very comfortable. The food is excellent, varying from tender organic local beef to fresh seafood. The riding is excellent and Uruguay still offers an authentic South American experience with large unpopulated stretches ideal for riding. Accommodation in superb traditional haciendas.

**Getting there:** Montevideo (MVD) Airport, Uruguay. Transfer included from meeting point.

**Riding in Uruguay**

Horseback riding is an integral part of the culture in Uruguay. Raising cattle is big business and the gauchos still depend heavily on horses to handle the cows. Riding is taken for granted, almost like walking in other parts of the world. The Criollo horses are ideal for the terrain and will carry you comfortably through the hill country of the interior and along the white sand beaches of the coast. They are reliable and responsive mounts and the traditional saddles are very comfortable. Uruguay is not as touristy as some of its larger, more well known neighbours. This allows a better experience of the authentic culture of the country and the genuine friendship of its people. The food is excellent - lots of tender organic local beef as you would expect and plenty of freshly caught fish.

**Vineyards to Beach Trail**

8d/7n. Open October to April.

Explore the vineyards, beaches and countryside of Uruguay, one of Latin Americas most underrated destinations. Enjoy wine-tasting, visit local studs, and enjoy the thrill of galloping along a pristine beach before cooling off in a turquoise lagoon. As well as enjoying the spectacular scenery, riders can sample some of the best food this region has to offer with a hand-picked selection of gourmet restaurants in a region well known for excellent food.

**Getting there:** Montevideo (MVD) Airport, Uruguay. Transfer included from meeting point.

**Haras Las Tordillas Ranch Stay**

8d/7n/5 days riding. Set dates throughout the year except June & July

Spend a week in Uruguay at this well appointed lodge which offers fast-paced riding on thoroughbred Arabian horses, wild swimming, waterfalls and fantastic accommodation in private cabins. Combine this with visits to vineyards, olive groves and wine tasting. This is one for intermediate riders onwards who want to experience great wines, authentic food, exciting riding and a wonderful place to stay.

**Getting there:** Montevideo (MVD) Airport, Uruguay. Transfer included from meeting point.
Peru

Size: 1,285,283km²
Population: 32,981,563
Languages: Spanish
Currency: Nuevo Sol
Time Zone: GMT -5

When to go:

Interesting fact: The potato is originally from Peru, and there are over 3,000 different varieties. Proud Peruvians use the phrase “Soy mas Peruano que la papa” (I am more Peruvian than the potato). In Peru, it is traditional to give friends and family yellow underpants on New Year’s Eve, as it is believed that wearing them on this date will bring good luck for the forthcoming year.

Riding in Peru

Peru is historically the seat of the Inca empire and their abandoned city at Cusco is unmissable. The entire area surrounding Cusco is full of history and sights and is known as the Sacred Valley. A horse riding holiday may not be the first thought that springs to mind when Peru is mentioned. Walking the Inca Trail is a wonderful experience but surely it pales into insignificance when compared with exploring this historic Sacred Valley of the Incas on magnificent smooth gaite Peruvian Paso horses.

Luxury Sacred Valley

11d/10n/7days riding.
Set monthly dates April to October

See Peru in a way few are privileged to experience. By day, explore the Sacred Valley of the Incas on horses descended from the steeds of the Conquistadors. By night, enjoy the luxury and comfort of the finest hotels in Peru. Ride on spirited Peruvian Paso horses, famous for their velvet smooth gait passing through mountain villages where all the residents will watch in awe as you ride by on these beautiful animals, the sounds of their hooves echoing on the cobblestone roads. This exclusive ride is more than an unforgettable riding experience in the Andes. It combines culture, history and adventure with fine Peruvian cuisine and charming hotels.

Getting there: Cusco (CUZ) Airport, Peru transfer included.

“Eddie and Maria were wonderful hosts... we had great food and wonderful, considerate riding” - CF of Swindon
Brazil

Size: 8,515,767km²
Population: 214,599,613
Languages: Portuguese
Currency: Real
Time Zone: GMT -2 to -4

Interesting fact: Brazil is the fifth largest country in the world and has borders with every country in South America except Ecuador and Chile. It is estimated that the total number of plant and animal species in Brazil could approach 4 million.

When to go:

J F M A M J

J A S O N D

Riding in Brazil

Unicorn Trails offers you a range of very special horse riding holiday destinations in Brazil. Most famous is the well-known wildlife paradise of the Pantanal. In addition we offer riding in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul which has a traditional gaucho culture and some of the most spectacular scenery, as well as further north on the beaches of Alagoas state.

Brazil is South America's biggest and most influential country. It is so large that it takes up almost half the continent and is bordered by every South American country except Chile and Ecuador. About two thirds of Brazil's population live near the coast and it's to the coast, in particular Rio de Janeiro (a must see extension), that most tourists flock. Few venture far from these spectacular beaches in the south. However, the north and the interior have so much to offer.

‘Wonderful ride, great landscape, scenery and a true homestay experience. Everyone on trip was very welcoming and friendly. Very calm strong horses. Incredible home cooked delicious meals!’
HK of Bala Cynwyd
Beaches, Dunes and Mangrove Trail

9d/8n/7 days riding.
Set dates February and November

Visit the Brazilian state of Alagoas, the smallest state in the country for an action-packed riding holiday with plenty of sun, surf, beach gallops and caprinas. This relatively unexplored region in Northern Brazil is home to some of the most spectacular beaches in the country as well as lush jungle and picturesque colonial villages. Join this 9 day trail along the tropical coastline, on fit, native, Mangalarga horses which boasts far more than your standard beach ride. River swimming, boat trips, authentic cuisine and wildlife filled lagoons combine to make this the quintessential Brazilian experience.

Getting there: Maceio (MCZ) Airport, Brazil. Transfers, payable on site.

Pantanala Wildlife Tour

9d/8n/7 days riding.
Set dates April to September

Experience three different Fazendas on this fascinating holiday to gain an insight into the Pantanal culture. Located in central Western Brazil, the Pantanal is a large mosaic of three of the most important ecosystems of South America. The seasonally flooded plains are best traversed on horseback; this is the only real way to travel in this region. It is home to one of the highest diversities and concentrations of fauna on the planet, including the world’s largest jaguars, capybaras, tapirs, armadillos, caimans and many others.

Getting there: Campo Grande (CGR) Airport, Brazil, transfers included.
Santa Catarina Trail

10d/9n/8 days riding. Set dates November to April

Experience the backcountry of Brazil with all its rich cattle farming customs and hospitality. Superb riding, at all paces, at 1,000m (3,000ft) + elevations surrounded by outstanding ever-changing scenery. Ride across wide open and hilly grass, bush and woodland with lush patches of magnificent South American Araucaria pine forest that frame the landscape.

You will cross a great number of rivers, canter through lovely green valleys and circle the edges of the Sierra Geral canyons. Ride on top of the clouds or right amidst them.

Getting there: Florianopolis (FLN) Airport, Brazil, transfers included.

Santa Catarina Gaucho Trail

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set dates Jan, Feb and October

An 8-day horseback adventure in the southern wilderness of Brazil, the ultimate trail blaze for riders looking for a truly exciting experience living the gaucho way of life and riding gaucho style. Brazil offers a landscape diverse and beautiful as a backdrop, and the chance to sample the real gaucho world, and make no mistake, this is for real!

Getting there: Florianopolis (FLN) Airport, Brazil, transfers included.

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
Argentina

- **Size:** 2,780,400km²
- **Population:** 45,153,943
- **Languages:** Spanish
- **Currency:** Argentinian Peso
- **Time zone:** GMT -3

**When to go:**

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**Interesting fact:** The name Argentina is derived from the Latin ‘Argentum’, meaning ‘silver’. Spanish conquerors first arrived in the area following rumours of silver mountains; they were disappointed, but nevertheless the name stuck.

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**Riding in Argentina**

Horse riding holidays in Argentina, South America are a natural way to explore the culture and landscapes that make Argentina so special. The vast estancias - cattle ranches - with their impressive haciendas - estate houses - have been passed down through families for many years, some dating back even into the 17th century. Luckily for us many estancias, though still traditional, authentic working cattle farms, now welcome guests. They make for an upmarket and relaxing based horse riding holiday. The scenery is stunning and the hospitality warm. Often riders of all levels can be catered for.

And don’t forget Argentina is the home of polo. Why not try a chukka or two while on an estancia, probably against the gauchos, or go for a whole week of immersion into this addictive sport on a polo horse riding holiday. If you haven’t played before lessons can be arranged, but we can’t guarantee that the gauchos will let you win!

If you haven’t played before lessons can be arranged, but we can’t guarantee that the gauchos will let you win!

Another option is to ride along ancient Inca trails. We offer camping trips for the truly adventurous or estancia hopping for riders wanting more comfort. What better way to see the Argentinian flora and fauna than on one of these amazing, remote horseback trails. In particular look out for armadillos, guanaco, the indigenous monkey puzzle trees and perhaps best of all, condors riding the thermals - catch a feather for your gaucho hat!

We cannot forget the fantastic Argentinean horses. Since they were brought from Europe in the time of the Spanish conquests, horses have played a major role in the people and culture of Argentina. The horse is an essential part of cow-herding by gauchos on the estancias. The most common breed of horse is the Criollo, the national horse of Argentina. This sure-footed breed is known for its stamina and endurance - the perfect horse on your perfect Argentinean horseriding holiday.

Of course you may not want an estancia stay but seek a more challenging horseback holiday. In this case Argentina has many exciting trails to offer. Head for the magnificent and immense Andes Mountains. Enjoy the truly stunning views and solitude of the massive snow covered volcanic peaks or even follow in the steps of the Spanish conquistadors and cross over the Andes from Chile into Argentina for the ultimate horse riding holiday.

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You may be lucky enough to time your riding holiday to coincide with a local festival. These are taken very seriously and you will see proud owners parading their beautifully groomed horses through the streets, maybe followed by a rodeo attended by the whole town.

‘Absolutely blew my expectations away! Truly amazing hospitality and SPECTACULAR riding landscape’.
MM Mandeville

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Argentina

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Programmes

**Ceiling of America Trail**

6d/5n/4 days riding
Set dates October to May

Adventure with comfort - come and ride the Aconcagua region amongst the most massive and immense mountains in America, including its tallest peak, the Aconcagua (7,071m) and return to comfortable hotel accommodation with hot showers every night. On this horse riding holiday, you will be riding at heights over 3,000m high, through small trails, past unspoiled valleys and colourful creeks. It is in these uninhabited places, which you can only reach on horseback, where huge herds of guanacos roam freely and the Andean condors nest. Only in places like this you can enjoy the privilege of watching them at ease.

We also offer an Andes Crossing ride which crosses between Chile and Argentina at the base of Aconcagua along the historic route taken by San Martin to liberate Chile – please see Chile p.250.

**Getting there:** Mendoza (MDZ) Airport, Argentina. Transfer included.

**Inca Trails Cattle Drive**

9d/8n/6 days riding
One set date in May

Visit the high Andes of north west Argentina on this unique trail. Ride on ancient Incan pathways, searching for cattle in the high altitude grasslands at 3,000m where condors circle overhead. You'll help the gauchos drive the cattle into corrals and assist with sorting and branding. This destination is for experienced riders who want to experience local Argentinian culture by taking part in one of the last truly authentic cattle drives in the world. Accommodation is in mountain cabins with two nights in a hotel for a true gaucho experience.

**Getting there:** Salta (SLA) Airport, Argentina. Transfers included.

**Inca Trails Expedition**

12d/11n Set dates throughout the year

Ride along ancient Inca trails in the Andes Mountains where life goes on as it has for centuries. From the dry Calchaqui desert on the west of the Dead Lion Range of the Andes, we cross at 3,000m (9,000ft) where condors roam and descend into a different world of lush green valleys and tropical forests of Lerma. En route we stay in the homes of the local Calchaqui Indians with nights of camping under the spectacular southern hemisphere stars in the high Andes, an unmissable experience. The 12 day itinerary includes time in Buenos Aires.

**Getting there:** 9d itinerary Salta Airport (SLA), Argentina, transfers included. 12 day itinerary Buenos Aires (EZE) airport, Argentina, transfers payable onsite.

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606

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Polo Week
8d/7n Set dates in March, October and November

A week dedicated to learning to play polo on a working cattle estancia. Ride with gauchos and experience Argentine hospitality, lovely accommodation.

Getting there: Cordoba (COR) Airport, Argentina. Transfers included.

Estancia Los Potreros
Suggested stay of 8d/7n (minimum 3 nights) available all year round apart from May and June.

Estancia Los Potreros is an exclusive 6,000-acre working cattle farm that has remained in the same Anglo-Argentine family for four generations. The estancia is in a very secluded location at an altitude of 915m nestled between Pampas and the Andes in the heart of the beautiful region of Cordoba. If you have a love for the wild and enjoy the thrill of arriving by horse, this adventure allows you to experience Argentine wildlife, scenery and culture at close quarters while not abandoning creature comforts provided by good accommodation, the best tack and fabulous horses.

Getting there: Cordoba (COR) Airport, Argentina. Transfers included.

Pampas and City
7d/6n/5 days riding Set dates throughout the year

A working estancia stay in the heart of the Pampas 3 hours from Buenos Aires. Work with the cowboys, ride a cattle drive and relax under the stars at this genuine traditional Estancia. The itinerary finished with two nights in the heart of bustling Buenos Aires including a city tour, tango show and river trip. The perfect combination to experience Argentina.

Getting there: Buenos Aires (EZE) Airport, Argentina. Transfers included.
Estancia Huechahue in Patagonia

Suggested stay of 7 nights (minimum 3 nights)
Open September to April
A 15,000 acre self-sufficient working ranch in northern Patagonia. Ride out each day where the mighty Andes rise up behind you, or ride into the neighbouring Indian reservation. Look out for wildlife of the area, especially condors.

Getting there: San Martin de Los Andes (CPC) Airport in Argentina. Transfers included.

‘It’s a real working farm in a beautiful landscape and the experience you have – you feel lucky to be allowed to live for a few days in a different life and it’s not something that can be defined without visiting. An amazing experience. Better even than I expected’. DP of Esher

Pioneers of Patagonia

7d/6n/5 days riding. Dates on request between November and May

A six-night adventure through the pristine wilderness of Patagonia in Argentina. The trails take you over uninhabited land that can only be reached on horseback with camping in unspoilt places.

Getting there: San Martin de los Andes (CPC) Airport, Argentina. Transfers included.
Chile

Size: 756,096km²
Population: 18,354,391
Languages: Spanish
Currency: Chilean Peso
Time zone: GMT -4 to -6
When to go:

Interesting fact: Due to altitude and lack of light pollution, many areas of Chile are a paradise for stargazers. The Atacama Desert in the north of the country is most commonly known as the driest place in the world. The landscape has been compared to that of Mars, and because of its otherworldly appearance it has been used as a location for a number of sci-fi films and television programs.

Riding in Chile

Horse riding holidays in Chile are as diverse as the geography and geology of this unique country. Surely Chile has the most absurd shape of any country in the world! It is shaped like a string bean. It is long - very long - approximately 4,329 km (2,706 miles) stretching from the tropics almost to the Antarctic. Yet it is on average only 180 km (112 miles) wide and at its narrowest only 15 km (9 miles)! The Andes Mountains form the backbone of South America and they divide Chile to the west from Argentina to the east. Chile’s vast length results in dramatic differences of climate from the hot, arid Atacama desert in the north, to cold, snowy Patagonia in the south with sunny sea sides, vineyards, a Lake District and fjords sandwiched between them.

However, there is a common element linking every region of Chile - spectacular scenery and, outside the cosmopolitan cities, a vast wilderness for the free spirited to discover on a horse riding holiday.

‘A once in a lifetime adventure. Both challenging and rewarding with great people as guides and comrades on the ride’
FA of Philomath
Chile to Argentina – Across the Andes

9d/8n/7 days riding Set dates December to March

This is a classic trek and a “must do” ride for all serious adventure riders. Ride across the High Andes in Los Andes, Chile and follow the original historic route to Uspallata in the Mendoza Province of Argentina; as the route is high altitude and very remote it is taken at a slower pace, on average. This means that even novices who are up for a challenge can complete the crossing.

Getting there: Santiago Airport (SCL), Chile, finish Mendoza, Argentina. Transfers included.

‘Our guide made our holiday very enjoyable. Horses safe. Terrain rough at times and long hours in the saddle’. HB of Cupar
Atacama Desert Trail

13d/12n Set dates in October and November

The Atacama Desert in Northern Chile is the driest desert on earth, created by the rain shadow of the Andes, east of the desert. It is one of the most spectacular and dramatic landscapes on earth made up of salt basins (salares), sand and lava flows. Although extremely dry, on this route we follow 2 natural river systems coming from the high Andes which cut deep into the sandstone, depositing salty water marks and attracting a surprising variety of wildlife. As you can imagine the Atacama is extremely sparsely populated. Our ride takes us from Calama in the centre of the desert to San Pedro de Atacama, a natural oasis. En-route we camp in tents under brilliant clear skies - no rain is guaranteed! We ride at all paces through challenging terrain on excellent criollo horses. An incredible adventure and not too much heat due to the 1,850m (6,000ft) altitude.

Getting there: Calama (CJC) Airport, Chile. Transfers included.

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
**Estancia Ride Patagonia**

**10d/9n/8 days riding Set dates October to March**

This is a fabulous ride based in and around the Torres del Paine National Park with its unforgettable landscape. It combines challenging, exciting riding on responsive, fit horses combined with the opportunity to experience the life of Patagonia’s unique estancia culture.

The majority of the ride takes place within the park itself and offers plenty of diversity with rides across open pampas, rides to wild glaciers and iceberg-filled lakes and peaceful rides through valleys and ancient southern beech forests. Throughout these long, exciting days in the saddle, the snow capped mountains are never far away. Accommodation is very comfortable, authentic, cozy and welcoming – all in private estancias and hotels. Here you can relax by the fireside each evening after a soothing bath with a famous pisco sour.

**Getting there:** Punta Arenas (PUC) airport. Transfer included.

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**Latin American Extensions**

**Argentina, Buenos Aires**

A visit to this exciting city is the perfect way to relax before or after a riding holiday in Argentina or Uruguay. We suggest a 2 night stopover with an optional city tour and tango show.

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**Argentina & Brazil, Iguazu Falls**

Situated between Argentina and Brazil, these impressive falls can be visited from either country and are ideal extensions to a holiday in Argentina, Brazil or Uruguay. We suggest a 2 night stay which gives time to view the half moon shaped falls from both sides.

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**Patagonia**

**Argentina:** The hugely impressive landscapes of Tierra Del Fuego, the Perito Moreno Glacier, the Glacier National Park and Ushuaia town lie in the far south of Argentina. We can tailor make itineraries to include all the sights.

**Chile:** Visit the Torres del Paine National Park, the penguin colonies and marvel at the variety of bird life in this beautiful area. Itineraries from 3 to 10 nights are possible here and can include sightseeing or be more active with hiking or multi-activities.

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**Ecuador, Galapagos Islands**

The Galapagos archipelago, 600 miles off Ecuador’s Pacific Coast, is an ecological paradise and inspired Charles Darwin’s Theory of Evolution. The animals have never experienced man as a predator and they show no fear of humans. Cruise this National Park with naturalist guides, swim with sea lions, walk among black marine iguanas basking in the sun and observe the elaborate mating rituals of Boobies, Albatrosses, or male Frigate birds displaying their red pouches. Ideal before or after a holiday in Chile, Ecuador or Peru.

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**Brazil, Rio de Janeiro**

Arguably the most beautiful city in the world, no visit to Brazil is complete without a few days to explore and see Copacabana Beach, Sugar Loaf mountain, Christ the Redeemer’s statue high above the city and many more iconic sights. We can arrange a variety of accommodation from 5 star boutique hotels with magnificent views to private apartments and city tours.

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**Ecuador Amazon Jungle**

Ecuador’s rainforest is located in the heart of the world’s largest and most famous tropical rainforest, the Amazon Basin and a 3 or 4 day extension is almost unmissable if visiting the region. Only a short flight, or a descent by road down the flanks of the Andes makes means that you can leave Quito in the morning and be swinging in a hammock at your chosen lodge by lunchtime. The country is also a continent-leader in nature- and community-based tourism initiatives, where the value of the forest and of its inhabitants’ heritage has been recognized and prized above its short-term exploitation.
New Zealand

Size: 268,012km²
Population: 4,797,939
Languages: English and Maori
Currency: New Zealand dollar
Time Zone: GMT +12/+13

When to go:

Interesting fact: New Zealand was one of the last major landmasses settled by humans, probably some time between 1,250 and 3,000BC, and has grown to be recognised as one of the world’s most stable and well-governed nations. One of the countries major exports is sheep, with approximately 9 sheep to every 1 human in New Zealand.

Riding in New Zealand

Aotearoa (the Maori name for New Zealand meaning ‘the land of the long white cloud’) consists of two main islands, the North Island and the South Island, with several smaller islands offshore. Being located on the Pacific’s ‘Ring of Fire’ means that the country benefits from geothermal areas and hot springs, vast mountain ranges and spectacular sounds and fjords.

The Maori people are indigenous to New Zealand and tend to live on the North Island. Their culture is rich and varied with a fascinating mix of traditional and contemporary arts. Traditions such as carving, weaving, kapa haka (group performance), whakarere (oratory) and moko (tattoo) are practised throughout the country. The Warrior Trail is a cultural and historical ride following ancient Maori warrior trails through coastal bush and beaches.

The South Island is the larger of the two main islands but has a population of just over 1 million people, compared to 3 million in the North Island. The dramatic landscape has made it a popular location for the production of several films, including The Lord of The Rings Trilogy, The Chronicles of Narnia and The Hobbit. Riding on the South Island is focused around livestock and station life as well as the incredible scenery.

‘The horses were AWESOME. We climbed mountainous slopes, rode along precipitous ridges and forged through raging rivers. We placed all our trust in those horses and they didn’t let us down’.

LK of Seghill
Programmes

 Warrior Trail

5d/4n/5 days riding  
Set dates from October to April

Pack trip on sure-footed horses between high stations through coastal bush and high country. This is a based ride with a one night stay out at a traditional Maori meeting place. The Warrior Trail is a cultural and historical ride following ancient Maori warrior trails through coastal bush and high country. This is a based ride with a one night stay out at a traditional Maori meeting place. The Warrior Trail is a cultural and historical ride following ancient Maori warrior trails through coastal bush and high country. This is a based ride with a one night stay out at a traditional Maori meeting place.

Getting there: Auckland (AKL) International Airport. Transfer via shuttle bus (payable locally)

 Hunter River Valley

6d/5n/5 days riding  
Set dates from October to April

Just two hours drive from Auckland is a land of spectacular views, amazing beaches and the source of Maori culture. The perfect place to start a trail ride! Pakiri Beach is a 17 km long, wide sandy beach complete with surf and the occasional dolphin, a fabulous place to ride and swim. The Warrior Trail is a cultural and historical ride following ancient Maori warrior trails through coastal bush and high country. This is a based ride with a one night stay out at a traditional Maori meeting place. The Warrior Trail is a cultural and historical ride following ancient Maori warrior trails through coastal bush and high country. This is a based ride with a one night stay out at a traditional Maori meeting place. The Warrior Trail is a cultural and historical ride following ancient Maori warrior trails through coastal bush and high country. This is a based ride with a one night stay out at a traditional Maori meeting place. 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Getting there: Queenstown (ZQN) Airport. Transfer via shuttle bus (payable locally)

 Miners and Musters

Pack Trip

7d/6n/6 days riding  
Set dates Feb and March

Lakes and Valleys of South Island

9d/8n/8 days riding. Set dates March and April

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606

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Australia

Size: 7,692,024km²
Population: 25,128,844
Languages: English
Currency: Australian Dollar
Time Zone: GMT +8 to +10.5

When to go:

Interesting fact: The population density of Australia is among the lowest in the world, largely due to the fact the majority of the country is covered with semi-arid desert land known famously as the outback.

Riding in Australia

Australia is a continent of about the same size as the continental USA. It has an historic attachment to horses, from mustering on the cattle stations to the wild Brumbies. Exploring on horseback is the best way to explore some of the magnificent scenery - from endless sunbaked horizons, bush and dense tropical rainforest to deserted beaches.

When planning a visit to Australia, it is essential to choose which parts to visit as all cannot be done in one or even 2 or 3 visits. Visitors expecting to see an opera in Sydney one night and meet Crocodile Dundee the next will have to re-think their grasp of geography in this huge country. It is this sheer vastness that gives Australia - and its diverse population - much of its character.

Riding in Australia is focused around livestock gathering and station life in the outback or bush and the fantastic natural beauty of the continent.

We currently offer riding in 2 areas: New South Wales, easily accessible with spectacular beaches and bush, and Tasmania, an isolated island state off Australia’s south coast, known for its vast, rugged wilderness areas, largely protected within parks and reserves.

Programmes

Bush and Beach in New South Wales

7d/6n/5 days riding.
Set dates throughout the year

Riders come from all around the world to experience the Australian bushland and beaches on horseback. In New South Wales the landscape is diverse and with undulating hills through eucalyptus forests, pockets of rainforest and miles of pacific beaches offering opportunities for long trots and gallops in various bush, beach and mountain terrains.

This ride is ideal for experienced riders with options for non riders to join. The route is selected and trained Australian bred Arabian horses whose agility, great stamina and adaptability to the Australian climate conditions are ideal horses for multi-day long distance trail riding through challenging terrain. Welcoming Australian hospitality, comfortable, quality accommodation and meals await you.

Getting there: Port Macquarie (PQQ) Airport or Kendall train station. Transfers included at set times.

Cradle Mountain and Bakers Beach

4n/5d/4 days riding. Open October to July.

Horse riding in Tasmania in 3 unique locations: the beautiful Mersey Valley, Cradle Mountain in the Vale of Belvoir Conservation Area and Bakers Beach (Narawntapu National Park).

Taking in part of the 460km Tasmanian Trail, this 5-day break offers fast riding along white sandy beaches, plenty of wildlife from wombats to possums and comfortable accommodation at two different locations. Ideal for adventurous riders looking to explore this vast, beautiful island state.

Getting there: Launceston (LST) Airport, Tasmania. Transfers payable on site.
Horses have been integral to the people of the central Asian steppes since time immemorial. Horses originated between the Urals and Mongolia and their direct descendants, Prezewalski’s horse can be found only in Mongolia today. Horses were domesticated in modern day Kazakhstan around 4,000BC and used first for food and then for transport, agriculture and warfare. Originally horses pulled chariots in war but new Asian inventions such as the saddle and most importantly stirrup, enabled Attila the Hun and the other nomadic tribes of the steppe to sweep through central Asia, the Middle East and to Europe, bringing the stirrup with them. In Mongolia a true nomadic way of life still continues today with horses providing food, transport, shelter (skins) and wealth. In Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan the people are semi nomadic, settling in the valleys in the harsh winters and following their herds in the mountain pastures in the summer. To ride amongst some of the oldest horse cultures in the world allows you to meet people and experience their lifestyles in an authentic way.

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Riding in Central Asia

‘I had a wonderful time in Kazakhstan and would definitely recommend this trek to all adventurer riders seeking beautiful landscapes, great but challenging riding and a truly unforgettable experience!’

IV of Montrouge

These central Asian steppes were home to the Silk Road, a network of trade routes which connected the East and West, and was central to the economic, cultural, political, and religious interactions between these regions from the 2nd century BC to the 18th century. The area is still littered with the ruins of caravanserais from that era.
Riding in Kazakhstan

The Kazakhstan terrain extends west to east from the Caspian Sea to the Altai Mountains and north to south from the plains of Western Siberia to the deserts of Central Asia. One-third of the country is occupied by the world’s largest dry steppes region, which is characterized by large areas of grasslands and sandy regions. We ride in the Altai Mountains in the far east, an extremely remote area rich in picturesque mountain forests, emerald Alpine meadows and populated by nomads, grazing herds of sheep, horses and yaks.

Experience magnificent mountain panoramas, grey glaciers and the highest peaks (over 7,000 meters) on the planet, travelling along passes only accessible on horseback.

Kazakhs were, and still are, superb horsemen. Few people know that struups and charteris originated with the Kazakhs. In the past many Kazakh children, it is said, learned to ride before they walked. Horses figure prominently in most Kazak celebrations today still. Experience this ancient nomadic lifestyle on our fabulous horse riding holiday in Kazakhstan.

‘I honestly was not prepared for just how beautiful the country was, how honest and genuine the people were and how reluctant I now am to face being home. I honestly believe I came home from Kazakhstan a different person. The bonds I formed with my fellow trekkers and the memories I have of 17 days in one of the most beautiful countries on earth, will stay with me for life’. JB of Balmoral

Kazakhstan Explorer

17d/16n/12 days riding Set dates June – August

We venture into the wilderness of Katon- Karagay National Park, an undiscovered paradise found in the far east of Kazakhstan. Here you’ll find a beautiful and rarely visited region of forests, lakes and high mountains. Close to the Russian and Chinese borders, this remote wilderness area is best accessed by riding and using pack horses.

These treks are most definitely exploratory in nature with no fixed itinerary, so you do need to be prepared for adventure! Once the horses, local team, food and equipment have been assembled, the trip is as non-itinerised as possible - days in the saddle could be long and the path unknown but that is what this adventure is all about; trying out different routes and really exploring the area to its full potential. This ride is aimed at intrepid travelers of all sorts, not just serious horse riders. The more fit and active you are, the more you will enjoy the trek. You need to be comfortable with not having a rigid itinerary, therefore if you need to know whether the accommodation is en-suite and what time lunch will be, this might not be the trip for you. Your guides will go out of their way for the promise of interesting wildlife and the numerous archaeological sites in the area. Experiencing the local culture is of course half the reason for travelling, so you will be meeting and mingling with the local people along the way.

You’ll be guided along the way by local park rangers and will be riding their fit and surefooted horses. Experienced riders will be in trekking heaven, with plenty of opportunities for fast riding along forest trails and over mountain grasslands. Those with less experience can follow trails at a pace that is appropriate to their abilities. Camp overnight, cook and enjoy meals over the campfire, for this is an adventure of a lifetime.

Getting there: Ust-Kamenogorsk (UKK) Airport, Kazakhstan, transfer included.

Riding in Kyrgyzstan

The Kyrgyz people are semi-nomadic meaning that they herd animals into the high mountains in the summer while descending to the lower valleys to sit out the extreme winters when temperatures can reach -20°C in the mountains in January with heavy snowfall.

Kyrgyz culture is very much focused on horse and horsemanship and is influenced by the nomadic nature of the people and transportation of the yurts they live in from place to place. The sides of these tents are highly decorated with multi-coloured fabrics. When riding in the mountains it is customary to offer hospitality to passing travelers and visitors are often invited in for refreshments.

The Pamir Mountains, where we ride in Kyrgyzstan, lie at the junction of the Himalayas with the Tian Shan, Karakoram, Kunlun, Hindu Kush, Sulaiman and Hindu Raj ranges. They are among the world’s highest mountains. The Kyrgyz portion encompasses the lower reaches of the Pamir range.

‘Absolutely awesome. We loved the landscape, our guides, and the hospitality. We really enjoyed our trip’.

ID of Lüneburg

Great Silk Road

15d/14n Set dates June – August

This is an adventurous two-week camping trail to the heart of the majestic Pamir Mountains of Kyrgyzstan. The Pamir range has a series of 9 plateaus, from the first in Kyrgyzstan, through eastern Tajikistan finishing in Afghanistan and Pakistan. On this trip we ride in the remote valleys and passes of the first plateau which is very green. In the summer shepherds drive their flocks in the mountains to take advantage of the lush grazing. We encounter these local herdsmen and visit with them.

Each trip is different and depends on the weather and local conditions, but generally speaking we head west from Sari Moghul, into the mountains, descending after some time to cross the floor of the great valley and ending at the base camp of Lenin Peak. Overnight we camp near shepherd’s yurts, which, on occasion, we may be invited to stay in.

Getting there: Meet at Osh (OSS) Airport, Kyrgyzstan (OSS), transfer included.
Riding in Tajikistan

Tajikistan or "Land of the Tajiks" is the smallest nation of central Asia. As well as having a rich and historic tradition of horsemanship the Tajik people are welcoming, warm and ready to impress visitors with their legendary hospitality.

Tajikistan’s mountainous landscape (over 50% of the country is over 3,000 metres above sea level), has been attracting adventurous types since independence was declared in 1991 and the country slowly emerged from the shadow of the mighty Russian Empire.

Historically, the Pamir Mountains were considered a strategic trade route between Kashgar and Kokand on the Northern Silk Road and have been subject to numerous territorial conquests. The Northern Silk Road (about 2,600 km (1,616 mi) in length) connected the ancient Chinese capital of Xi’an over the Pamir Mountains towards the west to emerge in Kashgar before linking to ancient Parthia. We ride in the heart of the remote Pamir Mountains which lie largely in the Gorno-Badakhshan province of Tajikistan.

This is one of the most breathtaking regions in the world with mineral peaks and snowy plateaus dominated by glaciers, and dramatic valleys that are home to shepherds. Here we visit the semi-nomadic people who herd their livestock into the mountains in the summer and pass over high passes hoping for a glimpse of the elusive snow leopard.

Pamir Mountain Explorer

14d/13n/ 8 days riding on a set dates in June, July and August

Deep in the Pamir Mountains of Tajikistan, bordering the south of Kyrgyzstan, we find some of the most breathtaking scenery in the world. From mineral peaks with snowy plateaus dominated by glaciers, to high valleys inhabited by shepherds and their herds, this is the home of the snow leopards and mountain sheep of Marco Polo’s adventures. Difficult to reach and off the beaten track, this is an area reserved for a handful of adventurous travellers each year. We ride local horses on an adventurous route through the Pamirs, mostly at a walking pace due to terrain and altitude (3,000-4,800m), but we trot and canter where possible. The horses are foot-sure and in good condition, well cared for by their loving owners. We enjoy the hospitality of families in their yurts in the mountains as well as camping allowing us to experience the true authentic local way of life. The approach road to the start point is along the legendary Pamir highway with sweeping views over the villages of Afghanistan. This is the ultimate adventure for fit adventurous riders.

Getting there: Osh (OSS) Airport, Kyrgyzstan, transfer included.

‘Excellent trip, well-organized, and with super hosts (interpreter, driver, guide and horse-men). Great fun and a very special experience. This trek was absolutely fantastic, and I would recommend it to everyone that wants some adventure’. JO of Oslo

‘Excellent - well organised, good people, fantastic scenery, good horses’. CD of Caluire et Cuire

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
Riding in Mongolia

If you want to return to the true roots and origin of horses and riding Mongolia is an essential destination. Many Mongolians still live the nomadic life of the traditional herdsmen. Mongolia is well known for its nature, wildlife and the generosity of the people. A riding holiday here is a true experience and chance to explore the vast unspoiled wilderness area occupied by the last truly nomadic people.

Today’s Mongol horses are largely unchanged since the time of Genghis Khan. In a span of just 25 years, Genghis Khan’s horsemen conquered an area larger and greater in population than the Romans did in four centuries and the Mongol horse was a key factor in the success of these armies. Nomads living in the traditional Mongol fashion still hold more than 3 million animals, which outnumber the country’s human population. Despite their small size, they are horses, not ponies. In Mongolia, the horses live outdoors all year, dealing with temperatures from 30 °C (86 °F) in summer down to −40 °C (−40 °F) in winter, and they graze and search for food on their own.

These holidays are all for adventurous travelers, however there are options to cater for all levels, even beginners and novice riders. Visiting nomads and experiencing part of their lifestyle is what these rides are all about. Comfort level can vary from basic camping to traditional yurt accommodation with hot showers available. Mongolia is about the size of Western Europe and with only 2.4 million people has a very low population density.

The vast open spaces make for wonderful outdoor adventures and fabulous horse riding holidays. It is important to realize the distances involved to some of the destination. Many internal flights are subject to delays and cancellations, so short in and out visits can only be planned around Ulaan Bator, the capital. This is an interesting city and we can happily arrange an extra day here as an add-on to your riding holiday.

Mongolia has a diverse landscape. The country is very mountainous with the highest peaks in the west. There are quite literally hundreds of lakes, some very large. You’ll also find hot springs to bathe in. Then of course we cannot forget the Gobi Desert where you may find wild camels, Gobi bears, snow leopards and Przewalski horses. These horses are the only truly wild breed of horse. You’ll be able to meet the Przewalski horses on the Orkhon Valley and Przewalski Horses Winter Trail.

Altai Mountain Trek

17d/16n/13 days riding. Set dates in Jun & Jul

Enjoy the wild beauty of the Altai Mountains in the far west of Mongolia, riding where few outsiders have ever travelled - camping under the stars, cooking over an open fire, riding rarely explored trails. Ride in scenic, challenging countryside in an extremely remote area within the high snowy peaks forming the border with China. The landscapes encompass open plains to dense forests, alpine grasslands and snowy peaks with crystal clear rivers and lakes. It’s some way out of Ulaan Bator, but well worth the effort to get there.

Gobi Desert and Steppes

13d/12n/8 days riding. Set departures May - Sept

This journey on horseback is a first in Mongolia; you don’t have to choose between riding in the dunes or on the steppe. This trail traverses 3 ecosystems: the northern part of Gobi Desert located in the geographical centre of Mongolia and the green Orkhon Valley and the mighty Khangai and Nairam Nuur Mountains.

You get to experience the variety Mongolia offers all in one trip. Accommodation includes tents, yurts and a hotel in Ulan Bator. At the end of the trip you will spend one night in traditional yurt accommodation, with a special meal cooked for you by the family. The horses used on this trip are owned by the local herdsmen and are sure-footed and willing. They have custom tack which combines western comfort for the rider with a good fit for the local horses. There are opportunities to gallop in the wide-open steppe and you can ride the camels as well if you like.

Getting there: Meet at Ulan Bator (ULN) Airport and transfer is included.

“I would do it again in a heartbeat. It was one of my favourite travelling experiences ever.” NC of North Saanich

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
Hike and Ride

13d/12n/5 days hiking/4 days riding. Set departures May - Sept

This is a true adventure trail which combines both hiking and horse riding. Each night the group will set up camp somewhere new, experiencing Mongolia in the traditional nomadic way and reaching places that are rarely seen by other travellers. The trip begins on the outskirts of Ulan Bator and goes to the Khogno Khan Park with a short hike to the Ovgon Khiid Monastery and then to the Essentasahal sand dunes. There is a visit to the Tsenkher Hot Springs and hiking in the Khangai Mountains with a visit to the mountain-top Tovkhon Monastery and the majestic Orkhon Falls. Then it is time to go trekking on horseback through the Orkhon Valley and into Naiman Nuur Natural Park. There is a visit to the Erdene Zuu Monastery towards the end of the trip and a traditional show in Ulan Bator.

Getting there: Meet at Ulan Bator (ULN) Airport and transfer is included.

Mongolia Express

8d/7n/6 days riding. Set departures May - Sept

Leave the rat-race for a few days and discover the heart of Mongolia with a ride created especially for those people who want the Mongolian horseback-experience but can’t take long holidays. This is an 8 day tour. 5.5 days on horseback galloping in the beautiful and wild landscapes encompassing steppes, forests and valleys, far from the tourist sites, staying a night in a yurt and encountering the nomads.

Getting there: Meet at Ulan Bator (ULN) Airport and transfer is included.

Mongolian Eagle Festival

17d/16n/11 days riding. Set dates once a year in Sept or Oct

On this trip you get to enjoy the wild beauty of the Altai Mountains with the added bonus of attending the Eagle Festival in Ulgii. This horse riding holiday takes you to a remote Mongolian province, riding through open steppe, forested valleys and mountains, and visiting the lakes and desert in the west of Mongolia. The two-day Eagle festival really is one of the world’s great cultural spectacles. If you think you’ve seen some strange and interesting festivals elsewhere, this is sure to impress even the most jaded festival-goer.

Getting there: Meet at Ulan Bator (ULN) Airport and transfer is included.

Nomadic Steppes

17d/16n/11 days riding. Set dates June to September

An adventurous trail that takes you deep into western Mongolia and the National Park Tarvagatnu Nur, an area boasting expansive steppes, forested valleys, mountains, lakes and deserts. This is a challenging area to reach and to travel in, where there is very little tourist development compared to the usual Mongolian horse riding routes near Ulan Bator - but the rewards for travelling that bit further are great. For those who do make the effort, beautiful untouched landscapes, fascinating local cultures, and perfect riding country awaits. This trip, part-trek-part-road-trip, is faster paced than other Mongolian adventures, really allowing the horses to show you what they can do! If you prefer a slower pace, though, this can be accommodated. Mongolian horses are very hardy and full of character. The hosts, a New Zealand/ Mongolia partnership, work closely with local nomadic families who can provide a range of high quality horses with good tack suitable for any level of riding ability and exceptional service levels for an adventure of this caliber. Another highlight of this trip is the chance to experience the legendary hospitality of local nomadic families.

Getting there: Meet at Ulan Bator (ULN) Airport and transfer is included.

‘Once in a lifetime experience, what childhood dreams are made of. Beautiful landscapes, willing ponies and hospitable trip leaders’. TG of Porthleven
**Orkhon Valley Naiman Nuur Wilderness Trail**

13d/12n/8 days riding. Set departures from May to Sept

This is a true adventure trail, taking in some of Mongolia’s widest and most remote scenery and progressing through areas that are unreachable by road. Each night the group will set up camp somewhere new, allowing riders to experience Mongolia in the traditional nomadic way and reach places that are rarely seen by other travellers.

Getting there: Meet at Ulan Bator (ULN) Airport and transfer is included.

"Exceeded my expectations. You need to be fit and experienced with lively fast horses in the open". GM of Buxton

**Orkhon Valley & Przewalski Horses: Winter Trail**

10d/8n/8 days riding. From October to April

This winter ride in Mongolia combines the magical unblemished landscapes of the Orkhon Valley, Bayan Gobi Desert and Hustai National Park, home of the famous Przewalski horses. Declared a heritage site by UNESCO in 2002, the Hustai National Park covers 50,000 hectares of steppe and mountain forest and is home to many species of mammals and birds. The Przewalski horses that live there are a rare and endangered subspecies of wild horse. At one time extinct in the wild, they have now been reintroduced into their native Mongolian habitat. This ride gives you the chance to view them in the wild, a once in a lifetime opportunity. This winter ride in Mongolia combines the magical unblemished landscapes of the Orkhon Valley, Bayan Gobi Desert and Hustai National Park, home of the famous Przewalski horses. Declared a heritage site by UNESCO in 2002, the Hustai National Park covers 50,000 hectares of steppe and mountain forest and is home to many species of mammals and birds. The Przewalski horses that live there are a rare and endangered subspecies of wild horse. At one time extinct in the wild, they have now been reintroduced into their native Mongolian habitat. This ride gives you the chance to view them in the wild, a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Getting there: Meet at Ulan Bator (ULN) Airport and transfer is included.

**Transmongolia Trek**

20d/19n/14 days riding. From May to September

This epic adventure trail over 20 days in central Mongolia, passing through some of the wildest and most remote scenery, progressing through areas that are unreachable by road. Each night the group will set up camp somewhere new, allowing riders to experience Mongolia in the traditional nomadic way and reach places that are rarely seen by other travellers.

The trek passes through the Arkhangai region to Terkhin Tsagaan Nur (the ‘White Lake’) and on to Lake Khovd in the north of Mongolia. Ride over mountains and through narrow valleys covered in forests and criss-crossed with rivers, and canter across the open plains. Some of the areas travelled are completely wild and uninhabited, while others will be playing host to nomads and their herds. Most of the paths are inaccessible by vehicle so this is truly the best way to explore the heart of Mongolia.

Getting there: Meet at Ulan Bator (ULN) Airport and transfer is included.

"It was an absolutely fantastic and adventurous holiday... You can see very far due to the landscape, so you can’t get lost easily; and I felt completely safe on our friendly, calm and well going half wild horses... They listened to every little “command”, to every shift of weight". SL of Bern
Riding in Asia encompasses the Himalayan Plateau in Tibet, Bhutan and Ladakh where the riding is on hardy mountain ponies through Buddhist cultures; India, which has a rich horse culture centered around the warm-blooded Marwari breed owned by the warrior rulers of India; and Japan where most riding is on imported horses and the extraordinary itineraries allow a view of rural Japan not possible travelling in the normal way.

A riding holiday in Rajasthan, India will transport you back to the magnificent days of the Raj. You are hosted and guided by former Rajas and their families and stay in forts and palaces, or top level "camping". The riding is on the beautiful warm-blooded and forward going Marwari horses, ideal for good riders. The level of care and training that goes into these horses is incredible as is the overwhelming contrasts of India. These are amongst the best rides in the world and, along with Kenya and Botswana safaris are a must do ride for any serious rider.

Ladakh is culturally far different from Rajasthan and the incredible scenery of this region must be seen. This can be done by riders of all levels as the riding is slow due to the terrain and the horses are small and well trained.

Similarly Bhutan and Tibet each have Buddhist cultures with slower riding in the Himalayan mountains with travel in Tibet being more challenging and remote and Bhutan "the land of smiles" incredibly welcoming. The Tibetan Plateau covers a large part of South West China. There are about 6 million Tibetans living in the Tibet Autonomous Region and the 10 Tibetan Autonomous Prefectures in Gansu, Qinghai and Sichuan, China.

In Japan, horse riding is for the elite, making it a very expensive sport in an already expensive economy. The vast majority of the horse population is kept for horse racing which is hugely popular. The horses are mainly imported, well-schooled and responsive and the riding hours less than average. However the cultural experience on our Japanese riding holidays, from being hosted by Japanese horse owners, to the amazing food, onsen hot pools to relax after a days riding and total immersion in welcoming, polite and friendly Japanese culture, is not possible to achieve with the usual methods of travel.
Programmes

**Tibetan Adventure**

**The Shamalong Race Trek**

15d/14n/8 days riding. Set date in July - August.

Make your way into the furthest reaches of far-off Tibet - sleeping by night in painted festival tents, guesthouses and a Tibetan nunnery - riding horseback through majestic peaks and across endless grasslands by day. Unique cultural experience of the Shamalong Horse Race Festival and riding in the remote mountains with nomadic herders.

Getting there: Chengdu (CTU) Airport, China. Transfers are included.

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**Tibetan Adventure**

**The Tagong Horse Festival**

14d/13n/7.5 days riding. Set date in July.

Tagong is home to one of the most important Tibetan monasteries and the extraordinary Horse Race Festival. This festival features thousands of local Tibetan herdsmen amongst the vast expanse of green meadow surrounded by snow-capped peaks. There are horse races with traditional Tibetan acrobatics, dances and various demonstrations of strength, courage and wealth.

Getting there: Chengdu (CTU) Airport, China. Transfers are included.

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**Himalayan Monastery Trail**

12d/11n/6 days riding. Set dates May, October and November.

Join us for an exciting adventure in the Kingdom of Happiness trekking on local Yuenta horses through the Himalayan Mountains. Following the Royal Trail through some of the most beautiful valleys in the Himalaya you will visit monasteries, ancient temples and local villages who make mountain life look easy. The easy pace allows time to spot some of the unique and hardy fauna and flora that have adapted to live on the mountain sides, and spending the night in tents will reveal incredible night skies. At the beginning and end of the trip there are also visits to some of the most spiritual and spectacular sites in Bhutan including Taktsang Goemba, Drukgyel Dzong, Punakha Dzong and Khamsum Yuelley Namgyal Chorten. The tour is a mix of horse riding, trekking and sight-seeing to include all the highlights of Bhutan, as well as exploring the land and people behind the ‘happiest place on earth.’

Accommodation is in hotels, local farms and monasteries and tents depending on location. Picnic lunches are taken in meadows and alongside sparkling streams, and local dishes are served each night.

Getting there: Paro (PBH) Airport, transfers included to meeting point.

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Riding in Tibet

Experience Tibetan culture and breathtaking scenery on our unmissable horseback treks on the Tibetan Plateau. Set at over 4,000m the plateau is surrounded by the world's highest mountains in the Himalayan mountain range. Although the riding is not challenging riders need to be fit to cope with a camping trip at altitude and long days.

The Tibetans are delightful people. They are mainly farmers, often nomadic. Yak butter is a speciality. Why not join us on one of these amazing horseback adventures in China, Tibet.

“...a very special trek to a part of the world that is not easy to access. Spending two weeks with these Tibetan people gives a unique insight into their world.”

KR of Geneva

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Riding in Bhutan

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Go to [www.unicorntrails.com](http://www.unicorntrails.com) for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606 for assistance.
Riding in Japan

Japan is an incredibly fascinating country to visit. It is clean, organised and the Japanese are friendly and welcoming with much English being spoken in cities. While it does not have an extensive historical horse culture, horses were used by the Samurais and we offer a Samurai experience in one of our rides in the south.

There are currently only 80,000 riders in Japan, a country with a population of 66 million. There are a few horse hubs: Hokkaido Island in the north, which is the home of horse racing in Japan. Horse races (and gambling) are extremely popular in Japan. Then there is the area 200km west of Tokyo where much of the leisure and competitive riders in Japan keep their horses. Here we offer a short break put together to show as much of the culture and nature of the area as possible in a short period including the famous cherry blossom season. Finally in Fukuoka in the South, a region famed for Wagyu beef, there is an area with lush open hills at the base of mountains which offers riding.

All the riding in Japan is at a steady pace and the hours are not long; this is one of the most expensive places in the world to ride (or visit) and the emphasis is on the whole cultural experience, not the pace or duration of the riding. These riding holidays in Japan allow you to get behind the scenes and see a side of Japan only open to locals and visit rural regions with attractions appreciated by locals. Your hosts are proud to show you their country and traditions.

Cherry Blossom Ride

7d/6n/5 days riding. Set dates in April

Head to Kyushu island, a subtropical, mountainous region in the southwest of Japan for this unique week-long holiday combining horse riding with a cultural tour of southern Japan. Ride across forested mountains and picture-postcard beaches, indulge in a multi-course kaiseki dinner and visit floating castles and sacred shrines. This destination offers exceptional scenery; the island is dotted with hot spring baths and steaming volcanoes, and guests will also be able to experience beach riding along coasts bordered with palm trees.

Yatsugatake Mountains

4d/3n/3 days riding. Dates on request.

Travel north-west from Shinjuku station in Tokyo on the Super Azusa train and arrive 2hrs later in a small rural village where you spend the next four days exploring the surrounding Yatsugatake mountains and foothills on fit, calm Arabian and cross horses before resting any aching muscles in a traditional Onsen hot spring. This holiday would suit intrepid travellers, keen to combine a completely different cultural experience with riding quality, endurance-trained horses through verdant, lush countryside.

Spend each day riding along ancient trails steeped in samurai history and admire the stone buddhas along the way before stopping for lunch at a restaurant offering authentic Japanese cuisines such as sashimi and soba noodles. Follow the trail up this volcanic Yatsugatake mountain range before stopping for a picnic lunch where you can admire the iconic mount Fuji in the distance. This holiday offers plenty; a super knowledgeable guide and the best Japanese cuisine.

Getting there:

Tokyo (HND or NRT) Airport, then train transfer from Shinjuku train station in central Tokyo to Kobuchizawa (meeting point).
Riding in India

A horse riding holiday in India has to be the very best way to explore the magic that is ‘Kipling Country’. This is a huge country is, in fact, a sub-continent. India has a long history, amazing architecture, colourful fairs and pageantry, a rich culture, interesting wildlife and unrivalled cuisine. On horseback you can escape the crowds and immerse yourself into discovering the real India.

In Rajasthan, the warm-blooded Marwari horse was bred specifically for warfare and remains a highly regarded symbol of power today. They are mainly used for polo and endurance. The export of Marwaris is forbidden to protect the gene pool, so India is the only place to ride these fabulous forward going horses.

The season for riding in India starts in October and ends in March, so an ideal location for a winter sun holiday.

Riding in India recalls the days of the Raj and these rides are some of the best in the world. Accommodation on the rides in India varies from fabulous forts and palaces to camping in the more remote areas - but remember camping in Rajasthan is in luxurious tented camps and service is second to none. You are accompanied by a personal guide to smooth the way and every attention is paid to detail.

Quite amazingly our fabulous Ladakh Trail through the Himalayas, which is on local Spital ponies and not tall warm-blooded Marwaris, is open to beginner riders, because the pace is at a walk. However, you’ll need to be fit. If you are a single rider then all the Indian trail rides are perfect for you and you will soon become part of the group.

Visit and stay in some of the finest Forts and Palaces of Rajasthan over the Christmas and New Year holidays. After a fantastic ride on Christmas Day you spend the night in a luxury tented camp with a bonfire under the stars, while the horses rest nearby.

Getting there: Delhi (DEL) Airport. Transfers are included. Internal flight not included.

‘Really amazing ride, authentic and historical. Excellent guide, staff, horses, overnight stays and meals. Make sure to book early and not miss out on this amazing experience!’ CF of Tynset

Aravalli Hills
Short Break

6d/5n/5 days riding. Set date in Feb

This is an ideal choice for intermediate to advanced riders who have less time than required to do a full Indian Riding Safari. This short break packs in plenty of riding and sightseeing staying in Heritage Hotels along the way. The ride starts in the hamlet of Kotri situated in the foothills of the Aravalli range and continues throughout the four days riding through open farmland along sandy trails.

Getting there: Udaipur (UDR) or Jodhpur (JDH) Airport. Transfers payable on site.

Christmas Ride
in Rajasthan

14d/13n/9 days riding. Set date in Dec

Naguar Fair,
Rajasthan

12d/11n/8 days riding. Set date in Jan/Feb

The Nagaur Fair is one of Rajasthan’s foremost cattle and camel fairs, based just outside the town of the same name. This riding holiday gives you the opportunity to visit and ride around the Nagaur Fair, giving you an immersive and unique view into the festivities. During this holiday you will stay in a combination of luxury hotels and desert camps. Many of the hotels are converted mansion houses and palaces and the high service levels make for a truly indulgent trip.

Getting there: Delhi (DEL) Airport. Road transfers are included. Internal flight not included.

Ladakh Trail

15d/14n/8 days riding. Set dates in Jul & Aug

Adventurous camping trail in Ladakh region of India at high altitude in the foothills of the Himalayas, visiting remote monasteries. Suitable for adventurous beginners as the pace is slow.

Getting there: Delhi (DEL) Airport. Transfers are included.
Pushkar Fair and Diwali Festival

14d/13n Set date in Oct/Nov

This fast-paced riding holiday gives guests the opportunity to visit and stay in some of the finest forts and palaces of Rajasthan, as well as two nights in a luxury camp. Combining both Diwali and the Pushkar Fair, two of the largest annual festivals, you will immerse yourself in the cultural history of India and get a true insight into what these ancient traditions mean in the modern day. While on horseback you will have a privileged view of rural Indian life and will be greeted by locals wherever you go. The rich diversity of the countryside will bring a new surprise at every turn, from carefully ploughed farmland to brightly coloured villages and onwards into semi-desert and sand dunes. The sandy tracks provide perfect going for the horses, which means there is plenty of cantering.

Getting there: Delhi (DEL) Airport. Road transfers are included. Internal flight not included.

Pushkar Trail

15d/14n/7 days riding. Set date in Oct/Nov

This riding holiday contains all the highlights of Rajasthan, encompassing Delhi, Ranthambore Tiger Reserve, Jaipur and the Amber Fort, Agra and the Taj Mahal not to mention riding at the Pushkar Fair, one of India’s most famous camel and livestock fairs. Along the way you visit and stay in the finest forts and palaces of Rajasthan, recreating the time of the Raj. The camping is in true luxurious Raj style, with walk-in furnished tents. The ride covers a variety of terrain and passes through many small local villages, giving you the opportunity to see rural India on horseback.

Getting there: Delhi (DEL) Airport. Transfers are included.

Rajasthan Kumbhalgarh Ride

8d/7n/7 days riding. Set dates in Feb and Dec

Explore Rajasthan on horseback, riding through the Thar Desert and Aravalli Hill range. This ride is perfect for intermediate and advanced riders wanting to experience rural life in India whilst staying in luxury tents, Heritage Hotels, Forts and a private 250-year-old castle only open to horse riding enthusiasts.

Getting there: Jodhpur (UDH) Airport. Transfers can be arranged, payable on site.

A to Z of riding holidays

Abbreviations

| HB | Half board (see later) |
| FB | Full Board (see later) |
| B&B | Bed and Breakfast |
| Double | 2 people in a room |
| Single | 1 person in a room |

Accommodation standards

Accommodation standards vary by country e.g. in southern Europe rooms are often not provided with heating. A bathroom can have a bath or shower. Double beds can mean 2 single beds pushed together. We will do our best to advise you of any differences but if anything is important to you e.g. hairdryer in room please ask so we can inform you before you book.

Advice

Unicorn Trails provides impartial, accurate and up-to-date advice on all our locations however there is no substitute for speaking it over with someone who has been on the holiday you have been on. If you would like to do so, please ask and we will arrange this if your travel advisor has not personally been on the holiday you are considering.

Arrival/Getting There

There may be a few ways to get to your destination and the possibilities are listed under transfer, or, sometimes where there are many possibilities, more details can be found below the Itineraries on our website.

Where Unicorn Trails books your flights we will only book those which fit with the arrival times and dates of the programme you are booking. There is no point in booking a cheaper flight if you miss the group transfer and have to pay an expensive transfer supplement. When booking your own flights please take careful note of group transfer times and start times of the ride. Note that there can be up to 60 minutes between your landing time and arrival at the transfer meeting point! Please also take into account any delays on your part. In many cases a new transfer cannot be arranged or will cost extra. We are happy to advise on flights before you book them!

Dates: In this brochure arrival and departure dates are the days of arrival and departure to the meeting point, not from home. In the case of overnight flights you may need to depart a day early or arrive home a day later.

Availability

There are many holidays which have live real time availability on our website. These are indicated with a lighting symbol and can be searched online. Where you see this symbol bookings can be confirmed immediately at any time. This means you are free to book flights at the same time and can take advantage of flight offers.

For all other holidays availability is an indication and is updated weekly or possibly more often. Online bookings for these rides will be confirmed on the next working day, any payments will be taken as soon as the holiday is confirmed. When a ride has no availability is always worth contacting us in case of any cancellations or unconfirmed bookings.

Bed & Breakfast

This includes overnight accommodation and a breakfast meal.

Booking

Once you have settled on a ride you can book online on our website www.unicontrails.com or by contacting one of our super travel advisors by telephone, email, webchat or on social media (Facebook, Instagram or Twitter). We have offices in the UK, Sweden and Canada and are open UK time 9am – 8.30pm and are famous for speedy responses even outside those times. We can usually hold a place for you on a ride for a week at least with no obligation while you check holidays times, flights or confer with fellow travelers.

To confirm your booking we will ask for a deposit, usually 20% of the holiday price but this can vary by destination. If the booking is less than 10 weeks before the departure date the full price will be due. We accept bank transfers, cheques, credit and debit cards by telephone or online.

Booking Conditions

Please see our website for up to date and complete terms and conditions. Please note these may vary depending on the ride and services you book, you will be given the exact T&Cs with your booking information if they vary from the website.

Breakfast

Breakfast in some Mediterranean countries can be smaller than the UK and may not offer warm dishes or eggs/cheese. A breakfast buffet means you serve yourself and does not indicate a limited choice.

Centre Based/Star Rides

From one start point (hotel or B&B) half day or full day rides are undertaken in a different direction each time. This gives the possibility to have a day off to rest or sightsee in the area and offers more leisure time as bags are not packed for a move each day.

Go to www.unicontrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
Riding Experience
An accurate and honest assessment of your riding experience is of the utmost importance to the enjoyment of your holiday. The holidays on our website are graded for riding ability from 1 to 4 levels as per the table below with a few additional circumstances. We understand suitability for a particular holiday can be difficult as it requires knowledge of the horses, riding pace & style and terrain conditions. If you have any doubts or questions don’t hesitate to ask one of our friendly travel advisors who have this knowledge and all riders themselves.

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<th>Non Rider</th>
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<td>Does not wish to ride</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Either never ridden or you may have ridden out at a walk or trot. You have either never ridden or had a few lessons at a walk and possibly trot.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>You can mount and dismount unaided and are happy to ride a good horse at a walk, trot and canter for short periods. You have ridden out at least 25km. You can mount and dismount unaided, have mastered the basics and can ride at a walk, rising trot and canter on a standard horse. At least 50 lessons in the last 2 years.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>You are a secure rider on a well-schooled horse at walk, trot and fast canter in open and uneven terrain. Balanced seat in all three paces with at least 100 lessons in the last 2 years. Can give a horse basic schooling, riding alone in the arena, applying aids without assistance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>You are a confident rider with an experience of riding a variety of horses. You ride regularly and have an independent seat and soft hands. You are capable of riding a spirited horse in open country and are able to jump small obstacles.</td>
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Financial Security
With Unicorn Trails your money is completely secure as we are fully insured and licensed and comply with all relevant UK and EU laws. We are licensed to sell flights by the CAA (UK Civil Aviation Authority ATOL 6431), we are a member of ABTOT (Association of British Travel Agents Y6321) and bonded with ABTOT. All Holidays and payments to us are completely protected both pre-travel and for repatriation once travel has commenced as below:

1. Flight inclusive packages commencing and returning to the UK (ATOL)
2. Non-flight packages commencing in and returning to the UK (ABTOT)
3. Flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the UK, which are sold to customers outside of the UK (ABTOT)
4. Non-flight packages commencing and returning to a country other than the UK (ABTOT)

Changes to this Brochure
While correct at the time of going to print brochures are prepared far in advance and information can change. Our website will have the most up to date information. Please understand that we must reserve the right to change listings, even after you have booked under rare circumstances. We urge you to take out cancellation insurance to cover your holiday at the time of booking.

Child Rates
Many of our holidays offer reduced rates for children. Some child rates do not include a riding programme. The eligible ages and rates vary by destination, please check each listing carefully or ask if you cannot find the information online. The age of the child at the time of travel is used to calculate the eligible rate.

Discounts
We offer the best value for money and prices on our holidays as well as a range of last minute and loyalty discounts.

Sign up to our mailing list to receive 8-10 Special Offer emails each year with exclusive discounts not available anywhere else. Further Discounted riding holidays are available on our website.

We offer loyalty discounts of 5% for returning to the same partner, in some cases these discounts are even bigger. Discounts are also available for booking 3 holidays in the space of 2 years, please ask your travel advisor for more details.

Finally, we price match if you find exactly the same holiday elsewhere for less. No more than one discount can be applied to a booking.

Data Protection
We take the protection of your data seriously. Your data is never sold or shared with third parties for marketing purposes. We only use your data to enable your holiday booking to run smoothly and keep in touch about our riding holidays. Our full data policy can be found on our website www.unicorntrails.com/privacy.

Health and Vaccinations
An indication of possible group size is given on our website. Group size of 1 or 2 while some special rides such as cattle drives or Icelandic horse drives may have more than 10. An indication of possible group size is given on our website.

Full Board
This includes breakfast and one other meal – either lunch or dinner.

Fights and Flight Prices
When booking flights for you, Unicorn Trails always advises the safest options and connections. We book scheduled flights with major airlines to ensure the best possible combination of quality, service and safety. Even so we must reserve the right to change flight times by several hours where airlines reserve the rights to do so provided we are reliant on these airlines to provide the service and their conditions are passed on to you when we book a flight on your behalf. We do not book flight connections which have resulted in problems for previous guests. As we organise small group travel to many destinations, we cannot book flights in bulk months ahead, Airlines do not offer fixed rates and prices change daily, please ask your travel consultant for a quote. As flight bookers Unicorn Trails takes on certain risks and pays ticketing fees. Insurance premiums for these risks and ticketing fees are included in our flight prices. This means tickets booked elsewhere can be cheaper.

Please note that direct flights can include a landing en route while non-stop flights do not. Arrival and departure days can be tiring and should not be regarded as real days off. This is why, with a few exceptions, we do not schedule any riding on these days.

When booking your own flights please note that you also take full responsibility for any risks including ride cancellation due to minimum numbers not being reached, flight times changing or unexpected events. It is advisable to take out insurance to cover these risks. Unicorn Trails does not usually refund 100% of non-refundable, it is important to check specific ticket conditions when booking. There are no paper tickets anymore, only electronic tickets. The ticket is held against your ID (eg passport) and booking reference. Please note that you must arrive at the airline check in, or departures at least 60 to 120 minutes before the scheduled departure of your flight depending on the flight and airport. Of course we are happy to advise you on flights and connections when you book your own flights.

Group Discounts
Generous group discounts are available for group organizers depending on the ride for groups of 5 or more. For groups of 10 a free place is often possible for the organiser. Please ask your travel advisor.

Gift Vouchers
Gift vouchers can be purchased from Unicorn Trails. They have denominations of £20 and £50 and are valid for a booking for 2 years from time of purchase. They can be saved and used together to pay for part or all of a holiday. This is a perfect way to help someone book a holiday or to save for one. Vouchers for specific holidays can also be booked and validity dates will be indicated per period.

Additional Terms and Conditions
For further information and general health recommendations the FCO office website www.fco.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice gives up to date information on outbreaks of disease. Current vaccination and precautionary measures recommended by country can be found on the National Travel health Network and Centre at https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries
Honest Descriptions
We write all the text and descriptions ourselves based on our own and client experiences in a way that can be easily understood by the majority of guests. You can rely on this brochure and our web site to make an informed decision about your holiday.

Horses
Different countries have different ways of doing things. Direct comparisons cannot be made with how things are done at home. Horses are ridden differently and kept differently. Is this bad? Not at all. This is why we travel, to see different cultures and ways of working with horses. The horses you ride are adapted to the local conditions including weather, terrain, going underfoot etc. Trail horses must be extremely fit and do not carry excess weight as do many horses at home. The pace and length or riding are designed to allow horses to do their job for years to come and not be “worn out” at the end of a season. As a veterinary-led organisation Unicorn Trails attaches huge importance to happy, healthy horses on our rides.

Included and Not Included
This is indicated for each programme in detail on our website. Most of the rides in this brochure include accommodation, meals and riding. You are free to organise your return journey to suit your requirements. The duration of the stay is given in days (including the arrival and departure days) and nights (Saturday to Saturday = 8 days = 7 nights). Unless otherwise stated, the services begin with the first dinner and end with the last day’s breakfast. Riding the specified itineraries and riding descriptions are possible for many reasons. The specified itineraries and riding descriptions therefore correspond to what is possible in the ordinary course. They do not constitute a binding commitment. Please see paragraph 11 of our T&C.

Meals
An attempt is made to represent local meal specialties for each region. Meals times may differ from your home timings considerably e.g. it is normal to eat the evening meal late (8-10pm) in southern Europe. Drinks are not included unless indicated in the “Included” section on your invoice. The midday meal can also consist of a picnic meal carried in the saddle. On arrival and departure days lunch is not usually included unless indicated otherwise on your invoice. See also B&B, Half Board and Full Board.

Minimum Number
The minimum number of participants required to confirm each programme is the lower number listed under Group Size on our website. This can vary from 1 to 5 at 30 days pre-departure. Often prices are lower as more join a group. Often departures can be confirmed for lower numbers particularly further in advance, please check with your travel consultant.

Mobile Phone and Internet
Please note that very often there is no mobile coverage in sparsely populated areas (even in Central Europe) and internet access can be variable, and, where available, slow. We indicate communication possibilities and electricity in our programme details but this is not a guarantee of availability.

Non-Riders
For many of our stationary programmes and some of the trails offered there are good possibilities for non-riders to enjoy their own holiday programme. Please see our website, where you can search for rides particularly suited to travelling with non-riders or ask your travel consultant.

On-Site Representation
Unicorn Trails does not have on-site representation. Riding guides are not a representative of Unicorn Trails in connection with any complaints or requests. Please be sure to contact us directly with any problems or requests.

Horse
We do not offer trips for riders with their own horses. On all our advertised holidays you are provided with a suitable locally trained and adapted horse.

Packaging
It is very important to be well prepared for your riding holiday. We give suggested packing lists and tips for each individual ride. It is always a good idea to bring your own riding helmet, to have good riding/walking boots with tread and, if you are not a regular rider, we strongly recommend a seat saver. The type made of memory foam and covered with sued is the most effective.

Prices
Price bands are given in our catalogue as guidance. Exact prices based on current exchange rates can be found on our website. Unicorn Trails reserves the right to increase or decrease the prices of holidays at any time before a booking is confirmed.

Once a booking is confirmed the price will not change. Prices indicated are per person sharing. Prices can also vary by season. Our website indicates exactly what is included and excluded from the programme price.

Prices do not usually include entry costs such as visas or tourist fees.

When making a booking you must pay a deposit (usually 20% but this can vary). The balance must be paid at least 10 weeks before your departure date. To guarantee the booking price you may be required to pay part or all of the balance prior to the due date. Provided your holiday is paid as requested the price of your holiday is fully guaranteed in the currency booked and will not be subject to any surcharges.

According to our policy, we do not charge more than the local service providers. By booking with a UK organizer you have significant advantages (eg guaranteed price in the currency booked, quality assurance, UK financial guarantees etc.). The costs for these advantages are borne by us.

Go to www.unicorntrails.com for current prices, dates and full details or call +44 1767 600606
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Reduced mobility
Ride in this catalogue are not generally suited to people with reduced mobility. Please ask for advice before booking if you have reduced mobility.

Rental Car
For some destinations, we recommend a rental car, either because the cost is less than arranging a transfer or because being mobile on your holiday confers significant advantages or possibilities. We are happy to book this for you or to advise. We strongly suggest pre-booking a package with unlimited mileage, third-party, comprehensive and motor vehicle theft insurance without deductibles, all taxes and airport charges. This is often significantly more expensive when booked on arrival. A credit card usually required.

Insurance
We recommend you to take out a suitable travel insurance covering you for all medical expenses, and cancellation at the time of booking. Many participants find themselves needing to cancel for health reasons and our standard T&C will apply (see paragraphs 27 and 6-8).

Visa, Permits and Passports
We are always happy to give advice and general guidelines, but it remains your responsibility to check the current situation and time frames required for your individual situation. Your specific passport, visa requirements and other immigration requirements are your responsibility and you should confirm these with the relevant consulates or embassies. We are not responsible if you cannot travel because you have not complied with any passport, visa or immigration requirements.

Website
Our website, www.unicorntrails.com contains all the up to date information on each programme in far more detail than we have room for in this catalogue. It is the most inclusive listing of the programmes available at the time and includes: new programmes; special offers; reviews; online booking (also confirmed immediately); rider requirements; Included and Not Included. Once you are interested in a programme we encourage you to find more details, including the current price in 4 currencies, on our website.

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