



# Equus Journeys

HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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Last updated 02/05/2024

## Sheep Round-Up

### ICELAND

On this unique **horse-riding tour**, join farmers in Iceland as they gather thousands of sheep from the mountains where they have spent the summer on grazing grounds. Riding Icelandic horses, you take part in this unique adventure and practice your team work skills! You will drive sheep across the black sands of Mt Hekla, the rhyolite mountains of Landmannalaugar or along mighty glacier rivers, depending on your selected date. Wherever you go, you are guaranteed a warm welcome and an experience riding holiday with a purpose.

Cattle Drive	⌚ 6, 7 or 9 days	📅 From £1,470	🐎🐎🐎🐎
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Celebrate the annual sheep round-up in Iceland



An extraordinary cultural and equestrian experience



Discover the beauty of the Icelandic landscapes on horseback

### ITINERARY

## Highlights

- Join an annual tradition with real sheep farmers and be involved in their daily life, bringing sheep down from their summer grazing to their winter pastures
- Ride with a maximum of 8 guests (plus a number of local farmers and guides)
- Enjoy the stunning Icelandic countryside

## Day 1 — 1: ARRIVE IN REYKJAVIK - No riding

Fly from to Reykjavik. Spend a night at a hotel in Reykjavik - these services are not included, but easily booked upon request. Please contact us. Dinner to your own account.

Your tour will begin the following morning.

## Day 2 — 2: REYKJAVIK TO LOCAL FARM

Pick up between 8:30:00 – 10:00 depending on your chosen tour, from the BSI (central bus station). Please come dressed already in riding clothes. Transfer to the farm before meeting your guides and horses. Today is your first ride in Iceland, and will be kept short and sweet for you to get used to the land and your horses' paces.

Depending on your chosen dates, the duration and location of the round-up will vary. Landscapes are also different.

With this sheep round-up, plunge into the life of the Iceland farmers. Please note that you need to have a good level of fitness to cope with long hours in the saddle, under sometimes unpredictable weather conditions. As participants, you are joining an annual tradition and not a customized riding tour. Therefore an open mind, good physical health and the ability to work as a team are essential. Expect to be treated as one of the crowd, be prepared to pull your weight each day and enjoy the camaraderie of all those participating.

PLEASE CONTACT US FOR DETAILED IT INERARIES

> Melrakkaslétta - 4 riding days

There is a lot of diversity on this tour starting with beautiful mountain views from the wide Öxarfjörður Fjord. The Peninsula of Melrakkaslétta, which stretches almost to the Arctic Circle, is a paradise for birdwatchers and people with geological interest. Gather the sheep from Núpasveitafréttur and Melrakkaslétta peninsula and drive them into Katastaða communal sheepfold so the farmers can sort out their flock and take them to their farms.

> Rangarvallaafrettur - 6 days riding

Ride across Mælifellssandur, a large area of sand and stones north of Mýrdalsjökull Glacier, between the mountains Einstigsfjall and Brattháls. Gather the sheep at beautiful Lake Álftavatn before riding through the area of Sultarfit and Rangárbotnar, through Reiðskarð Mountainpass and Laufahraun Lavafields.

> Reykjarettir - 3 riding days

From Kálfhóll Farm we head off through fertile farmland and enter the beautiful trail along mighty glacier river Thjórsá. The ride continues towards the herd of sheep that are herded down from the highlands in tenth of thousands. When we meet the herd we will herd them for the rest of the way to Reykjarettir (Reykja Coral) where all the sheep farmers come together to collect their sheep from the herd.

> Landmannaafrettur - 6 days riding

On this special tour you join the farmers in South Iceland as they round up thousands of sheep from the mountains. Help gather the sheep into the Landmannaafrettur communal sheepfold close to the famous Landmannalaugar geothermal area. The yellow, reddish and greenish hue of the rhyolite mountains give this area a magical touch.

Day 3 — 3 TO DAY 4 OR 6

You ride out on your first round-up. This is a day filled with emotions and a real immersion into the Iceland culture. Riders and farmers work together to make sure that no sheep is left behind.

Day 4 — 5 OR 7

Today is your last ride in the beautiful and wild Icelandic countryside. You are transferred to Reykjavik (BSI) at the end of the day. You settle into your hotel (not included) where you are free to make your own plans for the night or take your flight home.

Day 5 — 6 OR 8 - HOME

If you have chosen to stay in Reykjavik last night, self-transfer to the airport for your flight home.

DATES & PRICES			
DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
04/09/2024	09/09/2024	£1,470	Open
12/09/2024	20/09/2024	£2,506	Full

Price details

- Flights to your destination are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates.
- Rates are per person, based on riders sharing communal rooms. There is no single supplement and you must be willing to share.
- Groups are comprised of 5-12 international riding guests plus guides depending on your chosen dates.
- Transfers from the airport to Reykjavik are not included, but are included from Reykjavik to the farm. See <https://www.re.is/tour/flybus/> for more info

on how to get from the airport to the city centre.

- Accommodation in Reykjavik is not included but easily booked upon request.

- Vegan and/or Gluten Free diets will incur on an extra supplement of around £90/€100/\$110 per person.

Please Note

The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.

The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

## Price includes

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### SUPPORT TEAM

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1 english speaking horse guide since Reykjavik

2-4 assistants in charge of the free herd.

2 local horse guide, horses owners

### LOGISTIC

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2-3 horses per rider equipped with saddle and bridle

1 vehicle and driver

1 cook

### INLAND TRANSPORTS

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Minibus

### ACCOMMODATION

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Mountain Huts, dormitory style

### MEALS

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Full board during the ride

### EXTRA EQUIPMENT

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First aid kit

## Price doesn't include

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### MEALS

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Beverage and personal extra

2 free dinner in Reykjavik (£28-36 each meal)

Special diet supplement - please see above

### TRANSPORTS

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Transfers between Keflavik airport to Reykjavik

International flights

### EXTRA

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Tips to local team

Touristic sites fees not already included on the program

### INSURANCE

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Cancellation and travel insurance are not included in the above listed price. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend taking out an insurance policy as soon as your trip is booked to cover you in case of cancellation

## Optional

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## ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation in Reykjavik

## EXTRAS

Trip extensions or additional activities

## EQUESTRIAN INFO

### Horses

The Icelandic horse is a part of the history and saga of the country and its Vikings. It is characterised by its extra pace - the tölt, which is fast and very comfortable. Some are also capable of an additional Flying Pace, which is similar to trot, but much faster and used for racing. Icelandic horses are small, sociable, comfortable and energetic. Icelandic tack consists of simple snaffle bridles, often with drop nosebands and straight cut saddles similar to English style.

### Guide & local team

You will be assisting local farmers who know the land very well. You may be split into small groups, and sent in different directions to find sheep all over the mountainsides, but there will always be someone to point you in the right direction.

### Minimum riding ability

#### MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You should be a confident rider, capable of riding over varied terrain at all paces. You should be open to learning a new style of riding - the tölt (fast pace and normally comfortable) and fit enough to maintain this pace for long periods.

Rider weight limit is 110kg/17,3 st/242lb

#### PACE

The pace on this ride is moderate. The tölt, used most of the time, is a specific pace likened to a very fast walk which you sit to. Over technical terrain the horses will walk or trot. There can be long periods of walk or even standing around waiting for the sheep.

#### TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You will be expected to assist with grooming and tacking up your horse (guidance is available) and to help with meal preparations.

#### TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You need to be physically fit for some very long hours in the saddle (8-10 hours). The terrain is varied to include steep ascents/descents, rocks/lava fields and there may be holes to avoid. You should also be prepared for the changeable weather. The climate is temperate (12°C - 16°C during the day) but the temperature can change suddenly with strong winds and rain always possible. As this is Autumn you may also experience early snow flurries.

Having previous experience of riding a trail of several days in Iceland would be an advantage but it is not compulsory. Only guests who ride regularly and are fit are able to join the round-up rides. It is of particular importance to ensure you are comfortable and balanced when riding at speed across rough terrain and open spaces for long hours in the saddle.

All participants join an annual tradition and not a customized riding tour. Therefore an open mind, good physical health and the ability to work hand in hand with others is required. Expect to be treated as one of the crowd, required to fulfil your duty every day and enjoy the camaraderie of all those participating in this great adventure.

#### EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Saddle bags are provided, as are rain coats.

Hard hats are mandatory. We recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit.

## TRAVEL INFO

## COMFORT

On the ride the accommodation is basic and you stay in mountain cabins which are communal and equipped with bunk beds. Some of the larger cabins may have more than one room, whilst other smaller cabins are dormitory style. It is not possible to request single accommodation and so you must be prepared to share with the other guests and the farmers. There are usually toilets available, but warm showers are not possible at all locations. You will need to bring your own sleeping bag.

On some dates, accommodation is provided in more comfortable lodgings and you will not need a sleeping bag. Please contact us for details.

Please understand that accommodation in the highlands is always basic, with little privacy, small rooms and limited showers.

## MEALS

Lunches are simple picnics; dinners are generous and hearty.

You prepare your own picnic lunch at breakfast time.

Vegan and Gluten free diets can be accommodated at an extra cost.

## CLIMATE

Contrary to popular belief, the general climate in Iceland is temperate and cool with extreme cold temperatures only recorded in winter. In summer the average temperatures are 10-12c but can be as low as 5c and as high as 25c. You should be prepared for both sun and rain and dress in layers. The round-ups occur at the end of the season and so you are heading into autumn and the temperatures can be lower.

## TIPS

Tips are welcome but not expected. You should tip what you feel is appropriate and you are comfortable with.

## PACKING LIST

There are some important packing considerations for a riding holiday in Iceland. The Icelandic horses have had no contact with other equine species and are not vaccinated. They do not have any resistance to diseases which are common elsewhere in the world and so it is important to take precautions to prevent the spread of infections.

- You should NOT take the following products into Iceland: saddles, bridles, halters, saddle pads, whips, brushes or any leather products which have been in contact with a horse.

- Your riding clothes must be thoroughly cleaned at least 5 days before departure (riding breeches, jumpers, coats, gloves) and should be washed in temperatures of at least 40c.

- Items which cannot be washed at 40c, such as riding hats or leather boots must be thoroughly disinfected at least five days before departure:

1. Wash in detergent.
2. Dry thoroughly
3. Spray with a 1% solution of Virkon detergent (10g per litre of water)

For more details please visit the Icelandic veterinary authority website: [www.mast.is/english/frontpage/import-export/import/ridingequipment](http://www.mast.is/english/frontpage/import-export/import/ridingequipment)

### Head

- A riding helmet is compulsory and we recommend that you take your own to ensure a correct fit.
- A flyhat to wear over your helmet may be a good idea in the summer months, when flies can be an issue
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana for protecting your neck and face from the sun, wind or rain
- Warm hat for cold evenings/days

### Upper body

- Thermals in case of cold weather
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun or extra warmth
- Down jacket or gilet for cold evenings
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Warm polar fleece or equivalent (plus a spare in case one gets wet)
- Waterproof jacket - rain can be difficult to predict and it's better to be prepared. In the mountains the weather can change quickly

### Legs

- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub.
- Take two pairs
- Waterproof over trousers
- Casual clothes for the evenings (jeans or walking trousers)
- Thermal trousers

### Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged. Boots should be waterproof as river crossings are a possibility.
- Lightweight shoes or trainers for the evenings
- Sandals/flipflops
- Several pairs of warm socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun, wind or rain whilst riding

### Nightwear

- Sleeping bag with a minimum comfort rating of minus 5, although you may find minus 10 more comfortable
- Sleeping bag liner (silk/cotton/fleece) to add extra comfort and warmth
- A small camping pillow
- Slippers (you will have to remove your shoes inside the accommodation)
- An eye mask can help with the 24hr daylight

### Our Recommendations

- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bum bag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (camera, sunscreen, lipbalm etc)
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!

### Other useful items

- Swimsuit - for hot tubs
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bum bag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Water bottle (2 litres or 2 x 1 litre)
- Wet Wipes or equivalent (for when washing facilities aren't available)
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)

### In your luggage

- Any liquids, such as shampoo, moisturiser, deodorant unless they are less than 100ml and all bottles can fit in a small, clear, plastic ziplock bag.
- Swiss army knife or equivalent

### In your hand luggage

- Any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.
- Your riding hat

### Medical kit

- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent
- Any medication you regularly take
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Re-hydration sachets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.
4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please [see this page](#) .