



# Equus Journeys

HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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## Coast to Coast Ride

### COSTA RICA

This multi-base riding holiday will take you on a **trail ride across Costa Rica** from the Pacific to the Caribbean. Riding along mountain paths, dense jungles and dramatic river canyons, you will have the opportunity to visit the Arenal Volcano, and relax in its hot-spring waters. On this **riding holiday in Costa Rica** you will discover some of the country's most scenic regions, including hugely contrasting landscapes, rural communities and varied habitats known for their abundant wildlife. You will experience exhilarating beach rides that call for lively canters, while always keeping close contact with nature. A truly unforgettable riding holiday!

Trail Riding	 11 days (8 days riding)	 From £1,980		Open to non-riders
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### ITINERARY

## Highlights


- Visit the Arenal Volcano – both a landmark and an iconic feature in Costa Rica, and relax in its hot-spring waters
- Experience the contrasting landscapes of this country: the arid Pacific coast and its volcanic sand beaches, the forested valleys and mountains of the central regions, and the exuberant lushness of the Caribbean coast
- Follow a forest trail to a secluded and enchanting waterfall
- Visit quaint rural communities and get involved in the Costa Rican way of life – discovering the “Pura Vida”!

## Day 1 — 1 : Home – San Jose

You will catch your international flight to San Jose in Costa Rica (flights are not included, but can be booked upon request).

Upon arrival you will be met by one of our representatives and transferred to your hotel near the airport. Overnight in San Jose. Dinner is not included tonight.

## Day 2 — 2: Introductory Ride - 3 hours riding


 Finca los Domos

Early in the morning you will be transferred to the ranch, where you will get to meet the guides and be assigned your horse for the start of this riding adventure! You will first head towards Finca los Domos, riding along rolling hills and meadows into the Gallery Forest alongside the Cuarrros River – an excellent spot for wildlife encounters. Pass by multiple rural homes and farmland before arriving to the hacienda. Its remote location and attractive scenery will no doubt give a better feel of a typical Costa Rican life.

The next three nights will be at Los Domos. Upgrades to Cerro Lodge, a beautiful 3-star hotel with a pool, can also be arranged – please see “dates and prices”.

## Day 3 — 3: Coastal Ride - 5-6 hours riding

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 Finca los Domos

After breakfast, your ride takes you along country lanes leading to Tivives Crag. The Spaniards first started their conquest of the Central Pacific around 1561 right from this very spot! Ride across the Cascajalillo Mangrove Swamps and along the Pacific coast.

Depending on the tide, you may have the opportunity to enjoy a picnic on the beach, if not lunch will be served at a local café. Again, depending on the tide you might climb on horseback towards Cuevas Crag, enjoying unique views of the Pacific Ocean or alternatively ride along the shoreline towards Guacalillo beach. Back to the ranch in time for dinner.

## Day 4 — 4 : La Mariana Estate & Countryside - 3-6 hours riding

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 Finca los Domos

During the morning ride you will be exploring the hacienda and its private reserve, riding through beautiful scenery towards the Transitional-Dry Forest and the lush Gallery Forest. Here, the terrain is predominantly flat with forested valleys. You will continue your trail ride towards higher grounds where you will be able to enjoy excellent views of the Pacific Ocean. If you are lucky you might even have the chance to spot some local wildlife!

Ride back to the hacienda where lunch awaits. In the afternoon, there will be an optional ride in the southern part of the hacienda that will take you to experience an ocean view sunset! Get back to the hacienda and relax before dinner time.

## Day 5 — 5 : Machuca River Canyon Ride - 4-5 hours riding

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Today will be the last ride in the Central Pacific. You will ride into the area where the Machuca river canyon broadens onto the plains. Head towards the Jesús María River basin, allowing exploration of the plains and forested valleys along the Machuca River Canyon. After lunch, transfer to the northern region home to the Arenal Volcano (the drive is around three and a half hours).

Overnight in Arenal.

## Day 6 — 6 : Arenal Volcano Ride & Thermo-mineral Hot Springs - 2-3 hours riding

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After a hearty breakfast, you will meet your horses for the day and go on a riding adventure through the Arenal countryside. This ride ascends a mountain as it crosses both rainforest and cattle fields. On your way up, you will stop at a beautiful lagoon where the horses will have some time to cool off and you will be given time to stretch and look around. As you ride along the trail, you will come to a lookout with marvellous views of the Arenal Volcano.

In the afternoon, you will have the opportunity to join a guided tour of the Arenal volcano. Afterwards you can enjoy some free time at the beautiful Arenal hot water springs and gardens - an excellent addition to your riding adventure!

Overnight in Arenal.

## Day 7 — 7 : Transfer to the Caribbean Coast & Coastal Exploration - 3-4 hours riding

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 Atlantida Lodge

At around 6 a.m, get ready for the transfer that will take you to the Caribbean Coast (this takes approx. 5 hours). Upon arrival, and after checking in, there is some time to relax before lunch is ready.

In the afternoon, there is a brief introductory ride to get acquainted with the new horses. Start with a jungle trail followed by some coastal riding, for longer relaxing trails with the opportunity for some breathtaking canters. A stop for swimming and resting on the beach is usually included. Overnight in Cahuita.

## Day 8 — 8 : Caribbean Beach Ride - 4-5 hours riding

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 Atlantida Lodge

This morning you will take a short walk to the horse stables and ride over the scenic Playa Negra then partway over the village road, towards Playa Grande – a secluded, quiet and deserted Caribbean beach which is ideal for nice brisk canters. Afterwards, you will enter a beautiful tropical forest, where you may have the opportunity to spot the howler monkey, sloths and a variety of exotic birds such as toucans. During one of the rest stops while the horses rest in the shade of a tree, your guide may display his coconut peeling techniques using a machete!

On the way back to the lodge you may stop to see some nice local artisans and souvenir shops, and have an excellent Caribbean lunch at a local restaurant. Afternoon at leisure. You are free to take any local excursions, rent a bike or surfboard (at an extra cost).

Overnight in Cahuita.

## Day 9 — 9 : Mountain and Waterfall Ride & Shuttle transfer back to San Jose - 3-4 hours riding

Today's ride is a mountain trail ride, first riding along the beach and then following a mountain trail. You will ride past a local farm, reaching the trail head where you will dismount and enjoy a hike following a forest trail to a secluded waterfall with the opportunity for a swim. Enjoy a picnic-style lunch before heading back to the lodge.

Once you arrive, you will have time to freshen up before having to take the transfer back to San Jose (approx. 3h30).

Overnight in San Jose. You are free to make your own arrangements for dinner tonight.

## Day 10 — 10 : Departure and flight home

Transfer to Juan Santamaría International Airport (SJO) in time for your flight back home.

## Day 11 — 11: Arrival home

Arrive home.

DATES & PRICES			
DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
18/06/2024	28/06/2024	£1,980	Open
23/07/2024	02/08/2024	£1,980	Guaranteed departure
27/08/2024	06/09/2024	£1,980	Guaranteed departure
03/09/2024	13/09/2024	£1,980	Open
08/10/2024	18/10/2024	£1,980	Open
05/11/2024	15/11/2024	£1,980	Open
12/11/2024	22/11/2024	£1,980	Open
19/11/2024	29/11/2024	£1,980	Open
17/12/2024	27/12/2024	£1,980	Guaranteed departure
14/01/2025	24/01/2025	£1,980	Open

## Price details

- Flights or transportation to your destination are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates.
  - Rates are per person, based on two riders sharing a twin or double room during the ride.
  - Groups are composed of a minimum of 2 riders and a maximum of 8 international riders, plus guides.
  - If you sign up to the ride as a solo rider and there are no other riders likely to share your room, you will be charged a single room supplement of £340/€400/\$425. You will then be reimbursed if a sharer is found for you at a later date. Given the nature of the ride, accommodation may be limited to local guest houses. Some rooms are en-suite, some have shared bathrooms – en-suites are given on a first-come, first-served basis.
  - An upgrade to Cerro Lodge (instead of Los Domos – 3 nights) is possible at a supplementary charge of \$285/€265/£230 per person. The single supplement becomes £500/€580/\$620.
  - Airport transfers are included on the official arrival and departure dates. If you wish to add an extra day or extension, transfers must be paid at the cost of £22/€27/\$30 per car, each way (subject to change).
- Discounts:
- Accompanied minors are welcome from 12 years old, provided that they match the riding requirements. Children aged 11 or under will receive a

discount of £185/€225/\$245

- Non-riders will benefit from a discount of £350/€390/\$435

- People that stay in triple rooms will benefit from a discount of £100/€110/\$125

- IMPORTANT: Riders weighing more than 95 kg please indicate this at time of booking so we can ensure suitable horses are available.

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 horse guide (different guides according to the location)

### LOGISTICS

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1 support vehicle

### INLAND TRANSPORT

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Airport transfers

### ACCOMMODATION

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3-nights at a farm Lodge, 2 nights at a family Eco-lodge, 2 night at rustic Cabanas and 2 nights at a Hotel.

### MEALS

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Full board during the ride except for dinners in San Jose.

### ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

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Saddle bags

First aid kit

1L of water is included every day (mineral). Extra water payable locally.

### EXTRAS

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Entrance fee to the hot springs

## Price doesn't include

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### MEALS

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Alcoholic beverages and personal extras

Meals before or after the ride, and in San Jose

### TRANSPORT

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International flights

International airport exit fees payable in San Jose upon exit.

### EXTRAS

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Tips to the local team

### INSURANCE

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Visas and personal purchase

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

Single room supplement

## EQUESTRIAN INFO

### Horses

On this holiday you will ride different horses over the 8 days of your ride. On the Pacific side you will be riding smaller Criollos where the vegetation is sparser, and once you get to the Arenal side, change to more robust Criollos. All horses are easy to ride and are on the smaller size with an average of 14hh.

### Guide & local team

The team is composed by locals and one English speaking guide.

### Minimum riding ability

#### MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

The riding level for this ride is intermediate and upwards. You should be comfortable at all three paces and able to keep your balance over varied and uneven ground.

Rider weight limit: 110 Kg. (For riders over 95 Kg; please indicate this at the time of booking so we can ensure a suitable horse is available)

#### PACE

This is a multi-base riding holiday during which you will be spending 4 to 6 hours on average in the saddle each day. The main pace is the walk, with regular trots and canters, including fun beach canters.

#### TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You are very welcomed to help out as much as you want with the horses (brushing, bathing, and so on), this will allow you to develop a deeper bond with them and the team. Help is always on hand if necessary.

#### TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You must be riding fit. Please note that on some occasions, you may have to dismount and lead your horse over difficult terrain. Expect variable weather conditions.

Riders must also be prepared to meet people whose cultural specificities and differences of approach must be treated with acceptance and respect.

#### EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

The tack is similar to Western/McLellan saddles. Small saddlebags are provided.

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

Three nights at Finca los Domos. There are three private bungalows in dome style with AC, hotwater and private bathroom. There is a plunge pool - please note the cabins are basic with a comfortable downstairs room and a more basic upstairs mezzanine (mattress on the ground). Upgrade to a 3\*\*\* hotel with a pool (Cerro Lodge) can be arranged, please see dates and prices.

2 nights at a family Eco-lodge just 10 minutes from Carara National Park. This small lodge offers 14 Bungalows and 8 Standard room – all with private en-suite bathrooms of which some feature a semi-open internal garden, swimming pool and a dining area.

2 night in rustic Cabanas.

2 nights at a standard Hotel.

Given the nature of our rides and the areas where we ride, accommodation may be limited to local guests houses family villas which we rent, and

private en-suite bathrooms may not always be available or only in a limited amount.

## MEALS

Meals are varied and consist of local produce.

One litre of water a day is provided (additional water is available for purchase at all locations).

Dietary restrictions can be accommodated but please make sure to let us know before booking.

## CLIMATE

San Jose and surrounding areas have pleasant temperatures throughout the year, with cool nights and warm days. There's little rain from December to March, and barely any in January and February. The rainy season runs from May to November, and the wettest months are usually September and October.

The sun frequently shines in the dry season.

## TIPS

Tips are welcome but not expected. You should tip what you feel the service is worth and what you feel comfortable with. We would recommend around \$50 per rider for the whole team.

## PACKING LIST

### Head

- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit.
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding

### Upper body

- Thermals in case of cold weather (can also be worn at night)
- Down jacket or warm coat for the cold evenings
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun
- 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 (especially in the rainy season).

### 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
- Waterproof over trousers
- Casual clothes for the evenings (jeans or walking trousers)
- Thermals in case of cold weather

### Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots or hiking 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
- Lightweight shoes or trainers for the evenings
- Good walking boots (or hybrid walking/riding boots)
- Several pairs of warm socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun, wind or rain whilst riding

### Other useful items

- Swimsuit - for swimming/bathing in rivers
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around camp at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)
- Water bottle - 2 x 1 litre, or equivalent

### 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
- Micropur or similar water purification tablets
- Re-hydration sachets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel
- Toilet paper

#### 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!

## SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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](#).