



Equus Journeys

HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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Cappadocia Explorer

TURKEY

This **riding holiday** takes place between Urgup and Ortahisar, in some of Turkey's most spectacular scenery. Ride along lush canyons and steppe-like landscapes that will lead you to breathtaking views over the troglodytic treasures of **Cappadocia, in central Turkey**. You will be staying in charming hotels in different villages, experiencing the legendary Turkish hospitality and trying out traditional cuisine. This mobile trail is ideal for experienced riders ready to take on the challenges of riding in the unusual landscapes of Cappadocia.

Trail Riding	 8 days/5.5 days riding	 From £1,739		Open to non-riders
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ITINERARY

Highlights

- A more relaxed, less strenuous version of our "Wonders of Cappadocia" trail ride.
- Enjoy the picturesque landscapes of the Pigeon Valley and its fairy chimneys
- Explore the underground village of Golgoli
- Stay in picturesque, comfortable hotels located in ancient stone houses or in renovated cave houses, typical of the local architecture.

Day 1 — 1: Home – Kayseri airport - Urgup

International flight to Kayseri or Nevsehir (flights are not included, but can be booked upon request).

Transfers are included (shuttle bus from the airport to your hotel). We strongly recommend that you book a flight arriving at 6:00 pm at the latest so you can enjoy dinner with the guides and the group on the first night - this is important as this is when your guides will make the final horse attributions. If necessary, you can fly in a day early and we can book an extra night at the hotel you will stay on the first night (see dates and prices)

Overnight Melis hotel or similar.

Day 2 — 2: Introductory Ride - Approx 5hrs riding

You are driven to the ranch in the morning to meet the horses and get acquainted with the riding equipment. You will have time to try your horse on a training course going around the farm. The trail begins with a short ride through lush vegetation and along the stream of the Uzengi canyon. After a canter across a high plateau, lunch will be cooked for you on an open fire, at the foot of troglodyte citadels of dovecotes carved out of the abrupt rock walls. Very quickly, the first long canter brings you to the Avlak mountain. The views from the top are truly stunning and this is your first proper glimpse of Cappadocia.

You will be driven back to Urgup to have dinner and overnight.

Overnight Melis hotel or similar.

Day 3 — 3: Mustafapasa - Approx. 5 hours riding

Today, if the weather allows it, you will have your first long canter along the Avlak mountain

Make your way to the old Greek village of Mustafapasa where you will have lunch. Afterwards, you can take a nap on the nearest sofa or, if you are feeling energized, you can explore the village's old stone houses, its Ottoman madrasa and even its painted church.

In the afternoon, ride along small canyons, through narrow tracks and wide-open fields where you may encounter local shepherds and their flocks. Arrive to your guesthouse in Ayvali.

Note: luxury accommodation is not available tonight

Day 4 — 4: Keslik Monastery - Approx. 5 hours riding

This morning, expect long canters across the fields of the high Anatolian plateau (1600 m above sea level). Make your way through a steep trail that will lead you to the Damsa lake. Before visiting the monastery, you will enjoy a delightful lunch prepared by the locals.

The afternoon scenery is made of bare hills surrounding the lake and you may visit the underground village of Golgoli. Continue your ride along tracks of red clay and through hidden canyons that will lead you to your hotel.

Note: luxury accommodation is not available tonight

Day 5 — 5: Uchisar - Approx. 3 hours riding

Today's itinerary will take you to the beautiful valleys of north Cappadocia, and the village of Uchisar. Trot and canter through vineyards and over rolling hills of white tufa to reach Ibrahimpasa. From this picturesque village, you start to climb the "Twin Hills" of Cappadocia. A nice canter at the top takes you to a panoramic viewpoint surrounding northern Cappadocia and the towering rock fortress of Uchisar. As you ride towards the village, admire the multicoloured rock formations of the famous Pigeon Valley, and the picturesque fairy chimneys. Arrive at Uchisar and enjoy a late lunch on the terrace before spending the rest of your day exploring the village. You can visit the churches of Gerome's Open Air Museum or hike through the pigeon Valley.

Note: luxury accommodation is not available tonight

Day 6 — 6: Red Valley - Approx. 5 hours riding

In the morning, we can arrange an optional hot-air balloon ride to enjoy Cappadocia's magical landscape at sunrise (check the "Dates and Prices" tab to know more).

Start your riding day by heading to the White Valley canyon, where you will ride across rocky labyrinths and lush vegetation. From there, make your way to the Sword Valley and Red Valley. Ride through its multicoloured citadels and beautiful troglodyte churches. This is Cappadocia's most spectacular ensemble of geological formations.

Stop to have lunch at a unique cave café located in an ancient monastery. In the afternoon, keep exploring the Red and Rose valleys. The winding paths of the Shepherd's valley will take you back to your guesthouse in Uchisar in time to enjoy the sunset.

Note: luxury accommodation is not available tonight

Day 7 — 7: Balkan Valley - Approx. 5 hours riding

After breakfast, you will leave Uchisar and make your way to the Green Valley canyon, through rock tunnels, and natural arches. You will make a small detour to visit the famous Love valley before heading to Ortahisar where you will stop for lunch.

In the afternoon you will have the opportunity to go on some long canters along sandy tracks. Cross the Valley of Pancarlik and its multicoloured fairy chimneys before arriving to the ranch.

Transfer to your overnight location in Urgup.

* There is a hamman in Urgup, which can be organised for you (entrance is around €50 payable locally). <https://urguphamam.com>

Day 8 — 8: Kayseri airport – Home

Transfer to Kayseri (or Nevsehir) Airport in time for your flight back home.

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
01/09/2024	08/09/2024	£1,739	Full
13/10/2024	20/10/2024	£1,739	Full

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 triple room during the ride.
- Groups are composed of a minimum of 2 riders and a maximum of 8 international riders, plus guides.
- Transfers are included (shuttle bus from the airport to your hotel). We strongly recommend your flight to arrive at 6:00 pm at the latest so you can enjoy dinner with the guides and the group on the first night - this is important as this is when your guides will make the final decision to match horses with riders. If necessary, you can fly in a day early and we can book an extra night at the hotel you will stay on the first night - around £85/€92/\$105 per night (single rooms, half board) in 2024
- There is no single supplement if you are willing to share a room with another guest of the same sex (twin or triple rooms) - (policy valid for females only). The single supplement rate is £265/€305/\$330 or £410/€480/\$525 (luxury upgrade) in 2024.
NOTE: the accommodation upgrade is currently only available for 3 out of the 7 nights.
- The minimum age to participate in this riding holiday is 12.
- An optional air balloon flight can be arranged. The price is generally around €210-€230 per person (prices fluctuate depending on the season and fuel price - this will be reconfirmed on request). If interested, please contact us in advance. Availability can be difficult in the high season so please make sure to let us know with plenty of notice if you are interested. This is payable locally in cash.
- Non-riders will be offered a hiking programme, in autonomy with GPS device and roadbook. You will hike for around 4hrs a day and meet the riders for lunch. Price on request.
- IMPORTANT : Riders weighing more than 85 kg / 13.3 stone / 190 lbs please indicate this at time of booking so we can ensure a suitable horses are available. If you weigh more than that, an additional horse can be arranged at a supplement, please contact us before booking.
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

SUPPORT TEAM

1 English-speaking horse guide

LOGISTICS

1 vehicle and driver

INLAND TRANSPORT

Airport transfers during the day (late arrivals will have to pay a taxi)

ACCOMMODATION

Twin or triple room - guesthouse

MEALS

Full board from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 8

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

Saddle bags
First aid kit

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverages and personal extras

TRANSPORT

International flights

EXTRAS

Tips to the local team
Park, museum and other site entry fees

INSURANCE

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

ACCOMMODATION

Single room supplement
Upgrade to luxury accommodation

EXTRAS

Hot air balloon flight

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

The herd comprises forward-going Anatolian, Arab and cross-Arab mares. They are robust and sure-footed, responsive and respectful of their riders. There are no big horses (on average 1,50-55 m, 15hh) so there is a strict 85 kg / 13.3 stone / 190 lbs rider weight limit on this trail (including riding gear). If you weigh more than that, an additional horse can be arranged at a supplement, please contact us before booking.

Guide & local team

Your guide will be French-born Nicolas Guillo. He decided to make Cappadocia his home over 11 years ago and has been organising trail rides every since. He speaks English and also Turkish.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You must be an intermediate or advanced rider. You must be able to mount your horse unassisted, and be confident over rough terrain and during group canters.

There is a strict 85 kg / 13.3 stone / 190 lbs rider weight limit on this trail (including riding gear). If you weigh more than that, an additional horse can be arranged at a supplement, please contact us before booking.²

PACE

Pace is walk, with some good canters. Although not as active as our Wonders of Cappadocia trail ride, this is not a slow ride.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

Riders are responsible for their horse. You will be asked to help tack, untack, water and feed your horse.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You must be in good physical condition. On some occasions you will have to dismount and walk with your horse for short periods of time (shorter than on our “Wonders of Cappadocia ride”) and to warm up the horses. The weather can be hot, in which case you will take a longer lunch break to get some rest in the shade.

In July and August, the temperatures are really hot. You will therefore ride early in the morning and late in the afternoon, with a long midday break.

This is a more relaxed, less strenuous version of the Wonders of Cappadocia ride for riders who feel like they might not match the fitness requirements for that ride, but it is not a slow trail.

An experience of trail rides over several days is necessary. Riders should be comfortable with heights as the terrain is challenging with cliffs and low altitude passes.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

The riding equipment includes McClellan light trail riding saddles. These are fitted with two saddlebags.

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

You will stay in picturesque, comfortable hotels located in ancient stone houses or in renovated cave houses, typical of the local architecture. All of them are chosen for their authenticity, intimacy and warmth.

Most hotels offer internet access and a laundry service.

Note: There's the possibility to upgrade the accommodation throughout the holiday, please check the “Dates and Prices” tab to know more.

MEALS

Turkish and continental breakfast at the guesthouses

Lovely lunches - either good quality picnic lunches (with tables and chairs) or in local restaurants.

Dinners are taken at the guesthouses - starter, main and desert.

Water, tea and coffee are included. Cappadocia wine, beer and other drinks are available and payable locally. Vegetarian meals are available on request.

CLIMATE

Cappadocia has a continental climate and stands at over 1000 m above sea level. Expect cool nights from May through late June and possible rain during the day (average temperature is 15°C). This is a good time to visit and it also marks the beginning of the hot air balloons season. The summers are dry and hot with the hottest weeks from late July to late August.

TIPS

Tips and gratuities are not mandatory in Turkey, although it is customary to leave a tip at restaurants (some already include a 10% in the bill). Tips to the local team are appreciated but are left to your discretion.

PACKING LIST

Your luggage will be transferred by a logistics vehicle. You should pack several, lighter bags rather than one large, heavy suitcase.

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
- Buff or bandana

Upper body

- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and dust
- T-shirts
- Fleece, jumper or jacket - the evenings can be cold
- Waterproof jacket - the rains can be difficult to foresee in spring and it's better to be prepared. Layering is key to cope with the fluctuations in temperature between day and night
- Casual clothes for the evening

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
- Shorts for lazy lunchtimes
- Casual clothes for the evening
- A swim suit may be useful

Hands and Feet

- Please bring hiking shoes with half chaps as some of the passages you may take on foot can be steep. Riding boots are not suitable as they don't have enough grip.
- Sandals, flip-flops or trainers for the evening
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun whilst riding

Nightwear

- Pyjamas

Other useful items

- Mandatory: Water bottle (1.5 litre or two x 1 litre)
- Hand sanitiser
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch

Medical kit

- Sunscreen and lip balm - must 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...
- Rehydration sachets (dioralyte or similar)
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Ear plugs, particularly if you are a light sleeper

Our Recommendations

- 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!
- You should also bring a copy of your passport/insurance in case you lose your documents. You can also save a copy into your mobile phone.

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](#).