



## The Valleys of Gredos

### SPAIN

A **trail riding holiday** through the Valleys of Gredos, situated between the provinces of Avila, Cáceres and Salamanca, and crossed by the Duero and Tajo rivers. This is a taste of truly rural Spain with immense landscapes, unspoilt nature, remote Castilian villages and charming hotels. Ride across open fields with magnificent views and follow paths along river banks and through oak, pine and chestnut trees.

<b>Trail Riding</b>	<b>8 days / 6 days riding</b>	<b>From £2,480</b>	
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Gredos Valley Trail in Spain



On horseback in the valleys of Gredos



Canters across the open fields of Gredos

### ITINERARY

## Highlights

- This is a particularly nice holiday in summer with average temperatures of 25 °c in Navarredonda Gredos (Riding at altitudes between 1000m and 1700m)
- Many opportunities for swimming in natural pools in the river
- Excellent Spanish and Arabic horses
- Visit the fortified medieval town of Avila , recognised as a world heritage site
- The local cuisine combines a number of excellent dishes - sample many delicious local specialities.
- Ride through the wild and untouched countryside through flowering valleys, mountains, forests and heathlands, with an amazing and diverse display of flora and fauna.

## Day 1 — 1: - London - Madrid- Navarredonda de Gredos

Parador de Gredos

Fly to Madrid. You will be transferred from Madrid airport (Pick up at 15:00, from terminal 4) to Navarredonda de Gredos, a small village which is in the heart of Castile with stunning views over the Sierra. This region is steeped in history, where the Moors and Christians fought and where Romans built roads. On the way from Madrid, a stop in Avila for one hour visit of this medieval historic town, Unesco World Heritage city. You will enjoy a welcome dinner and stay overnight at the Gredos National Parador, the former hunting lodge of Alfonso XIII, which offers panoramic views of the Sierra de Gredos.

## Day 2 — 2: Pinewoods and Summer Pastures - 4 hours

Parador de Gredos

Set off on horseback from Navarredonda, an easy first day ride today, while you get used to your horse. You will ride through pine forests, across

open fields and follow paths towards the mountains with great views of the Sierra de Gredos. Aperitivo in the countryside and lunch at old sawmill by the river, an excellent paella cooked on the spot and other delicacies. In the afternoon ride back to the stables in Navarredonda, returning for dinner and overnight as the previous night.

Today's ride is short so that riders and horses get used to each other. If there are any change of horse it can be easily done, before leaving the next day for the rest of the ride.

A small Spa has been opened in the next village just 5 minutes away. It is possible to arrange a massage this evening before dinner. If riders interested in bird watching, an evening walk in the mountains can be organised.

### Day 3 — 3: Navarredonda de Gredos – Navalperal the Tormes - 4-5 hours


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 Hôtel rural Cruz del Gallo

This morning ride through woods and beautiful meadows in the valley of the Tormes river. You will follow the course of the river and enjoy a picnic lunch at the Pozo de las Paredes, a magical spot at the gorge of Barbellido, which joins the Tormes River. This is an ideal spot for a swim in summer. After lunch you will follow a cattle path, with great views of Navalperal the Tormes. Tonight you will stay at a new rural hotel near the Tormes River.

### Day 4 — 4: NAVALPERAL THE TORMES – EL BARCO DE AVILA - 4 hours

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 Puerta de Gredos

Today you will embark on a long half day ride, which will take you to El Barco. Ride along the Tormes River valley, along cattle paths, passing the village of Aliseda de Tormes. You will notice a distinct change in the vegetation as you approach the small town of El Barco de Avila. The hotel in Barco de Avila is a luxurious country house hotel which has a spa and an indoor heated pool. You will have a free afternoon to visit El Barco de Avila or just relax and enjoy the facilities at the hotel. El Barco de Avila is a 15th century fortified village with a medieval bridge stretching over the Tormes.

This evening a very special Spanish wine tasting and pairing dinner will be offered in the local wine shop, one of the top ten wine shops of Spain.

### Day 5 — 5: EL BARCO DE AVILA – HOYORREDONDO - 6 hours


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 LA TROCHA

Today's ride will take you through oak woodland and open pastures, following the cattle track between Barco and Hoyorredondo. You will arrive in Puente del Congosto, with a XVth century bridge and castle. Enjoy a picnic by the river, great for a swim in the summer. This afternoon there will be a short ride to Hoyorredondo. The evening will be spent at a beautiful and comfortable country hotel.

### Day 6 — 6: HOYORREDONDO – SAN MARTIN DE LA VEGA - 6-7 hours


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 Hôtel rural La Dehesilla

A day with great contrasts in the landscape. The ride will start in the valley of the Corneja River with open flat valleys. You follow the river Corneja to its source, and stop for lunch near one of the water mills along the river. In the afternoon you will follow a Roman road up to the Puerto de Chia (5,686 feet) for a panoramic view of the Corneja Valley on one side, and the Alberche River on the other. You then descend to San Martin de la Vega where the horses spend the night. There will be a short transfer to a charming rural hotel in Barajas de Gredos.

### Day 7 — 7: SAN MARTIN DE LA VEGA – NAVARREDONDA DE GREDOS - 4 hours

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 Parador de Gredos

On your final riding day, back to Sierra de Gredos, there will be great views of the peaks of the Sierra. You will descend towards the Tormes valley where you started. A very special catering lunch with a tasting menu produced and served by one of the best restaurants in the area, at the most beautiful spot with panoramic views of the Sierra de Gredos. The afternoon ride will be short, with some good canters, before heading back to the stables. Overnight and farewell dinner at the Parador.

### Day 8 — 8: Avila – Madrid

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After breakfast you will be transferred to Madrid, arriving around 12 noon. Please do not book flights departing before 1:00 pm.

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
21/04/2024	28/04/2024	£2,480	Guaranteed departure
05/05/2024	12/05/2024	£2,480	Guaranteed departure
08/09/2024	15/09/2024	£2,480	Guaranteed departure
29/09/2024	06/10/2024	£2,480	Open
13/10/2024	20/10/2024	£2,480	Open

## Price details

- Flights or transportation to your destination (international/domestic) 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.

- The riding group comprises 4 up to 10 riders plus your guide.

- If you sign up to the ride as a solo rider, you will be charged a single room supplement of approx. €200/£180/\$235 if you end up in a single room - this is payable locally to your guide

- Transfers from Madrid are included at set times (extra costs for groups with less than 3 riders may apply).

> Pick up at 15:00, Terminal 4. Your flight should arrive sufficiently early for you to be at the meeting point on time.

> Drop off in Madrid for flights departing after 13:00.

If your flights do not match the requirements, you may be required to pay for a private transfer (taxi).

- Maximum rider weight : 90kg/198 lbs with equipment on.

- These rides are suitable for accompanying non-riders. Other activities such as cycling or walking can be organised for non-riders on request.

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

2 English-speaking horse guides

### LOGISTIC

1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle

1 vehicle and driver

Chairs and table for the picnic at lunchtime

### INLAND TRANSPORTS

Airport transfers to/from Madrid at set times

### ACCOMMODATION

Double room in hotel standard 3\*

### MEALS

Full board from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on the final day

Drinks, wines, apéritifs and tapas

## Price doesn't include

## **MEALS**

Beverage and personal extra

## **TRANSPORT**

International flights

## **EXTRAS**

Tips to the local team

## **INSURANCE**

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

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A selection of 25 horses between 15hh - 16hh , Andalusians , Lusitanos , Hispano-Arab and Arab. All used for trail rides , but are well schooled in basic classical dressage. They are fun to ride , with a lot of personality and are well loved and happy.

All are ridden in English saddles with seat savers and saddle bags provided.

## Guide & local team

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Maria Elena is the owner and lead guide on certain dates. She is a qualified trail leader certified by the Spanish Riding Federation. After many years spent working for the Marketing department of an American corporation, she decided to change careers and to dedicate herself to her passion for travels and horses. She speaks fluent French and English. She has ridden in several countries herself, including Tunisia, Argentina, the USA, Australia and Botswana.

On other dates, the ride will be guided by Danish-born guide Selma, who loves the variety that working with horses brings and especially enjoys breaking in young horses and improving more established ones. She loves guiding and spend time getting to know the people who come and share this beautiful part of the world with her.

## Minimum riding ability

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### **MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY**

You need to be confident to ride at all paces and over varied terrain. This trip is suitable to riders of at least an intermediate level, comfortable riding out in the open.

Maximum rider weight : 90kg/198 lbs with equipment on.

### **PACE**

A lot of the ride is at walk due to the mountainous terrain, but there are regular trots, canters and occasional gallops when the terrain allows. The total distance of the trip is about 110 miles.

### **TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION**

The team is responsible for grooming, saddling and unsaddling the horses. You can participate in grooming and feeding if you like.

### **TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE**

Reasonable health & fitness is required. You must be able to cope with long hours in the saddle.

Trail riding experience over several days is a bonus, but is not required.

A support vehicle will follow the riders during the entire trip, meeting for aperitifs, meals and at night.

## EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

English leather saddles and tack (general purpose leather saddles with deep knee rolls).

Small saddlebags and seatsavers are provided.

Helmets 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

Accommodation on the ride is in a combination of Paradores and small village hotels that will vary in style, size and character. They are all comfortable and chosen as far as possible for their character and history. Rooms have private en suite bathrooms. Some nights are spent in the Parador of Gredos, an old hunting lodge built by King Alfonso XIII and now an imposing country hotel. Hotel rooms are twin bedded, but single rooms can be arranged at a supplement. Your luggage is transported from hotel to hotel by back up vehicle. Breakfast and dinner each day will be eaten at the hotels. Lunches are very rustic picnic style whilst out riding. The horses spend the night on land adjoining the hotels except at the Parador de Gredos.

### MEALS

A special attention is given to the meals and quality of your food.

The local cuisine is excellent and much consideration is taken when planning the meals to provide visitors with a sampling of the many different dishes produced in the area.

Lunch is usually a picnic in the countryside (a table and chairs will be organised). Some lunches will be cooked on the spot, others prepared at the village bars or restaurants. Dinner at the hotels will feature a varied selection of the typical cuisine.

Drinks are included during your meals: white and red wine, sherry, beer, soft drinks. Drinks outside meals - at the hotel bars - are not included.

Vegetarians can be accommodated with advance notice.

### CLIMATE

Temperatures are strongly influenced by the altitude, with the average of 1400m (the highest point is 1700 m and the lowest is 1000 m).

The Gredos rides start in April with temperatures that may rise to 15-18°C. Spring rides are spectacular with beautiful wild flowers and snow in the mountains (May-Early June).

Summer temperatures range from 25-30°C.

Autumn temperatures average at 18°C during the day. The weather will normally be sunny with clear blue skies with cool nights. T

The sun can be very intense at this altitude, so a brimmed hat, sunscreen and long-sleeved shirts are highly recommended.

### TIPS

Tips are welcome and recommended - usually 10%, but you should tip what you feel comfortable with. Tips should be handed out to Maria Elena who will distribute them as appropriate.

### PACKING LIST

Head

- Riding helmets are mandatory and we recommend 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 for protecting your neck and face from the sun and dust

### Upper body

- Thermal long-sleeved tops are a lightweight way of providing extra warmth, particularly in spring/autumn
- Long sleeved shirts to provide protection from the sun
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Warm polar fleece or equivalent
- Waterproof jacket - rain can be difficult to predict and it's better to be prepared.

### 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
- Thermal leggings

### Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps or long boots.
- Lightweight shoes for the evenings
- Several pairs of socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun, wind or rain whilst riding

### Nightwear

- Pyjamas etc

### Other useful items

- Swimsuit - there are pools on some nights
- Small backpack for accessing items required during the day (carried by support crew)
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Water bottle (2 litres or 2 x 1 litre)
- 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

### Our Recommendations

- Please don't take a hard sided suitcase. Your luggage should be soft sided with a capacity of 60-80 litres.
- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bumbag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (passport, 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!
- Any liquids in your hold luggage, such as shampoo, moisturiser, over 100ml should be decanted into small, clear, plastic ziplock bag. We recommend biodegradable washing products where possible.
- In your hand luggage take any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.
- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals

## 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](#) .