



# Languedoc Roussillon - Pyrenees to the Mediterranean

## LANGUEDOC ROUSSILLON - CEVENNES

A superb **trail ride on horseback** between the Mediterranean Sea and the Pyrenees Mountains. Ride through landscapes scattered with beautiful oak forests, deep valleys, coastal lakes and rugged mountain tops. The region has a Mediterranean climate with hot and dry summers, perfect for the cultivation of vines and olive trees.

<b>Trail Riding</b>	 <b>8 days/ 6 days riding</b>	 <b>From £1,025</b>	
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## ITINERARY

### Highlights

- See the small villages high up in the mountains, with citadels perched on limestone peaks
- Ride through landscapes scattered with beautiful oak forests, deep valleys, coastal lakes, vineyards and rugged mountain tops
- Ride sure footed mountain horses through breathtaking scenery
- Journey from the mountains to the sea, through the Aude (land of the Cathars) and discover its marvellous heritage and splendid landscapes
- Canter along the wild beaches of Carbonne

### Day 1 — 1: LONDON - CAMURAC - No riding

Fly from London to Toulouse. Your flight must arrive by 14:00.

You will be collected and transferred to the gite in Camurac where you will meet your horses and have dinner with your guide. This transfer is not included in the price and is €75 return, payable locally.

Alternatively, you can take a train to d'Ax les Thermes, from where you will be collected at 17:30 at no extra charge.

### Day 2 — 2: CAMURAC - BELVIS - 4hours 30

Cross the pal Boom overlooking the Gorge de la Frau and admire the mountain views from Frau, see the peak of Soularac and Montsegur Castle. Cross the Plateau Languerail westward, where herds of cows and Pyrenean Gascon horses graze throughout the summer season. Descend onto the Sault plateau where you will follow grassy paths, ideal for cantering. You will arrive in the late afternoon to your accommodation for the evening a cottage in Fontblanche where you can take advantage of this wonderfully quiet area.

## Day 3 — 3: BELVIS - AYGUEBONNE - 6 hours 30

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You leave the Sault plateau and descend down towards the gorges of Rebenty crossing the upper valley of the Aude until you reach the castle Puylaurens. Standing on a rocky peak, the castle remains very well preserved and protected by a unique baffle, the battlements are almost intact. Continue your ride until you reach the house of Ayguebonne . 35 km on horseback.

## Day 4 — 4: AYGUEBONNE - THE BOUCHARD - 5-6 hours

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This morning you cross the fenouillède valley, renowned for its vineyards. Ride to the foot of the Pech Bugarach, a mountain that is shrouded in mystery. Climb up to the house of Bouchard, a cottage in the middle of a wildlife reserve where you can see deer. The views of the Pyrenees are magnificent.

## Day 5 — 5: BOUCHARD - TUCHAN - 5 - 6 hours

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Today you ride to the east, through the village of Cubieres. You will get the most stunning views later in the day of Corbieres Castle and the citadel of vertigo as well as other mountain villages. You ride to the castle Quéribus perched on the highest peaks in Corbières. Continue until you reach the village of Tuchan where you will spend the night.

## Day 6 — 6: TUCHAN - OPOUL - 4 hours

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Today you will ride across wild scrubland, the air will be filled with typical smells of the Mediterranean. Ride in the shadow of the mountains above until you find your cottage Val d' Oriol which is hidden amid the scrubland.

## Day 7 — 7: OPOUL - LA FRANQUI - 5 - 6 hours

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This morning you leave Val Oriol and start your ride down the slopes of the Serre de la Murtra. You will soon see lakes and pools and the Mediterranean Sea in the distance coming closer with every step your horse takes.

## Day 8 — 8: LA FRANQUI - CAMURAC

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After saying farewell to your horse you are transferred to La Franqui train station or Toulouse airport. Your flight must depart after 16:00.

### DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	PRICE INCLUDING FLIGHTS	STATUS
11/04/2020	18/04/2020	£1,025		Full
16/05/2020	23/05/2020	£1,025		Guaranteed departure

## Price details

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- Flights are not included. Transfers from Toulouse are not included but cost 75€ per person. Alternatively we organise a transfer from Ax les Thermes at no extra cost.

- Groups are composed of 4 - 12 riders

- Single accommodation is not possible as pack horses carry all of the equipment

- Accompanied teenagers aged 14+ are welcome on this ride provided they are good enough riders.

- Riders over 80 kg / 12.5 st / 176 lbs, please contact us before booking.

- Special diet supplement: €30/£26 per person for the duration of the trip.

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

### LOGISTICS

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1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider

1 vehicle and driver

### INLAND TRANSPORT

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Transfers from Aix-les-Thermes train station

### ACCOMMODATION

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Mountain Huts

### MEALS

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

## Price doesn't include

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### MEALS

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Beverages and personal extras

### TRANSPORT

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Airport transfers from Toulouse: €75 return

International flights

### EXTRAS

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Tips to the local team

### 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

## EQUESTRIAN INFO

## Horses

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The horses here are local Meren mountain horses, chosen for their ability to navigate the tough terrain They will take you safely through the region. They live out high up in summer pastures as a herd before being brought into work. The horses are ridden in English saddles.

## Minimum riding ability

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### MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

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These rides are suitable for competent riders. You should be able to control a horse outside at all paces and over varied terrain.

Riders over 80 kg / 12.5 st / 176 lbs, please contact us before booking.

### PACE

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There are plenty of opportunities to trot and canter, but the terrain in the heart of the mountains dictates when you can do this. You will need to lead your horse on some of the steep descents.

## TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You will groom, tack and untack your horse and assist with feeding and watering.

## TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

This ride takes place mainly in the high mountains, so you will need to be in good physical condition. You will need to be fit as you will be required to lead your horse on some of the steep descents and will need to be comfortable walking on rough ground.

A previous riding holiday with several days on horseback is requested before joining this trip. Riders who do not ride regularly are requested to get fit prior to the ride.

## EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Water bottle holders are provided along with saddle bags.

Comfortable English tack.

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 is in various lodgings, all of which are comfortable. They are usually small gites and family homes with dormitories or private rooms (optional supplement). The accommodation is charming and in lovely locations with welcoming hosts.

### MEALS

Food consists of good breakfasts, picnic lunches carried in your saddlebags and excellent dinners at your lodging for the night. You should expect traditional family style meals freshly prepared by your hosts mostly using local produce.

There will be a supplement to pay if you have any specific diet (vegetarian, gluten free, etc). Please see dates and prices.

### CLIMATE

The region can experience different weather patterns.

In the foothills of the Ariège valley towards Tarascon and Pays de Sault the weather is mediterranean, with hot and sunny weather likely.

In the Pyrenean valleys the weather is more volatile with the possibility of storms and high temperature differences between day and night.

Rain can be possible all year round, particularly on the northwest facing slopes and snow is common above 1,000m.

### GUIDE AND LOCAL TEAM

The owner of the horses and trail riding company - Sylvain - is local to the area and is a certified guide for both climbing and horse riding. He is a geographer and specialist in ecotourism and will share his passion of mountains, horses and outdoor sports with you.

Whilst Sylvain normally guides this ride it may be possible that another member of his team guides and he works with the logistic team.

### TIPS

In France it is customary to tip - usually this is by rounding up the price when you are satisfied with the service in a restaurant. You may wish to leave a tip with the guide who can split it amongst all members of the 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

- Buff or bandana for protecting your neck and face from the sun and dust

#### Upper body

- Thermals in case of cold weather
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun, which can be fierce at altitude
- 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
- Waterproof over trousers
- Casual clothes for the evenings (jeans or walking trousers)
- Thermals (can also be used as nightwear)

#### 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
- Lightweight shoes or trainers for the evenings
- 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 celsius - you may find minus 8 - minus 10 more comfortable.
- Sleeping bag liner adds an extra layer - either cotton, fleece or silk
- Self inflating mattress such as Thermarest for comfort
- Pyjamas or tracksuits or thermals for sleeping in

#### Our Recommendations

- Please don't take a hard sided suitcase. Your luggage should be soft sided with a capacity of 60-80 litres. We recommend taking a backpack or similar. The luggage limit on the ride is 15kg per person.
- 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 (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

- Towels (camping towels pack lighter and dry quicker)
- Swimsuit - for swimming/bathing in rivers
- 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
- 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

## VISA & HEALTH

### Formalities

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UK citizens - other nationalities please contact us:

#### Passport validity

Your passport should be valid for the proposed duration of your stay; you don't need any additional period of validity on your passport beyond this.

The rules on travel will stay the same until 31 December 2020.

#### Visas

If you hold a British Citizen passport, you don't need a visa to enter France.

The rules on travel will stay the same until 31 December 2020.

For up-to-date information please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/france/entry-requirements>

### Insurance

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It is a condition of your booking with Equus Journeys that you have travel insurance which covers you for the riding activities to be undertaken. Your travel insurance should cover you for medical expenses and repatriation. Your guides will require your travel insurance details before they allow you to ride and may refuse to let you ride if you cannot provide them. You should take your insurance documents with you.