Equus Journeys
HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

+44 (0) 1905 388977 info@equus-journeys.com

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Dolphin Trail

PORTUGAL

A circular **trail ride** starting in the lush, green coastal mountains of Grandola, rich with pine and cork forests, to the inviting turquoise waters and beaches of the coast. Explore the beautiful and wild **Alentejo** region in Portugal on horseback, enjoying exhilarating canters along the sandy beaches of the "Costa Azul"! A boat trip to discover dolphins in the estuary is included and accommodation is in traditional farmhouses and comfortable hotels.

Trail Riding	**8 days / 6 days riding**	**From £1,649**	



This trail ride offers riders the chance to ride on the beach



Trail riding in the Alentejo, Portugal



Fun, splashy beach canters!

ITINERARY

Highlights

- Beautifully well-schooled Lusitano and Lusitano cross horses
- The chance to canter/gallop down a deserted beach (please note that in the summer months, this may be at dawn)
- Convivial and friendly guide
- The chance to view dolphins in their natural environment on a boat trip in the estuary
- Comfortable and unique accommodation - converted farmhouses and quality hotels

Day 1 — 1: HOME - LISBON - GRANDOLA - No riding

Monte Das Faias

Your flight to Lisbon should arrive by 16:30 to allow time for you to collect your luggage. Transfer at 17:30.

You will travel south to Monte das Faias, approximately 100km. Your accommodation is a rural house – a typical 'Alentejana' architecture which is located in the region of Grândola.

Day 2 — 2: GRANDOLA - SANTIAGO DO CACEM - 4 hours riding

Your first day of riding takes you through hilly landscapes to Santiago do Cacem. After your first few canters you will notice how characterful and sure-footed your Lusitano horse is.

You will stop for lunch in the shade where a picnic with grilled meat or fish, salad, bread and wine will be prepared for you.

In the afternoon you continue riding through forests of pine and cork trees until reaching Quinta da Ortiga where the horses will be stabled. You are transferred a short distance to your overnight location - Santiago Hotel.

Day 3 — 3: QUINTA DE MALMEDRA - 4-6 hours riding

Today you traverse forests of eucalyptus, with their distinctive perfume as the horses' hooves crunch through the fallen leaves.

Stop for lunch near Morgavel's reservoir where there is time for a short siesta!

In the afternoon there are opportunities for some good canters along the sandy tracks as you return to your hotel for a second night.

Day 4 — 4: QUINTA DE MALMEDRA - SANTO ANDRE - 3-4 hours riding

Vila Park

Today, either in the morning or the afternoon, you wil be transferred c. 30mins to the Sado River where you will join a 2hr boat trip into the estuary to look for dolphins. Dolphin sightings can not be guaranteed but are very likely. Please note that the boat trip is subject to weather conditions.

For your half day ride you will explore sandy trails through fields and forests, allowing for several canters. You ride past Santa Andre lagoon where you may see flamingoes and storks. Continue past rice fields, which in summer are an astonishing shade of green, until reaching your hotel - the Vila Park.

Day 5 — 5: BEACH RIDE - 4-6 hours riding

Vila Park

Today you ride from your hotel to the beach. Between June and September this ride is at dawn to avoid holiday makers on the beach - it's a beautiful ride as the sun rises over the dunes. There should be opportunities for beach canters (tides permitting) before reaching your picnic spot amongst the pine forests. There may be a chance to swim in the sea before riding back through the dunes to your hotel.

Diner will likely be in a local restaurant tonight.

Day 6 — 6: MELIDES - GRANDOLA - 4-6 hours riding

Monte Das Faias

Todays ride takes you from the coast towards Grandola. There are many opportunities for faster riding today as you pass through the pine forests. Red paths alternate with sandy paths and you may encounter herds of sheep or cows being tended by their owners.

Return to Monte das Faias where there may be time for a refreshing swim before dinner.

Day 7 — 7: GRANDOLA - 4-6 hours riding

Monte Das Faias

Your final day of riding is through the Sierra of Grandola - a rolling landscape dotted with picturesque villages. Stop for a final picnic lunch and siesta before continuing your circuit back to Monte das Faias for a farewell dinner.

Day 8 — 8: GRANDOLA - LISBON - HOME - No riding

After breakfast you will be transferred back to Lisbon airport for your flight, which should depart after midday.

Please note that if your flight departs before midday, we can organise a private transfer at an additional cost (please contact us).

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
14/02/2027	21/02/2027	£1,649	Open
28/02/2027	07/03/2027	£1,649	Guaranteed departure

07/03/2027	14/03/2027	£1,649	Guaranteed departure
13/06/2027	20/06/2027	£1,816	Guaranteed departure
27/06/2027	04/07/2027	£1,816	Guaranteed departure
04/07/2027	11/07/2027	£1,816	Guaranteed departure
22/08/2027	29/08/2027	£1,816	Guaranteed departure
29/08/2027	05/09/2027	£1,816	Guaranteed departure
24/10/2027	31/10/2027	£1,649	Full
31/10/2027	07/11/2027	£1,649	Guaranteed departure
14/11/2027	21/11/2027	£1,649	Guaranteed departure

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 double or twin room.

- Rides are confirmed for a minimum of 5 riders and a usual maximum of 10 riders, plus your guide

- Please note: the ride will also confirm for 3-4 riders on payment of a supplement. This is 25% of the rate for 3 riders, 10% for 4 riders. Once the group has reached 5 people, we will remove this supplement from your invoice and refund you if you have already paid it.

- 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:
High Season - €610/£525/$700 in 2026 or €650/£560/$750 in 2027
Low season - €580/£490/$665 in 2026 or €600/£520/$695 in 2027
You will then be reimbursed if a sharer is found for you at a later date.

- Transfers payable locally (€100 per person, in cash) as long as you arrive before 4:30pm (on time for your 5:30 pm transfer) and depart after 2pm. If you wish to book flights outside of these times then a private transfer may be arranged (on request) but is a taxi at your own cost.

- Competent children aged 10 and over can join the ride as long as they are comfortable riding horses (there are no ponies) and are accompanied by an adult. There is no discount for children

- Non-riders are welcome and benefit from a discounted rate - €1120/£965/$1285 in 2026 or €1150/£995/$1330 in 2027, per person (twin room) in the low season, or €1225/£1040/$1405 in 2026 or €1260/£1090/$1455 in 2027 in the high season. No activities are provided - they can travel in the support vehicle and meet the group for lunch, or relax at the hotels.
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

LOGISTIC

1 cook
1 assistant cook
1 support vehicle
1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle

INLAND TRANSPORTS

Private bus

ACCOMMODATION

Double room in hotel standard 3/4*

MEALS

Full board from first diner D1 to last breakfast D8. Water, wine and soft drinks are included at lunch. Drinks with the exception of water are not included at dinner.

EXTRA EQUIPMENT

First aid kit

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverage and personal extra

TRANSPORTS

Airport transfers outside of scheduled times
International flights bookable on request
Return airport transfers

EXTRA

Tips to local team
Small group supplement (between 3-4 riders)

INSURANCE

Cancellation and travel insurances are not included. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend to take out an insurance policy as soon as your travel is booked in case of cancellation.

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

Single room supplement - see above

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

You ride the beautiful and calm Lusitano and Lusitano cross-bred horses which are bred in Portugal. They are well-schooled and a pleasure to ride. There are calm and quiet horses for intermediate riders and more spirited mounts for experienced riders. You ride in English style tack with comfortable sheepskin covered saddles.

Guide & local team

Your guide is Miguel and he has been guiding in this area for many years and helped discover the routes you ride. He was a prestigious dressage instructor before choosing to guide trails instead and speaks fantastic English. He is supported by a back-up vehicle driver who meets you for lunch each day and transports your luggage.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be at least an intermediate rider, capable of riding a sensible horse at all paces in the outdoors. There are more spirited horses available for experienced riders.

There is a rider weight limit of 85kgs/13.3 st/187 lb

PACE

The pace is varied to include trots, canters and possible gallops. Some of the canters can be long and across varied terrain so you need to be secure in the saddle.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You will be asked to assist with grooming, tacking and un-tacking your horse.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You should have experience riding outdoors on trails and be confident riding in open spaces. You need to be fit enough for some long canters in the sometimes hot Portugese sun.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

English tack.
Saddlebags are not provided

We recommend all 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 stay in renovated farmhouses or local hotels. Some of the hotels are of a high standard and level of comfort. The rooms are double/twin and have en-suite bathrooms. Most of the hotels have swimming pools.

MEALS

Lunches are picnic - usually BBQ meats or fish with salads and bread. Red wine is provided.
Evening meals are in the hotel and usually the dish of the day - typical Portugese cuisine and all fresh and locally produced. Drinks are payable locally.

CLIMATE

Portugal has a pleasant climate with mild temperatures all year round:
Winter: 12 - 15c
Spring: 20 - 25c
Summer: 30 - 35c
Autumn: 15 - 20c
There is rarely rain during the summer months, but rain is common in winter and can occur in spring also.

TIPS

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

PACKING LIST

Please pack carefully and sensibly: the following guide is here to give you an idea of what to bring. This list must be adapted depending on the season and individual needs.

Head
- Helmet
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses
- Buff or bandana for protecting your neck and face from the elements

Upper body
- 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 (jeans or walking trousers)

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

Nightwear
- Pyjamas

Other useful items
- Swimsuit - there are pools on some nights
- Water bottle
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)

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
- 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.
- 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!
- Carry a copy of your passport and insurance documentation with you.

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 .