Equus Journeys
HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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Last updated 20/11/2026

Alentejo Coastal Trail

PORTUGAL

Ride **trails on horseback** through the untouched landscape of southwest Portugal and experience the sand dunes and beaches of the Costa Azul (Blue Coast). Follow trails through eucalyptus and cork forests and past rice fields, to the rolling hills of Serra do Cercal.

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


A comfortable trail riding holiday in Portugal


Enjoy beautiful canters!


Ride beautiful and calm Lusitano and Lusitano cross-bred horses

ITINERARY

Highlights

- Beautifully well-schooled Lusitano and Lusitano cross horses
- A linear trail so you end in a different place to where you began!
- The trail runs in both directions so you can choose whether to ride south to north or north to south
- The chance to canter/gallop down a deserted beach (please note that in September this may be at dawn)
- Convivial and friendly guide
- Comfortable and unique accommodation - converted farmhouses and quality hotels

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

Vila Park

Your flight to Lisbon should arrive by 16:30 to allow time for you to collect your luggage. Flights are not included but we can book them for you on request.

At 17:30 you will be transferred south c. 135km to the town of Santo Andre, and the hotel where you will spend the night.

Have dinner with your guide and the rest of the group.

Day 2 — 2: BEACH RIDE - 5 hours riding

Vila Park

Today you will meet your horse and ride towards the beach. In September, this ride will likely be at dawn to avoid the holiday makers on the beach. If everyone is comfortable and secure on their horses, then there is the possibility of a gallop or canter on the beach before reaching a lovely picnic spot

in the pine forest where your horses rest while you may swim in the sea and later have lunch.

Lunch is a picnic prepared with grilled meats or fish accompanied by salad, fresh bread and local wine.
After lunch, ride through the dunes and return to your hotel. Dinner is at a local restaurant.

NB. This ride also runs in reverse. Less confident riders are advised to choose the reverse itinerary where the beach ride is on the final day - this gives you the opportunity to get to know your horse before riding on the beach.

Day 3 — 3: SANTO ANDRE LAGOON - 5 hours riding

Today you ride in the direction of Santiago do Cacém, past the Santo André Lagoon, where you may see flamingos and storks. Ride past the rice fields of the area, which in late summer prior to harvest are an astonishing colour of green. Stop for a picnic in the pine tree forest.

After lunch, continue riding towards the Quinta da Ortiga where you stable the horses for the night. A short transfer of takes you to your hotel, Hotel Santiago, where you have dinner and spend the night.

Day 4 — 4: CERCAL - 5 hours riding

Today you continue to ride southwards towards Cercal, always with the sea in sight. Climbing the mountain through the 'montados' you ride through one of the last unexploited regions of Portugal.

In the afternoon you arrive at your accommodation at Casas Verdemar. This is a beautifully renovated tavern with individual rooms and cottages around the gardens. There is a pool, fruit trees and plenty of places to relax and enjoy the countryside. Take your meals either on the veranda or inside in the dining room. Your hosts are Christine Nijhoff, a specialist in antiques restoration and Nuno Vilas Boas Lebreiro, artist and cook.

Day 5 — 5: CERCAL - VILA NOVA DE MILFONTES - 2,5 hours riding

Today you have a morning ride exploring the fields around the farm and trails into the mountains of Cercal.
The afternoon is free to visit the fishing village of Vila Nova de Milfontes which is a popular seaside resort in the summer months. There is time for shopping, sightseeing or relaxing on the beach.
Dinner and overnight at Casas Verdemar.

Day 6 — 6: CERCAL - CAMPILHAS - 5 hours riding

After breakfast you set off into the mountains of Cercal, close to the dam of Campilhas where you have lunch. The scenery is varied and interesting and after some trots and canters you return to Casas Verdemar. Relax and enjoy the quiet of a typical 'monte alentejano' after a dip in the pool.

Dinner and night at Casas Verdemar.

Day 7 — 7: CERCAL - NOSSA SENHORA DAS NEVES - 4-6 hours riding

For your last day's ride you continue exploring the mountains of Cercal. You will ride to the chapel of Nossa Senhora das Neves from where you have a splendid view of the surrounding area.
After lunch, you return to Casas Verdemar.
Farewell dinner and overnight at Casas Verdemar.

Day 8 — 8 : LISBON - HOME - No riding

In the morning, you will be transferred to the airport for your return flight. Your flight should leave after 2pm.

If you decide to book an earlier flight, a private transfer can be organised (payable locally, please ask for price)

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
21/03/2027	28/03/2027	£1,649	Full
28/03/2027	04/04/2027	£1,649	Full

23/05/2027	30/05/2027	£1,649	Full
30/05/2027	06/06/2027	£1,649	Full
12/09/2027	19/09/2027	£1,649	Full
19/09/2027	26/09/2027	£1,649	Last seats
03/10/2027	10/10/2027	£1,649	Guaranteed departure
10/10/2027	17/10/2027	£1,649	Open

Price details

- Flights or transportation to your destination are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates.

- 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 solo rider and there are no other riders likely to share your room, you will be charged a single room supplement of approx. €610/£515/$700 in 2026 or €630/£545/$730 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/£950/$1285 in 2026 or €1150/£995/$1330 in 2027, per person (twin room). No activities are provided - they can travel in the support vehicle and meet the group for lunch, or relax at the hotels.

- Please note that this trail also runs in reverse. Some dates start in the north and heads south, whereas other dates start in the south and returns north. Less confident riders are advised to choose the trail which starts in the south and heads north so that they have an opportunity to get used to their horse before riding on the beach. Please contact us and we will check for you.
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 support vehicle
1 cook
1 assistant cook
1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle

INLAND TRANSPORTS

Support vehicle

ACCOMMODATION

Double or twin room in hotel standard 3/4*

MEALS

Full board from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 8. 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
Meals on day 1 and 8 depending on your flights

ACCOMMODATION

Single room supplement if you sign up as a single rider and no sharer is found for you.

TRANSPORT

International flights
Return airport transfers payable locally

EXTRA

Small group supplement (between 2-4 riders)
Tips to 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

ACCOMMODATION

Single room supplement

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

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 .