



Wild Connemara Trail

IRELAND

Discover mythical Connemara on this **horseback trail** west of County Galway. Where the mountains meet the sea, forming breathtaking peninsulas, lakes, fjords and deserted islands, ride brave Connemara ponies and experience the legendary Irish hospitality.

Trail Riding	 7 days / 6 days riding	 From £1,450	
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On horseback on Connemara's wild coast



Poney in the countryside



On horseback in the Connemara dunes

ITINERARY

Highlights

- Discover one of the most beautiful parts of Ireland
- Explore mountains, moors, jagged coastlines and dramatic bays
- Canter down the beach and perhaps swim with your horse
- Welcoming B&B accommodation with typical Irish hospitality
- A charismatic Irish guide!

Day 1 — 1: GALWAY - MAAM CROSS - 4-5 hours riding

 Wellfield farmhouse B&B

Note: this ride starts on Monday morning. It is likely you will need to fly a day early and spend the Sunday night in Galway.

You can fly to either Dublin or Galway airport - flights are not included.

If flying to Dublin airport then you should take a bus to downtown Galway and your hotel (www.citylink.ie / www.buseireann.ie)

If flying to Galway then you should take the airport transfer into downtown and your hotel. Those transfers and first hotel night are not included, but we can arrange accommodation for you on request.

Meet your group at the Meyrick Hotel, Galway at 10am and then transfer c. 30mins by road to the stables where you will be introduced to your horse.

Set off riding on country lanes, passing stone wall fences where sheep and cattle graze, enjoying the rolling green hills of Ireland. You ride into the mountains, passing old, abandoned cottages from the 1840 famine.

After lunch, you climb a long hill to reach the edge of the bog, and the road continues across the rocky hills with great views of the colourful valleys and pristine lakes. Riding out of the hills, onto the abandoned Galway-Clifden railway with possibly the opportunity for a long canter.

Leave the horses near the lake and head to your guesthouse to overnight.

PS - please note that although you arrive in Galway on D1, you will depart from Lougrea on your last day. Please make sure to keep this in mind when making your travel arrangements.

Day 2 — 2: MAAM CROSS - BALLINAFAD - 7 hours riding

 Ben view B&B

Today is a beautiful seven hours ride from Maam Cross to Ballynafad. The ride begins by crossing the bogland. Hidden amongst the trees is an old limekiln, where limestone would have once been burnt to produce lime for whitewash and fertilizer.

Picnic lunch on a small village green before riding through beautiful forests and a mountain with the most glorious views over the "Twelves Bens" and mountain lakes. Late in the afternoon, stop for a cup of tea before a canter along the old railway line.

You leave the horses to graze and drive to Clifden for the night - Ben View B&B or similar.

Day 3 — 3: BALLINAFAD - BALLYCONNELLY - 5-6 hours riding

 Ben view B&B

Today's ride offers a great variety of beautiful scenery. The morning begins by crossing a winding stream and passing small fields filled with sheep and one of the oldest cemeteries in Connemara. You also ride through the grounds of a 15th Century castle. After long trots and canters, stop for a picnic lunch near a small cottage.

In the afternoon, you ride through Roundstone Bog, passing extensive peat bogs and the harvested piles of the dried peat that are stacked by the roadside. In the early evening, your group reaches Ballyconneely and the sea.

Drive to Clifden for your second night.

Day 4 — 4: CLIFDEN COAST - 4-5 hours riding

 Ben view B&B

Today is spend enjoying Mannin beach which great for canters and gallops - if the conditions are right, you may also be able to swim with the horses! Keep an eye out for the seals that are usually found in these sheltered waters.

Picnic on the beach and return to Clifden before nightfall.

Day 5 — 5: CLIFDEN - LOUGHREA - 4-5 hours riding

 Fairhill house hotel

Leave the coast and head towards Toombeola in the heart of the mountains, crossing small farms scattered across the moors. Cross the Errisbeg mountain and reach the village of Roundstone which overhangs Dogs Bay and the ocean. The views in the mountains are spectacular, overlooking the sea and the Connemara mountains.

Leave the horses here and overnight in Loughrea (subject to availability).

Day 6 — 6: DARTFIELD - 4-5 hours riding

 Fairhill house hotel

You will be collected from your hotel in the morning and taken to the equestrian centre where you will ride around the 350 acres estate, passing through woodland and across fields. There is the option to jump some of the cross country fences too.

Lunch is taken at the centre and there is the chance to visit their museum dedicated to the Irish horse breeds. Another opportunity to hack around the estate in the afternoon.

Day 7 — 7: LOUGHREA - GALWAY - DUBLIN - HOME - No riding

Transfer by bus back to either Galway or Dublin airport for your flight home. This bus transfer is to your own account. We recommend a flight in the afternoon to allow time for the bus journey. (flight not included)

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	PRICE INCLUDING FLIGHTS	STATUS
25/04/2022	01/05/2022	£1,450		Open
09/05/2022	15/05/2022	£1,450		Open
23/05/2022	29/05/2022	£1,450		Open
06/06/2022	12/06/2022	£1,450		Open
20/06/2022	26/06/2022	£1,450		Open
04/07/2022	10/07/2022	£1,500		Open
18/07/2022	24/07/2022	£1,500		Open
01/08/2022	07/08/2022	£1,500		Open
15/08/2022	21/08/2022	£1,500		Open
29/08/2022	04/09/2022	£1,500		Open
12/09/2022	18/09/2022	£1,450		Open
26/09/2022	02/10/2022	£1,450		Open

Price details

- Flights and transportation to your destination (Galway) 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.
 - Groups are composed of a minimum of 1 international riders and a maximum of 20 riders, plus guides.
 - 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 of €200/£185/\$235 in 2022. You will then be reimbursed if a sharer is found for you at a later date.
 - Transfers to Galway on the first day, and from Loughrea on the last day, are not included.
 - Note: this ride starts on Monday morning. It is likely you will need to fly a day early and spend the Sunday night in Galway. You can fly to either Dublin or Galway airport - flights are not included. If flying to Dublin airport then you should take a bus to downtown Galway and your hotel (www.citylink.ie / www.buseireann.ie) If flying to Galway then you should take the airport transfer into downtown and your hotel. Those transfers and first hotel night are not included, but we can arrange accommodation for you on request.
 - If you wish to upgrade to hotel accommodation during the ride (rather than B&B) there is then a supplement (2022 rates):
 - > €140/£130/\$165 in April, May, June & September
 - > €110/£100/\$130 in July & August
 - > Single supplement for hotel accommodation is €250/£225/\$295
 - Weight limit: 110kg. Heavier riders please contact us.
- 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 vehicle and driver
1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle

INLAND TRANSPORTS

Private bus for 10 riders

ACCOMMODATION

Double room in Bed and Breakfast

MEALS

Full board from pack lunch day 1 to breakfast on day 7

EXTRA EQUIPMENT

First aid kit

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverage and personal extra

TRANSPORTS

Bus transfers from Dublin/Galway airport to the meeting point on Day 1, and from Loughrea to Galway/Dublin airports on the last day.
International flights bookable on request

EXTRA

Tips to local team
Park, museum and touristic sites fees

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 in B&B
Single room supplement in hotel
Upgrade to hotel accommodation instead of B&B accommodation
Hotel accommodation on the first night - we can arrange this on request.

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

Most of the horses are Connemara ponies or Irish hunters. They are very versatile, sure-footed, docile and steadfast.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You must be comfortable riding at all paces and be able to control your horse across open terrain. It is mandatory to wear a riding helmet on this ride.

Rider weight limite - 110 kgs. Heavier riders please contact us.

PACE

There are plenty of opportunities for trots and canters where the terrain allows, and even some gallops on the sandy beaches.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You are required to groom, tack and untack your own horse during the week. You are also welcome to help with feeding and watering the horses if you wish.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

There are no particular difficulties, but you should be prepared for a variable climate and rain is always a possibility. Previous experience of riding a trail for several days would be an advantage but is not essential.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Riding helmets are required and you should take your own to ensure the correct fit.

Saddlebags are not provided so if you wish to have one then you shall take your own.

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

You stay in small hotels or typical B&B's in double/twin rooms with private bathrooms.

MEALS

Breakfasts are provided at the hotels/B&B's.

Lunches are picnics whilst on the trail.

Dinners are included in local restaurants or hotels.

CLIMATE

Galway has an oceanic climate which is changeable and can be wet. In Spring the temperatures range from 8-12c. April is particularly pleasant. In summer (May-July) the highest average temperatures are 18-20c, whilst in Autumn (Aug - Oct) the temperatures range from 14-18c. September is considered to be mild and temperate. The coldest months are January and February and sometimes temperatures drop below zero. Snow is rare, but there can be heavy rainfall at any time of year.

GUIDE AND LOCAL TEAM

Your guide is a local Irishman called Willie.

TIPS

Tipping is always well received but is not essential. Service is often already included in bills at restaurants. If you wish to tip your guides then you should give what you feel is appropriate.

PACKING LIST

Head

- You are required to wear a helmet on this ride. We recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit. Helmet makers (GPA, HKM, LAS Helmets, Lamicell, Troxel, Equithème) now offer horse-riding helmets that are ventilated, strong, light and comfortable.

- Sunhat: cap 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 or short-sleeved T-shirts)

- Short or long-sleeved cotton shirts (to provide protection from the sun) or T-shirt in a quick-drying material

- Lightweight fleece or jumper

- Warm polar fleece or equivalent (plus a spare in case one gets wet)

- Warm Goretex-style jacket (water-proof and breathable)

Legs

- 2 pairs of jodhpurs or long leather trousers

- 1 change of trousers (riding trousers or jeans)
- 1 pair of waterproof over trousers)
- A swim suit may be useful
- Cotton or synthetic underwear (non-irritant)

Hands and feet

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

Other useful items

- Small bum bag to be worn whilst riding
- A soothing cream may be useful to treat areas irritated by long hours in the saddle
- Backpacks are not to be worn whilst riding. Everything should be kept either in pockets or in a bum bag : lip balm, sun screen, small camera, glasses, rope etc.
- Water bottle (1.5 litres or 2 equivalent)
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Toiletries
- Toilet paper and a lighter to burn it after use
- Swiss army knife or equivalent (in checking-in luggage!!)
- Small plastic bags for you rubbish
- Ear plugs (may be useful)
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery

Medical kit

- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent
- Any medication you regularly take
- Vitamin C tablets
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc..
- 10cm wide bandage
- Painkillers
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Re-hydration sachets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel

General information

- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals
- In your hand luggage carry any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.
- Travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes is highly recommended - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!

VISA & HEALTH

Formalities

British citizens: other nationalities, please contact us.

ID

Ireland, along with the UK, is a member of the Common Travel Area. British nationals travelling from the UK don't need a passport to visit Ireland. However, Irish immigration officers will check the ID of all passengers arriving by air from the UK and may ask for proof of nationality, particularly if you were born outside the UK. You are therefore advised to take your British passport with you.

For more information about the types of ID you might be asked to present, see the website of the Ireland Citizens Information Board.

Before travelling, check with your carrier about their ID requirements, as most airlines and other transport providers won't carry passengers to and from Ireland unless they've seen satisfactory photographic ID.

Passport validity

If you're using a passport to enter Ireland, it 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.

Please visit for the FCO website for up-to-date information - <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/ireland/entry-requirements>

ADDRESSES OF CONSULATES

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1040 Bruxelles
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Fax : (02) 230 53 12

Health

UK Citizens: A UK Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) gives you the right to access state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in the European Union (EU).

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/apply-for-a-free-uk-global-health-insurance-card-ghic/>

There are no vaccinations legally required to travel to Ireland. The country has a relatively good public health infrastructure, with hospitals, generally good doctors and widely available medicines etc.

Insurance

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.

Voltage

The electrical supply in Ireland is 230v 50hz. The plugs and sockets are a three-pronged formation, the same as those used in the United Kingdom. If your

appliances operate on a different current you will need a power converter and plug adapter.

Budget and money

Ireland has adopted the Euro (ISO code: EUR, symbol: €) as its official currency. One Euro is divided into 100 cents, which is sometimes referred to as eurocents, especially when distinguishing them with the US cents.

Euro banknotes come in denominations of €5, €10, €20, €50, €100, €200, €500. The highest three denominations are rarely used in everyday transactions. All Euro banknotes have a common design for each denomination on both sides throughout the Eurozone.

The Euro coins are 1 cent, 2 cents, 5 cents, 10 cents, 20 cents, 50 cents, €1 and €2. Some countries in the Eurozone have law which requires cash transactions to be rounded to the nearest 5 cents. All Euro coins have a common design on the denomination (value) side, while the opposite side may have a different image from one country to another. Although the image side may be different, all Euro coins remain legal tender throughout the Eurozone.

Visa and Mastercard are generally accepted, though American Express can be a bit harder.

Telephone and jetlag

The telephone dialling code is +353

Ireland is in the same time zone as the UK, so GMT.