

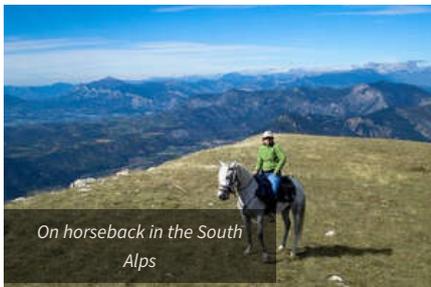


South Alps - Villages in Haute Provence

PROVENCE - THE COTE D'AZUR

Enjoy a **horse riding holiday in Haute Provence** through rocky mountain passes and across vast alpine pastures. You will explore ancient abandoned villages that are testament to the region's once thriving agricultural industry. Whilst spending long days **in the saddle** in the clear Mediterranean mountain air, this **trail riding holiday in France** will allow you to **ride off the beaten track** and discover lush valleys, craggy peaks and stunning views. Explore a region where man has learned to coexist, with sensitivity, with the environment around him.

Trail Riding	7 days / 5 days riding	From £630	
---------------------	-------------------------------	------------------	--



On horseback in the South Alps



Riding in the South Alps



The beautiful Haute Provence villages

ITINERARY

Highlights

- Explore the villages of Haute Provence full of character and charm set in truly stunning scenic alpine countryside
- Enjoy an expedition led by a local guide who is passionate, knowledgeable and welcoming
- Ride off the beaten track through craggy mountain passes, scale peaks and gallop across alpine pastures
- Discover architecture and ruins traditional to this region of France
- Benefit from a varied route on a trail riding holiday that is suitable for a wide range of riders

Day 1 — 1 : SISTERON - SAINT GENIEZ

Gîte de Saint Geniez

You will be met at the SNCF train station at Sisteron at 18:00 by a member of the guiding team, and you will be driven to Saint Geniez. On your arrival, you will have an opportunity to explore your surroundings and also meet the horses.

If you are arriving by car, you will be expected at Saint Geniez at around 18:30.

In the evenings, you will have your first taste of local Provençal cuisine and you will spend the night in a small dormitory style room at your hosts' home.

Day 2 — 2 : SAINT GENIEZ - MONTAGNE DE CHARDAVON - 5 hours riding

Gîte de Saint Geniez

Head out for your first day's ride, through the dense pine forests, towards Chardavon Mountain before passing spectacular white oak trees and riding the pastures at Gache; this first day's ride will take you in a loop back to Saint Geniez. Due to its remarkable geological features and heritage, Haute Provence

has been classed as a Geological Nature Reserve and is part of the Global Geopark Network. The subsoil, the remainder of a Mesozoic seabed, has been the site of many fossil discoveries. Finds such as those at the Barrémien stratotype in Angles, the slab of ammonites in Digne les Bains and sirens in Castellane have made this area known throughout the world.

Continuing through the white oaks, you will climb up to a peak offering spectacular views overlooking Durance Valley. You will complete the loop back to your holiday cottage by riding through grazing pastures for the region's sheep. The harsh nature of life out here has created a region that nowadays, in parts, is completely deserted. This first day in the saddle and its circuitous nature will give you a chance to get to know your horse and its rhythm; if necessary, you will have the opportunity to change your mount. You will enjoy another Provençal dinner and once more spend the night at your hosts' home.

Day 3 — 3 : SAINT GENIEZ - LA MOTTE DU CAIRE - 5-6 hours riding

 Gîte de Saint Geniez

The day's ride will take you out towards 'Le Collet', the collar, which signals your arrival into Durance Valley. You will then continue through Sasse Valley and ride through the shallow water refreshing both you and the horses! Finally, you will cross the fields of Donnet farm known as 'the lamb of Sisteron'. It is the stunning countryside around the small Provençal villages of Vaumeilh, on the banks of the rushing river Sasse, and Valerne, perched high on a hill that dominates the valley skyline, that you will be exploring during your day's ride.

You will stop for dinner and spend the night in a magnificently restored house complete with swimming pool.

Day 4 — 4 : VALAVOIR - AUTHON - 6 hours riding

 Gîte de Saint Geniez

After a descent down into the valleys, you will start your climb up towards the upper peaks and mountains using abandoned weatherworn paths. You will arrive at the village of Valavoir and enjoy fantastic gallops across the alpine pastures! Along the way, you will pass a work of art by Andy Goldsworthy, a British environmentalist and contemporary artist, who creates site-specific sculpture and land art.

At the end of the afternoon, you will arrive at your gîte at Authon where you will have dinner and spend the night.

Day 5 — 5 : LAMBER- ST PIERRE PASS - AUTHON - 5-6 hours riding

 Gîte de Saint Geniez

Riding out through Ainac pass, you will follow the trail under the crest of Gérueu which will lead you to the small picturesque village of Lamber. From there, a hunters' trail through the rocks will take you to the foot of St Pierre where you will start your climb between the 2 peaks of the Cloches de Barles in order to reach St Pierre's Pass. This is the highest point of your expedition, you will find yourself in the heart of lush alpine pastures at 1800m. After taking in the incredible views, you will descend the mountain by Barent pass and ride through Feissal Valley. After a long day in the saddle, you will have crossed immense reaches of mountain pastures and, depending on the season, have ridden past herds of up to 1500 grazing ewes.

You will head back to your accommodation at Authon for the night.

Day 6 — 6 : LA FOREST - DROMON - SAINT GENIEZ - 6 hours riding

 Gîte de Saint Geniez

Your final day's ride will see you riding Fontbel pass on horseback at 1304m, before taking Mounisse pass and exploring the ruins that you find along the way. Taking a detour to explore the abandoned hamlet of 'La Forest', you will see another of artist Andy Goldsmith's pieces - an entirely, and beautifully, restored church.

Back in the saddle, you will ride across Saint Geniez plateau and past the village of Dromon known for its 17th century chapel and curious 8/9th century crypt which still raises pilgrimages today.

At the end of the day's ride, you will arrive back at your hosts' home at Saint Geniez; you will enjoy your final meal as a group and relax in the evening's fresh mountain air.

Day 7 — 7 : SAINT GENIEZ - SISTERON

After breakfast and saying your farewells to the horses and the team, you will either be driven to the train station or you can head off in your hire car when you're ready.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	PRICE INCLUDING FLIGHTS	STATUS
18/04/2021	24/04/2021	£630		Guaranteed departure

Price details

- Flights 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 riders sharing communal rooms and tents.
- Groups are made up of 2 to 10 riders.
- Young riders aged 15+ are welcome on the ride provided they are experienced riders.
- Transfers are included from Sisteron train station on day 1 (meeting time: 6:00pm) and transfer back to the same station. Transfers outside of normal meeting times will be at an extra cost of €10 per person per journey, payable locally.

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 local horse guide (qualified)

LOGISTICS

1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider

1 support vehicle

INLAND TRANSPORT

Transfers to and from Sisteron train station at normal group times

ACCOMMODATION

6 nights spent in charming gites

MEALS

Full board from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on the final day (day 8)

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverages and personal extras

TRANSPORT

International flights

Transfer to Sisteron in France

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
Visas and personal purchase

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

The horses you will be riding have been bred and selected for their docility, their sure-footedness and their skill at riding the trails through the mountains. The majority of the herd have been bred from the same familial line.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

For this ride, you need to be perfectly at ease in the saddle and confident riding outdoors, for several hours at a time, at all paces and across uneven terrain. Children, accompanied by a parent, are welcome from the age of 15.

PACE

The base pace of the ride is a walking pace because of the uneven ground and ascents and descents on the trail. However, you will enjoy trots and gallops when the terrain allows.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You will be responsible for grooming, tacking and un-tacking your horse throughout the ride as well as feeding and watering them in the morning and evening.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

The terrain is mountainous and rocky, you will take narrow paths, ride through forests and cross mountain pastures at high altitudes. There will also be several passages on foot during the descents and ascents.

Previous experience of trail riding holidays is a plus but is not necessary.

Helmets are MANDATORY.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Trail riding saddles and saddle bags.

You will be required to wear a helmet. 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

Throughout the ride, you will stay in welcoming gites in the mountains - either in separate rooms or dormitories. You will have access to hot showers every evening.

MEALS

Meals will be picnic lunches carried in your saddle bags and in the evenings, you will have hearty dinners made from local produce grown on the farm.

CLIMATE

The region of Provence does enjoy a Mediterranean climate, although this is felt less in the mountainous regions where your trip will take place. In summer, the days are temperate even hot, yet it can still be cold out of the sun; showers and storms are possible and the nights can be very cold.

GUIDE AND LOCAL TEAM

Olivier is the creator and the guide of this stunning trail through the Haute Alps. Olivier, a equestrian tourism guide, set up his stables at the meeting point of the Alps and Provence more than 15 years ago. Since then, every year, he has ridden the most magnificent trails that this vast region has to offer. He shares these trails with riders who come to discover the area and then come back to explore all over again! Olivier raises his mountain horses with a well-

trained hand and has used his time in the mountains to select the best paths in order to offer unforgettable trails and experiences.

Céline has worked alongside Olivier for the past 10 years and is skilled at helping her riders discover the region, all thanks to her knowledge and her enthusiasm for trail riding in the great outdoors.

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 - this is not obligatory and is entirely at your discretion.

PACKING LIST

The information provided is general and should be adapted to the season in which you are travelling, specifically concerning the necessity of Goretex waterproofs.

Head

- A riding helmet is compulsory and we recommend that you take your own to ensure a correct fit. Helmet makers (GPA, HKM, LAS Helmets, Lamicell, Troxel, Equithème) now offer horse-riding helmets that are ventilated, strong, light and comfortable.
- 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, wind or rain
- Warm hat for cold evenings/days

Upper body

- Thermals in case of cold weather
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun or extra warmth
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Waterproof jacket (made from Goretex or equivalent) and/ or (depending on the season) a waterproof vest that covers you thighs. No ponchos!!

Legs

- 2 pairs of 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 (made from Goretex or equivalent), especially if you don't have a long waterproof coat
- Casual clothes for the evenings (jeans or walking trousers)
- A swimming costume may be useful for impromptu dips in the lake
- Non-irritant cotton or synthetic underwear

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

Night

- Tracksuit or pyjamas to sleep in
- Sleeping bag level +2°. We recommend doubling up with a sleeping bag liner, for extra warmth

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 (camera, sunscreen, lip balm etc)
- A soothing cream may be useful to treat areas irritated by long hours in the saddle
- 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

- Water bottle (1.5 litres or 2 equivalent)
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Toiletries
- Protein or cereal bars for the longer stretches of riding
- 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
- A pair of binoculars

Medical kit

Make sure any allergies (to medication or otherwise) and clearly stated in your medical kit

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

General information

- The airline allows only one bag to be checked-in per passenger. Make sure it weighs no more than 20kg; if it exceeds this weight, you will have to pay excess luggage fees at check-in
- Hand luggage is limited to 7kg (measuring 56 cm x 45 cm x 25 cm), it mustn't contain any sharp objects (knives, scissors, nail file or nail scissors, etc.) and the quantity of liquid allowed per passenger is limited to 100ml per container.

In your hold luggage

- Any liquids, such as shampoo, moisturiser, deodorant over 100 ml and all bottles can be decanted into small, clear, plastic Ziplock bags. We recommend biodegradable washing products where possible.
- 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.

VISA & HEALTH

Formalities

UK citizens - other nationalities please contact us:

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.

Visas from 1 January 2021

The rules for travelling or working in Europe will change from 1 January 2021:

- you will be able to travel to countries in the Schengen area for up to 90 days in any 180-day period without a visa as a tourist, to visit family or friends, to attend business meetings, cultural or sports events, or for short-term studies or training
- if you are travelling to France and other Schengen countries without a visa, make sure your whole visit is within the limit. Visits to Schengen countries within the previous 180 days before you travel would count towards the 90-day limit
- the 90-day limit for visa-free travel will begin on 1 January 2021. Any days you stay in France or other Schengen countries before 1 January 2021 will not count towards the 90-day limit.

At border control for France, you may need to:

- show a return or onward ticket
- show you have enough money for your stay, and
- use separate lanes from EU, EEA and Swiss citizens when queueing
- Your passport may be stamped on entry and exit.

Passport validity

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

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.

Passport validity from 1 January 2021

From 1 January 2021, you must have at least 6 months left on an adult or child passport to travel to most countries in Europe (not including Ireland).

If you renewed your current passport before the previous one expired, extra months may have been added to its expiry date. Any extra months on your passport over 10 years may not count towards the 6 months needed.

Check your passport is valid for travel before you book your trip. You will need to renew your passport before travelling if you do not have enough time left on your passport.

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

Health

At least 8 weeks before your trip, check the latest country-specific health advice from the National Travel Health Network and Centre (NaTHNaC) on the TravelHealthPro website.

If you need emergency medical assistance during your trip, dial 112 for an English speaking emergency service and ask for an ambulance. If you are referred to a medical facility for treatment you should contact your insurance/medical assistance company immediately.

<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/france/health>

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

In France the power plugs and sockets are of type E (two prongs). The standard voltage is 230 V and the standard frequency is 50 Hz.

Budget and money

Local currency is the Euro.

Telephone and jetlag

Phone code is +33.