Equus Journeys
HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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

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Montana Horse Drives & Horse weeks

UNITED STATES

Get ready for a real cowboy adventure! This **US ranch holiday** offers experienced riders the opportunity to embark on an incredible riding vacation in the Western state of Montana. Meet a typical ranching family who are willing to share their knowledge and their daily life on the ranch. This **horse drive** and themed horse weeks take place during specific times of the year and this is something aspiring cowboys will not want to miss! In the springtime, a herd of around 150 horses is brought north to Montana, and back down to Wyoming for the winter: contributing to this authentic horse drive is a unique horseback experience. A herd of free horses, a real team of cowboys and wranglers, all of it in the spectacular scenery of the Pryor mountains: this is a **ranch holiday** as it should be!

Horse Drive	**9 days/ 5 days riding**	**From £2,116**	


Embark on a real authentic ranch holiday on this US horse drive


A horse drive is a fascinating experience for competent riders


Explore Wyoming and Montana in the saddle

ITINERARY

Highlights

- Discover the two beautiful "cowboy" states of Montana and Wyoming, the Bighorn canyon area and the Pryor Mountains (on the full horse drive - other weeks are Montana only)
- Spend your days on a ranch with a typical wrangler family, who have been running the ranch for decades.
- Experience exhilarating days in the saddle with plenty of adrenaline and adventure.
- Take part in an exciting riding holiday, driving around 150 loose horses from their summer to winter pastures, and vice versa, or take part in other cattle work and work with horses.
- A unique horse drive experience that can either be done in the springtime or Autumn. A horse drive is very different from a cattle drive: loose horses are flighty and move at a significantly faster pace, covering longer distances. This makes a horse drive a really interesting choice for experienced riders.

IMPORTANT: Your itinerary for the following days may vary depending on your selected week. Please note that some departures include a shorter horse drive (2 days) then you will stay at the ranch and help with other ranch-based activities.

Please remember the following programme can vary slightly depending on local conditions, weather, etc. This is a mere guide designed to help you choose the best time to go according to your interests.

Day 1 — 1 : Arrive in Billings

Fly to Billings Logan International Airport in the United States (flights are not included in the listed price but can be booked on request).

European riders: there are no flights arriving early enough from Europe and you will spend a night in Billings. Please note this hotel is not included but we will be happy to quote for this. We recommend you stay at the Best Western Clock Tower Inn where you can be picked up the following afternoon.

US riders should aim to arrive the following morning (Sunday) on time for their airport pick up, unless they want to arrive early and relax in Billings.

It is also possible to arrive at Yellowstone Regional Airport (Cody, Wyoming) and self-drive to Lovell where a transfer to the ranch can be organised (we do not recommend driving to the Ranch as the road is very difficult to drive). Please contact us.

Day 2 — 2 : Billings - Montana - 2h30-3h drive

Dryhead ranch

You will be picked up on Sunday at around 4pm by Jennifer or an another member of staff from your hotel or the airport. The drive to the Dryhead Ranch takes around 2h30. Along the way, you will pass some great historical attractions such as the Pryor Mountain Wild Mustang Reserve, Big Horn Canyon Recreation Area and Caroline Lockhart Ranch. Enjoy the very scenic views of the Big Horn and Pryor Mountains and the lovely rolling landscapes of Wyoming and Montana. On arrival, the ranch cook will have dinner waiting for all the guests. Graces will be said before you can dig in and enjoy your first American dinner. All riders clean up their own dishes after dinner. With your belly full you will be shown to your room for a good night's rest.

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Day 3 — 3 : Montana-Wyoming-Montana - Approx. 6 hours riding

Dryhead ranch

After a hearty breakfast, you will head to the corral and meet your horse for the day. Quickly enough, you are riding to the heart of Montana's wilderness. You will enjoy the feeling of freedom while riding across unspoiled lands and forests. For some of you, this might also be your first time in a western saddle and the wranglers will give you tips on how to adapt to this new riding style - you just need to ask. A short picnic break will be taken in the plains. In the late afternoon you will pick up the pace as you head towards the ranch. You will leave the horses out in the plains and be transferred back to the ranch for a delicious warm dinner. Overnight at the ranch.

Note: This itinerary is based on the spring horse drive taking place in April (Wyoming to Montana). The autumn horse drive is done in the opposite direction (Montana to Wyoming). Please remember that certain weeks are not dedicated to a full horse drive, and other ranch-based activities will be offered.

Day 4 — 4 : Montana-Wyoming-Montana - 6-8 hours riding

After a tasty typical American breakfast, you will load your horses in the trailer and head out to the plains to find the horses that have spent the night there. These horses live outside all year round in herds, and know the land better than anyone, probably even better than the ranchers themselves! Once again you will saddle up and head north for today's adventure. After a short ride, you will be able to see in the distance the herd of about 150 horses, roaming free around the land... this is where the fun begins. Bringing in 150 horses is no easy task! Picnic lunch at the edge of the woods to regain some energy after the morning's adventures. As the sun begins to set, you will once again leave your horse to rest in the plains. Transfer to the ranch for a well deserved meal and good night's rest.

Day 5 — 5 : Montana-Wyoming-Montana - 6-8 hours riding

Dryhead ranch

Expect an early wake up call. After a short drive, you are reunited with the horses. Once your horse is tacked up and ready you will ride back to meet the herd. You will be surprised by how big the American West truly is before you spot the horses again. Your job is to safely guide them to their summer quarters in Montana. The little colts still don't really know their way around and might try to break through in a rebellious attempt: it is up to you to get them back in line and possibly canter after the odd escapee! After all this hard work, a picnic break is very much needed. In the late afternoon you will leave the horses as you go back to the ranch for dinner with the team that now feels like family. Overnight at the ranch.

Day 6 — 6 : Montana - 6-8 hours riding

Dryhead ranch

Another day across the plains of Montana. Today you will carry on with your horse drive around the immense land of this authentic ranch. After a few hours on horseback, you will share a picnic with the team and learn about their traditions and heritage. In the afternoon, get back in the saddle to continue your ride alongside the herd. At the end of the afternoon you will return to the ranch and have dinner in the warm and friendly atmosphere of

the Ranch.

Day 7 — 7 : Montana - 6-8 hours riding

Dryhead ranch

Today, for the last time, you will be reunited with your horse. You will have the opportunity to make use of all the techniques and self-confidence acquired over the week, and perhaps pick up the pace a bit. Make sure to make the most of your last day in the saddle and take in the lovely Montana views around you. Last evening at the ranch.

If the drive took less time than anticipated today you may be involved with cattle work instead.

Please make sure to pack this evening as you will be departing for the airport early in the morning.

Day 8 — 8 : Ranch-Billings-Departure - 2h30-3h drive

This Saturday, after your last traditional American breakfast, say goodbye to the team and horses. Departure for the airport at around 9am, arriving at Billings airport between 11:00 and 12:00 am. Please make sure to book a flight departing after 1:30pm.

Extensions are also possible - Yellowstone National Park, Glacier National Park, etc. Please contact us.

Day 9 — 9 : Europe

European riders will arrive home in the morning.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
17/04/2027	25/04/2027	£2,116	Full
29/05/2027	06/06/2027	£2,116	Full
16/10/2027	24/10/2027	£2,116	Full
23/10/2027	31/10/2027	£2,116	Full

Price details

- International flights are not included, but can be booked upon request. The first hotel night is not included but we will be happy to organise this for you on request.

- The group is made of 5-12 riders maximum plus local team.

- The rates are per person, based on a standard double room with a shared bathroom. There are private cabins available for $500/£390/€460.

- The ranch has some single rooms (with shared bathrooms) that they can give without a supplement on a first come, first served basis.

- Return transfer to and from Billings is included. There are two pick up places: Best Western Clock Tower Inn, and the Airport-at Door 4 at the west end of the airport. Pick up is in the mid-afternoon.

- Gratuities are not included in the listed price and must be factored into your budget - plan to tip around $400.

- Non-riders are welcome

- An electronic travel authorisation (ESTA) is required to enter the USA. It is your responsibility to organise this. Please visit https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/ and contact us if you need help.

- The ranch is located on Indian territory. Alcohol is strictly prohibited by Indian law.

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horse drive (2 days) then you will stay at the ranch and help with other ranch-based activities. Please remember the following programme can vary slightly depending on local conditions, weather, etc. This is a mere guide designed to help you choose the best time to go according to your interests.

ANTICIPATED 2026 PROGRAMME
April 12 – 18, 2026 Horse Drive from Wyoming to Dryhead Ranch in Montana.
May 31 – June 6, 2026, Adding stallions to mare bands for breeding season.
Oct 11 - 17, 2026 Making registration papers and weaning colts from mares.
Oct 18 - 24, 2026 Horse Drive from Dryhead ranch to Wyoming for winter

ANTICIPATED 2027 PROGRAMME
April 18 - 24Spring Horse Drive
May 30 - June 5Mare Band Week
Oct 17 - 23Colt Registration/ Weaning
Oct 24 - 30Fall Horse Drive
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

A team of cowboys from the ranch

LOGISTIC

Choice of several horses equipped with saddle and bridle
1 support vehicle
1 cook

INLAND TRANSPORT

Airport transfers from Billings at set times (see dates and prices)

ACCOMMODATION

Double or twin room with shared bathroom

MEALS

Full board from dinner on Day 2 to breakfast on Day 8

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverages and personal extras
Meals in Billings
Meals on day 1, 2 (breakfast and lunch), 8 (lunch and dinner) and 9 are not included in the price

TRANSPORTS

Visa fees (ESTA) which must be arranged in advance
International flights bookable on request

EXTRAS

15% gratuities for the team

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

Hotel accommodation in Billings
En-suite room supplement
Single room supplement

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

There are approximately 150 Quarter horses roaming freely on the ranch lands. These horses are well suited for western riding and cattle/horse drives due to their sprinting abilities. They have a great temperament and are very sure-footed. They know their job well and are ideal companions for a first-time ranch holiday!

You will not necessarily ride the same horse during the week but instead ride a few different horses.

Guide & local team

The team you will meet on this ranch holiday is a typical family of ranchers. Traditions and values are still very much alive at the Dryhead. They are passionate about their job and they will be more than happy to share with you their knowledge of the ranching traditions.
Ranching is a family tradition at the Dryhead. Joe and Iris started their ranching business back in the 1940s and purchased the ranch in 1990, where they set up a successful operation. Today, four generations still live and work at the Ranch: Joe and Iris's sons, daughters, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren are working to pass on the legacy.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be a rider of at least an intermediate level (confident at all three paces) and capable of riding outdoors over varied terrain for several hours. This ride is not suitable for beginners and novice riders.

There is a rider weight limit of 100kg /220lb/15.7st. Heavier riders please contact us

PACE

The riding is mostly at the walk so as not to tire out the horses but you may have to sustain faster paces when interacting with the herd, with some longer stretches at a trot or canter.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You will be expected to groom, tack and untack your own horse. Help will be provided.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

Please note: A stay at the Dryhead (and all our working ranches) follows the true rhythm of ranch life. There is no fixed program or daily schedule, activities depend entirely on the needs of the cattle and the ranch on any given day. You'll simply join the cowboys in whatever work needs doing, from gathering and moving cattle to fence checks or general ranch chores. There are no briefings or planned itineraries, as each day unfolds naturally according to the ranch's priorities. This is a key part of the experience and what makes a working ranch stay so authentic. If you are looking for a more leisurely holiday with more standard instruction and guidance, this may not be the right place for you.

You must be physically fit and riding fit. Riders who do not ride regularly must get back in the saddle before their holiday. Good levels of fitness are required since you will be spending 6-8h or more in the saddle on most days.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Western 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

You will be spending every night at the ranch, that is tastefully decorated in the American tradition. Two types of accommodations are possible: rooms sharing a bathroom in a wooden house (also known as the bunkhouse) or several twin/double en-suite cabins.

There is a supplement to request en-suite rooms. Please see "dates and prices"

The ranch house features a guest room where guests are welcome to relax after the days ride. There is a gift shop where guests and cowboys can buy needed riding items to use on their holiday or gift items to take home. In the guest room is a small library of second hand books, western movies, and complimentary WiFi.

WiFi does not extend to the rooms and cell phone reception is very limited. Please note the Ranch is very remote (1-1h30 from the nearest town).

MEALS

All meals are freshly prepared by the ranch cook. Ingredients are locally sourced. The meals will be served buffet-style. In keeping with the family's traditions, prayers are said before each meal. If you are uncomfortable with this, this may not be the right ranch for you.

Breakfast: hot and hearty with sweet and savoury options.
Dinner: tender Angus beef steaks and sirloin roast from the farm, meatballs, stews, vegetables, salads and home-made desserts.
Lunch: Depending on the activities scheduled for the day, lunch may be had at the ranch or you will carry your sack picnic with you on the trail.

Riders are expected to clean after themselves and wash their own dishes.
Snacks, lemonade and cookies are always readily available.

Special dietary requirements may be accommodated on request - please let us know before booking. Alcohol consumption on the ranch is prohibited as the ranch is located in an Indian reservation.

CLIMATE

The climate is continental, meaning hot summers and cold winters. Summer are usually hot (20-25°C and peaks of 30°C) but since the ranch is located on a mountain region, a cold breeze usually flows through the land.
In April and October, temperatures range from 5-10 °C during the day and there might be some snowfalls at night. There may be colder spells too, especially in late October, so you should be prepared for sub-zero temperatures. Always best to check the forecast a few days before departure!
During May and September, the temperature are warmer (10-15 ° C, up to 20 °C) but nights will remain cold.
Chances of rain are higher during the months of May and June. The weather in this area is always difficult to predict, so you should pack accordingly.

TIPS

Tipping is expected in all restaurants (except for some snack meals and in self-service restaurants). It is customary to leave 10-12% of the bill as a tip.
Some places you visit will automatically add in a tip, make sure to check your bill
At the ranch, gratuities are not included in the listed price - see "dates and prices".

PACKING LIST

Important: You should adapt this list according to your departure date and make sure to wear warmer clothes for the Autumn season, especially in October. Remember that whatever the season, nights are cold and bad weather is always a possibility.

Head
- A riding helmet is strongly recommended. Helmet manufacturers (GPA, HKM, LAS Helmets, Lamicell, Troxel, Equithème) now offer horse-riding helmets that are ventilated, strong, light and comfortable. You also have the option of buying protective shells to go under your hats (Ranch & Rider, Lexington Safety Products) or western hat helmets (Troxel)
- A bandana or a scarf to protect your neck and face form dust and sunshine
- Sunglasses with high UV protection and cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- A hat for the evenings that can be cold

Upper body
- Thermals (long or short sleeved)
- Cotton t-shirts + long sleeve shirts (protection against the sun) or quick dry fabric.
- Lightweight fleece or jumper.
- Warm fleece or jumper (and a spare in case one gets wet)
- Warm and waterproof jackets. Avoid ponchos!

Legs

- 2 pairs of lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jeans or chaps - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub.
- 1 spare trousers (hiking or jeans)
- Waterproof over trousers.
- Casual clothes for the evenings (jeans or walking trousers)
- Thermal trousers for cold days or for sleeping in
- A swimming costume may be useful for impromptu dips in the river.
- Non-irritant cotton or synthetic underwear

Hands and Feet
- Comfortable riding boots or cowboy 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.
- One pair of waterproof shoes or boots (in case of rain and also in the morning when the ground can often be damp)
- Lightweight shoes or trainers for the evenings
- Several pairs of thick socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun, wind or rain whilst riding

Horse riding extras
- A soothing cream may be useful to treat areas irritated by long hours in the saddle
- Backpacks are not permitted whilst riding. Everything you wish to take should fit in your jacket or bumbag. Small pommel bags are provided.

Night
- Optional sleeping bag liner for extra warmth.

Other useful items
- Travel bag, preferably a soft bag 60-80ltrs (front opening or backpack). Soft bags are preferable.
- Water bottle (1.5 litres or 2 equivalent)
- Head torch or small torch for moving around at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Toiletries (biodegradable wipes to replace water)
- Swiss army knife or equivalent (in checking-in luggage!!)
- Cord to hold your glasses.
- Backpack of 25-30ltrs
- Ear plugs (may be useful)
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Ziploc freezer bags to protect fragile objects.
- Possibly a pair of binoculars.
- Towel and washcloth
- A pair of lace or leather ties to attach the jacket behind the saddle.

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-diarrheal 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
- Anti-mosquito cream and spray
- Cream for blisters
- Re-hydration sachets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Hand wash gel

General information

- We recommend taking any valuables, such as your camera, iPod, iPad, medicines and glasses etc. in your hand luggage. 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!
- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals
- If, in wishing to 'travel light', you plan to wash your clothes throughout the trip, please ensure you bring biodegradable laundry products with which to do your washing.

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 .