



Equus Journeys

HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

+44 (0) 1905 388977

info@equus-journeys.com

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Galway family holiday

IRELAND

Bring your loved ones on a **centre-based horseback holiday** in Ireland. This programme is tailored for riders up to an intermediate level and includes a mix of lessons and relaxing trail rides in Co. Galway. You will stay in a comfortable eco-lodge and discover a "home away from home" in Ireland. Children are also welcome to the centre, making this an ideal choice for your next **family riding holiday**.

Centre based holidays	 8 days (6 riding)	 From £1,596		Family holidays from 5 y.o	Open to non-riders
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Take your family on a riding holiday in Ireland



Discover Ireland on horseback



Enjoy gentle rolling landscapes and Irish horses!

ITINERARY

Highlights

- A beautiful riding centre in the West of Ireland and the gateway to Connemara.
- Lovely local trails with the option to engage in other activities - hiking, cycling, fishing etc.
- Delicious organic food and sustainable accommodation options.
- A family-run equestrian centre committed to producing minimal environmental impact.

Day 1 — 1 : ARRIVE IN LOUGHREA

Eco-Lodge

Arrival and departure day is Saturday. The closest airport is Shannon airport, but you can also fly to Dublin or Cork (international airports). From there, you can rent a car or use public transportation to get to Loughrea, Co. Galway, where we can arrange your transfer to the riding centre. Please contact us for details.

New guests have time to settle into their accommodations, meet other guests, visit the horses, and relax after their journey. In the evening, you will have your first dinner at the Lodge. All ingredients are purchased from organic sellers or grown right there in the centre's beautiful garden.

Overnight at the lodge.

Day 2 — 2 : SLIEVE AUGHTY CENTRE - Approx. 3,5 hours riding

Eco-Lodge

On Sunday morning, the weekly routine begins. The board outside the locker room is updated daily with the riding plan and can be checked to find out

what horse or pony guests are assigned for the day.

There is usually a lesson (or horsemanship session) in the morning and a trail ride in the afternoon.

Important: Children will be looked after by the staff while the adults enjoy their extra riding time (pony painting, arts and crafts, stable management, etc).

Day 3 — 3 : SLIEVE AUGHTY CENTRE - Approx. 3,5 hours riding

 Eco-Lodge

Upon arrival at the stable after breakfast, guests go riding, or have free time, depending on their individual schedule.

The lessons (or horsemanship sessions) are usually held in the morning and the trek in the afternoon.

Day 4 — 4 : SLIEVE AUGHTY CENTRE - Approx. 3,5 hours riding

 Eco-Lodge

Upon arrival at the stable after breakfast, guests go riding, or have free time, depending on their individual schedule.

The lessons (or horsemanship sessions) are usually held in the morning and the trek in the afternoon.

For those who wish to shake up the routine a little, other activities are often offered instead of treks.

Day 5 — 5 : SLIEVE AUGHTY CENTRE - Approx. 3,5 hours riding

 Eco-Lodge

Check the today's schedule either in the reception or the taking room.

Lessons are held in the morning and trails in the afternoon.

The riding centre is surrounded by more than 2,000 acres of forestry and quiet country lanes. On your trail rides, you will pass under the shelter of tall trees, through gentle flowing streams, and over scenic country roads, each day exploring different areas on horseback.

Day 6 — 6 : SLIEVE AUGHTY CENTRE - Approx. 5 hours riding

 Eco-Lodge

Depending on the preferences and ability of the group, a day ride can be organised. This is lovely ride through some of Ireland's most beautiful countryside. The ride begins at 12:00 and arrives at a lush field where riders and horses rest and have a delicious picnic lunch. You will ride back to the centre for around 18:00, on time for a shower and dinner.

Day 7 — 7 : SLIEVE AUGHTY CENTRE - Approx. 3,5 hours riding

 Eco-Lodge

Check the today's schedule either in the reception or the taking room.

Lessons are held in the morning and trails in the afternoon.

The riding centre is surrounded by more than 2,000 acres of forestry and quiet country lanes. On your trail rides, you will pass under the shelter of tall trees, through gentle flowing streams, and over scenic country roads, each day exploring different areas on horseback.

Day 8 — 8 : DEPARTURE FROM LOUGHREA

You will be taken back to the station in Loughrea after breakfast.

DATES & PRICES

We are currently updating our dates and prices they will be online soon. If you want details of this holiday, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Price details

- Flights or transportation 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 two riders sharing a twin or double room during your stay.
- Dates are flexible and you can arrive/depart on any day and stay for as long as you like. This holiday will confirm for one person and all departures are guaranteed. We recommend a stay of 7 nights that benefit from a long stay rate, but it is possible to stay for as little as 3 nights and as many as 14 nights. Please contact us for a personalised quote over your preferred dates.
- Groups are composed of about 6 riders.
- Single rooms can be arranged however, rates can vary depending on the cabins available. Please enquire for further details.
- Transfers can be arranged from the bus station in Loughrea (€15 based on a shared taxi, payable locally). Bus to Loughrea from all airports [here](#)
We would recommend you rent a car from one of the international airports and make your own way to the centre. Airport transfers can be arranged on request, based on two people sharing (rate per person, paid to the driver): Shannon airport €100, Dublin €300, Galway €60
Transfer rates are subject to change.
- Friends travelling together (and sharing accommodation) benefit from a discounted rate
- Children aged 2-11 yrs benefit from a reduced rate: €1690/£1410/\$1770 - If the child is sharing a standard room with a parent, and additional discount will be applied to the child - €460/£380/\$480.

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 or 2 BHS qualified instructor(s)

LOGISTIC

1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle

ACCOMMODATION

Double or twin room at the eco-lodge

MEALS

Full board from dinner on the first day to breakfast on the last day

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverage and personal extra

TRANSPORTS

Airport transfers or transfers from Loughrea (see "dates and prices")
International flights bookable on request

EXTRA

Tips to local 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

Single room supplement

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

You will find a herd of around 25 horses and ponies, mostly Irish breeds (Connemara, Irish Cob, Irish Sport Horse). All are well looked after and are kept out all year round. There are horses for every level and each rider will find its match.

Rider weight limit: 90 kg / 14,1 st/ 198 lbs

Guide & local team

The centre is family-owned and operated, and has been open since 1986. Your hosts are Esther and her daughter Merel, who manage the property to create a peaceful, relaxing atmosphere where guests feel like part of the family. Your riding guides are Dylan, Marie and Danielle, all BHS qualified and great company on the trail.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

This holiday is open to riders of varied abilities. Guests will be taken out in groups of similar abilities. This is a relaxing riding holiday suited to people looking for peace and relaxation.

Novices riders are welcome to book additional lessons in the arena at an extra cost. Please note that more experienced riders can swap one of their trail rides for a jumping or cross-country lesson.

Children are welcome from age 4, but the itinerary may differ to accommodate them. Please note riding hours for the children are shorter than for the adults.

PACE

The trails are relaxed to include all three paces in the forests and countryside around the centre.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

All riders are expected to groom and tack/untack their horses. You are welcome to help catch the horses from the field in the morning and feed them, but this is entirely up to you!

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

No specific previous experience is necessary, although those with some previous experience will make the most out of this holiday.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

English tack. Some bitless bridles.

Helmets are mandatory and we recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit. Body protectors are mandatory for all riders until 18 years until. They are also recommended for adults.

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

Accommodation at the eco-house, in double or twin rooms. Triple rooms and family cottages are also available on request.

Bedrooms are large and individually designed, with natural materials.

Tea and coffee is readily available at the bar.

Please note that in keeping with the centre's ethos, you will find no TV in your room. WiFi access is available in public areas.

MEALS

All ingredients are locally sourced and even home-grown in Esther's beautiful garden. The restaurant at Slieve Aughty has received an organic certification, and is one of the only certified restaurants in Ireland!

Breakfast: homemade bread, eggs, cold meats, cheese, cereals and porridge. All organic.

Lunch: Garden salads, bread, cheese, soup, pasta salad, homemade cakes

Dinner: An assortment of dishes including soup, bread, salads, lasagna, apple crumble. On Fridays, the centre runs a "Pizza party" using their stone oven for all the guests (in the summer and weather dependent).

Water, tea, coffee and apple juice are complimentary throughout your stay. Soft drinks, wine, beer, and spirits are all available at the bar.

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.

TIPS

Tips are left to your discretion.

PACKING LIST

Head

- Helmets are mandatory. Your riding hat must comply with the official regulations (fixed peaks are not acceptable when cross-country jumping).

Upper Body

The weather can be very unpredictable in Ireland so we recommend bringing tops you can wear in layers, T-shirts, sweatshirts and vests etc.

- Body protector (if jumping)
- Half or long-sleeved cotton shirts (to provide protection from the sun) or T-shirt in a quick-drying material
- A light raincoat that you are comfortable in
- A lightweight fleece or jumper
- A swimsuit

Legs

- 2 pairs of jodhpurs or riding trousers
- 1-2 pairs of trousers suitable for dinner at the Conor's bar
- Cotton or synthetic underwear (non-irritant)

Hands and feet

- Short jodhpur boots and half chaps are the best option as they are much cooler and easier to transport, but if you are used to riding in your long boots and want to wear them this is fine.
- Lightweight shoes for the evenings
- Several pairs of socks
- Gloves

Other useful items

- Toiletries
- Small medical kit
- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor (at least 30+)
- Insect repellent
- Any medication you regularly take
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc..

Our Recommendations

- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals
- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bum bag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (passport, camera, sunscreen, lip balm etc)
- Any liquids in your hold luggage, such as shampoo, moisturizer, over 100ml should be decanted into small, clear, plastic ziplock bag. We recommend biodegradable washing products where possible.
- In your hand luggage take any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.

- Travelling in your boots/ hiking shoes and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage is highly recommended - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!

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](#) .