EQUUS JOURNEYS
HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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Last updated 19/11/2026

Saharan Caravan

MOROCCO

Discover the Sahara on horseback and enjoy a real equestrian adventure. **Ride off the beaten track** over the sand dunes of the Erg Chegaga. The trusty **Barb and Barb Arab cross horses** will carry you safely over deep sand dunes, stony plateaus and dry riverbeds. This is a magical and fully immersive way to explore the **Sahara on horseback**.

Trail Riding	**8 days (6 riding)**	**From £1,259**	


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ITINERARY

Highlights

- Enjoy a ride across the wide open spaces of the Sahara, with exhilarating canters and gallops.
- Camp under the stars in remote areas.
- Climb the highest dune in Southern Morocco on foot.
- Ride excellent trail horses that are well-behaved yet very responsive.

Day 1 — 1 : HOME - OUARZAZATE

Fly in to Ouarzazate. Flights are not included but can be booked on request. There are currently no direct flights from the UK to Ouarzazate and so it may be easier to fly to Marrakech and transfer by road to Ouarzazate - this is at an additional cost, payable locally and will be split between all who are sharing the transfer. See dates and prices.

Transfer to your hotel, dinner and night at the hotel.

Day 2 — 2 : Ouarzazate - N'esrate - Approx. 3hrs riding

Breakfast at the hotel. Shortly thereafter, embark on the road that traverses the Djebel Saghro, a volcanic massif. Descend through the Draa valley to our starting point south of Zagora and the Djebel Bani. This leg serves not only as a transfer but also marks the initial substantial phase of your journey (3hrs transfer). Here, acquaint yourself with the team and receive the allocation of horses. Once saddled up, initiate the horse trek towards the southwest, navigating easy terrain dotted with beautiful small dunes.

To the north, the horizon is dominated by the Jebel Bani, while to the south, beyond the dunes, the mountains bordering Algeria come into view. Transitioning through tamarisk trees, we move away from the dunes to traverse a reg, presenting a starkly different facet of the desert—more austere and rugged.

Discover small dunes that provide seclusion from the expansive plateaux. Overnight at camp.

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Day 3 — 3: N'esrate - Oued N'naam - 5 hours riding

Begin the day with a sunrise breakfast, attending to our horses and setting up camp. The departure signal is given after meticulous preparations, marking the start of the first day. Start your journey across sand, dry wadis, and sun-soaked pebbles. In close proximity to a flowing well, encounter a splendid tamarisk tree - a welcome parasol for lunch.

Continue westward post a brief siesta in the sun or beneath the shade of the few trees nestled in this undulating landscape. Traverse a reg, cross over small dunes, and eventually arrive at the magnificent canyon of Oued l'Ataach, our overnight location. Dinner and overnight stay in Oued l'Ataach, gathered around a small campfire.

Day 4 — 4: Oued N'naam - Chegaga - 5 hours riding

Set out on horseback heading north/northwest with our goal, visible since morning, being the mountain situated between Jebel Bani to the northwest and the expansive dunes to the southwest. Pause for lunch by the Oum Laalag at the foot of the mountain. Oum Laalag, Berber for the "wadi of leeches", it is surrounded by stony plateaux and dry wadi beds. The picnic area is concealed within a recess of the canyon, selected based on daily weather conditions.

In the afternoon, head due south to a plateau with sweeping views over the plains, paving the way to the Cheggaga dunes. Descend onto these plains, often lush green in winter, taking advantage of the ideal terrain for faster paces. Reach a well for a compulsory stop to refresh our horses, with our camp a short distance away, surrounded by tamarisk and euphorbia.

With the last rays of sunshine, climb the highest dune in Morocco before setting up camp.

Day 5 — 5 : Cheggaga – Erg El Ghol - 6 hours riding

Start the day with an early breakfast in the superb bivouac overlooking Erg Cheggaga. Head towards the dunes for some excursions onto the sandy slopes, with horses navigating well on the "hard" sides. Skirt the high dunes heading west and then turn northwest to cross long stretches of wild, horse-accessible dunes. In this veritable sea of sand, spot occasional gazelles. Approach a well located between the erg and the Bani mountains, with nomad camps standing on the edge of the dunes and even a nomadic school. Picnic in the shade of a tamarisk tree, and in the afternoon, transition to a landscape resembling the African savannah, with numerous acacia trees along the way. Reach the next well to quench the horses' thirst before heading due south to the dunes and our bivouac in a sandy arena.

Dinner and overnight in the bivouac. Erg Ghoul, literally Hercules' erg, lacks any trees, and thus, no dead wood is available for a fire tonight.

Day 6 — 6 : Erg - Iriki - 6 hours riding

An early start with breakfast precedes a visit to the well for the horses. Head west to tackle the Iriki "plain," which has now largely dried up due to minimal water from the Atlas mountains. Iriki relies on rain from Jebel Bani, as the Ouarzazate dam hinders rainfall from the Atlas. Cross the vast, flat "plain" for a short distance, having a picnic on the north bank. Depending on conditions, either cross directly over black stone plateaux interspersed with small mountains or follow the escarpments on the banks of the Iriki. Discover numerous fossil sites on the plateaux, including "Ortoceras." The M'Douar mountains dominate the horizon to the southwest. Use them as a reference point to find the bivouac, a few steps from a well for the horses.

Day 7 — 7 : Iriki - M'Douar - Ouarzazate - 3 hrs riding

A magnificent but varied stage awaits, encompassing mountains, plateaux, and a transfer to Ouarzazate.

Consider an early start to witness the sunrise over the mountains before breakfast. The journey takes you to the foothills of the mountain through a steppe, passing small dunes and dense vegetation. A hidden well with excellent water awaits in the midst of these dunes and "forest." After lunch, transfer to Ouarzazate (3hrs). Check into the hotel and farewell dinner.

Day 8 — 8: OUARZAZATE - HOME

Transfer to the airport in time for your flight home.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
06/12/2026	13/12/2026	£1,259	Open
27/12/2026	03/01/2027	£1,346	Guaranteed departure
24/01/2027	31/01/2027	£1,259	Open
21/02/2027	28/02/2027	£1,316	Open
07/03/2027	14/03/2027	£1,316	Open
07/03/2027	14/03/2027	£1,316	Open
14/03/2027	21/03/2027	£1,316	Guaranteed departure
04/04/2027	11/04/2027	£1,346	Open
24/10/2027	31/10/2027	£1,346	Open
07/11/2027	14/11/2027	£1,316	Open
21/11/2027	28/11/2027	£1,316	Open
05/12/2027	12/12/2027	£1,316	Open
19/12/2027	26/12/2027	£1,259	Open
02/01/2028	09/01/2028	£1,346	Open

Price details

- Flights to your destination 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/tent.

- Groups are composed of a minimum of 3 riders and a maximum of 10 riders, plus guides.

- This ride will also confirm for 2 riders on payment of a small group supplement of €990 / £860 / $1150 per person. Once the group has reached three 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 a solo rider and there are no other riders likely to share your room, you will be charged a single room supplement of approx. €165 / £140 / $185. You will then be reimbursed if a sharer is found for you at a later date. It is also possible to have a single tent but share a hotel room, please contact us for rates.

- Transfers are included to and from Ouarzazate airport on the first and last day. An additional fee of €30 (payable locally) may be charged for very early morning or late evening transfers, or transfers the day before the trip.

- Transfers from Marrakesh (city or airport) are charged at €150 per vehicle, per way. This is payable locally and split between the number of people sharing the transfer. If flying into Marrakesh your flight must arrive before 3pm on Day 1 and leave after 3pm on Day 8.

- Accompanied minors are welcome from 13 yo, provided they match the riding requirements.

- Certain diets may incur a supplement (gluten-free diets can be accommodated at a supplementary charge of €100 / £90 / $110 if you require specific gluten-free supplements). All dietary requirements must be specified at the time of booking.

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
1 backup guide

LOGISTICS

1 vehicle and driver
1 cook
1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider

TRANSPORTATION

Van or 4W vehicle
Return airport transfers

ACCOMMODATION

Tents and foam mattresses during the ride

MEALS

Full board accommodation from dinner on D1 to breakfast on D8
Bottled or filtered water

Price doesn't include

EXTRA

Gratuities to the local team

MEALS

Extra drinks and personal extras (laundry...), lunches in Ouarzazate
Beverages and personal extras (drinks at the hotel)

TRANSPORT

International flights

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

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

Single supplement - see price details above

TRANSPORT

Airport transfers from Marrakech

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

The horses are Barb or Barb Arabian and many are stallions. They are forward going but sensible and perfectly adapted to the desert landscape with big hearts, small feet and smooth paces. They are not particularly big and stand 14hh -15.2hh. There are spirited horses for very competent riders looking for a challenge, and calm, quiet horses perfect for more intermediate riders or those who just want to sit back and enjoy the ride!

Guide & local team

You will be guided by local Moroccans who are familiar with the horses and the landscape. They will be accompanied by grooms. At least one of the guides will speak English but the grooms may only speak French and Arabic.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be a competent rider and able to control your horse at all paces in open spaces. You should be able to canter in a forward seat, be balanced with good hands and be comfortable with handling well-behaved stallions.

There is a rider weight limit of 90 kilos, 14st1lbs. Please also let us know if you are tall so that we can ensure a suitable horse is available.

PACE

The main pace is the walk, especially when the ground is soft or stony, but there are some regular trots and canters when the terrain allows and once the riders have gotten to know their horses a little better. Fast canters and gallops will be had so you should be comfortable with this, although the group may split for those who prefer more relaxed canters.
Please note that the canters will be single file in places, particularly at the start of the ride, but it may be possible to spread out on some canters later in the week, depending on the abilities of the group.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You will be expected to groom, saddle and un-tack your horse. You will also be asked to help at camp – setting up and putting down tents, helping with dishes, etc. You can also help feeding and watering the horses.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You need to be physically fit for the long hours in the saddle, sometimes at a fast pace. You should be prepared for cold nights, particularly in December and January. Experience of riding a trail of several days would be an advantage but is not required. Riders who do not ride regularly should ensure they are back in the saddle and riding fit before departure.

It is of particular importance to ensure you are comfortable and balanced when riding at speed across rough terrain and open spaces.

Visiting a new country offers the opportunity to meet other cultures with different mentalities, therefore it is important to accept these differences and respect the local way of life.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Forestier trail riding saddles and comfortable tack.
Saddlebags are provided.
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

This is a camping trip: two-man tents with thick foam mattresses, a mess tent for dinners, and a shower/toilet tent with heated water.
Sleeping bags are not provided and you must bring your own. Nights in the desert can be cold, especially in December and January.

MEALS

All meals are cooked by your camp chef. They are hearty and generous in quantities, all inspired by the traditional Moroccan cuisine – salads, tajines, couscous, breads, etc.

Water is provided but you need to bring your own water bottle.

Special diets can be accommodated, however please note that some foods can be difficult to find in Morocco. Certain diets may incur a supplement (gluten-free diets can be accommodated at a supplementary charge of €100/£90/$110 for instance, if you require specific gluten-free supplements). All dietary requirements must be specified at the time of booking.

CLIMATE

In southern Morocco the rains are rare but not non-existent and in recent years the Sahara has experienced substantial rainfall. In the Spring and Autumn months the temperatures are pleasantly warm. In October and April the temperatures can be 35c during the day, dropping to 20c at night whilst in November, February and March it is a little cooler (25c daytime and 12c night). In the heart of the winter (December/January) the mornings and evenings can be cold, as low as minus 5c. At midday the temperatures will be 18-20c can drop rapidly once the sun sets. In summer it is too hot to ride (45c) and so no desert trails run in the summer.

TIPS

It is customary, as a sign of thanks to tip the local team. We recommend a tip of €50/£45, but you should give what you feel comfortable with. We recommend giving the tips to your guide who can distribute them amongst all of the staff members.

PACKING LIST

IMPORTANT: Please don't take a hard sided suitcase. Your luggage should be soft sided and you should pack it into two bags if it weighs more than 15-20kg so it's easier for the team to transport between camps

Head
- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit.
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana

Upper body
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and dust
- T-shirts
- Fleece, jumper or jacket - the evenings can be cold
- Waterproof jacket - the rains can be difficult to foresee and it's better to be prepared. Layering is key to cope with the fluctuations in temperature between day and night
- Casual clothes for the evening

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
- Shorts for lazy lunchtimes
- Casual clothes for the evening
- Swimsuit

Hands and Feet
- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps as long chaps/long boots can get very hot.
- Sandals, flip-flops or trainers for moving around the camp
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun whilst riding

Nightwear
- Thermals are a good option for sleeping in, or a t-shirt and shorts for warmer nights
- A woolly hat when camping (nights can be cold)
- Sleeping bag - we recommend a comfort factor of 0°C/-5°C. We also recommend taking a silk or fleece liner for an extra layer

Other useful items
- Towel. Camping towels will pack lighter and dry more easily
- Sarong (for going to/from the shower tent)
- Water bottle (1.5 litre or two x 1 litre)
- Hand sanitiser
- Wet wipes for when showers aren't possible
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch for moving around camp at night
- Toilet paper and small plastic bags for taking rubbish away

In your luggage
- Any liquids, such as shampoo, moisturiser, deodorant unless they are less than 100ml and all bottles can fit in a small, clear, plastic ziplock bag.
- Small penknife

In your hand luggage
- Any valuables, such as your camera, ipod, ipad etc.
- Your riding hat

Medical kit
- Sunscreen and lip balm - must 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...
- Rehydration sachets (dioralyte or similar)
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Ear plugs, particularly if you are a light sleeper
- Micropur or similar water purification tablets

Our Recommendations
- Please don't take a hard sided suitcase. Your luggage should be soft sided and you should pack it into two bags if it weighs more than 15-20kg so it's easier for the team to transport between camps
- Take a second, smaller bag to pack things you may need during the day such as a book or suncream then you can easily access it during the long lunch break. You are not allowed to ride with your backpack but saddlebags are provided.
- 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!

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 .