



# Equus Journeys

HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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Last updated 02/09/2025

## The Clare-Burren trail

### IRELAND

On this six-day **Irish trail ride** from Lough Derg to the Burren on the Atlantic Coast, you will discover one of Ireland's most picturesque regions and its colourful history on horseback. You will ride over about 150 km of quiet country lanes and rugged terrain, between the Slieve Aughty Mountains and the river Shannon, to reach the world-famous **Burren** on the Atlantic coast (from the Irish word "Boíreann" meaning a rocky place). The vast, moon-like area is one of Ireland's most compelling landscapes. This **trail riding holiday on the west coast of Ireland** is best suited to intermediate and competent riders looking for a relaxed equestrian experience.

Trail Riding	 8 days/ 6 riding	 From £1,845		Open to non-riders
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A great trail for experienced riders!



Discover the Clare-Burren trail on horseback




Group of riders on the Clare-Burren riding holiday

### ITINERARY

## Highlights

- Join a semi-mobile trail ride, perfect for riders looking for a relaxing horseback holiday.
- Ride Irish horses and ponies: Connemaras, Irish Sport Horses, Cobs, Tinkers, many of them bred by your guides and well-suited to the rugged environment of the Atlantic Coast.
- Discover some of Ireland's most picturesque scenery from the Slieve Aughty Mountains to the Burren.
- Enjoy a non-riding excursion to the Cliffs of Moher, one of Ireland's most famous sights.

## Day 1 — 1 : ARRIVAL IN SHANNON

 Laz An Sabin

Arrive in Shannon airport on the West coast of Ireland. Flights are not included but can be booked on request.

At around 4:00 pm, you will be transferred from Shannon airport to the equestrian farm, approx. 2hrs away – this is where you will be staying for the first four nights. Please see “dates and prices” for notes on transfer arrangements and costs.

Today you can just relax and recover from your journey before starting your riding holiday tomorrow, or explore the walking trails around the property. In the evening, you will get to know all your fellow riders for this week. You will have dinner in a tastefully restored 300-year-old equestrian farmhouse by candlelight and turf fire.

## Day 2 — 2 : OISIN'S AND GRAINNE'S GRAVE - 3 hours riding

After breakfast you will be taken to the start of your trail ride, where your guide will allocate the horses according to your experience. Every rider can then get used to his horse for the week by brushing and tacking up.

You will then leave for an easy ride across the extensive areas of bog land. There you might see local farmers cutting and drying the turf in the traditional way. A Neolithic dolmen - with the legendary name Oisín's and Grainne's Grave - beside the track proves that this area was already mystified about 5000 years ago. Much more recent (about 9th century) are the ruins of the monastic settlement on Holy Island, which you can easily spot by the typical round tower.

You finish the first day of your trail riding holiday in Ireland in the field where the horses stay overnight. Guests are driven back to the farm for lunch. In the afternoon, both riders and horses can take a rest and enjoy a relaxing evening.

## Day 3 — 3: LOUGH DERG - 4-5 hours riding

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Today's ride brings your group of riders across huge areas of heather and bog land with fascinating views over the majestic Lough Derg and River Shannon. Along the track, you will be passing old farm ruins and miles of stone walls and your guide will tell you about Ireland's most significant tragedy: about 170 years ago many farms and villages were abandoned during the Irish Famine. This was the time of the severe potato blight, which destroyed the sole source of food supply for the rural and poor Irish peasant and their livestock. In addition to that a Typhus- and Cholera epidemic enforced the disaster, leading to a flood of thousands of people emigrating to other countries.

After lunch break in the forest and a rest from the saddle, you will head on along the surrounding peaceful horse trails through the Slieve Aughty Mountains. You will ride past some rural farms to a new overnight field for the horses before you head back to the farm for the night.

## Day 4 — LOUGH GRANEY - 4 - 5 hours riding

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You are heading this morning for the top of the hills overlooking endless woods and grazing land to the north, west and south.

Long before you get there, you can spot way below the sandy shores of Lough Grane. After lunch your trail ride follows the water and soon you will be splashing right across the refreshing lake with the horses!

The riding trails in the later afternoon take you through the typical farmland of rural Ireland with its lush green fields and endless old stone walls, dotted with peacefully grazing sheep and cattle. Transfer back to the farm.

## Day 5 — 5 : GLANDARIA - 4 - 5 hours riding

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Today's lovely wood tracks take you further westwards overlooking Glandaria (the valley of the Kings) the wide fertile valley of the River Shannon, where hundreds of years ago Ireland's kings preferably used to settle.

After lunch, you get back in the saddle to cross the boggy uplands. County Clare unfolds in the distance, with the rising hills of the famous Burren National Park. On a clear day you can even catch the first glimpse of Galway Bay. This afternoon the horses will be transferred by lorry across the main road, to tomorrow's ride across the fascinating landscape of the Burren. You will be staying tonight in a charming village with its countless pubs and great Irish music sessions. A great way to get a taste of the "Irish craic" on your horseback riding holiday in Ireland!

## Day 6 — 6 : THE BURREN – CLIFFS OF MOHER - 4 - 5 hours riding

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Another day in the saddle in Ireland. Today's riding adventures offer riders totally different and unique scenery: you are entering the world-renowned Burren. The moon-like landscape of this limestone area is home to an immensely colourful flora and fauna with a large number of very rare species, but also reveals a stunning variety of prehistoric settlements. Dolmens and Wedge Tombs line up next to Norman stone fort ruins and Celtic ring forts. Picnic lunch with a beautiful view across the Burren landscape.

For the next two nights you will be staying in the Lisdoonvarna area, which is famous for its traditional music and pubs. After dinner, guests have the opportunity to visit the fascinating Cliffs of Moher close up at sunset (taxi trip and entrance tickets are not included) – an unforgettable experience.

## Day 7 — 7 : THE BURREN – BALLINALAKEN CASTLE - 4 - 5 hours riding

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On today's trail ride you will head westwards through the Burren, learning about the impressive Poulabrone Dolmen, and the extensive cave systems in this special area. You will lead your Irish horses downhill on a historic Irish famine road – a unique experience.

After lunch break you will lead the horses up the last hill on an old green road. Make sure to look up and enjoy the breathtaking view over the Atlantic Sea, the famous Aran Islands and the rugged Connemara Mountains. The extremely rough shore of County Clare stretches out below as you enjoy your

last canters along the old stone walled tracks on Slieve Elva. Your riding holiday in Ireland ends near the ruins of Ballinalaken Castle.

## Day 8 — 8 : SHANNON AIRPORT - DEPARTURE

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Transfer to the airport after breakfast. Please make sure to book a flight departing after 12:00 noon.

### 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

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No departure for this destination. Please contact our travel advisers for more information.

- Flights or transportation to your destination (Shannon airport) 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 triple room during the ride.

- Groups are composed of a minimum of 4 riders and a maximum of 8 international 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 approx. €210/£185/\$235. You will then be reimbursed if a sharer is found for you at a later date.

- Transfers will be arranged from and to Shannon airport but are payable locally in cash at €55 per person, per way, based on a minimum of 4 riders sharing the same transfer. The pick-up is scheduled around 4:00 pm on arrival. On departure, please book a flight departing after 12:00 noon. Transfers from/to Loughrea bus station can be arranged at a rate of €45 per person (each way), where you can catch a bus to Dublin if you'd like to fly into or out of the city.

- During the trail you will have the opportunity to go visit the Cliffs of Moher at sunset. Taxi to the Cliffs of Moher (around €8 per person) and entrance to the Cliffs is not included and payable locally.

- Accompanying non-riders are welcome and will benefit from a discounted rate: €995/£840/\$1105. This includes accommodation, breakfast and dinner. Non riders can enjoy sightseeing during the day (you will need a rental car), go golfing, fishing, cycling, hiking or just travel along in our backup vehicle to meet the riders at lunch time.

- Accompanied young riders are welcome from 12+ yo, provided they match the riding requirements.

- Rider weight limit : 85 kilos, 187 lbs, 13.3 st. 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

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### SUPPORT TEAM

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1 English-speaking horse guide

### LOGISTIC

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1 horse per rider (same throughout the week)

1 back-up vehicle and driver

### INLAND TRANSPORTS

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Inland transfers as mentioned in the itinerary

### ACCOMMODATION

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Double or triple room at the equestrian farm for 4 nights, and local B&B for 2 nights

## MEALS

Full-board accommodation from dinner on arrival to breakfast on departure

## EXTRA EQUIPMENT

First aid kit

## Price doesn't include

### MEALS

Beverage and personal extra

### TRANSPORTS

Airport transfers at set times (see dates and prices above - payable in cash)

International flights

### EXTRA

Tips to local team

Park, museum and touristic sites fees - e.g. visit to the Cliffs of Moher (taxi + entrance fee) payable locally

### 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

The Irish horse is renowned for its stamina, versatility and gentleness and will provide an ideal companion for an unforgettable horse riding holiday in Ireland. The horses at the equestrian farm are proud examples of several typical Irish breeds such as the tall but gentle Irish Sport Horse, the lively and clever Connemara, the fine and energetic Irish Hunter, the beautifully coloured and surefooted Tinker/ Gypsy Vanner and the intelligent and comfortable Irish Cob.

Our local team breeds many of their horses at home. Each year some new foals join the growing herd. They are specifically trained by our guides to become the willing, safe and sure-footed trail horses they are – really the perfect mount for a week-long riding holiday in the Burren!.

## Guide & local team

Bertie and Nicola are your hosts. They are very friendly and open people. They have been operating trail rides in the west coast of Ireland and the Burren for many years now and are therefore very experienced.

## Minimum riding ability

### MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be a strong intermediate or competent rider and able to control your horse at all paces in open spaces. You should be able to canter in forward seat and be balanced with good hands.

Rider weight limit: 85 kilos, 187 lbs, 13.3 st.

### PACE

The pace varies depending on the terrain. There are opportunities for long trots and canters when the terrain is suitable. There are also long stretches of walking. Canters are in single files.

## TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You will be responsible for your assigned horse during the week: brushing, tacking and untacking. You can also help feed and water in the evening. Assistance is always on hand if necessary.

## TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

Guests who do not ride regularly are requested to get fit prior to your riding holiday. It is of particular importance to ensure you are comfortable and balanced when riding across rough terrain and open spaces. The terrain in the Burren is quite rugged and you may be requested to lead your horse on foot for short periods of time over loose gravel.

This trip is vehicle-supported. The back-up vehicle takes your luggage from place to place and will meet riders in the evenings.

## EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

English saddles and bridles. Saddlebags are not provided - we recommend you bring a bum bag.

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

For the first four nights of your trail riding holiday, you will be staying at a renovated equestrian farm that is our guides' home base. Riding guests stay in double or triple en-suite rooms and can enjoy the cosy ambiance of the sitting rooms. This is quite a lovely farm setting and perfect for those who would like to reconnect with nature, including many friendly pet farm animals and sign posted walking trails.

The following three nights will be in a guesthouse or small family hotel in typical Irish towns.

### MEALS

Full Irish breakfasts are served in the morning, or a choice of home-made bread, yoghurt, cereal...

Light picnic lunches are provided during the day and eaten on the trail: salads, bread, cakes, cheese platters...

Three course dinners at the farm always tasty and fresh – meat, potatoes, salads are a staple! On the nights you're staying in guesthouses, dinners will be had at a local pub or restaurant.

Wine, cider and beer and sodas can be provided at an extra cost (in cash).

Vegetarian, lactose and gluten-free diets can be accommodated on request. Please make sure to mention it at the time of your booking.

### CLIMATE

The west coast of Ireland 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 not mandatory but very welcome if you are pleased with the service provided.

### PACKING LIST

#### Head

- A riding helmet is mandatory. 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

#### 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 for the evening.
- 1 pair of waterproof over trousers
- Cotton or synthetic underwear (non-irritant)

#### Hands and feet

- 1 pair of comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps or long boots.
- 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
- Small plastic bags for your 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!

## 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](#) .