Equus Journeys
HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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

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Cappadocia Explorer

TURKEY

This **riding holiday** takes place between Urgup and Ortahisar, in some of Turkey's most spectacular scenery. Ride along lush canyons and steppe-like landscapes that will lead you to breathtaking views over the troglodytic treasures of **Cappadocia, in central Turkey**. You will be staying in charming hotels in different villages, experiencing the legendary Turkish hospitality and trying out traditional cuisine. This mobile trail is ideal for experienced riders ready to take on the challenges of riding in the unusual landscapes of Cappadocia.

Trail Riding	**7 days (5 riding)**	**From £1,754**		Open to non-riders





ITINERARY

Highlights

- A more relaxed, less strenuous version of our “Wonders of Cappadocia” trail ride.
- Enjoy the picturesque landscapes of the Pigeon Valley and its fairy chimneys
- Explore the underground village of Golgoli
- Stay in picturesque, comfortable hotels located in ancient stone houses or in renovated cave houses, typical of the local architecture.

Day 1 — 1: HOME - KAYSERI AIRPORT- URGUP

Hotel Surban

International flight to Kayseri or Nevsehir (flights are not included, but can be booked upon request).

Transfers are included (shuttle bus from the airport to your hotel). We strongly recommend that you book a flight arriving by 6:00 pm at the latest, so you can enjoy dinner with the guides and the group on the first night. This is important, as this is when your guides will make the final horse allocations. If necessary, you can fly in a day early and we can book an extra night at the hotel you will stay in on the first night (see dates and prices).

Overnight at the hotel in Urgup.

Day 2 — 2: MUSTAFAPASA - 5 hours riding

Hotel Dilek Tepesi

You are driven to the ranch in the morning to meet the horses and get acquainted with the riding equipment. You then will have your first long canter

along the Avlak mountain (subject to weather conditions). You will then make your way to the old Greek village of Mustafapasa where you will have lunch.

Afterwards, you can take a nap on the nearest sofa or, if you are feeling energised, you can explore the village's old stone houses, its Ottoman madrasa and even its painted church. In the afternoon, ride along small canyons, through narrow tracks and wide-open fields where you may encounter local shepherds and their flocks, before arriving at your hotel.

Overnight at the hotel in Ayvali.

Day 3 — 3: KESLIK MONASTERY - 5 hours riding

Hotel Dilek Tepesi

This morning, expect long canters across the fields of the high Anatolian plateau (1600 m above sea level). Make your way through a steep trail that will lead you to the Damsa lake. Before visiting the monastery, you will enjoy a lunch prepared by villagers on a wood fire.

The afternoon scenery includes hills surrounding the lake, and you may visit the underground village of Golgoli. Continue your ride along tracks of red clay and through hidden canyons that will lead you to your hotel.

Overnight at the same hotel in Ayvali.

Day 4 — 4: UCHISAR - 3 hours riding

Kilim pension

Today's itinerary will take you to the beautiful valleys of north Cappadocia, and to the village of Uchisar. Trot and canter through vineyards and over rolling hills of white tufa to reach Ibrahimpasa, where you will have lunch.

From this picturesque village, you will start to climb the "Twin Hills" of Cappadocia. A nice canter at the top takes you to a panoramic viewpoint surrounding northern Cappadocia and the towering rock fortress of Uchisar. As you ride towards the village, you'll be able to admire the multicoloured rock formations of the famous Pigeon Valley and the picturesque fairy chimneys. In the afternoon, you are free to explore Uchisar.

Overnight at the hotel in Uchisar.

Day 5 — 5: RED VALLEY - 5 hours riding

Kilim pension

In the morning, we can arrange an optional hot-air balloon ride to enjoy Cappadocia's magical landscape at sunrise (this is not included and is paid for locally, check dates and prices).

Start your riding day by heading to the White Valley canyon, where you will ride across rocky labyrinths and lush vegetation. From there, make your way to the Sword Valley and Red Valley. Ride through its multicoloured citadels and beautiful troglodyte churches. This is Cappadocia's most spectacular ensemble of geological formations.
You will stop to have lunch at a unique cave café located in an ancient monastery. In the afternoon, keep exploring the Red and Rose valleys. The winding paths of the Shepherd's valley will take you back to your hotel in Uchisar in time to enjoy the sunset.

Overnight at the hotel in Uchisar.

Day 6 — 6: BALKAN VALLEY - 5 hours riding

Hotel Surban

After breakfast, you will leave Uchisar and make your way to the Green Valley canyon, through rock tunnels, and natural arches. You will make a small detour to visit the famous Love Valley before heading to Ortahisar, where you will stop for lunch.

In the afternoon you will have the opportunity to go on some long canters along sandy tracks. Cross the Valley of Pancarlik and its multicoloured fairy chimneys before arriving to the ranch. Transfer to your overnight location in Urgup.

Overnight at the hotel in Urgup.

Day 7 — 7: KAYSERI AIRPORT - HOME

Transfer to Kayseri (or Nevsehir) Airport in time for your flight back home. Please book a flight departing after 08:30am.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
13/12/2026	19/12/2026	£1,754	Open
07/03/2027	13/03/2027	£1,930	Open
21/03/2027	27/03/2027	£2,105	Open
11/04/2027	17/04/2027	£2,281	Open
09/05/2027	15/05/2027	£2,281	Open
29/08/2027	04/09/2027	£2,281	Open
19/09/2027	25/09/2027	£2,281	Open
10/10/2027	16/10/2027	£2,281	Open

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 riders sharing a twin, triple or double room during the ride.

- Groups are composed of a minimum of 2 riders and a maximum of 9 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. €370 / £320 / $430 in 2026 and 2027. You will then be reimbursed if a sharer is found for you at a later date. Please note: single rooms cannot always be guaranteed, please check with your travel advisor.

- Transfers are included (shuttle bus from the airport to your hotel) if riders arrive in Kayseri by 10:30pm. We strongly recommend you book a flight arrive by 6:00pm on the first day so you can enjoy dinner with the guides and the group on the first night. This is important as this is when your guides will make the final decision to match horses with riders. If necessary, you can fly in a day early and we can book an extra hotel night for you. We recommend staying in Ürgüp or Avanos rather than in Kayseri. Please contact your travel advisor for details and rates.

- Please note: The first shuttle service for return departures runs between 6:00am and 6:30am. There are regular shuttles throughout the day. Please book a flight departing after 08:30am.

- There may be an option to upgrade your accommodation on the first and last nights (to stay at Selcuklu Evi instead of the Surban Hotel), subject to availability. The price is an extra €90 / £80 / $105 per person (for a shared or single room). The Surban and Selcuklu hotels are next door. Dinners and breakfast will be taken all together.

- An optional air balloon flight can be arranged during your trip, payable locally in cash (euros). Availability is limited during the high season so please let us know as soon as possible if you'd like to book.
Prices per person vary throughout the season between €170 and €250. The price will be confirmed on arrival.

- There may also be an option to visit a hammam during your stay, you will need to organise this directly with the hotel.

- Non-riders will be offered a hiking programme. You will hike for around 4 hours each day and meet the riders for lunch. Please contact us for prices.
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

LOGISTICS

1 vehicle and driver

INLAND TRANSPORT

Airport transfers during the day (late arrivals will have to pay a taxi)

ACCOMMODATION

Twin or triple room - guesthouse

MEALS

Full board from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 8

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

Saddle bags
First aid kit

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverages and personal extras

TRANSPORT

International flights

EXTRAS

Tips to the local team
Park, museum and other site entry fees

INSURANCE

Visas and personal purchase
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

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

Single room supplement
Upgrade to luxury accommodation

EXTRAS

Hot air balloon flight

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

The herd comprises forward-going Anatolian, Arab and cross-Arab mares. They are robust and sure-footed, responsive and respectful of their riders. There are no big horses (on average 1,50-55 m, 15hh) so there is a strict 85 kg / 13.3 stone / 190 lbs rider weight limit on this trail (including riding gear). If you weigh more than that, an additional horse can be arranged at a supplement, please contact us before booking.

Guide & local team

Your guide will be French-born Nicolas Guillo. He has been organising trail rides in Cappadocia for many years. He speaks English and also Turkish.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You must be an experienced rider to join this trail. You should be able to mount and dismount your horse unassisted, and you should be confident at all paces over varied and sometimes uneven terrain, and during group canters. You should be able to canter in light seat.
Riders should ride regularly at home.

Rider weight limit is a maximum of 85 kilos / 187 lbs / 13.3 st including your riding gear.

PACE

This an active ride - the pace is varied to include trots and some long, technical and/or regular canters. Some canters are in single file, and some are spread out. There may be some fast canters, but there are not normally gallops in this trail.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

Riders are each responsible for their own horse, and asked to tack, untack, water and feed their horse each day.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You must be in good physical condition. On some occasions you will have to dismount and walk with your horse for short periods of time when the terrain is very steep (much less than on our “Wonders of Cappadocia ride”). You will also be expected to walk and lead your horse before and after each ride (to warm up or cool down the horses).

There are some long canters, so guests should be riding fit. The weather can also be hot, in which case you will take a longer lunch break to get some rest in the shade.

Experience of multi-day trail rides is necessary before joining this trail. Riders should also be comfortable with heights and narrow paths as the terrain may be challenging, possibly with some cliffs and low altitude passes.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

The riding equipment includes comfortable trail saddles, made and designed by Nicolas, with saddle bags and a small, front, water bottle pocket.
Helmets are mandatory on this ride and are not available to borrow locally.
Seatsavers are available to borrow locally.

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

You will stay in picturesque, comfortable hotels located in ancient stone houses or in renovated cave houses, typical of the local architecture. All of them are chosen for their authenticity, intimacy and warmth. Most hotels offer internet access and a laundry service and accept card payments.

The first and last nights are spent at a hotel in Urgup, close to the ranch/stables. Nights 2 and 3 are spent at a hotel in Ayvali. Nights 3 and 5 are spent at a hotel in Uchisar.
Please note: There is a possibility to upgrade the accommodation on the first and last nights of the holiday, subject to availability. Please check the “Dates and Prices” tab to know more.

MEALS

Turkish and continental breakfast at hotels.
You will enjoy quality picnic lunches provided by the local team, or lunches in small, local restaurants along the trail. At restaurants, lunch often includes soup and salad alongside hot food.
Dinners are taken at the hotels and usually include starters, mains and desert.

Water, tea and coffee are included. Cappadocia wine, beer and other drinks are available but not included in the price, and payable locally.

Vegetarian meals and gluten free options are available but please let us know in advance.

CLIMATE

Cappadocia has a continental climate and stands at over 1000 m above sea level. Expect cool nights from May through late June and possible rain during the day (average temperature is 15°C). This is a good time to visit and it also marks the beginning of the hot air balloons season. The summers are dry and hot with the hottest weeks from late July to late August.

The weather can still be hot during spring and autumn, in which case you will take a longer lunch break to get some rest in the shade.

TIPS

Tips and gratuities are not mandatory in Turkey, although it is customary to leave a tip at restaurants (some already include a 10% in the bill). Tips to the local team and appreciated but are left to your discretion.

PACKING LIST

Please pack carefully and sensibly: the following guide is here to give you an idea of what to bring. Your luggage will be transferred by a logistics vehicle. Please try to bring a soft-sided bag, instead of a suitcase, as this can more easily be transported.

Head
- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit. Helmets are not provided on this ride.
- Sunhat for when not riding.
- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding.
- Buff or bandana (highly recommended, as it can be dusty).

Upper body
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and dust.
- T-shirts.
- Fleece, jumper or jacket - the evenings can be cool.
- Waterproof jacket - the rains can be difficult to foresee in spring 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.
- Casual clothes for the evening.

Hands and Feet
- Please bring half chaps to wear with hiking/riding shoes with good grip -- please note, some of the passages you will take on foot are steep and rocky, and normal riding boots with smooth soles are not suitable as they don’t have enough grip.
- Sandals, flip-flops or trainers for the evening.
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun whilst riding.

Nightwear
- Pyjamas.

Other useful items
- Water bottles - 2x 500ml, to fit in the saddlebags and water holder.
- Warm clothes if you decide to do the hot air balloon ride.
- Swimwear (if you opt for a hammam).
- Phone holder.
- Ear plugs and eye mask, (if you are a light sleeper).

Cosmetics, personal items and medicines
- Any medication you regularly take (and a list of any allergies).
- Sunscreen and lip balm - must be high factor.
- Insect repellent.
- Pain killers.
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs.
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc.
- Rehydration sachets (dioralyte or similar).
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses.

Our recommendations:
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes / any essentials and valuables in your hand luggage - then

if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!
- Please print copies of your passport and insurance documents and take them with you.
- Please carry any valuables in your hand luggage.
- Backpacks should not be worn whilst riding. Small saddlebags are provided on this ride for you to carry small items you'll need during the day.

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 .