Equus Journeys
HORSEBACK TRAVEL & EQUESTRIAN TRADITIONS SINCE 1972

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Summer Trails of Central Bulgaria

BULGARIA

Explore beautiful central Bulgaria on horseback. This riding adventure will take you through forests, meadows, and charming villages while also introducing you to **historic landmarks**. Experience gentle canters along the **Balkan Mountains** and enjoy authentic picnics in the heart of nature. Each day you will stay in traditional guest houses and country hotels that will showcase the **local cuisine** and envelop you in the region's culture and history

Trail Riding	**8 days (6 days riding)**	**From £1,649**	


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ITINERARY

Highlights

- Enjoy a relaxed trail ride in Eastern Europe, ideal for intermediate riders
- Experience panoramic views of the Balkan Mountains in Central Bulgaria and varied landscapes featuring rivers, lakes, caves and forests
- Visit traditional villages and historic sites, including Dryanovo Monastery and Etara Ethnographic Complex
- Be guided by a Bulgarian family who have good knowledge of the geographical area, culture and the history
- Taste delicious Bulgarian cuisine – famed for its good quality vegetables, herbs and dairy products

Day 1 — 1: Home – Sofia airport - Sevlievo - no riding

Fly to Sofia airport. Flights are not included but can be arranged upon request.

You will be transferred from the airport to the hotel in Sevlievo. Upon arrival the local team will brief you and the other riders on the upcoming week.

Dinner and overnight at Niks Hotel.

Day 2 — 2: Forest trail - Approx. 4 hours riding

After breakfast, you will be transferred to the stables. There, you will be introduced to the horses, and the guides will run through some safety procedures with the entire group before heading out on horseback. Today you will be riding through rolling hills and beautiful forests before heading back to the stables for lunch.

In the afternoon, you will enjoy another trail around the stables before heading back to St. Geroge guesthouse for dinner and overnight.

Day 3 — 3: Novakovtsi - Approx. 3,5 hours riding

After breakfast at the guest house, you will set out for a ride through forests and open fields, with opportunities for gentle canters and panoramic views of the Balkan Mountains. A picnic lunch is planned near Armenite village. In the afternoon, you will continue riding towards Novakovtsi.

Dinner and overnight at St. George guesthouse.

Day 4 — Etara - Approx. 3,5h riding

Today's ride will take you to the small, hidden village of Zhivko, following trails along the foothills of the impressive "Vitata Stena" rock chain. You will stop for a picnic lunch by a lake perched above the rocks before getting back in the saddle.
Upon arrival in Zhivko, you will take a short drive to visit the Ethnographic Complex, Etara - a reconstructed 19th-century village where traditional crafts are still made using water-powered machines.

Dinner and overnight in a traditional guesthouse in Zhivko.

Day 5 — 5: Gesha - Approx. 4h riding

After breakfast, you will pack up and ride through the wilderness towards Gesha village. A picnic is planned by the Yantra River, surrounded by serene natural scenery.

Depending on availability, you will stay at Boutique hotel Kentavar or Skalsko lodge (both have swimming pools).

Day 6 — 6: Draynovo Monastery & Bacho Kiro cave - Approx. 5h riding

After breakfast, you will take a short drive to visit Dryanovo Monastery and the "Bacho Kiro" cave above it. The monastery, partially destroyed by fire during the 1876 uprising against Ottoman rule, remains a remarkable historical site.
Back with the horses, you will ride north through wild meadows, enjoying pleasant canters along the way. Another picnic lunch near Vetrentsi village.

The day ends at the beautiful country-style hotel Imenieto, where you can relax and enjoy the swimming pool.

Day 7 — 7: Forest & Open Fields - Approx. 4,5h riding

Today you will ride through forests, creeks, and open fields. You will have a picnic lunch and enjoy your final hours in the saddle before arriving back at the stables.

The day concludes with a farewell dinner and overnight stay at Hotel Niks.

Day 8 — 8: Kormiansko – Sofia – Home

After breakfast, you will be transferred to the airport in Sofia.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
24/07/2027	31/07/2027	£1,649	Open
07/08/2027	14/08/2027	£1,649	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 two riders sharing a twin or double room.

- Groups are composed of a minimum of 4 international riders and a maximum of 8 riders, plus guides.

- Please note: the ride will also confirm for 2-3 riders on payment of a supplement of c. €350/£305/$415 in 2026/2027. Once the group has reached 4 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. €180/£160/$215 in 2026 or €250/£215/$290 in 2027. You will then be reimbursed if a sharer is found for you at a later date.
Please note: Accommodation on day 5 is always shared (triple rooms). It may be possible to book a single room in a hotel for an extra cost, please contact us to know more.

- Scheduled transfers from Sofia airport are included. The pick up is usually scheduled for 4pm. On the last day you should book a flight departing after 11am. If your flights do not match this schedule, private transfers can be arranged at €220/£195/$260 per person (each way, paid locally).
Pick ups from hotels cannot be arranged.

- Younger riders aged 12+ can join but they must be accompanied by an adult and meet the riding requirements.

- Optional activities (booked and paid locally):

> Massages - Between €25-€80
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 support vehicle

INLAND TRANSPORT

Airport transfers (within schedule)

ACCOMMODATION

Double/twin room - guesthouse

MEALS

Full board from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on day 8
Water and soft drinks

EXTRAS

Entry fees to sites mentionned in the itinerary

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Alcoholic drinks and personal extras

TRANSPORT

Private airport transfers

EXTRAS

Tips to the local team
Small group supplement - check "Dates&Prices"

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

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

Single room supplement

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

You will be riding Shagya, pure-bred Arabs, and other Arab crosses. They are very well-trained and spirited, and range between 14.7hh and 16.2hh

Guide & local team

You will be guided by Maria and Vasko. They grew up in the family business and are very familiar with the trails. They look very well after both horses and guests.

Katherina will be around to help with the logistics.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

Riders should be comfortable at walk, trot and have some experience cantering.

Rider weight limit: 85kgs / 187 lbs / 13.3 st.

PACE

The main pace is the walk, however there are opportunities for trots and canters.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

The team will look after the horses

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

The terrain is diverse, but mainly smooth and pleasant, so riding is not overly technical. Riders should be prepared for warmer weather (and so early morning or late afternoon rides).

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Endurance or Western saddles.
Some of the horses are ridden in bitless bridles.
Saddlebags are provided.

Important: Helmets are not provided but are mandatory.

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

On this riding holiday, you will be staying in hotels and guesthouses. The rooms are mostly twin with an en-suite bathroom. There are small swimming pools available at most overnight locations. Accommodation on day 5 is always shared (triple rooms).

On some days, it may be possible to book a massage (not included in the price).

MEALS

Picnic lunches are organised by the local team (vegetables, warm soup, BBQ, fruit or sandwiches).

Dinners at local restaurants and at the hotels.
Beer is included with your picnic.

Vegetarian and gluten-free diets can usually be accommodated if mentioned in advance - please inform your travel advisor upon booking.

CLIMATE

Temperatures shift noticeably with the seasons.

Winter (Dec–Feb): Cold and damp, with average highs around 3–6 °C and lows near –4 °C. Frost, fog, and occasional snow are common.

Spring (Mar–May): Mild and changeable, warming from 10 °C in March to about 22 °C in May. April and May often bring frequent showers.

Summer (Jun–Aug): Warm and sunny, with average highs of 28–30 °C and occasional peaks above 32 °C. Thunderstorms are possible in June.

Autumn (Sep–Nov): Pleasant and gradually cooling, from around 25 °C in September to 10 °C in November. Rainfall decreases after the summer peak.

Rainfall is moderate but fairly evenly spread throughout the year, with the wettest months tending to be late spring and early summer.

TIPS

Tipping is not compulsory but will be very much appreciated if you enjoy the services provided by the team.

PACKING LIST

Please pack carefully and sensibly: the following guide is here to give you an idea of what to bring. This list must be adapted depending on the season and individual needs.

Head
- Helmets are mandatory and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit.
- Sunhat for when not riding
- Sunglasses
- Buff or bandana

Upper body
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and are an extra layer
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Warm fleece or jumper (and a spare in case one gets wet)
- Warm and waterproof jacket
- Swimwear

Legs
- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs
- Casual trousers for the evenings, such as jeans or tracksuit bottoms

Hands and Feet
- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half chaps.
- Trainers or equivalent light shoes for the evenings
- Socks
- Gloves

Nightwear
- Pyjamas, tracksuits

Other useful items
- Water bottle
- Swiss army knife (or equivalent)
- Wet Wipes or equivalent (for when washing facilities aren't available)
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)

Medical kit
- Any medication you regularly take
- A soothing cream to alleviate any areas irritated by long days spent in the saddle
- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent, preferably containing deet
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Re-hydration sachets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel

Our Recommendations
- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bumbag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (camera, sunscreen, lipbalm etc)
- 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!
- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals

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 .