



Languedoc Roussillon - High Lakes in the Pyrenees

LANGUEDOC ROUSSILLON - CEVENNES

An expedition **horseback ride** for those with a spirit of adventure and love of nature and the wilderness. On horseback you will make your way towards the high peaks of the Pyrenees and see the crystal clear lakes high up in the mountains. For riders who love the outdoors, enjoy camping in remote locations and long hours in the saddle.

Pack Trip	 8 days / 6 days riding	 From £1,248	
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An adventure between France and Spain



High lakes in the Pyrenees



Trail riding in the Pyrenees

ITINERARY

Highlights

- Ride through breathtaking scenery and view the area from some of the highest summits
- Ride the beautiful sure-footed Meren horses, an ancient native breed of the Ariège
- A real feeling of an equestrian expedition supported by pack mules on remote passes
- Ride up high into the mountains and see chamois and vultures circling
- A journey into a remote area with difficult terrain to negotiate and long days in the saddle
- The use of pack mules allows you to stay in remote locations without having to go back to civilisation each night.

Day 1 — 1: HOME - PUYMORENS - No riding

Fly to Toulouse, where you will be met and transferred to the gite for your first night (transfer is not included, €75 return payable locally). Your flight must arrive before 14:00. After being shown to your room there will be time to meet the horses before dinner with your guide.

Alternatively, you can take a train to Puymorens station from where you will be collected at 17:30.

Day 2 — 2: PUYMORENS - PORTA - LANOUX - 4 hours

Ride from Porté Puymorens you will ride high into the mountains to the lake of Lanoux which is at 2200 m. This is the largest lake in the Pyrenees and this where you will camp for the evening.

Day 3 — 3: LANOUX - CAMPORELS - 4 -5 hours

You will continue your ride at high altitude, following a path at the same height as where you stayed the previous evening. Ride to the refuge of Camporels (2250m) which is right on the side of the beautiful Camporel lake.

Day 4 — 4: CAMPORELS - VALLEE DU GALBE - 4 hours plus 1 hour on foot

After two days high in the mountains you descend this morning to the beautiful valley of the Galbe. The valley is known for its biodiversity and it is not uncommon to encounter wild animals as you ride. Today you will walk for approximately one hour as the paths are very steep. This evening you will spend the night in a gîte at the bottom of the valley.

Day 5 — 5: RIEUTORD - RABASSOLLES - 5 - 6 hours

Today you will ride past the Lake of Quérigut before taking a path that will lead you high up into the mountains and to the lake of Rabassolles (2000 m). You will camp out this evening near the lake.

Day 6 — 6: RABASSOLLES - CAMURAC - 6-7 hours

From the Lake of Rabassolles ride up to the blue lake with its distinctive colour, then onto the black lake towards the Coumeille de l'Ours. Ride along the bottom of the Tarbésou (2364 m) to the neck of Paillhère, continue your ride along the ridge and over the crests back to Camurac.

Day 7 — 7: CAMURAC - 4 - 5 hours

One last ride around Camurac. Enjoy the green pastures and rolling hills of the Pyrenees and the company of your horse and fellow riders before a well-deserved farewell dinner!

Day 8 — 8: CAMURAC - HOME

After breakfast you will be transferred to the train station at d'Ax les Thermes for your train or back to Toulouse airport for your flight back home. Your flight should depart after 15:00.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
20/07/2024	27/07/2024	£1,248	Guaranteed departure
17/08/2024	24/08/2024	£1,248	Guaranteed departure

Price details

- Flights or transportation to your destination are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates.

- Rates are per person, and single accommodation is not possible as pack horses carry all of the equipment and tents

- Groups are composed of a minimum of 4 riders and a maximum of 12 international riders, plus guides.

- Transfers:

> If you choose to fly to Toulouse, a transfer is scheduled from the airport at 2:00 pm. Your flight home on the last day should depart after 3:00 pm to allow enough time for your transfer back to the airport. This is €85 return rate.

> If you choose to come by train, a free transfer is scheduled from the train station in Porte Puymorens at 5:30 pm. Please note departure train station on the way back is Ax-les-Thermes (please choose a train departing after 11:00 am).

- Young riders aged 14+ are welcome on this ride if they are accompanied by their parents (provided they are good enough riders).

- Riders over 80 kg / 12.5 st / 176 lbs, please contact us before booking.

- Special diet supplement: €35/£30/\$45 per person for the duration of the trip.

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

1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider

Pack horses or pack mules

INLAND TRANSPORT

Transfers from Puymorens train station and to Ax-les-Thermes

ACCOMMODATION

Mountain Huts

2 person tents

MEALS

Full board from dinner on day 1 to breakfast on the final day

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverages and personal extras

Supplementary charge to accommodate special diets - please contact us

TRANSPORT

Airport transfers from Toulouse

International flights that we can book for you upon request

EXTRAS

Tips to the local team

INSURANCE

Cancellation and travel insurance are not included. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend taking out an insurance policy as soon as your trip is booked in case of cancellation.

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

The horses are local Meren mountain horses, bred for their ability to navigate the tough mountain terrain. They will take you safely through the region. They live out high up in summer pastures as a herd before being brought into work, which gives them their sure footedness and hardiness. The horses are ridden in English saddles.

Guide & local team

The owner of the horses and trail riding company - Sylvain - is local to the area and is a certified guide for both climbing and horse riding. He is a geographer and specialist in ecotourism and will share his passion of mountains, horses and outdoor sports with you.

Whilst Sylvain normally guides this ride it may be possible that another member of his team guides and he works with the logistic team.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

This trail is suitable for fit and experienced riders, confident at all paces riding outdoors. Please note that it may be necessary to lead your horse on foot on some parts of the trail.

Riders over 80 kg / 12.5 st / 176 lbs, please contact us before booking.

PACE

The pace is varied and there are opportunities for trots and canters when the terrain allows for it. You may have to lead your horse on foot on some parts of the trail.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You are responsible for your own horse, you will groom, tack and untack your horse as well as water and feed it as shown by the guide.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

This trail takes place mainly in the mountains so you need to be riding and physically fit and able to walk on foot when the terrain dictates. You must be able to get on and off unassisted several times a day. The terrain can be tricky to navigate and you must be comfortable in and out of the saddle. You should also be ready for unpredictable weather changes. Previous trail riding experience over several days and in a mountainous environment is requested. This ride is better suited to adventurous riders.

The back-up vehicle will not be able to reach certain sections of the trail and you will rely on pack mules to carry your belongings.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Water bottle holders are provided along with saddle bags.

Comfortable English tack.

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

Overnight will either be camping or staying in a gite or shepherds refuge. Picnics are cold and carried in bags. The evening meal is either cooked by your host or by attendants.

MEALS

Picnic lunches are cold and carried in saddle bags.

Evening meals are cooked by your hosts and guides.

There will be supplement to pay if you have any specific diet (vegetarian, gluten free, etc). Please see dates and prices.

CLIMATE

The region can experience different weather patterns.

In the foothills of the Ariège valley towards Tarascon and Pays de Sault the weather is mediterranean, with hot and sunny weather likely.

In the Pyrenean valleys the weather is more volatile with the possibility of storms and high temperature differences between day and night.

Rain can be possible all year round, particularly on the northwest facing slopes and snow is common above 1,000m.

TIPS

In France it is customary to tip - usually this is by rounding up the price when you are satisfied with the service in a restaurant. You may wish to leave a tip with the guide who can split it amongst all members of the team.

PACKING LIST

Please keep in mind this is an altitude trail and the weather can be unpredictable - anything from hot sunshine to hail and even snow. Please be

prepared and bring appropriate clothing and gear.

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 for protecting your neck and face from the sun and dust

Upper body

- Thermals in case of cold weather
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun, which can be fierce at altitude
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Warm polar fleece or equivalent (plus a spare in case one gets wet)
- Waterproof jacket - rain can be difficult to predict and it's better to be prepared. In the mountains the weather can change quickly

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
- Waterproof over trousers
- Casual clothes for the evenings (jeans or walking trousers)
- Thermals (can also be used as nightwear)

Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short hiking boots (with a heel) with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged
- Lightweight shoes or trainers for the evenings
- Several pairs of warm socks
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun, wind or rain whilst riding

Nightwear

- Sleeping bag with a minimum comfort rating of minus 5 celsius - you may find minus 8 - minus 10 more comfortable.
- Sleeping bag liner adds an extra layer - either cotton, fleece or silk
- Self inflating mattress such as Thermarest for comfort
- Pyjamas or tracksuits or thermals for sleeping in

Other useful items

- Towels (camping towels pack lighter and dry quicker)
- Swimsuit - for swimming/bathing in rivers
- Small backpack for accessing items required during the day (carried by support crew)
- 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 at night - bring spare batteries and bulbs
- Water bottle (2 litres or 2 x 1 litre)
- Wet Wipes or equivalent (for when washing facilities aren't available)
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)

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.
- Swiss army knife or equivalent

In your hand luggage

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

Medical kit

- Sunscreen and lip balm - should 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...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops

- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Re-hydration sachets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel

Our Recommendations

- Please don't take a hard sided suitcase. Your luggage should be soft sided with a capacity of 60-80 litres. We recommend taking a backpack or similar. The luggage limit on the ride is 15kg per person.
- 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 (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!
- You should carry a copy of your passport and insurance policy with you

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](#) .