



Languedoc Roussillon - Mountain Pass Trail

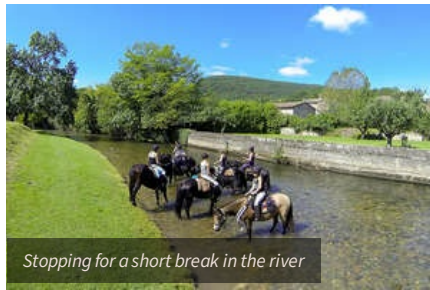
LANGUEDOC ROUSSILLON - CEVENNES

Trail riding in the heart of the French Pyrenees high on the Aillou plateau. Follow streams, ride past lakes and grazing herds, and canter along plateaus in the wild high mountain landscapes. On the backs of the local **Meren and Castillon horses** take in the unique flora and fauna of the region and swim with your horses in the clear waters of Lake Puyvalador. Experience technical ascents and stunning views in altitudes of over 2000 metres.

Trail Riding	 8 days/ 6 days riding	 From £1,248	
---------------------	--	--	---



Crossing a watercourse



Stopping for a short break in the river



Stunning mountain trails in the Pyrenees

ITINERARY

Highlights

- Experience riding Meren and Casillon horses local to the region
- Explore the small mountain villages of the Pyrenees and the Aillou plateau
- Discover the unique flora and fauna of the high mountains - chamois goats, pine martens, red squirrels, vultures etc.
- Have the chance to swim with your horse in the mountain lake of Puyvalador

Day 1 — 1 : HOME - CAMURAC - No riding

You will fly into Toulouse where you will be collected and transferred to your gite. Your flight needs to arrive before 14:00. There should be time to meet the horses before having dinner with your guide.

Alternatively you can travel by train to Ax les Thermes from where you will be collected at 17:30.

Day 2 — 2 : CAMURAC - BELVIS - 4 hours riding

Your first day's ride will see you heading west, crossing the steep grasslands of the Languerail plateau. The first night will be spent in a gite in Belvis.

Day 3 — 3 : ESPEZEL - MIJANES - 5-6 hours riding

You will ride from the Plateau of Sault across the verdant valleys of Rébenty and Rodome before descending to Campagna de Sault. Following a rocky path around the top of the l'Aude gorge, you will head towards Rouze and you will spend the night at a hotel in Mijanès - a village nestled between Pic de Balbonne, Roc Blanc and Pic de la Camisette.

Day 4 — 4 : MIJANES - MADRES MASSIF - 5-6 hours riding

Riding to Quérigut, a village dominated by the imposing ruins of Quérigut castle, you will then follow a path around the Neck of Hares and onto the high

plateau of Capcir. You will hopefully have the opportunity to swim with your horse in Lake Puyvalador. After re-mounting and riding up the Madres Massif, you will set your camp up for the evening.

Day 5 — 5 : MADRES MASSIF - LES ANGLES - 5 hours riding

Looking out across the glorious view of the Capcir Plateau and Confluent valley, you will ride downhill towards Les Angles plateau. There should be plenty of opportunity for some great canters along the way.

Day 6 — 6 : LES ANGLES - BOUILLOUSES - 5 hours riding

The day's ride will take you to Lake Bouillouses (2,016 m) via Lake Aude. As you leave the grassy plateaus of Capcir behind, you will start to encounter some very high mountain trails. The riding will become increasingly technical as you begin your ascent.

Day 7 — 7 : LES BOUILLOUSES - PORTE PUYMORENS - 5-6 hours riding/1hour walking

Climbing higher and higher into the mountains - you will be at altitudes of over 2,000 metres - you will reach Carlit, with its beautiful view of Étang du Lanoux, on the Spanish border. You will ride alongside high mountain streams, with herds grazing in their summer pastures, before negotiating a very steep downhill passage (more than an hour walking, leading your horse) to Porte Puymorens. You will spend the night in a gite.

Day 8 — 8 : PORTE PUYMORENS - HOME - No riding

After breakfast, you will be taken to Porte Puymorens railway station or Toulouse airport for your flight back to the UK. Your flight must take off after 15:00.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
13/07/2024	20/07/2024	£1,248	Guaranteed departure
10/08/2024	17/08/2024	£1,248	Open

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 4:00 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 Ax-les-Thermes at 5:30 pm. Please note departure train station on the way back is Porte Puymorens (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

ACCOMMODATION

Mountain refuge accommodation

2 person tents

MEALS

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

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Supplementary charge to accommodate special diets - see above

Beverages and personal extras

TRANSPORT

Airport transfers from Toulouse

International flights that we can book for you upon request

EXTRAS

Tips to the local team

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

The horses are local Meren mountain horses, chosen for their ability to navigate the tough terrain. They will take you safely through the region as they live outside high up in summer pastures as a herd, before being brought in to work. The horses are ridden in English saddles.

Guide & local team

The owner of horse 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 for mountains, horses and outdoor sports with you.

Whilst Sylvain normally guides this ride it may be possible that another member of his team guides you while 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, canters and gallops 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 predominantly in the mountains, 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.

Previous trail riding experience over several days is requested. This ride is better suited to adventurous riders.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

English tack, very comfortable brand of saddles.

Water bottle holders are provided along with saddle bags.

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 accommodation will either be camping, staying in gites or shepherds refuges. Picnics are cold and carried in your bags. The evening meal is either cooked by your host or by attendants at the refuge.

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 changing 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 is 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

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 boots 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 hold 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 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!
- You should carry a copy of your passport and insurance policy with you

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](#) .