



Equestrian holiday in Crete

GREECE

Blessed with almost 300 days of sunshine a year, Crete is a great **riding holiday** destination! This centre-based holiday is ideal for riders who want to enjoy Crete in the saddle from the comfort of a lovely equestrian hotel. You will ride in a different direction every day, exploring the island and enjoying a warm Cretan welcome.

Centre based holidays	8 days (6 days riding)	From £1,180		Open to non-riders
-----------------------	------------------------	-------------	--	--------------------



Riding holiday in Crete



Centre-based holiday in Crete



Immerse yourself in the local culture

ITINERARY

Highlights

- Stay in comfortable accommodation and enjoy the delicious Greek and Cretan cuisine
- A great introduction to trail riding
- Explore the beautiful Cretan countryside, through olive groves and over rolling hills
- Suitable for intermediate and competent riders

Day 1 — 1 : HOME – HERAKLION

Hotel Velani

Fly to Heraklion in Crete. Flights are not included but we can assist with this on request. If you require airport transfers (the hotel is 45 min away from the airport), this can be arranged – please see dates and prices.

Welcome dinner with the rest of the group and night at the hotel. Note for late arrivals: dinner will be taken to your room (simple, cold meal).


Day 2 — 2 : LYTTOS - Approx 3 hours riding

Hotel Velani

For your first day in the saddle in Crete, you ride uphill to visit the archaeological site of the ancient city of Lyttos - stop a moment to enjoy the views over the valley of Kastelli. The city of Lyttos (meaning high, tall), was a strong Minoan town and a rival of Knossos. The city was even mentioned by Homer as Lyktos. It had an aqueduct, theatre and acropolis. Unfortunately nowadays little can be seen of this, as excavations of the site have yet fully taken place. The site has two Byzantine churches. After some time spent exploring the city, you ride along the remains of the Roman aqueduct back to the equestrian hotel.


Please note: the itinerary is given for indicative purposes only and the rides can be done in a different order.

Day 3 — 3 : MOCHOS - Approx. 3 hours riding

 Hotel Velani


Today is an active ride in a northerly direction, past the Byzantine church. You ride up the hills dotted with olive trees until you reach the Mochos Plateau. The paths open up and offer opportunities for a faster pace over the plateau. Ride back through the village of Avdou.

Day 4 — 4 : LAKE APOSELEMIS - Approx. 4 hours riding

 Hotel Velani


Ride through the village of Avdou up the hills of Sfendili. You are surrounded by the Cretan countryside, enjoying views over the Dikti peaks and the Psiloritis Mountains. You then ride down to Lake Aposelemis and follow the water to the deserted village of Sfendily, riding back to the hotel for a well-deserved rest and perhaps a swim!

Day 5 — 5 : AGIA FOTEINIE - 2-3 hours riding

 Hotel Velani

A spectacular climb up the mountain offering excellent views over the Langada valley with Lake Aposelemis. You ride through Kerm Oak forest to visit the mysterious Church of the Saint Fotini, hidden deep within a cave.

Day 6 — 6 : KERA - 5 hours riding

 Hotel Velani

You ride through the gorge of Gonies (Rosas Gorge) to start your spectacular climb to the Greek village of Kera at 800 meters. In spring time on the walls of the gorge you can spot the vulture nests. In Kera, you stop for lunch at Restaurant Niki, before starting your decent along the springs of Kera. Another beautiful day riding in Crete.

Day 7 — 7 : CYPRESS RIDE - Approx. 3 hours riding

 Hotel Velani

Your last day exploring Crete on horseback. You ride through a very quiet, beautiful valley full of olive groves, along a small cypress forest. There are some steep ascents today before you reach the hotel.

Day 8 — 8: HERAKLION - HOME

Transfer to Heraklion airport (payable locally) after breakfast.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
01/09/2024	08/09/2024	£1,250	Open
08/09/2024	15/09/2024	£1,250	Open
15/09/2024	22/09/2024	£1,250	Open
22/09/2024	29/09/2024	£1,250	Open
29/09/2024	06/10/2024	£1,250	Open
06/10/2024	13/10/2024	£1,250	Open

13/10/2024	20/10/2024	£1,250	Open
20/10/2024	27/10/2024	£1,250	Open
27/10/2024	03/11/2024	£1,250	Open
03/11/2024	10/11/2024	£1,180	Open
10/11/2024	17/11/2024	£1,180	Open
17/11/2024	24/11/2024	£1,180	Open
22/12/2024	29/12/2024	£1,250	Open
29/12/2024	05/01/2025	£1,250	Open
05/01/2025	12/01/2025	£1,250	Open

Price details

- Flights or transportation to your destination (Heraklion) 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 standard room during the ride. Room upgrades are available on request – please contact us.

- Groups are composed of a minimum of 2 riders and a maximum of 8 international riders, plus guides.

- There is no single supplement if you are willing to share a room with another guest of the same sex. To guarantee your own room there is a single supplement of £210/€245/\$270 (2023/2024).

- Transfers can be pre-booked from Heraklion airport and are payable locally directly to the driver: around €55-60 each way per car (max 4 riders).

- Accompanied minors are welcome from 12 yo, provided they match the riding requirements.

- Rider weight limit: 90 kilos, 14st11lbs. Heavier riders please contact us.

- You can avail of the hotel's facilities (jacuzzi and massages) starting from €50 per hour, payable locally.

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

ACCOMMODATION

Double or twin room at the hotel

MEALS

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

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

Saddle bags

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverages and personal extras

TRANSPORT

International flights

EXTRAS

Tips to the local team

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

TRANSPORT

Airport transfers payable locally. See above

EXTRAS

Trip extensions or additional activities

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

You ride on Arabians, Thoroughbreds and warmbloods – hardy horses with great stamina, used to long-distance riding and difficult terrain. They are always eager to go, sure-footed and easy to handle. The horses are ridden English style, but are easily ridden on a long rein. They vary in height and each has their own temperament, so there is a horse for any sort of rider!

Guide & local team

Sabine (of Dutch descent) and Manolis Fragkakis (Greek), are the owners of the stables and have been welcoming guests on riding holidays since 1997, building the hotel in 2006. Vladimir and Beau complete the team. Your guides will speak English (and Dutch, if led by Sabine). Safety and horse welfare is their priority - the stables are an ISO 9001:2008 certified yard, with a standardisation for safety and stable management.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be at least an intermediate rider, capable of riding a sensible horse at all paces in the outdoors.

There is a rider weight limit of 90kg /198lb/14st.

PACE

You will be riding at all three paces. When riding in the more mountainous areas the pace will be slower for obvious safety reasons, and you may have to dismount and lead your horse on foot.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

All riders are responsible for grooming and tacking their own horse. You can also help the team feed and water the horses when required.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

No particular requested experience other than being a rider of at least an intermediate level and confident riding outdoors. On some occasions you will be asked to dismount and lead your horse on foot over hills and rocky terrain.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

English and trail riding saddles. Saddlebags are provided.

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

The accommodation on this stationary riding holiday is at Velani country hotel. The 12 en-suite rooms are spacious, with beautiful views over the valley. All rooms have a large private balcony or patio with garden. There is a large infinity pool as well as a separately located children's pool. WiFi is available.

Laundry service is available but there is a charge for this.

MEALS

The restaurant at the main hotel only uses fresh ingredients and local products. The restaurant has its own vegetable, herb and fruit gardens providing guests daily with new seasonable ingredients. Some of the local produce used in the restaurant also includes meat from free-ranging goats and sheep from neighbouring farms, cheese made by the local shepherd, homemade raki and honey from a local beekeeper.

Lunches can be picnic lunches carried in your saddlebag.

CLIMATE

Crete, the largest Greek island, has a Mediterranean climate, with mild, rainy winters and hot, sunny summers.

The bulk of the rain falls from October to March; in summer, it almost never rains. In winter, but also in spring, it can snow in the mountains, the highest of which is Mount Ida, 2,456 meters (8,058 feet) high.

In winter, from December to mid-March, temperatures are generally mild. For its southern location, Crete is less exposed to cold spells than other Greek islands, however, the temperature can drop at night. Springs and summers are warm to hot (up to 30°C), and very sunny with virtually no rain.

TIPS

Tips are left to your discretion and are not mandatory. We recommend around €40/£35 per rider for the week, to be divided between the team.

PACKING LIST

Head

- A riding helmet: we recommend that you take your own to ensure a correct fit. Helmet makers (GPA, HKM, LAS Helmets, Lamicell, Troxel, Equithème) now offer horse-riding helmets that are ventilated, strong, light and comfortable.

- Sunhat for when not riding

- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding

Upper body

- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun or extra warmth

- T-shirts

- Lightweight fleece or jumper

- In the spring and fall: waterproof jacket (made from Goretex or equivalent) waterproof and breathable

Lower body

- 2 pairs of 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 evenings (jeans or walking trousers)

- A swimming costume

- Non-irritant cotton or synthetic underwear

Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend short boots with half 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

Other useful items

- Water bottle (1.5 litres or 2 equivalent)
- Toiletries
- Protein or cereal bars for the longer stretches of riding
- Small plastic bags for your rubbish
- Ear plugs (may be useful)
- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery

Medical kit

Make sure any allergies (to medication or otherwise) and clearly stated in your medical kit

- Any medication you regularly take
- Painkillers
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhea medication
- Vitamin C tablets
- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent
- Eye drops
- Hydrating/ soothing cream
- Plasters
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc..
- 10cm wide bandage
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- 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, lip balm etc)
- A soothing cream may be useful to treat areas irritated by long hours in the saddle
- 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!
- Keep a copy of your passport and insurance details with you.

In your hold luggage

- Any liquids, such as shampoo, moisturiser, deodorant over 100 ml and all bottles can be decanted into small, clear, plastic Ziplock bags. We recommend biodegradable washing products where possible.
- 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.

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](#) .