



Horseback Adventure and Cattle Drive in Colombia

COLOMBIA

Set off **on horseback in Colombia** and discover a fascinating country with both cultural and natural wonders. On this horseback riding adventure, you will explore breathtaking landscapes and learn about local lifestyles, staying among the **Llaneros, the region's cattle herders**. This exclusive itinerary is designed for those who love to explore. Experience the true essence of **Latin America** with this authentic journey. An incredible adventure to uncover all the diverse facets of **Colombia on horseback!**

Trail Riding	⌚ 12 days, 9 riding	📅 From £3,347	🏠🏠🏠🏠
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ITINERARY

Highlights

- Discover the diverse landscapes of Colombia: plains, mountains, waterfalls, and tropical forests.
- Enjoy four days in the Llanos: cattle gathering and sorting on a hato (traditional ranch).
- Ride Anglo-Arab and Criollo cross-breed horses.
- Opportunity for a challenging horseback trail, with some rides between 20 and 30 km (up to 8 hours in the saddle).
- Join a ride exclusive to Equus, accompanied by Christophe Leservoisier, owner of Equus Journeys.
- Make the most of this new and very special adventure, which is open to skilled and adventurous riders who are not deterred by the uncertainties of a new expedition.

Day 1 — 1: ARRIVAL IN BOGOTÁ - No riding

Arrival in Bogotá. (Please note that international flights are not included in the price, but can be booked upon request). Transfer to hotel. Dinner not included.

Day 2 — 2: BOGOTÁ TO MACHETÁ - No riding

Today you can enjoy a relaxing morning by the pool before being transferred to Machetá (approx a 2.5 hour drive) at around 2:00 pm. The journey follows the historic Camino Real (royal road), a cobblestone route built by Indigenous peoples and enslaved workers during the Spanish colonial period. This road was used for centuries to connect the highlands to the Casanare Llanos. Lunch is not included today.

Day 3 — 3: MACHETÁ - CHIVOR - 5-7 hours riding

After a brief visit to a coffee plantation near the hotel, you will continue your descent into the Tenza Valley, following the Camino Real. This route offers spectacular views of the mountains and the towns of Guateque, Somondoco, Guayatá, and Almeida, a region renowned for its emerald mines. Lunch will be hosted by locals in the countryside, and will be traditional home-made cuisine. In the afternoon, after walking the horses in the Somondoco River, you will arrive at a beautiful hotel near the Chivor Dam, where you can relax and enjoy the swimming pool.

Day 4 — 4: CHIVOR - SABANALARGA - 7-9 hours riding

Today, you'll cross the 15 tunnels of the Chivor Dam by car (the horses are transported by truck), enjoying stunning views of the dam and its surroundings. The ride begins on an old trail through tropical forest, once used by guerrillas and paramilitary groups to avoid the main roads. Lunch will be served at a local household, where the host will share fascinating stories of the region's turbulent past. In the afternoon, you'll cross the Upía River on horseback and arrive at a farm / hato. There, you'll enjoy a delicious local meal (ternera a la llanera, slow-cooked beef) while listening to live music performed by local musicians. Tonight you sleep either in a 'chinchorro' (traditional hammock) or in dormitory-style room.

Day 5 — 5: SABANALARGA - MONTERREY - 7-9 hours riding

You'll head towards Monterrey, crossing a picturesque valley and stopping for lunch by a river with a natural swimming pool. In the afternoon, you'll cross hills that separate you from the vast eastern plains that stretch all the way to Venezuela (approx. 400,000 km²). These hills offer one of the most breathtaking views of the entire trip. By the evening, you'll arrive at a comfortable hotel with a beautiful pool.

Day 6 — 6: MONTERREY - TAURAMENA - 7-9 hours riding

Today, you'll ride across the Casanare Savannas, leaving behind the mountains of the previous days. The pace will quicken as you enter the plains, where you'll begin to spot wildlife and vegetation typical of the Llanos. Tonight you will stay at the hato.

Day 7 — 7: TAURAMENA - WILDLIFE OBSERVATION - 4-8 hours riding

Rise early to witness a magnificent sunrise over the Llanos. After breakfast, you'll head out on a ride and have the chance to observe various species of wildlife, including forest bears, deer, wild boars, capybaras, caimans and a variety of birds. The day concludes with another night at the hato, enjoying the company of the llaneros, or cowboys of the Colombian plains. You'll sleep either in a hammock or in a dormitory room with others.

Day 8 — 8: TAURAMENA - CATTLE WORK - 4-8 hours riding

Today you'll join the llaneros and help with their daily cattle herding routine. Sleep again in a hammock or in a dormitory with others.

Day 9 — 9: TAURAMENA - CATTLE WORK - 4-8 hours riding

Another day with the llaneros, continuing to discover their unique lifestyle and the surrounding wildlife. Sleep again in a hammock or in a dormitory with others.

Day 10 — 10: TAURAMENA - CATTLE WORK - 4-8 hours riding

A final day with the llaneros, immersing yourself further into their daily lives and helping with cattle herding. Sleep again in a hammock or in a dormitory with others.

Day 11 — 11: TAURAMENA - HATO BARLEY - 3 hours riding

Today, you'll travel to a second hato (approx. a 2-hour drive), venturing deeper into the Llanos, an increasingly wild and untamed environment. In the afternoon, embark on a horseback safari to discover the lush local flora and fauna. In the evening, you may have the chance to hear the gentle music played by the llaneros after a hard day's work. For your last night on the ranch, prepare for very basic accommodation. You'll sleep in traditional Colombian hammocks or in dormitories for 5 to 6 people.

Day 12 — 12: HATO BARLEY - YOPA - BOGOTÁ / CARTAGENA - No riding

In the morning, you'll head to Yopal to visit local saddle-making workshops and chinchorro crafting studios. Lunch and dinner are not included today. Please note: As Yopal is a small city, morning activities may vary depending on flight schedules and availability.

Two options are available for the next part of your journey:

- Extension: Extend your trip with a few days in the Rosario Islands off the coast of Cartagena. From Yopal, you'll take a flight to Cartagena and spend the night in a bed-and-breakfast.

- Return: Fly directly from Yopal to Bogotá, where you can choose stay in a bed-and-breakfast for the night before flying home (not included in the price) or you can take a connecting flight this evening to Europe.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
26/02/2025	09/03/2025	£3,347	Guaranteed departure

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 in hotels. For the rest of the ride, guests will share dormitory-style accommodation.
- Groups are composed of a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 international riders, plus guides.
- To guarantee your own room in hotels on days 1, 2 and 4 there is a single supplement of US\$50, payable locally and subject to availability. There is no single supplement if you are willing to share a hotel room with another guest of the same sex.
- Riders should arrive by 2:00 pm on day 1. If you wish to arrive a day earlier, we can book a hotel room for you in Bogotá for an additional \$65 / €60 / £50 per person.
- Children aged 12 and above are welcome on the ride, as long as they are accompanied by an adult and meet the riding level required.
- The weight limit for this ride is 90 kg / 14st 2 / 198lbs.

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

2 English/Spanish-speaking horse guides

LOGISTICS

1 horse equipped with saddle and bridle per rider

INLAND TRANSPORT

Support vehicle and driver

Airport transfers

All ground transportation according to the itinerary

Domestic flight from Yopal to Bogotá

ACCOMMODATION

6 nights in dormitories or hammocks

3 nights in hotels (in a shared double or twin room)

MEALS

Full board during the ride (excluding arrival day, lunch on day 2, lunch + dinner on day 12)

Non-alcoholic beverages with meals

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Alcoholic beverages and personal extras

All meals on arrival day, lunch on day 2, lunch + dinner on day 12

TRANSPORT

International flights, taxes and passenger fees

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

Visa

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

Single room supplement - to be paid locally

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

The stable has 35 horses, 20 of which are used for trail rides. They include Anglo-Arab horses, and Anglo-Arabs crossed with Colombian Criollos. They are energetic and hardy, and range in size from 1.40 to 1.60m, with some suitable for less confident riders. In the second part of the trip, you will switch to working Criollo horses.

Guide & local team

Two equestrian guides will accompany you during the ride. They speak Spanish and English, and some have basic knowledge of French or German.

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

You need to be an experienced rider who is physically fit and used to riding outdoors across varied and tough terrain for many hours. You must be comfortable and competent in all three paces: walk, trot and canter. The weight limit for this ride is 90 kgs / 14.2 st / 198 lbs.

PACE

This ride is mostly at a walk (especially during steep climbs and descents). There will be some trots and canters when the terrain permits.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

Your horse will be tacked up for you by the guides, but you are welcome to assist.

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

You should be very physically fit for this ride, and expect long days in the saddle, sometimes 8-9 hours. Previous experience of riding a trail for several days is an advantage. Your luggage will be transported by a support vehicle during the trail.

Visiting a new country offers the opportunity to meet other cultures with different mentalities, therefore it is important to accept these differences and respect the local way of life.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

English or McLellan saddles. Saddlebags and a sheepskin seat saver can be provided on request. Equus Journeys strongly recommends that you wear a riding helmet. Please bring your own to ensure a correct fit.

COMFORT

3 nights in hotels.

6 nights in hatos (traditional ranches), sleeping in dormitory-style rooms or in chinchorros (local hammocks with mosquito protection).

Accommodation is rustic and Columbian in style. Showers are available daily, though hot water may not always be provided. Air conditioning is available in some rooms but not in others.

Single rooms are available in hotels only, and are subject to availability. See dates and prices.

MEALS

All meals are provided during the trip (except lunches and dinners on 1, 10 and 11). Breakfast is served at hotels or eaten with locals. Lunch is either a picnic carried in saddlebags or a home-cooked meal with locals. Dinner is enjoyed at a restaurant or with locals, depending on the day's accommodation. Alcoholic beverages are not included.

CLIMATE

The average temperature is 20°C (68°F) during the day, and cooler at night. Colombia has no distinct seasons, but tropical downpours are frequent year-round. The rainiest months are April, May, October, and November. In the llanos region, the dryer months are normally from December to March. However, the weather can be unpredictable, and it is recommended that travellers bring a raincoat.

The weather in Columbia also depends on the altitude. Typically, the higher the region, the cooler the weather. The ride will be mostly in 'Los Llanos Orientales' (the Eastern Plains) region -- starting at around 2000 metres above sea level on day 1, and descending to around 300 / 400 metres above sea level after day 2, with an average temperature of around 25-35 °C.

TIPS

Tips are welcomed. We would recommend around US\$50 to US\$100 per rider, to be shared between local guides and drivers.

PACKING LIST

Head

- A riding helmet is highly recommended. Manufacturers (GPA, HKM, LAS Helmets, Lamicell, Troxel, Equithème, etc.) now offer ventilated, sturdy and lightweight riding helmets. There are also protective shells to put under your hat (Ranch & Rider, Lexington Safety Products) or western helmet hats (Troxel).
- Cap or hat for the sun (essential).
- A bandana, scarf or neckerchief to protect the neck or face from dust and the sun.
- A pair of high-protection sunglasses.

Upper body

- Cotton T-shirts + long-sleeved shirts (for protection against the sun) or T-shirts made of quick-drying technical materials.
- 1 lightweight fleece or equivalent.
- 1 warm, waterproof and breathable jacket.

Legs

- 2 pairs of riding breeches / jodhpurs or long leather chaps.
- 1 pair of spare trousers (hiking or jeans or equivalent)
- 1 swimsuit (for possible swimming in lakes, washing in rivers)
- Underwear made of cotton or non-irritating synthetic materials

Feet and Hands

- 1 pair of lightweight walking shoes with gaiters (mini-chaps).
- 1 pair of trainers or equivalent lightweight shoes for the evening.
- 1 pair of lightweight gloves.
- Several pairs of socks.

Miscellaneous

- 80 - 100 litre travel bag, preferably a soft bag (front opening or backpack).
- 1x 1.5 litre water bottle or 2 x 1 litre bottles.
- Headlamp, spare batteries and bulbs.
- Toiletries.

- A Swiss army knife or equivalent (must go in checked luggage).
- Small plastic bags to throw in the bin or isolate your dirty / damp clothes.
- Earplugs may be useful.
- Camera (with a spare battery).
- Type A / B electrical adapter (identical USA).
- Bum bag so you have quick access to your belongings: tissues, lip balm, etc.

Medicines

Please write down any allergies to medications in your medicine bag.

- Personal medications.
- Aspirin or paracetamol (painkillers).
- Anti-diarrheals.
- High protection sunscreen for lips and skin.
- Eye drops.
- Moisturising cream.
- Plasters.
- Mosquito repellent cream and spray.
- Compeed for blisters.
- Soothing cream for intimate areas irritated by long hours on horseback.

General information:

- Check your cabin baggage weight and size restrictions. It should not contain any sharp objects (knife, scissors, file, nail clippers, etc.) and the quantity of liquids allowed per passenger is limited to 100ml per container.
- 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 also bring a copy of your passport/insurance in case you lose your documents. You can also save a copy into your mobile phone.
- If, in order to travel "light", you wash your clothes during the trip, choose biodegradable detergents.
- Take something to collect your toxic waste (batteries, aerosols, batteries, tubes of ointment, etc.) in order to bring them back to Europe where sorting is done well and efficiently.