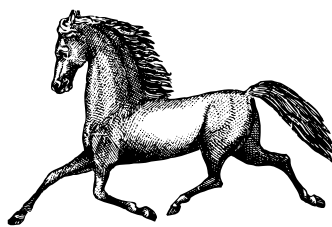


ACTIVE



RIDING TRIPS

IRELAND'S GALWAY AND CLARE TRAIL RIDE





Nestled in the foothills of the Slieve Aughty Mountains, your wonderful Irish sport horse or cob will take you on a fun and adventurous ride through the quintessential parts of Ireland.

Explore some of the dense forest land and lochs of western Ireland, including views of Holy Island, sheep spotted farmland neatly parceled out with low stone walls, ancient celtic tombs and celtic ring forts, the Burren and the Cliffs of Moher.

Passing through charming Irish villages, you will be introduced to wonderful Irish jigs as well as the chance to enjoy a rest and a pint of your preference. This is quintessential Ireland.



duration:
8 DAYS



2-8
MEMBERS



country
IRELAND



airport
GALWAY



accommodation
B&B



all meals
INCLUDED



Rate: \$2,330



Suggested ITINERARY

Day 1 Saturday

Arrival in Shannon Airport and transfer to the riding center. Transfer time from Shannon to Whitegate is approx. two hours. You will be staying here for the first four nights. On the arrival day you can just relax and recover from your journey, or take a stroll on the well mapped East Clare Walking Trail which is very nearby. For the more adventurous, there is also the possibility to go on a guided boat tour to the historical Holy Island with its monastic settlement of the 9th century (additional fee).

In the evening, you will get to know all your fellow riders for this week. You will have dinner in the tastefully restored 300-year-old farmhouse in the center by candlelight with an open turf fire.

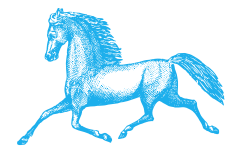
Day 2 Sunday

After breakfast you will be brought to the start of the trail, where your guide will introduce you to your horse. You can then get acquainted to your horse for the week by brushing and tacking it yourself - don't worry there are always lots of helping hands around you! You then leave for an easy ride into the surrounding peaceful scenery and easy ride across the areas of bog land. There you might see local farmers cutting and drying the turf in the traditional way. You finish the first days ride in one of the fields where the horses stay overnight and you are driven back to the guesthouse for lunch. The afternoon is at leisure.

Day 3 Monday

Today's ride brings you up over the hills of the Slieve Aughty Mountains with fascinating views over the majestic Lough Derg and River Shannon. Along the track you will be passing old farm ruins and miles of stone-walls and your guide will tell you about Ireland's most significant incident in history: About 150 years ago many farms and villages were left because of the Famine. This was the time of the severe potato disease, which destroyed, for a couple of years, the sole source of food supply for the rural and poor Irish peasant and his stock. In addition to that, a Typhus and Cholera epidemic further affected the disaster, leading to a flood of millions of people emigrating to other countries or starving to death.

A Neolithic dolmen - with the legendary name Oisín's and Grainne's Grave - beside the track proves that this area was already mystified about 5000 years ago. Much more recent (about 9th century) are the ruins of the monastic settlement on Holy Island which can be easily spotted by the typical round tower.



HOURS RIDING PER DAY

5-7 hours per day

PACE OF RIDE

50% walking

50% trotting and cantering



Suggested ITINERARY

Day 4 Tuesday

Leaving the sheltered pasture you head for the top of the hills overlooking endless woods and grazing land to the north, west and south. Long before you get there you can spot way below, the sandy shores of Lough Graney where you are heading. The beach invites you for a canter along the water and the trail goes right across the refreshing lake! The ride in the later afternoon takes you through the typical farmland of rural Ireland with its verdant green fields and the endless old stone walls surrounding the peacefully grazing sheep and cattle.

Day 5 Wednesday

Today's lovely wood tracks take you further westward overlooking Glandaria (the valley of the Kings) the wide fertile valley of the River Shannon, where hundreds of years ago Irelands' kings preferred to settle. After lunch near a typical mountain river you will cross the boggy uplands. County Clare unfolds all around you and in the distance you will see the rising hills of the famous Burren National Park. On a clear day you will even get the first glimpse of Galway Bay. This afternoon your horse will be transferred by lorry across the busy valley to tomorrow's start at the Mullaghmore Mountain in the Burren. You will be staying tonight in the charming village of Corofin with its countless pubs.

Day 6 Thursday

The totally different and unique scenery of the world renowned Burren will accompany you for the next two days. The moon like

landscape of this limestone area bears not only an immensely colorful flora and fauna with a large number of very rare species, but also reveals a stunning variety of pre-historic settlements. Dolmens and Wedge Tombs line up next to Norman stone fort ruins and Celtic ring forts. Close to a fu-lacht fiadh, an ancient cooking site, you will enjoy your lunch. It is amazing how many eye-catching sites this landscape offers.

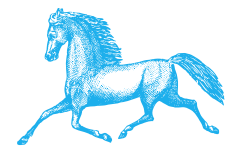
The next two nights you will be staying in the Lisdoonvarna area, which is famous for the traditional music in the pubs.

Day 7 Friday

Today you head westward through the Burren, learning about the impressive Poul nabrone Dolmen, and the extensive - and dangerous - cave systems in this special area. You will rest for lunch overlooking the story telling rocky landscape. After the break the horses are led up the last hill for the breathtaking view over the Atlantic Sea, the famous Aran Islands and the rugged Connemara Mountains. The extremely rough shore of County Clare stretches out under you for the last gallop. In the glittering afternoon sunlight the impressive silhouette of the Cliffs of Moher rise in front of you. Near the ruins of the spooky looking Ballinalaken Castle you bid your horse farewell.

Day 8 Saturday

After breakfast you will be transferred back to the airport for your onwards journey.



BREEDS OF HORSES

Irish Sport Horses, Cobs and Gypsy Vanners

TYPE OF TACK

English cross county saddles with comfortable, deep seat and good knee rolls. Only a few western saddles – which must be requested in advance.



Rider REVIEWS



The ride was wonderful – after seeing similar areas of Ireland from a car in 2008, nothing compares to the up-close of riding through that beautiful landscape. **The horses were incredible – extremely well cared for, with excellent manners, sensitive to the leg, and sound minds and bodies!** I'm proud to say I did my first gallops on an Irish Cob! Bertie and Nicola have the logistics of that trip down to a science, and there the food at their place was incredible too! In short – loved it! Thanks for everything, Stacey – it was a blast! **Adrienne J.**



“We had a great time in Ireland – **beautiful scenery – great hospitality** (Bertie and Nicola were very gracious hosts), great food – both Heather and I loved our horses (Jasper and Nina). The day we crossed the lake was hot and sunny – that was a blast!! A most memorable vacation in every way – we’re already thinking about where we can ride next. Thank you again!!” **Glenda B.**



“Nicola and Bertie are exceptional hosts! Their many years of experience provide a seamless schedule that affords you the opportunity to truly relax and enjoy their **OUTSTANDING horses and beautiful countryside.** The delicious food, comfortable accommodations, amazing rides and overall experience were an exceptional value for the price we paid for the trip.” **Hollie G.**



Getting THERE



From Airport: Clients can be collected from Shannon Airport for 55€ per person each way. Drive to Whitegate is about 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Pick up from Shannon Airport meets at the sign posted “Meeting Point” in the arrivals lounge. Pick-up times are arranged ahead of time so if you need one, please alert us to your flight details. The driver will be carrying a sign with your name on it. Transfers are 55€ per person each way and can be paid directly to the driver.

From the Train Station:

The nearest train station is Birdhill for 35€ per person each way. Train schedules may be found at www.irishrail.ie/ and the rate is roughly 25€ per person each way.

From Bus Station: Clients can be collected from Ennis bus station for approximately 28€ per person each way. There is no charge for transfers from Whitegate bus station. Bus routes and time schedules may be found at www.buseireann.ie/. If you happen to be staying or

arriving in Dublin before coming on the ride, you can catch the www.kearnstransport.com – a private bus company from Dublin city (Cathal Brugha street) at 1PM (and for only 10€) to Portumna. It takes 3 hours and pick in Portumna can be arranged at 4PM (a 25 min drive to the riding centre for 15€).



ACTIVE RIDING TRIPS *The premier provider of equestrian vacations*

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