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Clew Bay Trail Ride

Weight limit: 90kg

Nearest airport: Knock

7 days / 6 nights / 5 days riding

The Clew Bay Trail Ride takes small groups of experienced riders along Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way through new and ever-changing landscapes of small villages, breathtaking sandy beaches, sea and off-shore islands, country lanes, mountain tracks and local heritage sites, stopping for a picnic along the way.



The Riding

Riders will explore small villages, country lanes, mountain paths, various sea and off-shore islands and, of course, the beautiful sandy beaches. You need not be an expert to ride this trail as great care is taken to ensure that each rider is matched with a suitable horse, however you should be able to ride securely and confidently at a walk, trot and canter in open country. This is a progressive ride with the pace varying from slow to fast depending on terrain and weather conditions.

Participants should be reasonably fit, we recommend you go riding a couple of times a week before coming on the trail.

Guides & Group sizes

You will be guided by Padraic Foy who personally leads out all of the trail rides and is a qualified instructor as well as an accomplished horseman.

The maximum number of riders in a group is 8.



Horses and Tack

The majority of trail horses have competition experience and have been started by your hosts on their stud. Featured breeds include Connemara ponies, Irish Sport Horses, Irish Draughts and Irish Cobs. Heights range from 13.2hh to 16.2hh. All the horses used for this ride have friendly temperaments and excellent stamina, making them ideal horses for the trail. All the horses will have their own individual English saddle and bridle fitted to them.

Accommodation & Dining

During the trail you'll be staying in a traditional Irish guesthouse in the bustling and vibrant town of Westport. Each morning you will be collected from your accommodation and driven to

the start point of that day's trail. All guesthouse bedrooms are en-suite and various breakfast options are available including Full Irish and continental. Special dietary requirements can be catered for.

As the accommodation is on a bed and breakfast basis this gives you the opportunity to choose from the many fine, award-winning restaurants in Westport for your evening meal. Picnic lunches on the trail consist of sandwiches, fruit, snacks, drinks etc. and can be tailored to individual needs.



Itinerary

Day 1

On arrival to Westport, check in to your accommodation which is where you will be staying for the duration of the trail. Explore the vibrant and bustling town with dinner in a local restaurant.

Day 2

Transfer to Drummindoo Stud to meet your host, your horse and the other riders. After an assessment ride in the indoor arena, riders and horses are transferred to the village of Aughagower. You'll ride through the villages of Curvey, Lankill and Knappagh Beg where a picnic is provided on the shores of Knappagh Lake, then on to Drumhill before returning to Aughagower via Peggy's Boreen. After riding there is a chance for riders to visit the round tower and monastic site which dates back to the 7th century.

Day 3

Today we start at the village of Formoyle. This takes us over a mountain pass, close to a megalithic burial site (one of many in the area), through the Carrowniskey River and on to the bog roads at Feenone. We then head for Carrowniskey beach where we can canter and gallop before returning to base.

Day 4

Today we start at Cloona just outside of Westport and ride towards the east side of Croagh Patrick (Ireland's Holy Mountain which has been a site of worship for over 3,000 years). This mountain path gives us a great view of Clew Bay. We ride through Prospect and picnic near the ruins of a holmestead which dates back to pre famine times. Then on to Teevnacroagha where we ride in the footsteps of St. Patrick (Ireland's patron saint) and Brackloon before finishing the day at Cloona.

Day 5

Today we start at the village of Culeen. This ride takes us to the west of Croagh Patrick, through quiet country lanes at Kilsallagh and Kinnock and then to bog roads at Dereen where we will have some long canters. We picnic on the bog and get to see the harvesting of the bog peat at close hand. We then return via a river crossing at Bellakip to finish the day at Culeen.

Day 6

For the final day of our trail we make our way to Doughmakeon to ride the beach at Carrowniskey before crossing the Carrowniskey river and on to Cross Strand. There are ample opportunities to gallop today with the coastline of Connemara in the distance. There are many standing stones in the area dating back to megalithic times. We ride along Cross Strand and Carrowniskey beach again before returning to our base to say goodbye to the horses. In the evening enjoy a farewell dinner with your host Padraic in one of Westport's restaurants.

Day 7

Depart after a final breakfast in your accommodation.

Price includes

- 5 full days of riding
- Trail riding horse and tack
- 6 nights in a hotel in Westport
- All breakfasts
- All lunches
- Daily transfers between accommodation and start of trail
- Services of guide

Not included

- Flights
- Airport transfers
- Evening meals

International flights & Airport transfers

Do not book flights until you have received the Booking confirmation email from saddletravel.com.

The closest airport is Knock. Transfers are also available from Shannon or Dublin airports.

Return Airport Transfers Per Vehicle (up to 8 people)

Dublin : 750 €, Shannon : 480 €, Knock : 140 €

Complimentary transfers from Westport Train Station and Bus Depot

Train from Dublin (Heuston) direct to Westport. Visit: www.irishrail.ie

Bus from Dublin, Shannon, Knock. Visit: www.buseireann.ie

What to bring

We recommend wearing your riding boots when travelling and carrying one set of riding clothing and your helmet in your hand luggage, so should your luggage not make it to the destination you'll still be able to ride.

Please use the packing list as a guideline, bearing in mind the time of year you are riding.

- Riding hat (available to borrow)
- Boots with a heel (available to borrow)
- Jodhpurs or other riding trousers
- A lightweight waterproof jacket
- Riding gloves
- Warm socks
- Fleece or lightweight jumpers suitable for layering
- Long-sleeved shirt or t-shirt
- Casual clothes for evenings
- Casual shoes for evenings
- Sun protection in the summer (suncream, lip balm)
- Sunglasses
- Camera
- A 2 point European plug

Climate

The west coast of Ireland has a temperate climate, generally summers are warm, rarely hot and winters are quite mild. In the summer, daylight can last for eighteen hours while in the winter nights are long and days are very short. The temperatures are generally around 10°C in spring and autumn, from 17°C to 20°C in summer and between 4°C and 7°C in winter. You should be prepared for wet weather at all times of year. The driest months are April to July.

Health

For health and vaccine recommendations, please consult your healthcare provider at least 8 weeks before your trip.

Country specific information can also be found at National Travel Health Network and Centre website: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>.

Travel documents

For entry requirements to Ireland for UK citizens, please visit the Foreign Travel Advice website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/ireland/entry-requirements>

For any other nationalities, please contact your local embassy to check entry requirements.

Having the correct travel documents is entirely your responsibility.

Currency & Tipping

The local currency in Ireland is Euros. Credit cards are widely accepted although you may want to bring some cash for purchasing smaller items.

Tipping your guide is at your discretion.

Riding declaration

“I am confident and in control at trot and canter out in the open and over uneven ground. I’m able to mount and dismount unaided and have a good level of current riding fitness. I do not suffer from any illness or disability that could prejudice my safety or that of others.”

Cancellation policy

Payment & Cancellation Terms saddletravel.com

Holidays are confirmed with a 20% non-refundable deposit. The full balance is due 56 days before the start date.

If you cancel your booking less than 56 days before the start date of your trail we are entitled to receive full payment, less refunds as follows:

42 days or more before booking date - 50%

30 days or more - 30%

less than 30 days - nil

Book with confidence – Covid Guarantee:

If a ride operator is closed/you are unable to travel – due to lockdown:

1/ The deposit is reissued as a rebooking voucher to rebook anytime.

2/ Any balance payment will be refunded to you in full within 1 week of departure date.

Insurance

All saddletravel.com customers are required to take out appropriate travel insurance that covers horse riding and holiday cancellation. Proof of insurance details will be required during the booking process.

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