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Pyrenees Mountain Trail

8 days / 7 nights / 6 on horseback

Maximum weight: 90 kg



Overview

A trail for riders in search of adventure on a choice itinerary in the heart of the Pyrenees, off the beaten track. Discover the Pic du Midi from its summer pastures via ancient muleteers' paths, small lakes and paths steeped in history. An itinerary full of delightful surprises and enchanting landscapes.

Riding & level

This holiday, combines adventure, serenity and local traditions, is an invitation to discover the Pyrenees in a different way. A timeless experience of nature, sharing and wonder.

This trail takes you along mountain trails to discover lush green valleys, enchanting lakes and breathtaking panoramas.

Throughout the trail you will be accompanied by two pack mules with provisions by the vehicle of intendance every two days minimum.

This ride is only for experienced riders. The trail combines lots of walking, trotting and galloping at least once a day, except on days 5 and 6, which are in the high mountains. With on average 5 to 7 hours on horseback per day. Max weight 90kg.



Guides & group size

Your guide Caroline has been traversing the Pyrenees since 2021 and holds a professional ATE (Tourism riding diploma). She holds a vast knowledge on the local flora, fauna and natural environment. Speaks French and English and ready to share her passion for this region of France.

4-8 riders maximum.

The horses

Ten or so horses available, plus two pack mules.

Merens, PRE, PSA, crossed, Mules

Size : from 145 to 160 hands

Accommodation and meals

Full board. Picnic lunches, usually consisting of :

A mixed vegetarian salad, bread, sausage, paté and served with cheese. A variety of desserts.

In the evening: hot meals in the accommodation, or a meal prepared by the support team. If the night is spent camping a meal will be prepared by the guide and his camp assistant.



Itinerary

Day 1: A Warm Welcome in an Idyllic Setting

Your adventure begins in Bagnères de Bigorre, where you'll be greeted warmly by the team and

the horses that will accompany you. The evening promises relaxation and conviviality in a charming inn filled with authenticity.

Day 2: First Gallops in the Baronnies

After selecting your equine companion and preparing your gear, set off to explore the foothills of the Baronnies. Cross the Adour Valley and ascend the trails leading to the majestic Casque du Lhéris. End the day under the stars, either in a bivouac or a traditional mountain hut, for a full immersion in the natural beauty of the Pyrenees.

Day 3: A Natural Balcony Overlooking the “Little Canada”

Soak in the beauty of the Adour Valley as you ascend toward the plateau of Payolle, nicknamed “Little Canada” for its postcard-perfect landscapes. The day concludes in a cozy inn, where you can unwind and enjoy a restful evening.

Day 4: Legendary Peaks and Passes

Embark on a journey through legendary passes and ridges, with stunning views of the Payolle Lake and the Adour Valley. This day offers exhilarating gallops and moments of quiet contemplation. Spend the night in the authentic mountain setting of Courtaou.

Day 5: Mountain Villages and Timeless Traditions

Step back in time as you explore the mountain pastures and ancient villages of the Four Véziaux. Discover traditions such as the “leytés,” ingenious systems for butter refrigeration. Continue your climb on forest tracks and old mule trails before spending a magical night in a bivouac near the Arizes cabin.

Day 6: A Challenging and Stunning Day Between Lakes and Peaks

Cross the Arizes Pass for a day filled with challenges and natural beauty. Sparkling lakes, towering ridges, and grandiose landscapes will guide you to a welcoming hamlet, where you'll enjoy a hearty meal in good company. Overnight at a comfortable hotel.

Day 7: Return Across the Plains of Esquiou

Your final day of riding takes you back to Bagnères de Bigorre through the famous plains of Esquiou, with a last glimpse of the majestic Pic du Midi. Treat yourself to a relaxing session at the thermal baths to wrap up this incredible adventure.

Day 8: A Memorable Farewell

After enjoying a final breakfast together, wander through the charming market of Bagnères or take one last relaxing dip in the thermal baths before heading home with a heart full of unforgettable memories.



Arrivals/departures and airport transfer.

Please do not book your flight tickets before receiving your booking confirmation email.

Please plan your flights/travel to/from as follows:

By plane: Lourde/Tarbes airport. Ideally, before 5pm to enjoy a first evening with your hosts and fellow riders. Transfers can be organised separately, please contact. WL Transport: <https://g.co/kgs/mXr6pSn>

By train: Tarbes station, then direct bus connection on line 960

By car: instructions will be sent to you following a confirmed booking.

What to bring

Equipment list

Footwear:

Rather than boots, we recommend :

- ☐ - Waterproof, breathable shoes or boots that are also comfortable for walking.
- ☐ - Mini-chaps to protect your calves.
- ☐ - A light pair of shoes for the evening.

Sun or rain? The weather is changeable in the mountains, so you need to be prepared for changes in the weather!

- ☐ A long, waterproof rain jacket
- ☐ rain trousers
- ☐ sunglasses
- ☐ sun cream
- ☐ We recommend the use of cotton trousers that may or may not be suitable for riding, but are still comfortable.
- ☐ We recommend light clothing that covers the arms and shoulders to prevent sunburn and sunstroke!

Clothing :

- ☐ A warm jacket
- ☐ Warm fleeces
- ☐ comfortable clothes for the evening
- ☐ Toiletries, including a towel
- ☐ A sleeping bag is essential for sleeping.

Small items of equipment :

- ☐ Torch for camping or bivouacs on some trips.
- ☐ Pocket knife
- ☐ Water bottle of at least 1.5 litres to ensure you have enough water for the day's riding.

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 the National Travel Health Network and Centre website: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>.

Travel documents

For entry requirements to France for UK citizens, please visit the Foreign Travel Advice website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/france/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 France is the Euro. We recommend bringing enough local currency for any additional drinks you may want to purchase such as wine with dinner.

Tipping is common when eating and drinking in France. Tipping your guide is at your discretion, gratuities are greatly appreciated.

Riding declaration

"I am an experienced rider and able to mount & dismount unaided. I have a firm seat and I'm confident and in control at all paces (including rising trot, light seat canters and gallops) 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

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Holidays are confirmed with 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.



Contact details

+44 1497 888 228 WhatsApp

trails@saddletravel.com

saddletravel.com

The Coach House

Clyro Court

Clyro

Hereford

HR3 5LE

Wales

CN: 05411320

<https://saddletravel.com>