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trail riding worldwide

Cappadocia Guesthouse Trail

Weight limit: 85kg / 13.3 stone (including riding gear)

Nearest airport: Kayseri

8 days / 7 nights / 6 days riding

Overview:

This wonderful, active riding adventure takes you right into the heart of Cappadocia national park. The unique moon-like landscape with its geological wonders of fairy chimneys, lush green canyons and vast high plateaux will take your breath away. Visit the famous underground cave villages full of history and experience the second to none Anatolian hospitality.



The Riding

Enjoy long canters across the open land and navigate your horse through challenging, rocky passages. The riding can be fast, technical and there are long canters of up to 15 minutes along the way. The riders may be asked to dismount and lead their horses for up to 20 minutes at a time, up and down steep and difficult terrain. Your efforts will be rewarded with magnificent views over Cappadocia and exhilarating canters and gallops across the high plateaux.



Level of Riding and Fitness

This trail is suitable for strong intermediate and experienced riders only. Riders must be able to tack up their horses and mount and dismount from the ground unaided. All participants must be competent, confident and in control at all paces over rough terrain and on a forward going horse. Good level of **current** riding fitness is required as you'll be spending 5-6 hours in the saddle each day.

Riders are expected to take care of their own horse during the trail. This includes tacking up and untacking each day, as well as, helping with feeding and watering the horses during overnight stops.

Guides & Group sizes

You will be guided by French-born Nicolas who has lived and organised horse riding tours in Cappadocia for over 15 years. He is very knowledgeable about the local history and culture. He is passionate about his horses and always has their well-being at heart.

Maximum number of riders in a group is 8.

Horses & Tack

The horses on this trail are well-trained Arabs and Arab-crosses. They are responsive, well-balanced, fit and trained with natural horsemanship methods, which makes them a pleasure to ride and handle. They live out in a herd all year round in big pastures.

The horses are ridden in snaffle or pelham bits. The saddles are either McClellan saddles or handmade by our partners in Turkey to fit their horses perfectly. Both saddles are ideally suited for trail riding and long hours in the saddle. Two saddlebags are fitted for each horse to carry daily items such as water bottles, sun cream and camera.

The weight limit is strictly 85kg, including riding gear. All participants will be weighed upon arrival. If you are between 80kg and 85kg, please enquire before booking as there are only a small number of horses who can take the weight.



Accommodation & Dining

During the holiday you will stay in picturesque, comfortable guesthouses located in ancient stone houses or in renovated cave houses, typical of the local architecture. Most guesthouses are run by families. You will have the time to visit Cappadocia's nicest villages and experience the legendary Turkish hospitality and the Anatolian way of life.

Accommodation is in double or twin rooms, often staying in the same guesthouse for two nights at a time. Single rooms are subject to availability and single supplement. Your luggage will be transported between overnight stops by the logistics vehicle.

Dinner and breakfast are served at the guesthouses. Guesthouses serve Anatolian cuisine for dinner comprising a starter, one or two courses and a dessert. Tea, coffee and mineral water are included. Cappadocia wine, other local alcoholic drinks, beer and soft drinks are available as an option. Lunch is either served in a restaurant or is a picnic lunch out on trail.

Allergies and special dietary requirements can be catered for with advance notice.



Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival

Arrival at Kayseri airport where you are met by your chauffeur and transferred to your guesthouse in Ortahisar, transfer time approx. 50 minutes. Meet your fellow riders and guide over dinner.

Day 2: Urgup - Akköy

Take a short drive to the ranch in the morning to meet your horse, and get acquainted with the tack. Your trail begins with a ride through lush vegetation along Uzengi canyon. The first long canter brings you to Avlak mountain with a magnificent view of Cappadocia. Canter on the high plateau brings you to lunch time with olives, humous, vegetables, cheeses, black bread, traditional yoghurt dish and Turkish black tea served in the heart of a tiny, green canyon. In the afternoon, ride through a huge valley passing the ghost village of Karain and enjoy more canters before arriving at Akköy village. Stop here overnight and enjoy a drink with the panoramic views over the valley.

Day 3: Akköy - Ayvali

Start the day with a canter through a high Anatolian plateau at 1600m. Dismount and lead your horse down a narrow path to lake Damsa. Today your lunch will be prepared on woodfire by local villagers. Pass by a valley of fairy chimneys and continue the afternoon ride on bare hills surrounding a lake. If the weather permits, you can take your horse for a swim in the lake. Canter along tracks of soft red clay and continue through a hidden canyon to arrive at the village of Ayvali where you will stop overnight.



Day 4: Ayvali - Mustafapasa - Ayvali

Start the day with wonderful canters which bring you to the underground village of Golgoli for a visit. Follow the hidden tracks along the phenomenal rock formations and ride through vineyards and orchards, surrounded by table top mountains. Arrival at Greek village of Mustafapasa for a visit on horseback. Climb up on another breathtaking high plateau and enjoy an exhilarating canter before setting back down to Ayvali for another great night's sleep. Depending on the season and forecast your lunch will either be served at Mustafapasa or in Ayvali.

Day 5: Ayvali - Uchisar

Today's ride offers varied scenery with narrow tracks, small canyons, farmed land and the wide-open spaces of Subasi. Sneak your way through narrow canyons and gallop on large sandy tracks. Stop and visit Kirkule, another underground village. Continue the ride by cantering through vineyards and over rolling hills. Pass by the fairy chimneys of Gomeda valley and arches of Gumuslu canyon before stopping for lunch at a local restaurant. The afternoon offers panoramic views over northern Cappadocia and the fairy chimneys of Uchisar as you climb up the "twin hills". Admire the multicoloured rock formations of the famous Pigeon Valley before reaching your guesthouse for the night.

Day 6: Uchisar - Uchisar

Optional hot-air balloon flight in the early morning: travel with the wind over Cappadocia's magical landscape at sunrise. (Not included in the price.)

Start your day by riding through the spectacular 4km long canyon of Green Valley. Make your way through the famous Love Valley and its gigantic rock formations, and continue through Sword Valley and Red Valley. This part of Cappadocia offers the most wonderful ensemble of geological formations with its beautiful troglodytic churches and colourful citadels. Lunch will be served in a cave cafe in an ancient monastery. In the afternoon explore further in the northern Cappadocia by riding through the Red and Rose Valleys. Take the winding paths of Shepherd's Valley and enjoy a long canter that brings you to Uchisar, your overnight stop.



Day 7: Uchisar - Urgup

Enter the beautiful canyon of White Valley, named after the colour of its rock. Ride through stone labyrinths and lush vegetation and pass by the impressive fairy chimneys. Crossing the picturesque village of Cavusin, you dismount for a short walk to reach the plateau of Boz daha. Take your horse for a canter on a ridge overlooking Red valley on one side and Devrent Valley on the other. Enjoy more long canters through the woods of the valley of Urgüp before reaching the rock formations, gardens and orchards of Pancarlik. The afternoon ride takes you back to the ranch where it's time to say goodbye to your trusty steed. After a tea on the terrace, you have an option to be driven to a Hamam (not included in the price) in Urgüp for a relaxing steam bath and massage. Short transfer back to your guesthouse and farewell dinner.

Day 8: Departure

After breakfast departure to Kayseri airport for your onward flight.

Prices 2021

Low season £1299

Mid season £1449

High season £1599

(Available April - October)

Single occupancy £245

The rides will be confirmed with a minimum of 2 riders.

Hot Air Balloon Flight

On Day 6 there is an option of taking a Hot Air Balloon Flight. Due to high demand the flights should always be booked in advance. Please let us know during the booking process if you wish to do a Hot Air Balloon Flight. Price: £155

Hamam

On Day 7 there is an option of getting a Turkish massage, Hamam. Due to high demand the Hamam should always be booked in advance. Please let us know during the booking process if you wish to book one. Price: £TBC

Price includes

- 6 full days of riding
- Trail riding horse, tack and saddlebags
- Shared accommodation
- Breakfasts
- Lunches
- Evening meals
- Tea, coffee and mineral water
- Airport transfers
- Local transfers
- Services of guide
- All arrangements for the duration of holiday

Not included

- Flights
- Optional activities (Hot Air Balloon, Hamam or entry to museums or open air sites)
- Drinks
- Tips



Flights & Airport transfers

The closest airport is Kayseri.

There are no direct flights from the UK to Kayseri so participants will have to change flights at Istanbul. The times of the flights may sometimes fall over night.

Please plan your flight to arrive at Kayseri between 8am and 7pm on the first day of your holiday.

Airport transfers are included in your holiday for flights arriving and departing between the set times. Airport transfers outside of these times are at additional cost.



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.

You should pack a couple of small, lighter bags rather than one large, heavy suitcase.

- Comfortable riding trousers / jodhpurs
- Your own well-fitted hard hat
- Riding boots/ walking boots with a good grip (riding boots with smooth sole are not recommended as they can be slippery when walking)
- Chaps
- Riding gloves
- Long sleeved shirts to protect against the sun and sand
- Warm fleece / jumper for the cooler nights
- Waterproof jacket
- Comfortable clothes for evening
- Lightweight shoes for evening
- Buff / bandana to protect you from the sun and sand
- Sun cream & lip balm
- Sunglasses & sunhat
- Bumbag
- Bathing suit
- Camera + extra batteries
- Insect repellent
- 2 Refillable, hardy 1 litre water bottles
- Personal medication
- Copy of passport & insurance details



Climate

Cappadocia has a semi-aride, continental climate with 29 days of rain per year on average. Chances are, you'll get lucky...

April in Cappadocia normally means sunny spring days with cold nights. Turning to May the weather can be more unpredictable, however, most of the time it is still sunny with trees in blossom. June, July and September are lovely summer months with warm weather, with August being the hottest months with temperatures reaching 35°C. In October the nature offers wonderful colours and beautiful light with colder nights.



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 Turkey for UK citizens, please visit the Foreign Travel Advice website: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/turkey/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 Turkey is Turkish Lira. Your holiday is fully inclusive so we recommend not bringing too much local currency. We recommend just bringing enough cash to have a bit of pocket money for when stopping at cafes along the way and souvenirs.

Tipping your guide is at your discretion.

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 over rough terrain (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."



Booking conditions

You are booking with the riding holiday operator, these are their booking conditions:

Travel insurance

- You must have appropriate travel and repatriation insurance to take part in our trails. Make sure your policy covers horseriding activities abroad. Your insurance details will be requested on arrival.

Riding ability & fitness

You must have an adequate riding level, level of fitness and body weight to take part in our trails. In doubt, please enquire.

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 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

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 booking process.



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