

Equirando 2021 in the Loire valley leaving from Maisons-Laffitte with Horse Holidays France 8 days - 7 nights

Join us this summer for the largest European meetup of equestrian tourism!

Equirando takes its name from the contraction of “equestrian” and “randonnée”, the French word for ramble or trek. With some 1000 participants from all over France and other countries (Belgium, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Morocco), it is the largest equestrian meetup in Europe and is tailor-made for those who enjoy trekking in the countryside.

Equirando offers the ideal opportunity to discover different regions on horseback, enjoying local gastronomy, tourism, culture and landscapes. Riders from all over France and Europe will take part in treks that last a minimum of three days, or can be as long as several weeks or even months, in order to reach this festive meetup of horse riders in the heart of the French countryside. Whether on horseback, astride a mule or even a donkey, or hitched to a carriage, each participant will make their own way to join the festivities and the festival site – which changes every year – at their own rhythm. Since its beginnings in 1961, the organisation of the festival has been entrusted every year to a local committee in a different region.

This year's Equirando is being organized in Lion d'Anger, in the Loire Valley and we will join this huge event starting our ride from Saumur. We will organize the transportation from Maisons-laffitte for all riders and horses.



Program

Day 1: Sunday 25th of July

07:00 Our meeting point is at the stables in Maisons Laffitte where we will meet the other participants and our horse, and enjoy our first breakfast together. We will load the horses in the truck, your luggage in the minivan and we will travel to our departure place located in Moulins. The van will follow us the whole time.

At the arrival around 1pm, we will unload the horses and have lunch. We will be heading to Saumur, our first stop where we will spend the night.

Saumur:



The first sight we get arriving in Saumur from any direction is the towering castle.

Built in the XIV century by the Dukes of Anjou, it will be successively: the town governor's place, a jail, and an arsenal.

Saumur is a pleasant town, built on both sides of the Loire river and includes Offard Island. Several bridges connect the north bank and the south bank of the Loire river.

The world tallest equestrian statue! A huge horse, named "Archeval" by Christian Renonciat was built in 1999 from welded steel tubes and is 12 meters high, is located at the entrance of the city. It is there to remind us that Saumur is the horse capital. During the whole year, there are lots of horse events, some really prestigious like the Cadre Noir show, horse driving competitions, equestrian vaulting and horse racing at the Verrie racing track.



Around 6pm: Arrival in Saumur.

Our horses will get the honor of spending the night at the **Cadre Noir!**

In 1825, to reinforce the mounted troops, a cavalry school was founded in Saumur with some of the famous civilian riders from Versailles, the Tuilleries and Saint Germain. The Cadre Noir was created as an elite school to train the student officers.

From the military instruction and the training of the horses to the different equestrian disciplines, shows and competitions, the Cadre Noir has represented through the centuries all the equestrian tenets in progress. They are used in many different schools, in Versailles for exemple and through many famous riders such as La Guérinière, d'Absac, d'Aure, Baucher, l'Hotte, Wattel, Danloux, Decarpentries, Margot, Durand...

This savoir-faire is shown in the dressage and techniques you can admire in their shows.

Impulse, grace, lightness, temerity, delicacy, portray the french traditional equestrian style, recognised as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by Unesco in November 2011.



The riders will meet in a charming and comfortable hotel below the castle's in Saumur.

After depositing our luggage in our rooms we will have time to relax next to the outside pool and for dinner we will head to a wine bar to share some good snacks while drinking a glass of local wine.



Day 2: Monday 26th of July

After a generous breakfast at the hotel, we will start this beautiful day with a private visit of the Cadre Noir.



We will then meet our horses in their stalls, and leave for a ride in the Natural Regional park of Loire-Anjou-Tourraine which will lead us to Gennes.

On our way, we'll make a stop at Langlois Chateau winery for a wine tasting. The vineyard overlooks Langlois chateau. 30 hectares are now being transformed into organic agriculture. We will taste some Saumur and Saumur-Champigny.

After getting back on our horses we will later stop for a pique-nique pause next to the Loire river before arriving at the end of the afternoon at the Gennes Val de Loire village.

We will leave our horses in good care at the fields of "Crins Nature" and then will head to our overnight accommodation, an authentic Bed and Breakfast, where we will share dinner. It is furnished with bunk beds and located in a peaceful environment on the edge of a protected wooded area.



Day 3: Tuesday 27th of July

After a hearty breakfast we will depart to visit a troglodyte site, the Cave aux Moines.

The beginning of the cave and the first meters of the galleries was used by people to live. We will have an explanation of the origin of mushroom cultivations in the cave, and you'll be surprised by the colors and shapes of the oyster, asian and the blue stem mushrooms.



After this fantastic visit we'll go back to our horses and carry on towards Brissac. We'll stop for lunch before arriving at the next destination for the night, a beautiful mansion where the outside pool will be waiting for us!

After this delightful moment our host will prepare a homemade dinner for us.



Day 4: Wednesday 28th of July

In the morning we will visit the castle of Brissac.

Brissac is a family castle which has belonged to the same family since it was purchased by the lordship of Brissac from a gentleman of Anger: René de Cossé, on May 26th, 1502.



519 years later, his descendants, the marquis and his wife, still live here with their 4 children.

In the afternoon, we will load the horses in the truck and the riders will take the mini-van to Thomas Ranch in Contigné where we will meet 100 other riders from Iles de France and spend the afternoon together. Our group will go for a ride in the afternoon. A special evening awaits us with dinner, music and surprises. It will be a wonderful moment to meet new friends who share the same passion for horses and nature. This night is organised by the CREIF (Regional horse riding committee of Iles de France)

We will spend the night at our Bed and Breakfast which is located within the ranch so we will be sleeping close to our horses. Thomas Ranch is a huge Western complex with breeding grounds for Quarter horses and Paint horses. There are also Western riding ethology classes and organised events.



Day 5: Thursday 29th of July

After breakfast we will meet our horses and get ready to ride on to Dahon, where we will again meet our new friends from Iles de France and have a team building evening and dinner.

We will set up the paddocks for the horses in a big field and our tents next to them. Camping night under the stars!

Day 6: Friday 30th of July

Back on trail which will lead us to le Lion d'Anger, a place where all riders from the Equirando 2021 will gather from the four corners of France and abroad, for a weekend altogether.

Horse shows, demonstrations, market stands, workshops, evening and dinner are included in this program. We will be camping again next to the horses in the paddocks.



If the Lion d'Anger was not directly implied in the One hundred war, it was burnt by people from Brittany during Charles VIIIth minority, son of Louis XI.

Peace was broken again by the religious wars in the XVIth century, and by the Fronde in the XVIIth century. This place sadly had the privilege of being a bridge-town, an essential passage.

The XIXth century was quiet and slow with significant canals taking 20 years to complete.

In the XXth century Le Lion d'Anger suffered a lot due to the 2 wars. On June 19th 1940 came the Germans. Le Lion d'Anger was close to disappearing but was saved by some French Resistance soldiers from the Mayenne.

It is the city of horses! The horse sector is extremely important and benefits lots of different fields such as breeding of course, but also sports, tourism, leisure and environment as well. This is a real asset for this town and brings fame and a positive economic impact.





Le Lion d'Anger welcomes every year the international eventing championship (dressage, jumping and cross country) with the participation of all the best international riders.

This impressive show shouldn't be missed!

Day 7: Saturday 31st of July

After breakfast we'll be back in the saddle for a big show where all the participants of Equirando 2021! We will all parade together through town on our horse. At the previous Equirando, we were 850 riders and horses!

After we'll trail ride in the afternoon and have a pique-nique on our way.

Back in the Departemental Park of Briand Island, we'll rest a bit before getting ourselves ready for the gala evening.

Day 8: Sunday 1st of August

After a good breakfast and a lazy morning we'll pack our tent and luggage to get ready to be driven back to Maisons Laffitte where we'll arrive at the end of the day.

Experience: To take part in this trek you need to be an experienced rider (minimum Galop 3). It is vital to be in good physical form and to be a regular rider, since we will be spending around 5 to 6 hours a day in the saddle for the first 4 days.

Price: 2800€ / person (all taxes included)

Price includes:

- Rental of your horse
- All necessary equipment for trekking: saddlebags, equipment for setting up the paddocks for horses (stakes, etc), grooming equipment, saddles, bridles, halters, ropes, flexible buckets...
- Supervision by 2 equestrian tourism guides and / or riding instructors (one supervisor for 8 riders max and another one for the assistance)
- Vehicular transport assistance for carrying your luggage and equipment during the trek. This person will meet us for lunch during the trek with ropes to attach the horses, set up the tables and prepare lunch.
- Transportation from Maisons-Laffitte to Saumur and back from Anger to Maisons Laffitte for riders (mini-van) and horses (truck) with drivers.



- All transfers during the trip to places where we will sleep or the visit (see program)
- Transfers for the horses from Brissac to Contigné
- Preparation for the trek and mapping out of the route.
- All meals during the stay (except lunch on our way back the last day)
- Accommodation of the riders during the whole trip: 1 night in a hotel room, a 1 night in a mansion, 2 nights in a Bed and Breakfast, 3 nights in camping.
- Accommodation and food for the horses during the trek.
- Displays, performances, workshops, visits and other activities on the Equirando 2021 programme.
- V.A.T

The price does not include:

- Your own equipment (riding hats and chaps can be borrowed). Once you have registered you will receive a list detailing the clothes and equipment that we recommend you bring with you.
- A tent, blow up mattress and sleeping bag for the three nights camping.
- The lunch on our way back Sunday 1st of May. (We will stop on the motorway)
- The extra drinks you may have.
- The FFE licence, which is compulsory for this trek. You can sign up for it through us. It costs 36€ for an adult and 25€ for a child for a year, or the “licence verte”, which costs 10€ for one month.

