

Carpathia Gourmet Ride, Romania

Itinerary

This is a centre based seven night ride, with riding on five days. A feature of this itinerary is the culinary experience, with emphasis on home-grown, organic food and drinks. During the week you will experience a wonderful combination of great riding, delicious food and the chance to explore some of the cultural highlights of the area.

Each riding day you will be in the saddle for c. 3-4 hours. Explore beautiful unspoilt countryside along gorges, through forests, alpine meadows and unique mountain settlements. The mountain forests are rich in beech, sycamore, maple, poplar and birch. You seldom have to venture onto roads and for most of the ride you are on tracks.

The routes that you ride have been specially selected, taking conservation concerns into consideration. Care is taken not to cause soil erosion and so you stay out of the wetland areas where horses' hooves may cause damage. In the summer months, in respect of the farmers' needs, you ride on the cart tracks when riding through hay meadows.



On some days the going is quite steep and there will be times where you may be required to dismount and lead your horse on downhill tracks which might be rough underfoot. To get the most from this holiday you should be riding fit and have good general fitness. You should also be able to mount from the ground.

Generally the horses are prepared for you each morning, but you will be expected to un-tack. Your guide will be on hand should you require any assistance.



The pace is varied and while much is at a walk, there are usually plenty of opportunities to have a canter, along the grassy valley floors and tracks. The usual maximum group size is eight riders plus guides, but occasionally nine riders are accepted.

Hard hats are obligatory for this ride. You should take your own properly fitted riding hat with you.

Day 1

Arrive on an afternoon flight and be transferred from Bucharest Otopeni airport to Equus Sylvania. The journey to Equus Sylvania in Sinca Noua is some three hours' drive.

On arrival at Equus Sylvania in the late afternoon meet your riding guide and later have an introductory supper. Sometime during the evening there is usually an opportunity to discuss the riding and horses.

Dinner and overnight at Equus Sylvania.

The following is the outline itinerary for the week. Please note the itinerary may change depending on local weather conditions and the riding abilities of your group but always with your best interest in mind

Day 2

A delicious breakfast will start the day. Freshly –baked bread and pastries, accompanied by eggs from the hen-house and home-cured cold-cuts of meat, along with seasonal berries and honey from neighbouring bee-hives will set you up for the day.

Then there is time to meet the horses. Set off on a 3-4 hour ride along the Stramba Ridge. Make your way through old oak forests and keep an eye out for local wildlife. Weather permitting; lunch will be a picnic on Magurice Hill.

In the afternoon, have a guided tour of the farm, from the vegetable and herb garden, to the animals.

Later, return to Magurice Hill for sun-downers.

Dinner will be served back at the guesthouse.



Day 3

After a delicious breakfast, set off of a 3-4 hour ride through the hills and meadows surrounding Equus Silvania.

In the afternoon, it is a journey of c. 30 minutes' by road to Piatra Craiului National Park. Set off on an easy hike along the spectacular Zarnesti Gorge.



This evening there should be the chance to visit a hide in the forest not far from Equus Silvania, where wild brown bear sightings are common.

Dinner will be served back at the guesthouse.

Day 4

Today is a day off from riding and there is the chance to discover the true history of Transylvania with a visit Viscri and Sighisoara.

From Equus Silvania, it is a drive of around an hour to the village of Viscri with its famous fortified church (UNESCO World Heritage Site) from the times of the invasion of Turks. The village has been a settlement of the Saxons, the German minority, for the last 900 years.



In 1990, most of the original villagers left for Germany but a small number of people stayed to continue their traditional life. Although by now a minority in their own village, these people have started to build themselves a future where their ancestors lived for centuries. Visit the fortified church, stroll through the village soaking up the sights.

Later, continue on to the medieval town of Sighisoara, one of the cultural centres of the Transylvanian Saxons. Stroll through the colourful streets and have a light lunch in a local café.



On the way back to Equus Silvania, stop in a medieval village for a gourmet dinner.

Day 5

After a delicious breakfast, set off on a half-day ride of 3-4 hours.



Relax over lunch at a nice spot with views of the surrounding countryside.

Have the afternoon at leisure to relax on the terrace or perhaps take a walk through Sinca Noua or up into the hills above the guesthouse.

Dinner will be served at Equus Sylvania.

Day 6

Set off on a 3-4 hour ride after breakfast.

Lunch will be served back at the guesthouse.

This afternoon a guided visit to Cobor is planned. Here, the Conservation Carpathia Foundation runs an organic 500ha farm with horses, cattle and free-range pigs.



Dinner will be served in Cobor, before returning to the guesthouse to overnight.

Day 7

After breakfast it is time for your final ride (c. 3-4 hours). Weather permitting, lunch will be a picnic in a panoramic spot.



This afternoon there is an optional visit to some nearby caves, with a torch lit walk if you wish.

Returning to the guesthouse for a farewell dinner.

Day 8

After breakfast transfer back to Bucharest in time for your afternoon flight home. .