

# Equus Sylvania, Romania

---

## Itinerary

This is a centre based seven night ride. Each day you ride out from Equus Sylvania, with an overnight camping trip mid-week which is subject to weather conditions.

During the week you ride through 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 really quite steep and there will be times where you will 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 at lunch time and then groom and tack-up for the afternoon ride. 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.

Whilst the surrounding mountains of Bucegi and Piatra Craiului reach up to 2,500 metres (around 8,260 feet), on this centre-based ride you do not ride over 1,400 metres (around 4,630 feet).

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 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.

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 and 3

After breakfast spend some time meeting the horses (and donkey) and then ride along the meadows at the foot of the mountains. The hills offer a fantastic view (weather permitting) over the local area and the meadows invite you for a first canter. In Spring and Summer there are lots of varieties of wild flowers and you may come across tracks of bears or wild boar.

Lunch breaks on both days are in the meadows with beautiful views surrounding you. Once you have returned to the stables there is time to relax on the terrace for an hour or so.

Since you will be riding in the mountains, there will likely be some steeper sections to negotiate. Due to the terrain it may be necessary for you to do some walking on foot leading your horse.

After dinner each evening you might want to relax at the willow pavilion. Alternatively, you may have the possibility to visit a hide in the forest not far from Equus Sylvania, where wild brown bear sightings are common (additional charge).

If you are interested in the conservation projects and research done by the owners of Equus Sylvania, there may also be chance to view their presentation on the area.

#### Day 4



Today is a rest day for the horses. Have a chance to experience the history of Transylvania with a visit to the village of Viscri. This is a drive of approx. 2 hours through sleepy villages to the north until you reach the medieval town of Sighisoara, one of the cultural centres of the Transylvanian Saxons. You then continue on a gravel road 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 and soak up the sights.

For lunch you will be served a traditional Saxon meal, accompanied by home-made wine or plum brandy (which is not for the faint-hearted!).

Return back to Sinca Noua for the evening.



#### Day 5 and 6

Weather permitting; this two day ride takes you through the forests of Transylvania, home of the large carnivores (lynx, bear and wolf). In the evening of the first day, arrive at a little mountain farm where you stay overnight in tents (weather permitting). A rustic dinner is cooked over the campfire and you have an evening around the fire to tell stories.

If you prefer not to camp out in tents, you can be picked up and driven back to the guesthouse (€15 payable locally). In this case you will need to walk from camp for c. 20 minutes to meet the vehicle.

The next morning pack up your things and ride along trails and roads through the forests of Transylvania. From time to time you have spectacular views over

the Carpathian Mountains. If you are lucky it may be possible to spot tracks of wolves or bears along the trails. In the late afternoon, arrive back at the guesthouse for a relaxing evening.

After the two days of riding you will have completed a 50 km roundtrip of the Transylvanian forests.

#### **Day 7**

On your last day ride for the week, you ride a loop of approximately 3 hours around Sinca Noua through wild forests and beautiful meadows. You can enjoy some great canters and beautiful scenery. Arrive back for a late lunch and then be taken to the nearby Bran Castle. This is commonly known as Dracula's castle, however you will learn that the history is much more exciting than the legend.

#### **Day 8**

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