



RIDE WORLD WIDE

Turkey 2018

Riding Trip Information Sheet

The spectacular Taurus Mountains in southern Turkey were named for the ancient Syrian storm god Hadad, whose symbolic animal was the bull and for whom many temples were built in the mountains. This new camping ride makes the most of the wonderful scenery, impressive natural sites and fascinating history of the area. Setting off from Lake Beyşehir National Park on the Anatolian plateau, home to Turkey's largest freshwater lake, you'll follow a route riding southwards, crossing the mountains to reach the Mediterranean province of Antalya. Each day is scenically diverse, taking you from sandy lake shores bordered with oak forests; through wide valleys and rocky ravines; past terraced fields and pomegranate orchards, and climbing up through mountain passes and high pastures to reach the majestic canyon of Köprülü. A highlight is the unique experience of riding to the ancient city of Selge, thought to have originated as a Spartan settlement, with its astonishing rock formations and impressive ruins.



Rides are run by Nicolas Guillo, who is French and has been guiding rides in Turkey for many years. The horses are based at a small ranch just outside the town of Ortahisar in Cappadocia, and will be specially transported to Antalya for these trips.

Dates 7 night trips are run from set dates in June, October and November, with other dates available on request. Please see overleaf for departure dates and contact Ride World Wide to check availability.

The Horses The horses used for these rides are mixed breeds, locally bred, mainly Arab and Arab crosses. They are generally between 14.2 and 15.2hh, forward going but also adaptable and well suited to the terrain. McClellan saddles are used, similar to a western style saddle and comfortable for long hours, fitted with cruppers and breastplates. Saddle bags are provided on each saddle. If you wish to use a seat saver (there are some provided) a gel pad is recommended rather than a fitted saver. Horses are all ridden in hackamores and are used to light contact. There is a strict weight limit when fully clothed, of 90kg / 14st 2lbs - you may be weighed on arrival and if above this weight you will not be allowed to ride!



Riding There will generally be 5 or 6 hours in the saddle each day, covering between 25 to 38 kilometres, with breaks to rest and for lunch, although riding time does vary. There will be some walking, leading the horses - generally you lead the horses for 10 minutes or so to warm them up before starting the ride and again to cool them off after riding at the end of the day. You will also be asked to get off to lead the horses through the more rocky and difficult sections, and up or down any steep hills, so you do need to be comfortable walking on uneven ground and on a gradient - and of course to mount your horse unaided. You may also be asked to dismount in villages out of politeness to the inhabitants. You are encouraged to spread out where possible, taking your own line, rather than riding in single file, though when passing through narrow gorges and tracks this will not be possible. Luggage and camping equipment is transported by back up vehicle. Groups are limited to a maximum of 8. You are expected to groom, tack-up / un-tack and generally look after your horse yourself although your guide is on hand if you need help and your saddle is always checked before you set off.



Pace The route will follow trails and mule tracks through forests and up into the mountains, at times following ancient transhumance routes, and a paved Roman road. You will also have to negotiate some difficult, stony and steep gorges and mountain passes. The ride is at a slow to moderate pace overall due to the terrain but there are some lovely canters on the edge of the lake, along winding forest paths, across mountain pastures, and along river beds. There are some quite steep mountain tracks, which dictate a slow pace and also a small amount of road work on mountain roads, where there is very little traffic, and through villages.

Riding Experience This program is aimed at reasonably experienced, confident riders. To join, you must feel relaxed, comfortable and secure in the saddle on a well-schooled horse at a walk, trot and fast canter. You should be used to riding for reasonably long hours, outside in an open environment and on sometimes challenging terrain. The horses are sensible, but have a generally lively temperament so they suit confident, relaxed riders. You need to be able to tack up a horse and also mount and dismount several times each day without assistance.

Fitness As with all our rides, you will enjoy your trip much more if you are fit - both riding fit and with a good level of general fitness. There are places each day where riders need to dismount to walk over rough ground - both uphill and down - and you need to be physically fit. If you do not ride regularly at home, and are not in good physical shape, we recommend concentrated training in the months before you go to get used to the hours in the saddle and time spent leading horses up and down hillsides.



Terrain Both Lake Beyşehir National Park and Köprülü Canyon National Park are popular tourist destinations, but this ride will take you off the beaten track to areas seldom seen by other visitors, and across a variety of terrain. The ride starts on the shores of Lake Beyşehir where the sandy lake edges and paths through forests provide good going for canters. As you climb up into the mountains over the next few days, you'll use forest tracks, which sometimes dip into dry riverbeds and cross upland pastures, coming out to high passes which give you superb views out across the mountains. There will be some difficult sections, such as rocky gorges and stony mountain paths, where you may need to lead your horse for up to an hour. You will also ride short distances on the edges of local farms, on small tarmac roads, and through a couple of villages.

Wildlife The national parks provide hunting grounds for raptors like rock eagle and peregrine falcon, and refuge for several species of rare endemic birds, such as the brown fish-owl, Caspian snowcock, and cinereous vulture. Wild mountain goat, fallow deer, fox, hare, red and Persian squirrels may be seen; also present, but less likely to be spotted are wild boar and beech marten. Caracals are native here but are mostly nocturnal and very shy. You might come across small herds of horses that have gone native, and shepherds tending their flocks of sheep and goats high in the hills, perhaps riding donkeys.

Accommodation Accommodation is mainly camping, but with the first and last nights at small hotels, and with Wednesday night spent in a traditional, family run guesthouse, with private bathrooms. Ride rates are based on twin / double occupancy and if you want a single room then these can be arranged subject to availability for a supplement. Camping is basic but you should be reasonably comfortable. Sleeping tents are large, white canvas 'tipi' shaped tents, tall enough to stand up in the middle of the tent, with a waterproof groundsheet, rugs and 2" thick mattresses supplied. You are expected to put up / take down your tent and stow it all away in the back up trailer each morning. There is a central 'mess' tent in traditional nomadic style with kilims and rugs on the floor and low Turkish 'chai' tables. A 'shower' tent, which has a large basin and jugs for pouring hot water, is set up for the group - there is not always time for everyone to have a shower every night. Loos when camping are open air!



Meals Turkey has an excellent reputation for delicious food and you will have the chance to sample some traditional dishes. Meals on camping nights are eaten Turkish style, sitting on a carpet around a round tray or 'chai' table. Breakfast is eaten in camp or at your guesthouse and is generally fresh bread, butter and jam or honey with eggs, cheese, tomatoes and olives and tea or coffee to drink. (Tea and coffee are usually drunk black in Turkey, in small glasses - there is sometimes milk powder available but not often fresh milk). Lunch is generally a picnic, carried in saddle bags, perhaps a salad with herbs, stuffed peppers, sausages cooked on the fire, or pancakes stuffed with meat or cheese (gozleme) served with a salted yoghurt drink as well as tomatoes, cheese and fresh bread with fruit for pudding. In the evening meals are either cooked in camp or are served at the guesthouse/hotel. At guesthouses they are often 3 courses, perhaps rice, yoghurt and mint soup to start, followed by lamb and bean stew with couscous and apricots in syrup to finish. In camp dinner is usually just one fairly simple dish - grilled chicken or pasta - followed by fruit. Main meat dishes are usually chicken or lamb, with specialities such as 'bostan kebab' (aubergines, lamb and cheese cooked in a clay pot). Vegetarians can, of course, be catered for, but please let us know in advance on your booking form. Local wine and beer will be available to purchase in camp.

Weather Rides are run from set dates June to November when weather in the area is best, and are also available on demand for a minimum of 4 people. During winter months there can be torrential thunderstorms in the mountains. In mid-summer temperatures can be high but there is usually a breeze and as you are at some altitude (up to approx 1500m) the heat is dry and it is still pleasant for riding. Average daytime temperatures between May and November are roughly - April 12°C; May 18°C; June 23°C; July 28°C; August 28°C; September 23°C; October 17°C; November 10°C - though it may be about 5 degrees hotter at midday and 5 degrees colder at nightfall. Rain possible at any time of year so you need to be prepared for this, though most precipitation falls between November and April.

What to bring We will send you a list of things to bring when you make your booking.

After the ride The coast of Antalya province has been famed for its beauty since ancient times, with rocky coves, golden beaches and azure waters. A few days here would be a wonderful way to relax after the ride.

Example itinerary Please note that this itinerary is just an example, and day by day arrangements may be changed at the discretion of your guide depending on weather and local conditions.

Day 1 - Arrive in Konya Airport, with 9 flights per day via Istanbul. The pickup is scheduled to co-inside with Turkish Airlines flight TK2038, departing Istanbul at 17:40 and arriving at 19:00. You will be driven 100 kilometres to Lake Beyşehir (around 90 minutes) where you will stay at a hotel on the shores of the lake. Dinner with your guide and fellow riders and night at the hotel. (D)



Day 2 - Breakfast before being introduced to the horses. Mount up for your first morning's ride which starts on the sandy lake edge, providing good going for canters, then onto earth tracks winding between oak trees. Stop for a picnic lunch looking out over the lake with its fishing boats. In the afternoon you'll continue up along the southern delta of the lake, where herds of cattle graze the flat grassy areas. Reach a small paved road and ride through a typical village, before following a riverbed which takes you up into a shady oak forest where you will camp. After untacking the horses, put up your tent before enjoying a hearty dinner cooked over a wood fire. Night in camp. (B,L,D)

Day 3 - Ride early to pack up your tent, eat breakfast and tack up before setting off along a wide path, used in ancient times for transhumance, taking you into a beech forest with good opportunities for canters along the forest paths. Leaving the forest you find yourselves in the foothills of the Taurus Mountains, where you might spot some wild horses. Dismount for a 20 minute walk along a narrow, stony canyon, then get back into the saddle to enjoy the scenery of tall pine trees, growing either side of a wide, dry riverbed, with imposing rocky outcrops. Stop for a picnic in the shade of the pines before setting off again, with panoramic views of the valley before you. Reach a picturesque pasture between cliffs and a stream, where you will make camp. Dinner and night in camp. (B,L,D)



Day 4 - Pack up camp then get mount up and set off down a beautiful ravine, the stream flowing around large boulders, where you may have to lead the horses. As you near civilisation you will see traditional terraced fields. Ride through a village, then back into a shady forest for a long canter, stopping for lunch on the banks of the river, where you can see ancient Roman tombs carved in the cliffside. The afternoon's ride is short but great fun, with the sandy river bed providing the chance for some good canters. Reach a small track that brings you to a little guest house, where you will be welcomed by the owners, a local family who will prepare a delicious traditional meal. Dinner and night at the guesthouse. (B,L,D)



Day 5 - After a breakfast you ride up a narrow mule track up out of the river valley, to be rewarded with views over the Köprülü Canyon. Continue climbing, reaching a small road that leads to an unusual village, built in amongst the rocks and chestnut trees. After lunch you ride upwards once more along a dirt road, giving you wonderful views of Selge's Rocks, a meteor crater. Close by are the archaeological remains of Selge, once an important city in the region, believed to have been founded by Spartans; you will ride right past the well preserved amphitheatre. Make camp around a kilometre from Selge; that evening you may wish to walk back and explore the ruins on foot. Dinner and night in camp. (B,L,D)

Day 6 - Pack up camp and leave Selge, riding through a forest with good opportunities for canters. The route follows a wide path carved into the edge of a mountain, hundreds of metres above the valley. It will take 40 minutes to negotiate, leading the horses, until you reach your picnic spot in the shade of plane trees with a spring to water the horses. The afternoon is challenging for both horses and riders. Set off climbing across terraced fields and through a forest, emerging onto a remote mountain pasture, perfect for short canters. Then dismount to lead the horses along a mule path, crossing three rocky passes - it's not dangerous, but you will need to concentrate, and the whole crossing takes about an hour. Eventually descend to a forest, to find your camp in the middle of a wide clearing. Dinner and night in camp. (B,L,D)

Day 7 - Breakfast, pack up camp and tack up for your last day riding. Set off down the mountain on a track winding between rock formations and through the trees, to reach farmland where you will stop for a picnic lunch. The afternoon is on flatter terrain, allowing you to move on; cantering along the edges of fields, crossing a river, and finally reaching your destination - a sandy beach, next to the river. Say goodbye to the horses before a transfer of around 30 minutes to the historical coastal city of Antalya, where you will spend the last night. A final supper with your fellow riders in Antalya and night in a well located guest house. (B,L,D)



Day 8 - Breakfast in the guest house and transfer to Antalya airport (around 30 minutes). (B)

Dates & Rates 2018**Mountains of Antalya Ride**

18th to 25th June

29th October to 5th November

5th to 12th November

Other dates are available on request; please enquire

Price : 1500 Euros per person

Rate assumes a minimum of 4 riders.

Please note due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, ride rates are quoted in euros. The sterling price will be the equivalent sterling rate using the euro/sterling exchange rate in force when you book/pay.**Rates INCLUDE** - 7 nights twin accommodation, all riding, guiding and equipment, transfers from Konya / to Antalya within set times, meals, tea / coffee and mineral water. Rates assume twin bedded rooms in hotels / tents, please see below for information about the single supplement.**Rates EXCLUDE** - International flights / travel to Konya and from Antalya, any visa fees, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have), bar bills, airport transfers outside set times and any tips you may wish to leave.**Single travellers** - Single rooms / tents can be booked for a supplement of 90 Euros for the week.**Travel arrangements** - For these rides it is best to fly to Konya via Istanbul. A transfer between Konya and the first nights' accommodation will be arranged to co-inside with Turkish Air flight TK2038, departing Istanbul at 17:40, and arriving at 19:00. From here you will be driven around 100 kilometres / 90 minutes to your first nights' accommodation, a hotel on the shores of Lake Beyşehir. Both Turkish Airways and British Airways currently have direct flights from London Heathrow to Istanbul daily. Turkish Airways then operate onward flights to Konya. On the return, it is possible to book flights from Antalya back to Istanbul with Turkish Airlines, and from there on to Heathrow with British Airways / Turkish Airways.

The alternative is to fly directly to / from Antalya Airport (Thomas Cook Airlines operate direct flights from London Stansted and also from Manchester), then stay a night there and take a morning bus to Beyşehir (unfortunately the direct flights do not land in time to then get a bus). The bus (via Isparta) takes around 5-6 hours and costs 40 Turkish Lira (around £10); there are four departures a day at 09:00, 11:00, 13:00 and 14:30. Alternatively a private transfer could be arranged to meet you on landing; a 3 seat taxi from Antalya to Beyşehir would cost around 350 Euros or a 6 seater minivan transfer would cost around 450 Euros for the vehicle and would go a more direct route than the bus, taking around 4 hours.

Flights range from around £300 to £550 economy return plus taxes depending on time of year, airline used, route and availability. If you plan to connect straight through to Konya please allow plenty of time between flights - particularly if using different carriers (eg British Airways in conjunction with Turkish Airways). There are often long visa queues and immigration can be time consuming. For further advice on flights, a quote for a flight inclusive holiday or to book flights, please call us (our ATOL number for flight bookings is ATOL 6213).

General visa and health information - further information will be sent if you make a confirmed booking**Visas** Visas for Turkey must now be obtained in advance online at: <https://www.evisa.gov.tr/en/>

The visa fee is USD \$20, payable by credit card (subject to change - please check).

Health No inoculations are legally required to enter Turkey from Europe but Polio and Tetanus are recommended - you should consult a health professional for further and more detailed advice in any case. **(DRAFT 15/03/18)**