Equestrian in the West of Ireland

Horses have always been an integral part of life in Ireland and the easy-going nature and deep-rooted love of the animal in Ireland makes any visit special for equestrian fans. Riding schools and trekking centres are surrounded by some of the most picturesque scenery in the country. Racing is a celebration of form, and fine breeding a state-sponsored hobby.

Horse Riding

The West of Ireland is a great place to sit on a horse for the first time, take some lessons, venture into nature on a bridle or do some challenging long-distance trail riding. Look out for AIRE (Association of Irish Riding Establishments) approved equestrian centres for their well-maintained horses and ponies and range of activities for novice and experienced riders. For a less formal approach and a brush with the wild, consider joining a long-distance trek.

Racing

There’s no excuse for being anywhere other than the Galway Races (www.galwayraces.com) during the first week in August. That’s because the racing scene here as such is as much about the atmosphere and legendary ‘craic’ (fun) as for the racing itself. Whether you’re a bookie’s nightmare or plan to stay firmly by the bar, it’s one of the most thrilling weeks of the calendar. There’s also regular racing in Ballinasloe and Roscommon throughout the summer, and in North Mayo traditional beach racing is still popular. The Clifden Horse Fair (www.clifdenhorsefair.com) is held in late July, with more beach racing at Omeo Island near Clifden in late July, and in Galway in August. Beach races allow venues to capitalise on their location on the coast and social events, and attract large crowds both for the racing itself and the family entertainment and fairground attractions.

Shows & Events

Ireland is famous for its horses and to see the pick of the crop in action it’s well worth visiting the local horse and pony shows. In August each year, breeders, owners and admirers of Ireland’s Connemara ponies gather in Clifden for the Connemara Pony Show (www.cpbs.ie), which showcases the finest of the breed. In October, the attention centres on the Ballinasloe Horse Fair, one of Europe’s largest and oldest fairs, where you can buy anything from a racehorse to a nag. The wheeling and dealing lasts 10 days and is accompanied by plenty of traditional fairground attractions.

AIRE Approved Riding Establishments

1. Ard Achillin Stables
2. Ashford Equestrian Centre
3. Ballyjennings Stables
4. Barnfield House Equestrian Centre
5. Belmont Stables
6. Blue Meadow Equestrian Centre
7. Calvey’s Equestrian Pony Trekking Centre
8. Carrowholly Stables & Trekking Centre
9. Carrowmore Stables
10. Castlepark Equestrian Centre
11. Claregalway Equestrian Centre
12. Claremorris Equestrian Centre
13. Cleggan Beach Equestrian Centre
14. Coolcronan Trekking Centre
15. Creagh Equestrian Centre
16. Dalysgrove Equestrian Centre
17. Dartfield Horse Park & Museum
18. Drumindoo Stud & Equitation Centre
19. Dubhoilean Riding Centre
20. Errislannan Manor Riding Centre
21. Eve’s Equestrian Centre
22. Flower Hill Equestrian Centre
23. Mount Cashel Stables
24. Parkmore Stables
25. Purrin Riding Stables
26. Rockmount Riding Centre
27. Slieve Aughty Riding Centre
28. The Point Pony Trekking Centre
29. Turlough Equestrian Centre
30. Upper Mace Stables
31. Westport Woods Riding Centre
32. Willros Stables

A road (Northern Ireland)
N road / B road (Northern Ireland)
Other roads
Railway with station
Ferry route
County boundary
International boundary
Road distances in kilometres
Mountains (heights in metres)
Other peaks (heights in metres)
International Airport
Other Airport
Nature Reserve
Places of Interest
Town: population over 10,000
Town: population 10,000-5,000
Town: population under 5,000
National Parks
Land from sea level to 150m
Land from 150m to 450m
Land over 450m

Discover Ireland

West

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A road (Northern Ireland)
N road / B road (Northern Ireland)
Other roads
Railway with station
Ferry route
County boundary
International boundary
Road distances in kilometres
Mountains (heights in metres)
Other peaks (heights in metres)
International Airport
Other Airport
Nature Reserve
Places of Interest
Town: population over 10,000
Town: population 10,000-5,000
Town: population under 5,000
National Parks
Land from sea level to 150m
Land from 150m to 450m
Land over 450m
Aille Cross Equestrian Centre
Aille Cross is home to the legendary Irish horsemen, Willie Liddy who has been involved with horses for 60 of his life and for the last 30 plus years has operated the Connemara Cattle Pack. Aille Cross was founded at a time when many of Ireland’s top qualities started and currently hosts the offices which organises all the riding holidays.

During the winter months, Aille Cross takes time out to share its passion for cross country riding with visitors wishing to experience this Irish tradition. There’s no better way to explore this countryside than on the back of Irish Hunter or new world Connemara Pony.

Hunting is available three days a week with the famous Galway Blazers where Willie has been the Field Master for over a decade. An Aille Cross hunting holiday can be arranged through our offices at Aille Cross.

Moycullen Riding Centre
Put yourself in assured hands and trek your troubles away!
- Horsemanship lessons
- Experienced staff
- Lessons in both English and Irish
- New indoor complex
- Experienced riders
- Experience the Connemara Pony
- Experienced riders
- Many different types of horses and competitive prices
- Experience the Connemara Pony
- Experienced riders
- Many different types of horses and competitive prices
- Ideal for beginners and experienced riders
- Enjoy a relaxing stay at the Milltown House
- Choose from woodland, open fields; swim through the lake and splash in the Kilcrow river
- Leisure centre and outdoor hot tub too.

Slieve Aughey Riding Centre
Family owned and operated and catering for all levels of horsemanship from the competitive rider to the horse-riding beginner. For over 20 years Slieve Aughey Riding Centre has been providing safe, personal riding holidays, lessons and hourly trips. Situated in a peaceful valley below the Slieve Aughey Mountains and adjacent to more than 2,200 acres of forest and 50 miles of trails the centre offers an authentic Irish riding experience just 45 minutes east of Galway.

Large outdoor sand arena, 45 fences cross-country course, full set of show jumps, 10 Irish horses and ponies, each walk, rise and changing facilities and qualified instructors.

Choose a riding holiday focused on trail riding, intense training, cross country jumping or hunting. One of four approved English language instruction examine centres in Ireland, combines your holiday with off-site courses provided by the Shannon Language Centre.

Westport Woods Riding Centre
Get trekking in the stunning scenery of the West of Ireland with the Westport Woods Riding Centre. Choose from assiduous, maze- and beach-based trail rides. Trekkers from foreign countries and locals alike have appreciated and enjoyed this unique riding experience. The centre is linked with the Galway Language Institute and has facilities open to students and tourists. Equestre courses are available through VEC and Spanish. Lessons in show jumping and dressage are available. S.I.cum on Sundays.

Galway Equestrian Centre
A family run equestrian centre in Athenry training people and horses for many years locally, nationally and internationally. All instructors are BHS qualified and carefully selected to ensure that clients receive the highest possible standards of tuition. We offer a friendly, experienced staff, a large outdoor school, new indoor arena, a variety of riding activities for all levels and ages, many different types of horses and competitive prices.

A cross country course is being laid out try to provide facilities to ride out over fields and mountain areas in the near future.

Situated within five minutes of Galway Airport and city, the centre is linked with the Galway Language Institute and has facilities open to students and tourists. Equestre courses are available through VEC and Spanish. Lessons in show jumping and dressage are available. S.I.cum on Sundays.

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