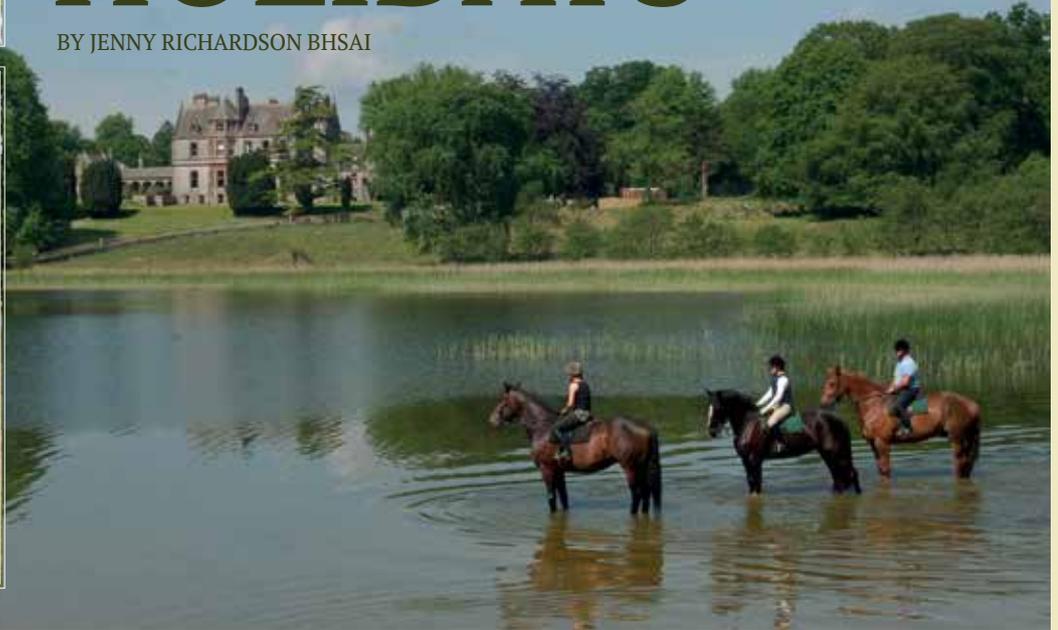


# HORSEY HOLIDAYS

BY JENNY RICHARDSON BHSAI



**E**questrian holidays offer many benefits, such as improving your riding skills and making new friends. Whatever your skill level, there's a riding holiday for you! If you are looking for somewhere not too far from home, have you considered a trip to Ireland? It is easily accessible from airports within the East Midlands and the UK's northern counties.

## Can my non-horsey partner come on a riding trip?

There are now lots of horsey venues that cater to couples or friends, whereby one partner rides, and one doesn't. At Castle Leslie Estate, there's plenty for non horsey partners to do, such as angling, kayaking, clay pigeon shooting and hiking. Or why not book them in on our beginners' 'Learn to Ride in Five Days' trip, while you indulge your own equestrian passions? For you, there's our five day Horse Sport package - a trip for the more experienced rider looking to improve their riding skills. It incorporates a mix of show jumping, cross country, dressage and estate rides.



## What do I pack for a riding holiday?

This very much depends on whether you're on a single-base trip, e.g. a hotel with a training centre, or a base-to-base ride, where you ride to different locations each night and your luggage is transferred. For the latter, pack very lightly. It is imperative to check

the projected weather forecast, and pack accordingly. For a week in a warm location, you will probably just need two pairs of jodhs, three tops with collars to protect from the sun, a waterproof coat, your riding hat and any other accessories like a seat saver and body protector. (In Ireland, the weather, as in the UK, is very changeable!) Ladies: remember your sports bra... Additions to your packing list include sun cream, camera and sunglasses. For a single-base trip, you can take more, and also account for smarter evening meals. Generally for footwear, short boots with gaiters work well, as they can double up as your travelling footwear. You can then pack a pair of smart sandals or light shoes for evenings.

## How do I chose a trip?

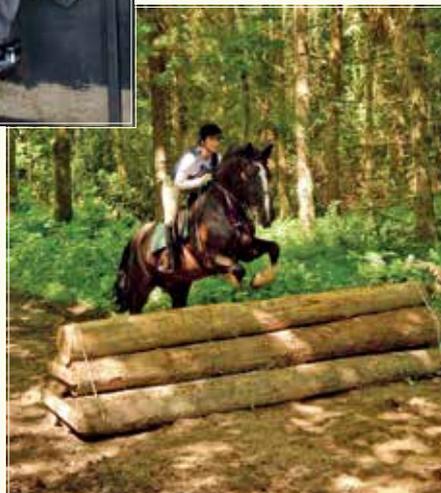
Choose a horse riding trip that matches your experience. If

you exaggerate your level of riding skills, you will either hold the other riders back, or put yourself in danger. Work out what appeals to you. Truly adventurous rides may actually be very slow, due to difficult terrain!

## What if I am not good enough?

There's no such thing! There's a riding holiday for every level - including complete beginners - so it is all about doing your research. If you lack experience, join a holiday with lots of tuition. If you are an experienced rider who needs a confidence boost, look for a training venue that specialises in this area, so you're not over-faced. Castle Leslie Estate's five day 'Get Back Your Confidence' package features three hours' of daily lessons, culminating in a thrilling, two hour estate ride.

*Jenny Richardson BHSAI is Equestrian Centre Business Manager at Ireland's Castle Leslie Estate, a venue that offers luxurious equestrian riding holidays and training breaks in the heart of Ireland. The team welcomes riders of all abilities and age groups and offers expert tuition, gentle hacks and exhilarating cross-country rides over an extensive XC course. All trips mentioned here are priced at £1,058 per adult. Accounts are settled in Euros. Visit [www.castleleslie.com](http://www.castleleslie.com)*



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