

If you are planning a summer riding trip, here are Jenny Richardson's top tips:

- **Be honest about your experience.** If you are going on a trek-style trip, don't exaggerate your level of riding skills, you will either hold the other riders back, or put yourself in danger – either scenario could spoil someone's holiday. Some travel operators specifically match riders with other guests of similar levels of experience.
- **Get riding fit.** For longer holidays or 'base to base' rides, this is probably the biggest issue that riding holiday guests face - a lack of fitness appropriate to their trip. If you can find time, try and get in some general fitness work before you leave home.
- **Pick a trip that meets your needs.** Truly adventurous rides may actually be very slow, due to difficult terrain, while beach rides can be fast and furious. Consider a training break, if you need to brush up on your riding skills - the UK and Ireland has many options that are close to home - why not make a long weekend of it? You can find training breaks for all of the main disciplines, including side saddle. If you want to take a non horsey partner, look for a dual-activity trip, like the 'Anglers' and Horse Riders' Paradise' holiday, detailed below.
- **Pack according to your trip.** A longer, trek-style ride will be informal, and you won't need much luggage - in any case, you may be carrying it yourself every night to a new location. You can roll your clothing to save space, and store small items on your riding hat. Don't forget several pairs of jodhpurs, gloves, shirts with collars (for protection from the sun) and a waterproof coat, and comfy shoes; especially if you may have to get off and lead, if you are heading somewhere with challenging terrain. Additions like sun cream, camera and sunglasses are also important, plus a bumbag or rucksack to store them in while you ride.
- **If you are heading to somewhere more luxurious,** such as a hotel with an equestrian base, like Castle Leslie Estate, you will need some non-horsey clothes for the evening - a lightweight dress and sandals plus a wrap or scarf will be very lightweight to pack, for ladies. This type of trip is ideal if you don't want to spend all day in the saddle, and like to explore new locations, as well as try other activities.
- **Prioritise tacking your own helmet,** so you know it is a good fit, and up-to-standard. Training venues tend to provide body protectors, but you may still like to take your own. Seat savers are ideal for trek-style rides!

# Horsey holidays

Words by Jenny Richardson BHSAI

Hotels with an equestrian base are ideal if you don't want to spend all day in the saddle

CASTLE LESLIE  
EQUESTRIAN CENTRE



Training breaks will help you brush up on specific riding skills



## Unique 'Anglers' and Horse Riders' Paradise' trip launches

Many couples want to travel together, but have different sporting and leisure interests - this is notably common when it comes to horsey females and their partners. However, Ireland's Castle Leslie Estate has solved the dilemma with several packages designed to offer couples different activities during their stay.

The latest package is the three night 'Anglers' and Horse Riders' Paradise' trip.

For the riding partner, this trip includes five hours of horse riding spread over two days. Guests can choose the type of lessons they want, based on their individual needs, from practise on the centre's mechanical horse, to lunge lessons, flatwork, hacking and jumping.

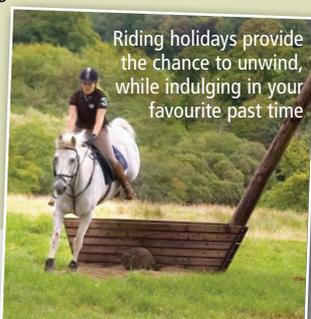
Fishing enthusiasts will enjoy angling in one of Ireland's best-preserved lakes. The beautiful Glaslough or Green Lake is synonymous with monster pike, and Estate records show impressive catches year on year, of 18-30lbs fish. The trip includes two full days' angling.

The trip includes three nights' accommodation, a two course dinner in Conor's Bar each evening, and a hearty full Irish breakfast each morning. Priced at £395 per person sharing.

Please visit [www.castleleslie.com](http://www.castleleslie.com) for more information on breaks at Castle Leslie Estate, where Jenny Richardson is Equestrian Centre Business Manager.



Choose a dual activity break if you have a non horsey partner



Riding holidays provide the chance to unwind, while indulging in your favourite past time

THE CASTLE | THE LODGE | THE OLD STABLE MEWS



## A rural retreat in the heart of Ireland...

NESTLED ON 1,000 ACRES of undulating Irish countryside, dotted with ancient woodlands and glittering lakes, Castle Leslie Estate offers an idyllic setting for equestrian activity and adventure. The Equestrian Centre combines the authentic charm of a country estate with all the amenities you'd expect from one of Ireland's best horse-riding locations. It also provides the added advantage of easy accessibility; located in County Monaghan, Ireland, the Estate is only 80 minutes from Dublin airport and 60 minutes from Belfast airport.

Our facilities include:

1,000 acres of private estate  
300 cross country jumps  
21 miles of meandering bridleways  
Mile-long all-weather gallop  
56 stables  
Horse simulator – virtual horse for beginners  
50 x 30 metre indoor arena with indoor cross-country fences

Tiered seating for 200 plus private dining / viewing room  
Lounge and showering facilities  
20 x 50 Dressage Arena  
30 x 20 Outdoor Manège  
Sand Gallops  
SJI approved show jumps  
Horse walker  
Lorry & trailer parking  
BHS, SJI & AIRE Approved

Castle Leslie Estate, Glaslough, Monaghan, Ireland  
t: +353 47 88 100 [www.castleleslie.com](http://www.castleleslie.com)

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