

Equestrian vacations offer many benefits, from improving your riding skills and making new friends, to developing fitness and challenging your own boundaries.

If you are planning a trip this year, you may like to check out our frequently asked questions.

Can my non-horsey partner come?

There are now lots of horsey venues that cater to couples or friends, whereby one partner rides, and one doesn't. Chose a single-base trip, as opposed to a base-to-base ride where your luggage is taken to different locations. Unless you are on a long trek-based holiday, it is likely that you will only ride for up to three hours a day - plenty of time for your partner to explore the area or just rest and read, while you ride.

Castle Leslie Estate's one night, Sparkling Summer Special is a very nice overnight trip for couples - it includes Sparkling Pink Prosecco, Summer Inspired Chocolates, the venue's self professed Best Breakfast in Ireland, and a €25 estate voucher to use on Afternoon Tea for two, or the Table D'Hote Dinner for two at Snaffles Restaurant. The cost is from £67 per adult for the overnight trip. Guests can then add on riding tuition as required, with a 45 minute private lesson costing £40, and a one hour hack costing £32.

What do I pack?

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 jodhpurs, three tops with collars to protect from the sun, a waterproof coat, your riding hat and any other pieces of equipment like a helmet, seat saver and body protector. Ladies: remember your sports bra. Additions like sun cream, camera and sunglasses are also useful if the weather will be warm.

For a single-base trip, such as those offered at Ireland's Castle Leslie Estate, you can take more luggage, and include something for smarter evening meals. Generally for footwear, short boots with gaiters work well on riding trips, as they can double up as your travelling footwear, and will hopefully be comfortable. You can then pack a pair of smart flip flops or light shoes for evenings.

How do I choose a trip?

Choose a trip that matches your riding 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, while beach rides can be fast and furious.

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 'Get Back Your Confidence' package - see www.castleleslie.com - is a five day holiday featuring three hours of daily lessons, culminating in a two hour estate ride, from £1,089 per person sharing. (Available from August onwards). Dublin and Belfast airports are very well served by all of the South East's airports.

Jenny's Bio

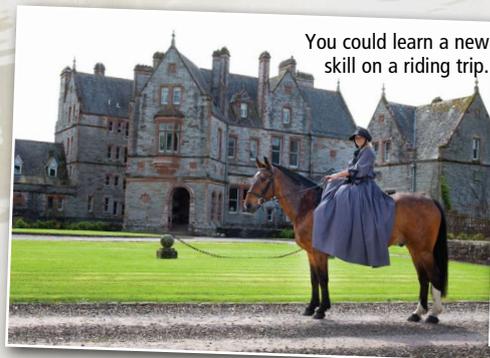
Jenny Richardson is Equestrian Centre Business Manager at Castle Leslie Estate; she's also former head instructor at the Jebel Ali Equestrian Club in Dubai, and has a Bachelor of Science degree in Equine Science, along with her BHSAl.



Jenny Richardson is an experienced riding tutor

Time to travel

Words by Jenny Richardson of Castle Leslie Estate



You could learn a new skill on a riding trip.



The Sparkling Summer Special is a nice treat for couples.

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

