



RIDE WORLD WIDE

France - Le Bourdil Blanc, Dordogne 2012

Riding Trip Information Sheet

These rides are based from an elegant 18th century manor house, Le Bourdil Blanc, not far from the town of Bergerac in the Dordogne in south west France. They combine accommodation in a lovely French manor house with daily riding out through the Dordogne's beautiful rolling countryside, exploring its forests of beech, oak and chestnut, its fields of maize and sunflowers and its famous vineyards. Much of the riding is within the private estates of beautiful chateaux and there are plenty of opportunities to try some of the delicious food and wine for which the area is renowned. The rides are lead by an experienced French guide, Antoine, and when not riding, you are looked after by the English owner of Le Bourdil Blanc, Jane Hanslip, who has lived in the Dordogne for many years. As well as welcoming you into her charming home, Jane will introduce you to local residents and the owners of a local vineyard and chateau, making your stay delightfully personal.

Dates 7 night stays are organised at Le Bourdil Blanc from specific dates between (generally) April and July, and September and November. Set dates are listed overleaf and additional dates are also be possible on request for groups of 4 or more year round. Shorter 3 or 4 night stays are also possible during the same weeks. Other dates are possible when there are optional French conversation classes are also available. The house can also be rented for groups / families in July and August from Saturday to Saturday. Please contact Ride World Wide to check dates and availability.



The Horses The horses used at Le Bourdil Blanc are owned by a local ride operator and are mixed breeds many of which are home-bred crosses with Arab and Anglo-Arab blood. They average about 15hh to 15.2hh, although there are some smaller ponies for children, and are calm and reliable but also forward going and enjoyable to ride. They are also well mannered and sensible to handle. Saddles are usually 'Maclellans' which are a comfortable cross between an English and western saddle and the horses are usually ridden in snaffle bridles. Saddle-bags are provided where necessary. There is a rider weight limit of 95kg (about 15 stone) - please contact us if you are close to this so we can ensure a suitable horse is available.

Riding The 7 night riding itinerary from Le Bourdil Blanc includes riding on 6 days combined with visits to local places of interest such as chateaux, an organic herb and flower farm and vineyards. On riding days there will generally be between 4 and 6 hours in the saddle (there maybe a shorter ride on the first riding day when there is often also a market visit), with breaks to rest and for lunch - although as you return to the same base each night, riding hours can be varied on request to suit the group. Rides are usually run for a minimum of 4 and a maximum of 8 riding guests and are lead by Antoine, who is an experienced guide and an excellent horseman. Horses are brought to Le Bourdil and allocated to the group at the beginning of the week and are kept in the stables and paddocks close to the house for most of the week. Riders will be shown the daily routine with the horses on the first day and are then very welcome to help prepare, tack up and un-tack their own horse each morning and evening, although as Antoine and another groom are available to oversee and help, this is not compulsory! Antoine speaks some English but he is not fluent and some knowledge of French will be a great help when riding. Jane, your English host at Le Bourdil, does not ride but will be on hand to co-ordinate your stay, will meet you for picnic lunches, organise sightseeing, chateaux visits and so on.

Pace The rides are usually at a medium and well varied pace. Routes followed take you from village to village, through woodland and along forest tracks where there are regular opportunities to trot and canter and, although the local environment of forest, fields of crops, vineyards and small villages means canters may be short and you often need to ride in single file, you will move on well where the going allows. There is some tarmac road-work each day in the vicinity of Le Bourdil Blanc and local villages but this is generally on quiet rural roads where there is little traffic.

Riding Experience Riding from Le Bourdil is aimed at reasonably experienced riders and as a minimum to take part you should be comfortable, balanced and secure in the saddle and able to control a well-schooled horse in open country at a walk, trot and fast canter. There is a good choice of horses for riders of an intermediate ability, with some of Antoine's own horses sometimes available for very experienced riders, and as the riding hours and pace can be adapted to suit riders' ability to a certain extent, some confident but more novice or young riders can also be taken - although all participants must have a reasonable amount of previous riding experience, including experience riding out in a group over varied terrain. Horses will be allocated on the first day and there is a chance to try them in the paddock, or on a short ride with Antoine, to ensure a good match. You should be reasonably fit to join these rides and we recommend regular riding in the months before you go to get used to hours in the saddle. Children are accepted by arrangement with the minimum riding age generally 12 years old, except for family bookings for the whole house when younger children may be taken.



Non-Riders Le Bourdil Blanc is an ideal venue for riders travelling with non-riding companions and those choosing not to ride can relax at the house, making use of the swimming pool and tennis court, or explore the local area, where there is much to see, by car (a hire car is recommended), meeting up with riders for picnic lunches if they wish. Walking and cycling (bicycles can be hired locally) is also possible, kayaking on the Dordogne river makes a great day trip and there are miles of forest tracks and footpaths in the area for keen walkers.

Terrain This region of France has a huge density of private chateaux and much of the riding is through these large country estates and over private land, with some routes passing through villages and farmyards. The countryside itself is rolling with forested hills, valleys, vineyards and grassy meadows and there are miles of wide tracks through the forest as well as narrower paths that wind through woods, along river banks and around fields, vineyards and meadows. Low branches and fallen logs provide occasional obstacles and a chance to jump for those who wish! In spring and early summer, new leaves on the trees give the landscape a lush verdant look, whilst in autumn, the area is full of colour with the changing leaves.

Accommodation Accommodation during the week is at 'Le Bourdil Blanc', a lovely manor house, set within 7 acres of grounds. There are 8 double / twin bedrooms, all of which are different, a good size, comfortable and most with en-suite bathroom with bath, shower and loo (some have a private bathroom close by). The house is attractively furnished with antique furniture and has polished wooden or terracotta tiled floors in some rooms as well as a small patio balcony overlooking the lawn that sweeps down to the lake - an ideal spot for evening drinks. It also has a large drawing room and a dining room with a long dining table, both with open fireplace. It is a 'home' rather than a hotel and overall has a relaxed 'house party' atmosphere. You are encouraged to treat it as your own and to enjoy it in your own way. The grounds, which are mainly lawn, are well kept and there is a good-sized heated swimming pool (open in summer months) and a well-maintained tennis court a short walk from the house. There is also a lake with boat as well as 11 loose boxes in the converted barn / coach house close to the main house. Overall it makes a charming base.



Meals You will be extremely well fed at Le Bourdil with three meals a day made using the excellent local produce and plenty of good local wine to revive you after a day in the saddle! Le Bourdil Blanc's excellent chef, Bernadette, prepares meals with menus that include many of the delicious regional specialities. Breakfast is usually French style, with croissants delivered daily and plenty of coffee or tea provided (eggs are also often available on request). Lunch is a substantial picnic of delicious cheeses, meats, salads and fresh bread. Dinners are three courses, often including a speciality of the region, such as a truffle omelette or magret de canard, followed perhaps by duck confit and finishing with a tarte tartin or selection of local cheese. Both lunch and dinner are accompanied by wine and you will have a chance to try different wines from some of the vineyards you may pass during your stay.



Weather Rides are usually organised between March / April and July and then from September to December. In May, September and October daytime temperatures average between 15 degrees C and the mid 20s C. In March, April and November it is usually between 10 and 15 degrees C in the day. The coldest months are December, January and February with daytime temperatures between about 5 and 10 degrees C. It seldom drops below freezing but cold winds can make it seem quite harsh. It can rain at any time although rainfall is higher in the winter months - but even in mid-winter, there can be wonderful warm sunny spells.

What to bring We will send you a list of things we suggest you bring when we confirm your booking.

Itineraries The standard 7 night itinerary generally includes riding on 6 days, following a different route each day and half day free to visit local sites or simply to relax by the swimming pool. Day by day arrangements and routes may be varied by your host and guide depending on the season, the ability and interests of the group and also local conditions. Final decisions are left to the discretion of your guide and host. An example of the itinerary planned for a week's stay is set out below but please note that this is just an example and both the riding and places visited may be varied.

Day 1 (Saturday) You will be met at the airport or train station in Bergerac and driven the 20 minutes or so to 'Le Bourdil Blanc' for dinner and to settle in for the week. Dinner with Jane your host and overnight at Le Bourdil. (D)

Day 2 (Sunday) After breakfast at the house, head the short way down to the stables to meet the horses and try them in the paddock under the expert eye of your riding guide Antoine. Then, as Sunday is market day, a quick change and set off by car at about 10.30 to visit the street market in Issigeac which is great fun and full of local colour. The morning shopping in the market before returning to the house for lunch followed by a ride of between 2 and 3 hours. Return to the manor house in the late afternoon for drinks and dinner, then overnight at Le Bourdil. (B,L,D)

Day 3 (Monday) Breakfast in the house, then mount up and set off riding. Today's route takes you through the village of Lamonzie Montastruc and across la Forêt de Liorac to the private Chateau Garraube with its formal gardens, then on to the pretty village of Saint Marcel du Perigord where you stop for a picnic lunch near a stream. After lunch ride on to Pressignac-Vicq where the horses will stay overnight. Return to 'Le Bourdil Blanc' by car and Bernadette will cook a delicious, typical local dish to be washed down with some great local wines! Dinner and overnight Le Bourdil. (B,L,D)

Day 4 (Tuesday) Breakfast and drive back to Pressignac-Vicq to meet the horses. Today's ride takes you down to the Dordogne river - a spectacular ride with wonderful views. Stop on the bank of the river for a drink and a picnic lunch and in the afternoon ride back to Pressignac-Vicq by a sharply contrasting route with the opportunity for a few good canters. Driven back to Le Bourdil for a well-earned drink before dinner. (B,L,D)



Day 5 (Wednesday) Breakfast before returning to the horses and riding them back home through the forests to the manor. Stop for a delicious picnic lunch along the way arriving at Le Bourdil in time to change and relax before enjoying another delicious dinner. Overnight at Le Bourdil. (B,L,D)

Day 6 (Thursday) Set off on a morning ride then ride through the forests and vineyards either to Chateau Tiregand (owned by the Saint-Exupéry family, one of whom wrote the well known children's book, 'Le Petit Prince') or to Les Terres Vieilles. Both produce excellent local wines and there will be time for an informal and informative wine tasting before riding back to Le Bourdil for lunch. The afternoon free for sightseeing or to relax. Jane will discuss the options and will happily arrange group visits to local sites of interest, book restaurants and organise hire cars - or you can just relax at the house, using the heated swimming pool and tennis court or perhaps trying the boat on the lake - the choice is yours. Dinner is not included today and will be eaten out, either on the way back from the places you visit or you will be driven to a local restaurant, or even at the manor house if someone wants to cook! (B, L)

Day 7 (Friday) After breakfast, a stroll from the dining room to the stable yard to mount up for your last day's riding. The route takes you through the Caudeau Valley visiting the villages of Montclard, Saint Georges, St Martin des Combes and Clermont Beauregard and passing the Chateau de la Gaubertie stopping at another idyllic picnic site. After lunch return to the manor house for drinks and a farewell dinner. (B,L,D)

Day 8 (Saturday) You will be driven to Bergerac airport or train station after breakfast (about a 20 minute drive) or, depending on your departure time, you may be able to visit Bergerac street market for some local shopping before departing. (B)

DATES 2012

28th April to 5th May	8th to 15th September
12th to 19th May	22nd to 29th September
26th May to 2nd June	13th to 20th October
16th to 23rd June	27th October to 3rd November
30th June to 7th July	10th to 17th November

Shorter stays for 6, 5, 4 or 3 nights are also possible over the above dates, starting on the Saturday. Other dates are also possible where French language classes will be taking place - please enquire for dates.

Rates assume a minimum of 4 guests and rides will normally be run for a maximum of 8 riding guests. Other dates may be arranged for groups of 4 or more on request.

RATES 2012

Please note that due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, ride rates are now quoted in euros. The sterling price will be the equivalent sterling rate using the euro/sterling exchange rate in force when you book/pay.

7 night stays are Euros 1450 per person (Non riding rate - Euros 840 per person)

6 night stays are Euros 1300 per person (Non riding rate - Euros 700 per person)

5 night stays are Euros 1150 per person (Non riding rate - Euros 600 per person)

4 night stays are Euros 890 per person (Non riding rate - Euros 450 per person)

3 night stays are Euros 650 per person (Non riding rate - Euros 350 per person)

This **INCLUDES** twin accommodation at Le Bourdil Blanc, all riding, guiding and equipment, meals from dinner Day 1 to breakfast on the last day 8 (except dinner on Thursday night), wine with lunch and dinner and also transfers from / to Bergerac on first & last days.

Rates **EXCLUDE** - Travel to Bergerac, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have), any visa fees, dinner on Thursday night, extra drinks during the ride and any tips you may wish to leave.

Small group supplement As mentioned above, rides are usually confirmed for 4 riders however if there are just 2 or 3 riders the full week ride can still be confirmed at a supplement. The rate for 2 to 3 riders is 1875 per person for the week.

Optional French Lessons - On certain dates a qualified French teacher will be based at Le Bourdil. This is very flexible and you can either do half a day language tuition and half a day riding or simply the riding - good for rider / non-rider combinations. Another option is joining French conversation classes for an hour each evening, lessons do not take any time away from riding and are charged locally at 20 euros per person for the hour. Please enquire for dates.



Group / family bookings - Le Bourdil Blanc is a wonderful place for a family holiday and the house can be booked on request for private groups / families either on a catered or self catering basis with itineraries tailored to suit. Please call us to discuss your requirements.

Single rooms - Single rooms are generally available for single travellers if required. No single supplement is charged but these are subject to availability.

Travel arrangements - The meeting point for the rides is Bergerac and the ride rates quoted above include collection from Bergerac on Day 1 and return to Bergerac after breakfast on Day 8, 5 or 4 (as appropriate)

Flights - There is an airport in Bergerac (about 20 minutes drive from Le Bourdil Blanc). Ryanair (www.ryanair.com) operate direct flights to Bergerac from London Stansted, Bristol, Nottingham and Liverpool, as do FlyBe (www.flybe.com) from London Gatwick, Southampton, Exeter, Birmingham, Manchester and Edinburgh. Jet2 also fly from Leeds Bradford. Generally flights with these low cost / budget airlines are the most convenient to use (transfers from / to Bergerac airport are included in the ride price) and fares, booked direct over the internet, are usually excellent value. You can also fly to Bordeaux and then take a train or taxi to Bergerac from there. British Airways fly to Bordeaux from London Gatwick, Flybe from Birmingham, Easy Jet from Bristol, Liverpool, Gatwick and Luton and BMI from Manchester. Air France also have flights to Bordeaux via Paris. These flights can be booked direct or we would be happy to book scheduled British Airways services for you - please call if you would like a quote that includes a flight.

Trains from Bordeaux to Bergerac take about one hour and 10 minutes and cost about £10. Bordeaux airport is about 11 kms from the city centre / train station and transfers from the airport are by airport shuttle bus or by taxi taking about 20 to 30 minutes. A taxi all the way from Bordeaux to Bergerac takes about 90 minutes and costs around 150 Euros (about £130) - or 190 Euros at night. There are also train services from London St Pancras to Bergerac, changing in Paris and again at Libourne. For more train information and timetables please check with International Rail on Tel: 01962 773 646 or look at the French rail website: www.sncf.com - or Rail Europe website: www.raileurope.com.

General visa and health information (NB this is a brief outline - further information will be sent to you if you make a confirmed booking.)

Visas If you hold a full British passport you do not need a visa for visits to France whatever the length of stay, although for visits of over 90 days residence permits are required.

Health No vaccinations are needed by EEC residents to enter France. If you have a particular condition requiring special medical treatment, in case of emergencies you should carry a letter from your own doctor translated into French describing your condition and the medicine / treatment required. **(draft 17/02/12)**

