



RIDE WORLD WIDE

Greece 2011

Riding Trip Information Sheet

These rides explore the Pelion peninsula, an unspoilt corner of Greece that juts out into the Aegean Sea on the east coast. In mythology, perhaps because of its lush vegetation and thick, impenetrable forests, the area was home to the Centaur and with its tiny secluded bays, winding cobbled tracks that lead to remote whitewashed cottages, groves of gnarled olive trees and shady forests of beech and chestnut, it is picturesque, forgotten riding country. Village squares shaded by huge plane trees harbour hospitable little tavernas, and the relaxed combination of riding and bathing excursions with each night spent at a comfortable hotel in Katigiorgis makes for a wonderful holiday. Your guide, Eric, is French but has been based in Greece for many years. He speaks fluent English (and Greek), is charming, professional and very knowledgeable on the local area.

Dates Rides are usually for 7 nights but can be tailor-made and dates are arranged on request for families or small private groups of 2 to 5 riders. Rides are possible from April to mid July, and in September and October. Please call us to discuss dates and check availability.

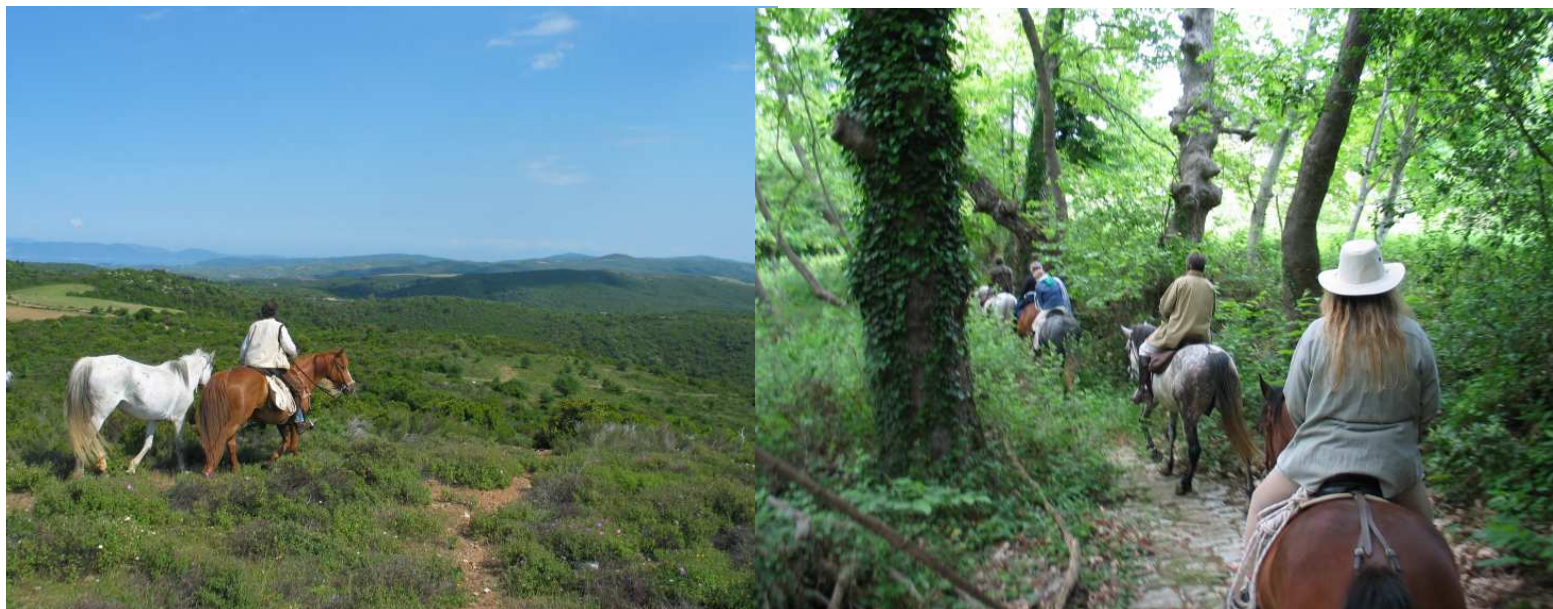


The Horses The horses used are locally bred, many on Eric's own farm. They are of mixed blood with some a local mountain breed called Pindos crossed with Thoroughbred or Arab, and others a cross of another sturdy local breed called the Thessaly horse. They are generally fairly small, averaging about 15hh and are forward going and fun to ride, as well as being very sure-footed so they cope well with the rocky terrain. Eric has about 12 horses in all including breeding mares, a couple of geldings and three stallions which he sometimes uses on rides, either for himself or for experienced guests. Saddles are English style and hackamore bridles are usually used.

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Riding The itinerary for the Katigiorgis Ride is quite flexible. There is usually riding on 6 days and about 18 hours riding in all, but this can be adjusted to suit. As the going is often rough and sometimes steep, riders must be prepared to dismount and lead the horses from time to time. There is usually no more than about 10 minutes walking at a time and provides wonderful opportunities to admire the tremendous views! Rides are usually limited to a maximum of 5 guests and are generally run for a minimum of 2. There is a weight limit of 12 stone 12lbs (82 kgs). Riders are generally expected to help groom and to tack up and untack their own horse each day although there is always assistance if required. Some saddle bags are provided, shared amongst the group, for carrying personal items, sun cream etc on the longer day rides.

Pace The overall pace of the riding is quite slow, mostly at a walk and trot, with a few places to canter. The terrain is quite rough and rugged, sometimes on ancient cobbled paths, so there are only a few opportunities to ride fast.



Riding Experience The rides are aimed for the most part at intermediate riders - some of the horses are quite spirited and the riding is over varied terrain, so although the pace is slow, the riding can be quite challenging. However, the horses are all well schooled and sensible and, as itineraries are flexible and riding can be adapted to suit, the rides also work very well for families and groups of mixed abilities.

Terrain The Pelion peninsula is well away from the tourist traps of the Greek islands and offers a good variety of unspoilt scenery. The craggy Aegean coast hides some lovely secluded beaches and coves and traditional villages with their narrow cobbled streets are perched on the hillsides above the rocky coastline. Away from the coast, narrow paths wind upwards through olive covered slopes and apple orchards and into deciduous forests of shady beech and chestnut, eventually reaching the isolated villages that cling to the wooded mountainsides. Often these winding donkey trails and narrow dirt or cobbled tracks are the quickest route between the villages and you are likely to meet local people who also use them, perhaps with donkeys loaded with wood or baskets of olives or fruit.



Accommodation Accommodation is in the small fishing village of Katigiorgis at the Avra Studios. The hotel is only 100 yards from the beach, with a swimming pool and also a lovely view. It is close to the Katigiorgis harbour where there are a few tavernas and shops and only a 10 minutes walk from a sandy cove. Bedrooms are twin bedded and most have a small balcony and private bathroom. On one night you may also stay in Lafkos, with accommodation in a traditional mansion, beautifully decorated. Rooms here are very comfortable but bathrooms may be shared. Breakfast is often served in the garden in Lafkos from where there are wonderful views to the blue waters of the Pagasitic Gulf. Rates assume shared twin rooms but single rooms can be arranged at a supplement.



Meals The food is typical of the area: hearty and simple, yet delicious. Breakfast, which is eaten in your hotel, will generally be bread, butter and jam with coffee, tea and fruit juices. Lunch is a picnic of freshly baked bread and a selection of locally made cheeses, salami, ham, salad, delicious local olives and fresh fruit, eaten in a shady spot out riding or in some village square at a taverna. Dinner will be in one of the local tavernas or small local restaurants where there will be a selection of Greek hors d'oeuvres to choose from as well as a choice of local meat dishes, grilled fish, vegetables or Greek salads. Wine, beer and soft drinks are not included with meals but are readily available to purchase in the restaurants and bars.



Weather Rides can be run from late spring to early autumn, excepting mid July to end of August. In April, May, early June, September and early October it is generally very pleasant with daytime temperatures varying from about 60°F to 85°F (15°C to 30°C) and evening temperatures dropping to a cooler 45°F to 55°F (7°C to 13°C). Summer months can be hot (mid July to end of August is not usually possible) but the flexible programme means the riding hours and timetable can be altered accordingly and there is often a cool sea breeze as well as opportunities to swim to cool off. As the Pelion Peninsula is bathed in a Mediterranean climate, there is very little rainfall during these months (less than 5mm/month) with winter rains generally arriving in late October.

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

Travel The meeting point for the rides is Skiathos airport and you will be met here and taken by car and boat to Katigiorgis on the Pelion peninsula (about half an hour in all). Several charter companies fly direct from the UK to Skiathos, with most services on Fridays (try www.avro.co.uk or www.thompson.co.uk) Flights are from about £250 return and there are options from Gatwick, Birmingham and Manchester.

Transfers from Athens or Volos to the Pelion can also be arranged by car, usually for an extra charge (depends on the group's travel plans). The drive takes 5 ½ to 6 hours from Athens, about 1 ½ hours from Volos. There are direct flights to Athens with a number of different airlines from many different UK airports and if you book early there are some very good deals on offer with low cost airlines such as Easy Jet (www.easjet.com) as well as with British Airways (www.britishairways.com) and Olympic Airlines (www.olympicair.com). Flights to Volos are usually charter flights, not scheduled. Please call us for more information or if you would like help booking flights.

Itinerary The following is an example of the Katigiorgis Ride, a relaxed and flexible itinerary, with about 18 hours riding in all, combined with excursions around the peninsula. The riding is generally on 6 days (however if the group wishes, a non-riding day can be arranged) and is a combination of rides out from the base and short lessons in the arena if required. It can however be tailored to suit and each day's activity may be varied by your guide depending on the weather and other local conditions.

Day 1 You will be met at Skiathos airport and transferred by car and boat, about 30 minutes in all, to the small town of Katigiorgis at the southern end of the Pelion peninsula. (Transfers from Athens airport, about 5 to 6 hours drive, can be arranged on request). Dinner at a taverna on the beach at Katigiorgis and overnight in a hotel in Katigiorgis. (D)



Day 2 Breakfast then enjoy the beach and meet the horses. After lunch a short ride in the arena to get used to them then an afternoon hack into the hills, returning to Katigiorgis for dinner in a small taverna on the harbour wall and the night. (B,L,D)

Day 3 An optional morning lesson in the arena and in the afternoon a short ride to the beach and (weather allowing) a chance to swim with your horse (which they love) in the calm waters of the Aegean which are often clear turquoise right through to the bottom. Dinner and the night in Katigiorgis. (B,L,D)

Day 4 An excursion on horseback to Platania, a small town to the south or to Paltsi which is to the north. Lunch at a taverna returning to Katigiorgis for dinner and the night. (B,L,D)

Day 5 Breakfast and either a lesson in the arena, or a hack out and in the afternoon either drive or ride to the town of Lafkos. The night in a hotel in Lafkos which is an old mansion. (B,L,D)

Day 6 Return to Katigiorgis for lunch and in the afternoon a ride out heading to the village of Promiri. You will stop here for dinner at a taverna and then (weather and moon permitting!) might ride back in the moonlight. (B,L,D)

Day 7 Perhaps a full day ride today with lunch en-route returning to Katigiorgis for dinner at the harbour and the night. (B,L,D)



Day 8 An early breakfast and transfer to Skiathos (or by car to Athens - about a 5 to 6 hour drive). (B)

2011 Dates

On request for small groups of 2 to 5 people

2011 Rates

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.

Katigiorgis Ride - Euros 1060 per person (single supplement - Euro 145)

Non-riders - Euros 690 per person

Children under 16 - 10% discount

Rates **INCLUDE** all riding, guiding and equipment, 7 nights twin hotel / guesthouse accommodation (single room if paying supplement), meals (dinner Day 1 to breakfast Day 8) and also transfers from / to Skiathos airport (or Athens) with the group at set times on Day 1 / Day 8.

Rates **EXCLUDE** flights / travel to Skiathos (or Athens), transfers outside the set times, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have), any visa fees, all drinks, personal extras such as telephone calls etc and any tips you wish to leave.

Rates quoted are based on a minimum of 2 participants and assume twin bedded rooms and if you are travelling alone the single supplement will be payable to book a single room. If you are travelling alone but are prepared to share a room with another guest please let us know and we can see if there is someone to share with you (we cannot guarantee this and if there is no-one willing to share, the supplement will be charged).



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 Holders of full UK passports do not need visas for visits to Greece whatever the length of stay, although for visits of over 90 days residence permits are required. 24 hour visa information is available on tel: 09065 508 983, or alternatively, visit their website at www.greekembassy.org.uk

Health No vaccinations are needed by EEC residents to enter Greece (according to the Greek and World Health Organisations), however it is always advisable to ensure your tetanus inoculation is up to date. 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 Greek describing your condition and the medicine / treatment required. You should in any case consult a health professional for further and more detailed advice.

(draft 16/11/10)

