



Connemara

Connemara Equestrian Escapes
7 Day Clinics with Julie Goodnight

Welcome Connemara Equestrian Escapees!

Thank you for signing up for your riding and Irish cultural adventure with Connemara Equestrian Escapes in association with Julie Goodnight.

I trust that you too will find this adventure be a joyful, informative and exciting experience.

This trip info package provides you with all the essential background information about your trip. If you have any additional questions, please be in touch with us any time and we will do our best to ensure that you are comfortable and ready for your adventure!

So I warmly welcome you to Ireland and look forward to meeting you on August 25th.

Sincerely,

Cathriona (Cáit) Goaleý

Managing Director

info@connemaraequestrianescapes.com

Horseback Riding, Clinic and Cultural Tour Details

Introduction

Our ponies and horses get the utmost respect they deserve and we encourage our riders to spend as much time as they desire getting to know their new partner for the week. Our guests are taught to care for, groom and saddle their horses. Away from the tourist crowds, you will witness the most spectacular views of Connemara from the seat of your Irish made saddle. Flushing out the constraints of urban life, we will awaken your senses to the miles of paths strewn with an expanse of wild flowers amongst the heather covered mountains and mystical lakes and rivers. Your free spirit will be opened as we re-kindle your natural bond with nature. Our equines take us on a journey each day with paces that allow you to absorb the scenery, air, sounds and aromas of the beauty that surrounds you. The terrain is kind but rest assured that the sure footedness of your Connemara Pony or Irish Draught Horse will take you along your trip safely. The day's ride is never complete without a long canter to tease out the adrenaline and work up an appetite for lunch after which your daily cultural experience will captivate your mind.

Connemara Equestrian Escapes (CEE) has gathered together this information with care in the hope of simplifying your trip planning and answer some of your questions. Advice provided by CEE on matters such as permits, visas, vaccinations, climate, clothing, baggage, and special equipment are for your benefit and are your responsibility. Our goal is to provide you with the resources to help you get the most out of your outdoor experience.

Please print a copy of your trip itinerary and flight schedule to review a couple of days prior to travel in case there have been changes that affect your plans. Also please review the Booking Conditions and print the packing list to make sure you do not forget anything.

What's Included

- 7 days including riding and cultural site visits and 3 daily clinics with Julie Godnight
- Riding Gear (tack & helmets)
- Professional Horse Guides
- 3 nights accommodation in luxurious farm house, 3 nights accommodation in 4* Renvyle House Hotel & Resort
- 6 breakfasts, 6 lunches, 6 dinners
- Transfer to/from pickup point in Galway
- Entrance and guided tour fees to all cultural sites
- Luggage transportation between accommodations

What's Not Included or Optional

- Round trip International Airfare to the trip destination
- Shuttles to/from Shannon or Dublin airports
- Personal equipment
- Personal, Luggage, and Travel Insurance
- Any expense of personal nature (souvenirs, beverages, alcohol etc.)
- Tips (for waiting staff/guide staff)
- Laundry services

Arrival Information

- Arrive to Galway before 1pm (local time) on Day 1. We recommend a 'jetlag' day, i.e. fly into Ireland and maybe stay in Galway City prior to Day 1 to get over any jetlag issues and have plenty of energy to enjoy your intensive, fun filled 7 day itinerary.
- Fly into either of the two international airports below:
- Airlines : www.norwegian.com, , www.aerlingus.com

Dublin Airport

- Arrival in Dublin will require a bus/train or hired car to Galway City.
- www.citylink.ie or www.gobus.ie or www.irishrail.ie or www.hertz.ie

Shannon Shannon

- Arrival in Shannon will require a bus or hired car to Galway City.
- www.buseireann.ie, www.citylink.ie, or www.hertz.ie

****For international destinations, there is always the risk of flight delays, baggage delays and flight schedule changes, which may cause late arrivals, which may, in return, result in you missing the group tour departure. For these reasons, we encourage you to consider arriving a day early, which will also help you overcome any jet lag from travelling.**

Rendezvous Point

- Galway City Tourist Office
Intersection of Forster
Street and Fairgreen
Road, Galway City,
Ireland
Tel: 00 353 91 537700

Departure Information

- On day 7, your transfer will take you from Renvyle House Hotel at 9:30am to Galway Tourist Office to commence your onward journey.



Day-by-Day Itinerary

Day 1

You will be collected at the tourist office in Galway city to travel to Moycullen, at the gateway to Connemara and then on to Curra Farm, the breeding ground of our Connemara Pony herd.

Before your riding adventure begins you'll have an opportunity to settle in, relax in your room, refresh in the bath or take a walk around the farm.

Once you've settled in we will have a quick familiarization with our tack and the English style of riding before being paired up with the Connemara Pony that will be your partner for your vacation. You will be joining Julie Goodnight in the arena as she coaches you on the "Golden Moments" with your new equine partner and after an initial assessment in the outdoor arena, you will be ready to set off for a short trail ride around the farm before our chef cooks a traditional Irish meal in the comfort of your home away from home. Relax on our boat shaped deck or have a glass of bubbly in our outdoor hot tub...

Day 2

Today our ride takes us to the beautiful outdoor arena and we will continue our adventure of strengthening our partnership with our new mount under Julie's tutelage. After enjoying our clinic with Julie and grooming the ponies down after the long ride, you will have a chance to refresh yourself before we visit the home of Connemara Marble and onwards for a tour of Aughnacore Castle. This evening, we will light up the BBQ and enjoy a relaxing evening on the boat shaped deck in the garden with wonderful views of Lough Corrib.

Day 3

Today, now that your pony/rider relationship has developed, you will have a chance to improve your English riding skills in the arena with Julie. We can practice our dressage skills and the grand finale will be our musical group ride. You choose the music and you will be surprised at how synchronized the ride will look when we play it back later on the TV. After lunch we travel to Bridgits Garden for a tour and time to relax in the cleverly landscaped representation of the four Celtic seasons of the year. Tonight we dine out in one of our local award winning restaurants to sample Irish style gourmet dining at its best.

Day 4

Today we pack our bags, horses and tack for the onward transfer to our second accommodation, the wonderful Renvyle House Hotel & Resort. En-route, we visit the hidden treasure of Glengowla Silver Mines where we descend over 120ft in into the mine shaft to witness the hardship of the mining industry that many locals endured to survive centuries ago. The owner Keith will take you on a tour of the onsite "Klondike" film set before he gives us a working sheepdog and turf cutting demonstration.

After check-in at the 4 Star Renvyle House Hotel & Resort, your ponies will be ready for a ride around the 150 acre hotel property, taking in the spectacular views while soaking up the fresh Wild Atlantic Way air. This will work up your appetite for the 5 course meal ahead, to be prepared by Renvyle's award winning chefs.

a tour of the Abbey, the Gothic Church and the spectacular walled gardens. After lunch at the abbey, you will be met for the short transfer to the hotel located on the Renvyle Peninsula where you can relax after a quick tour of the grounds to see what the resort has to offer. We ride around the peninsula in the late afternoon for spectacular views of the Wild Atlantic Way coastline. Dinner will be prepared by Renvyle's award winning chefs. Prepare to indulge in one of the finest 5 course meals you have ever experienced!

Day 5

After being spoilt by choice with the extensive "cooked to order" breakfast menu, we travel through the Quaker village of Letterfrack, the home of Connemara National Park, to the grounds of the wonderful Kylemore Abbey. We normally allow 3 hours for this tour, taking in the abbey itself, the spectacular gothic church (modelled on some of Europe's biggest cathedrals) and the wonderful walled gardens. Our ride today takes us around the Renvyle Peninsula. More spectacular scenery and history talks along the way allow us to envisage the life and traditions of the generations gone before us. Later, at the hotel, take a dip in the ocean, the outdoor heated swimming pool or Canadian Hot Tub, or simply relax with one of the many books in the hotel library before dinner.

Day 6

Today we will load up the horses for our trip through Clifden town where you will have an opportunity to stop and stroll around the town and maybe visit some of the Connemara Pony Museum and some of the gift shops and art galleries before our ride at the wonderful Omey Island. Omey is a tidal island situated near Claddaghduff on the western edge of Connemara. From the mainland, the island is inconspicuous and almost hidden. At low tide, it is possible to ride, drive or walk across the large sandy strand to the island by following the arrowed signs. Again, the pace will be your choosing and if you dare, you can even swim with your horse before we stop off at the local pub with spectacular views of the island for a chowder or fresh crabmeat salad to name but a few choices from the menu. Dinner that evening will be served at the hotel.

Day 7

Today, after a hearty breakfast you will say farewell to the ponies and horses and your private coach will take you from Renvyle House back to the Tourist Office in Galway City for your onward journey.

Itinerary Disclaimer

Connemara Equestrian Escapes and our local partners intend to adhere to the described itinerary and this is only a general guide to follow on your tour of the region. CEE itineraries are subject to change, as we cannot predict the weather or other environmental conditions. We are continually striving to make improvements to all our trips based on feedback from CEE guests, guides, partners, and other research. CEE reserves the right to alter itineraries based on this feedback at anytime.

Accommodations

Please note that single rooms at both Curra Farm and Renvyle House Hotel & Resort attract a single supplement charge.

Nights 1,2 & 3: Curra Farm B&B

Curra Farm House our Irish guide Cait's B&B. Situated on the shores of Lough Corrib it features 4 bedrooms with shared baths for guests, a cozy open concept kitchen/living room/dining room with a large purpose built riding arena overlooking Lough Corrib, the largest lake in southern Ireland! Surrounded by stone walls, this B&B and its surrounding farm land is sure to be well enjoyed.

Visit

<http://connemaraequestrianescapes.com/our-partners/our-hotels/curra-farm/>

for more information.



Nights 4,5 & 6: Renvyle House Hotel & Resort

The historic Renvyle House first opened as a hotel in 1883. The bedrooms vary in size and style but all in keeping with the features of the historic house. The characteristics are simple, clean lines and the use of solid Irish oak and furniture are apparent throughout. The fabrics and furnishings are, as much as possible, made and woven by skilled local craftsmen.

Onsite facilities (all free of charge) at the resort include an outdoor heated swimming pool, a seaside outdoor hot tub, a 9 hole golf course, tennis courts, beautiful garden walks, bowling greens, fishing, lake boats, kayaks.

Visit

<http://connemaraequestrianescapes.com/our-partners/our-hotels/renvyle-house-hotel-resort/> for more information.



Notes about meals...

Food in Ireland is as much an experience as the people and the landscapes. On this trip you will be spoiled with homemade Irish stew, full Irish breakfasts, 5 course gourmet dinners and many opportunities to enjoy local pubs – remember your on holiday, so enjoy the food!

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinners	Snacks
Expect a variety of cereals, breads, yogurts, fruits, tea and coffee and Curra Farm. Why not try the full Irish Breakfast or one of the many breakfast options at Renvyle House to set you up for the day?	Will usually be enjoyed at a local pub where there is enough variety to meet everyone's needs. Picnic lunches accompany some of the rides	Enjoy homemade stew, fresh fish or lamb and all the local seasonal veggies you can handle. Prepare yourself for two 5 course meals at the hotels – absolutely divine!	The Irish typically aren't snackers, so if you would like to have a few snacks on hand, please bring them from home.

Meal Times

Ireland is like many European countries when it comes to meal times. Breakfast will be anywhere from 8:30-9:30 am, lunches are late afternoon (2-3pm) and dinners are after 7pm. If you need snacks between these times, it is advised you bring some along on the tour.

Water

Water is safe to drink out of the tap throughout at our accommodations.

Important Notice for Vegetarians, Clients with Allergies and Other Restricted Diets

In the city, you will find sufficient vegetarian choices in most restaurants. A variety of freshly-prepared foods will be available throughout the tour. Meals are designed for omnivores, but the outfitter is able to satisfy vegetarians. Strict vegetarians/ vegans/ gluten free are advised to bring food supplements from home, as many specialty items may be unavailable.

If you have food allergies or restricted diets, you must inform Connemara Equestrian Escapes as soon as possible. Review allergies and restrictions with your guide and other operations staff during the orientation meeting or early on in the trip.

Pre-Trip Preparations

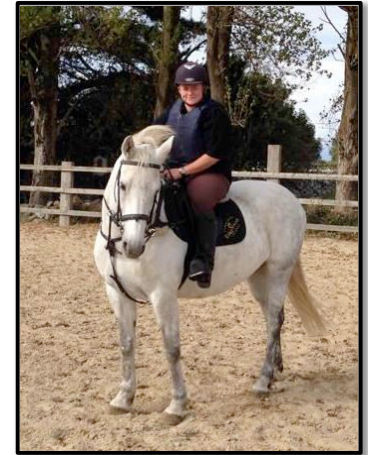
Ireland Quick Facts

Capital: Dublin

Currency: Euro (€)

Local Outfitter & Guides

Connemara Equestrian Escapes and owner/operator Cathriona(Cáit), takes special pleasure in showing visitors the unique Connemara area atop Irish bred ponies. Born and raised in Connemara, Cáit and her guides will help you to get to know the real Ireland – meadows, beaches, pirate history and more!



Passports & Visas

You are fully responsible for your own visa requirements, permits and certificates for your trip. It is the sole prerogative of each country or region to determine who is allowed to enter. Canadian consular officials cannot intervene on your behalf if you do not meet entry requirements. It is your responsibility to check with the Embassy of Ireland or one of its consulates for up-to-date information.

***As fees and policies can change, we highly recommend that you contact your local embassy or consulate for the most up-to-date visa requirements, or see your travel agent. It is the sole responsibility of the traveller to ensure that they have the most updated passport and visa information and that they travel with the appropriate entry and exit documentation.*

Release of Liability, Waiver of Claims, Assumption of Risk, and Indemnity Agreement

Connemara Equestrian Escapes (CEE) is committed to taking excellent care of all of our trip clients, and CEE does NOT assume liability for any loss or damage to person or property in traveling to the location of a CEE trip or event, or during or after participation in the event. CEE trips may be operated using one or more local third party activity suppliers and we endeavor to use the best available suppliers, who offer quality equipment and follow our high standard safety procedures. Prior to participation in any Connemara Equestrian Escapes program, you will be required to sign our standard Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk, Waiver Of Claims and Indemnity Agreement. Involved in any outdoor adventure activity, we recommend that you obtain whatever personal insurance you feel is appropriate.

Travel & Health Insurance

Travel insurance is compulsory for all our trips when CEE customer are travelling outside their home country. Documentation is required. Travel insurance must include adequate coverage for accidents, medical expenses (including any related to pre-existing medical conditions), emergency repatriation (including helicopter rescue and air ambulance) and personal liability.

We also recommend that you obtain adequate coverage for cancellation, curtailment, loss of luggage and personal effects.

You are responsible for booking your own flights or other transport arrangements to the trip

Rendezvous Point. These arrangements and any other independent arrangements that you may make that are not a part of the trip booked with us are entirely at your own risk. CEE accepts no responsibility, directly or indirectly, for any loss, damage or injury to property or person in connection with such arrangements.

Please be advised that you should wait until the trip is confirmed before booking your flights.

Money Matters

CEE recommends that each participant should bring enough cash or available credit/debit funds to cover their meals during travel to and from their destination. Please consider your own spending habits when it comes to allowing for drinks, shopping, participating in optional activities, etc. and we also suggest you have access to emergency funds.

Cash – It is handy to have Euros (€) on hands for pub meals and tips for guides.

Credit Cards - Are widely accepted in Ireland. The major cards in Ireland are MASTERCARD and VISA.

Cash can be obtained at every bank branch as well as in all ATMs throughout the country. Please note that there might be a difference between the official currency exchange rate in Ireland and the exchange rate that the credit card companies charge.

Tipping – It is never expected, but like everywhere in the world it is appreciated. There is no obligation to tip your guides or tour staff but many participants do when they feel they provided great service. We are often asked what an appropriate amount is; most participants who provide a gratuity for their guides and tour staff usually tip 10-20% of the trip cost to be shared by all guides and staff.

Emergency Contact Numbers

Should you require any assistance during your travels with CEE, please contact us directly at the number listed below. You may leave the CEE number with family or friends should an emergency arise and they need to contact you while you're on trip.

Connemara Equestrian Escapes

+353876445589

Health & Fitness

English horseback riding skills and trail riding (hacking) experience is required and a good level of physical fitness is necessary. We want you to have the best possible adventure and appreciate you helping us create an inclusive and healthy group environment that is about taking excellent care of ourselves and each other.

You must be comfortable;

- riding 2-4 hours per day;
- riding in various paces with a secure seat (walk, trot/post, canter);
- mounting (getting on) and dismounting (getting off) from a mounting block;
- walking (a.k.a. hiking) up and down steep, rocky, uneven trails while leading your horse;
- tacking (putting on the saddle)

Plenty of time is available each day to travel and see the sights. Most routes require a walk but cantering may be used in some locations at the guides discretion.

CEE highly recommends that in the months leading up to your adventure, you take at least 4 English style riding lessons or ride regularly to improve skills and build endurance. This will help you be more comfortable and relaxed on your trip. You can additionally prepare yourself by walking or running and/or stair-climbing, as this will all strengthen your legs.

If you are affected by any condition, medical or otherwise, that might affect your or other people's enjoyment of the trip, you must advise CEE of this ASAP and we encourage you check with your doctor about health and safety in Ireland.

Weather in Ireland

May in Ireland is typically nice, however like every other North Atlantic island, it is heavily influenced by the ocean winds and currents. Expect weather to change quickly here, but overall daily highs from 12-20°C and lows from 8 - 0°C can be expected. It can be warm enough to wear a light shirt, or cold enough to send you looking for your down jacket!

Light woolens, polypropylene fabrics, and wind and rain-proof clothing are essential. Dressing in layers works best in Ireland's changeable weather. Be sure to check the current weather conditions while packing!

Packing

Checked luggage on airplanes can get lost or delayed on the way to any destination. Therefore, you should prepare for this possibility by wearing or carrying on the items that are essential to your CEE Adventure. While most clothing, gear and equipment can be replaced prior to your trip, there are some things that cannot.

CEE recommends that you wear one complete outfit on the plane, including a long sleeve shirt, riding appropriate pants, underwear, socks, and riding/ hiking boots. In your carry-on baggage, you should bring your waterproof jacket, insulated jacket or sweater, toiletries, medications, camera, all paperwork, and a full change of clothes. Make sure you wear/carry your riding/hiking boots; wearing a different pair of boots on your trip could be very uncomfortable.

- o Throughout the 6 days of riding, your luggage is taken by vehicle between the overnight stops - **only 1 piece of luggage per person will be carried in the vehicle.** Please pack light and use soft sided luggage.

Personal Gear & Equipment

You are responsible for bringing personal gear and equipment. Below is a suggested packing list.

Clothing

1 – Rain Gear - Waterproof Jacket (Waterproof Pants optional)

- o Look for waterproof breathable fabrics such as Gore Tex or other nylon types, with a well-fitting hood, pit and side leg zippers are highly recommended. Your jacket and pant should be big enough to wear warm layers underneath, and have good-sized pockets.

1 - Insulated Jacket (optional)

- o Bring a warm jacket for colder times (morning/evening). Look for something that is very warm (synthetic or down filled), but still light weight and will pack small, also makes a good pillow.

2 – Warm Sweaters

- o Another part of your warm layers, a fleece or wool sweater.
- o 1 for riding (a.k.a. being dirty and smelling like horse) and 1 for relaxing in the evenings (a clean one!).

2 – Riding Shirts

- o It is recommended you bring a long sleeve and a t-shirt.

1 – Riding Pants

- o Ideally, bring English riding breeches. If you require an alternative, look for seamless, snug fitting, two way stretch garments made of polyester or other

“warm when wet” materials. What you will want to avoid in any case, is pants that twist, wrinkle or bunch along the inside of your legs.

1 – Comfy Pants and Top

- These are for wearing at the accommodation, and can double as pajamas.

1 – Set of Long Underwear (Top and Bottom)

- These are to be worn on cold/ damp days under your riding clothes.
- Look for synthetics (polypropylene and polyester). These are light and strong, absorb very little water, and are quick to dry.

4 - 8 - Underwear

1 – Pair of cycling shorts/ padded briefs to help reduce sore bums and chaffing (optional)

2 – Firm support and comfortable bras

- Make sure it fits snug, trotting can be hard on the ladies!

1 – Swimsuit

1 – Set of street-clothes for travel or if you’re extending your stay

Headwear

1 – Riding Helmet (Optional)

- Helmets are provided. If you bring your own, it must meet the PAS015 standard. Contact Cáit if you require clarification.

1 – Bandana/ [Buff](#)

- To be used as a headband, ear warmer, scarf, sweat wiper, snot rag etc.

Handwear

1 – Riding gloves (recommended)

- Work gloves, biking gloves, or leather gloves

Footwear

1 pair of Hiking **or** Riding Boots ~ **you will be wearing these for 60% of your trip!**

- If you already have riding boots – they are comfortable, waterproofed and have a sturdy sole, then bring them.
- If you already have hiking boots - they are comfortable, waterproofed and have a small heel (0.5-1.5 inch) and sturdy sole, then bring them.
- If you have neither – CEE recommends hiking boots (day hikers) as these are more multipurpose than riding boots (you can use them on another adventure!). Look for waterproof and a small but distinguishable heel section. The reason riding boots have a small heel is to help prevent your foot from going through the stirrup and getting caught should you fall off

1 pair of Walking Shoes **or** Sandals (optional)

Bring one other pair of shoes if you feel like you would like an alternate set of footwear (that doesn’t smell like horse!) to wear at the accommodation, and to travel home in.

4 to 6 Pairs – Socks. Thick and warm, wool or synthetic preferred

Accessories

1 – Sunglasses and case

1 - Small waist bag or fanny pack (to use when riding)

1 - Water Bottle (optional)

Lots of ziplock plastic bags in various sizes, and a few larger garbage bags (for wet bathing suits, dirty boots, toiletries, etc.)

Equipment

1 – Small Travel Pillow (optional)

1 - Duffel Bag **or** Soft Suitcase **or** Backpack

- Please try to pack minimally as only 1 large item per person will be transported in the car.

Other

Electricity plug adapter & converter

- Ireland's power is 230volts, 50 HZ AC. Bring a 3 prong (UK) adapter and a converter.

Toiletries (soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, razors, etc.)

Prescriptions (Bring in duplicate and pack separately. In the event you lose a set of medication you will then have a spare.)

Sunscreen, Lip Balm (with SPF)

Personal First Aid Kit (should contain; Ibuprofen/ ASA, band aids/plasters, second skin, adhesive tape, anti-histamines, Polysporin, Imodium or similar tablets for mild cases of diarrhea, throat lozenges, extra prescription drugs you may be taking). Be ready to deal with chaffing (ex. Lanacane Anti-Chafing Gel).

Hand Sanitizer & Wet Wipes (recommended)

Snacks (optional)

Pencil and Notebook/ Journal (miniature, for trip log) (optional)

Travel alarm clock or watch (optional)

Ear plugs (recommended for room sharing)

Camera and accessories (recommended)

- Small cameras are easier to use while riding and will fit inside pockets.

Documents Checklist

- ☐ Passport with photocopies (for yourself, with someone at home)
- ☐ Travel Insurance with photocopies (for yourself, with someone at home)
- ☐ Airline Tickets (with photocopies for yourself, with someone at home)
- ☐ Cash (local currency is recommended, get at airport upon arrival)
- ☐ Credit Card (Visa and/or Mastercard with photocopies)
- ☐ CEE Trip Info Package
- ☐ Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required