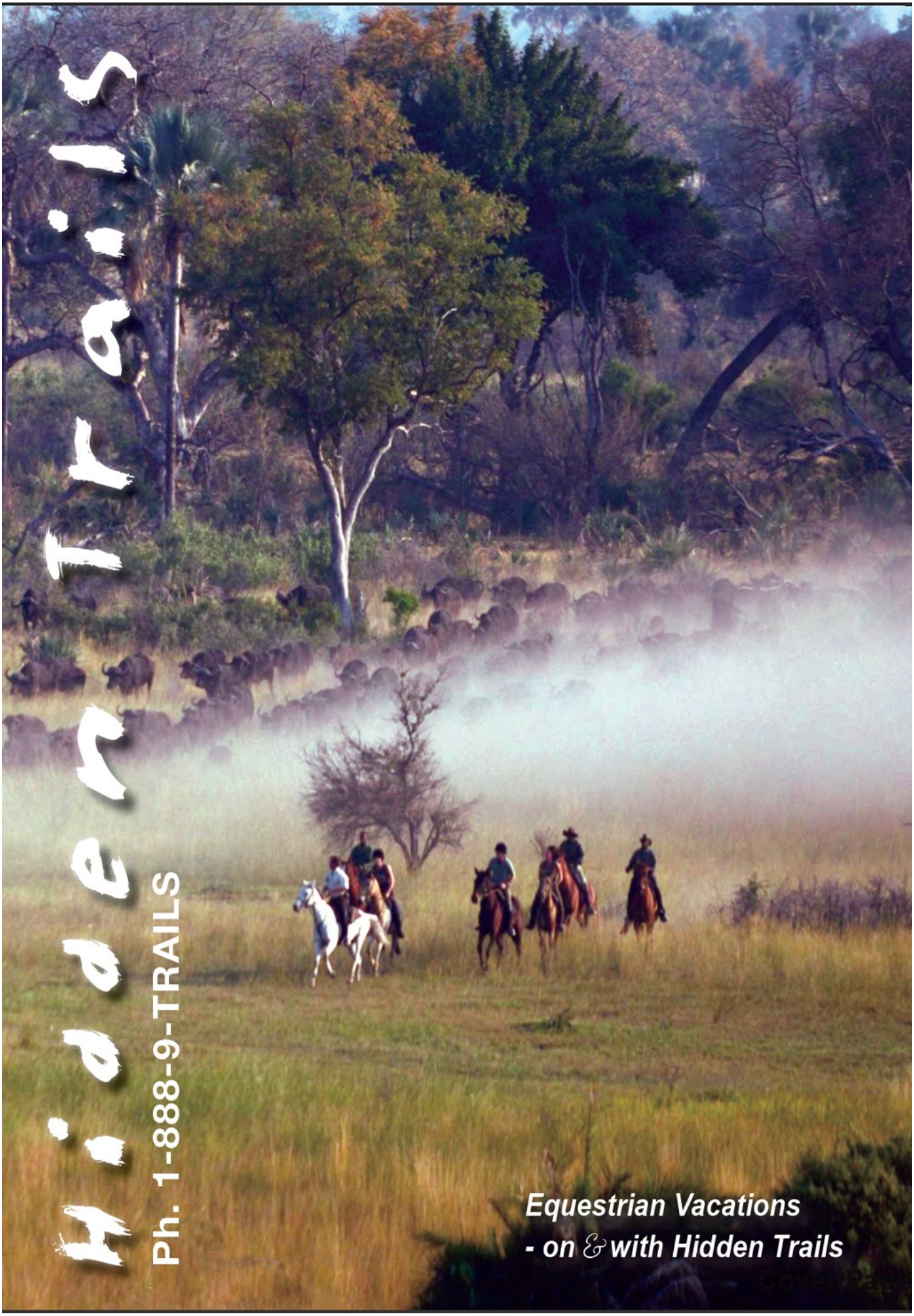

Hidden Trails
Ph. 1-888-9-TRAILS
Equestrian Vacations
- on & with Hidden Trails

# About Hidden Trails




Hidden Trails is owned and operated by nature enthusiasts who love horses and adventure activities. We have been involved with riding and other outdoor vacations for over 20 years.
With our partners Voyage du Cheval (France), Pegasus (Germany) as well as Equitour (Switzerland and France) we have collected the best riding destinations all over the world in some hidden places we would like to share with you.

These rides are about galloping on endless beaches, forging rivers, cantering through forests, trotting along age-old trails, gazing at beautiful vistas and encountering foreign cultures. But most of all, these trips are about getting away from the cycle of too much work and never enough free time.

Escape from the rituals, which long ago froze our nights and days into little more than routine and away from the worries of our new tense times. It is so satisfying when we take the plunge of adventure - it's unfortunate that we invent so many reasons to put aside living our dreams of adventure. It is sometimes a tangled web that we weave through life. Some of the threads reveal a work-a-day world of commitments, duties and obligations. Other threads are of a quiet fabric of hope, responsibility and refreshment.

On our adventures you see the real country, its back country and meet the locals. The love for horses has no boundaries but possesses a common language we all speak and understand. The majority of the overseas rides are from inn to inn, some from castle to castle and a few are camping rides.
You will experience new countries and their customs and make new friends. The Hidden Trails trips are the best you can find.

They have been tested by our staff or associates and received our stamp of approval. If you are considering a special riding vacation anywhere in the world, call us first and let our experienced consultants match the perfect trip with your dream.
We will listen to you and give you objective advice to help you choose the best destination and adventure.

Your vacation is the most precious time of the year and we are committed to making it the most memorable time of your life. Wherever you go, have a great time and bring back some peace of mind.

Thank you for your continued support.

**Hidden Trails**
Phone: 604-323-1141
Fax: 604-323-1148
Toll Free: 1-888-9-TRAILS
from within the USA or Canada or

E-mail: info@hiddentrails.com
Website: www.hiddentrails.com

Address:
659A Moberly Road, Vancouver BC Canada V5Z 4B3 or
4406 Tennyson Road, Willmington, DE 19802 USA

**Toll Free from the U.K.:**
Ph: 0- 808 189-0420
Fax: 0-808-280-1860

**Toll Free Worldwide:**
Skype: hiddentrails

# Crete Mountain Explorer Ride - Greece, Europe

**Tour Code: IT-GR-LAS**
8 days / 7 nights ~$2,090.00
Dates: Mid-March to Mid-November
(except July & August)

Trip Rating :
Difficulty :
Lodging:

Tack: English - Wintec
Horses: Arab, Berber, Thoroughbreds, Warmblo...
Pace: Moderate with trots and canters. Occas...
Walk,Trot,Canter,

Airport: Heraklion International Airport














## Introduction

Crete, Greece
Ride across Crete through the mountains to the Libyan Sea.

Surrounded by the clear and blue Mediterranean seas and with its rough and wild rolling landscape of mountains reaching 2,5 km high, you will find horseback riding here on Crete is rather special. Here you ride in the coveted silence and peace that only a tiny island covered with olive-trees, historical sites and timeless myth can offer.

From the moment you arrive on the hillside of the 4-star country hotel you will immediately be enchanted by the stunning panoramic views of a countryside which beckons for you to mount up and hit the trails. Imagine riding through the Gorge of Gonies, climbing up from sea level to 1100 meters high, or trekking across the remote Lassithi Plateau, a beautifully fertile plateau between the tops of the Dikti Mountains. Enjoy the pleasing views of a quaint local countryside comprised of white windmills still irrigating the lands, rough yet friendly shepherds supervising their herds and workers whom continue to tend to their fields traditionally with their donkeys under the hot Mediterranean sun. Ride along the pretty olive groves and wine yards and pass through Greek villages which have been curiously caught in tradition and time. Traverse desert lands that have been cultivated by the Southern winds of the very close and mysterious continent of Africa. Meet the largest colony of Egyptian Vultures in Europe, nestled up high in mountains. And if conditions are just right, you can take a refreshing swim in the beautiful Libyan Sea with the horses and after we will follow the Anapodaris River and the impressive 5 km gorge it has carved out from the solid Earth. There will also be time to visit the nearby and charming town of Avdou and partake in a drink of Ouzo with the locals at the village square. The trail is an adventurous one - 100 miles through the Dikti Mountains - 6 riding days and 32 riding hours.

There is a Self Guided trip Option available any time with 2+ riders from March-May and Sept to Dec - suitable for **Experienced** riders ONLY

The Unguided Option - truly alone with horse and nature
Only for the very experienced rider who has complete knowledge horse care it is possible to do this trail without our guide. You will have the help of a map, a route description and painted arrows on every cross road marking the entire trail while all your personal luggage needed are taken in your saddlebags. 2 times during the week you will be able to have a luggage change.
For this option there is a minimum of 2 guests required for safety reasons.

The route for the unguided trek is exactly the same as the route of the guided trek.

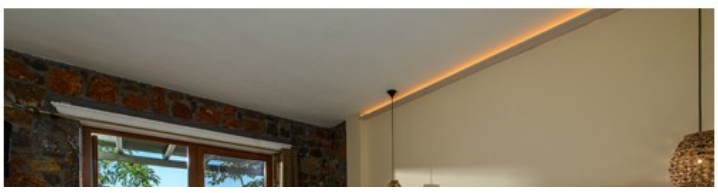
## Accomodation



**Accommodations**
This is a progressive ride, so nights are spent in different accommodations.

**Description**
Accommodations are in small hotels and guesthouses with private facilities.

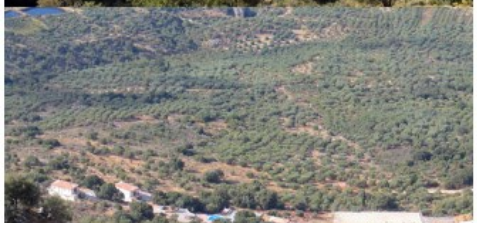
Accommodation Itinerary - *subject to changes based on availability*
Nights 1 & 2: Country Hotel near Avdou
Night 3: Hotel Dionissos in Magoulas or Hotel Kourites in Dzermiado
Night 4: Country Hotel near Avdou
Night 5: Giannis Rooms (previously known as Finikas Rooms) in Keratokambos
Nights 6 & 7: Country Hotel near Avdou













*Country Hotel near Avdou*
The hotel suits its surroundings. It is built with real natural stones collected from the land it stands on, which give it a robust and natural look. The main building houses the reception and a café with a large balcony on which you can drink your Greek coffee or Rakí. In the main building, you also find the Restaurant with its large terrace overlooking the riding place and the valley. The terrace is surrounded by moveable glass walls and a roof that can be opened or closed depending on the weather conditions.
Next to the main building lays the naturally formed large swimming pool of 100 m2 (130 – 160 m deep) with a separate children pool of 11m2 (40 cm deep). The pools are open year round but are not heated. There is also a Jacuzzi with a lounge area that can be rented by the hour during the summer months (comes with Cretan sparkling wine and a fruit platter).
Private outdoor massages and wellness treatments are also available at an extra fee.
The 12 hotel rooms are grouped into 2 bungalows each housing 6 rooms. The rooms are large and comfortable and all have a tremendous view over the valley. All rooms have central heating and air conditioning, a fridge, a flat screen TV with international channels, a private bathroom with hairdryer as well as coffee and tea making facilities.
Since 2020 the rooms feature new luxury cotton satin bedding, anti-allergic duvet and summer cotton sheets as well as 2 pillow choices (soft and hard).
The hotel has WIFI on the entire property.
Laundry is available for an additional fee.

*Taverna Hotel Dionyssos in Magoulas*
This small hotel offers simple accommodations on the Lasithi Plateau. All rooms feature a balcony with a view, a private bathroom and a free Wi-Fi access.

*Giannis Rooms in Keratokambos*
Tonight you sleep in air-conditioned rooms with a private bathroom and great views over the sea. The accommodations are basic but comfortable. There is no Wi-Fi access.

Room Occupancy
Triple rooms are available in Avdou.
If we are unable to find another rider to share a room with you, the single supplement fee does not apply.



**Meals**
All meals are included but drinks are to be paid extra (water, soft drinks and alcoholic drinks not included).

The chef will prepare traditional Cretan/Greek food with local products. The hotel's restaurant has its own vegetable, herb and fruit gardens. Ripened under the Cretan sun and grown organically they have a rich and delicious taste. Food is prepared with extra virgin olive oil from our own olive grove.
Some of the local produce used in the restaurant includes meat from the free ranging goats and sheep of our neighbors, cheese made by the local shepherd, homemade raki and honey from a local beekeeper.
Meals are cooked in our wood fire oven and include many vegetable, mezedes, or grilled meat.
All meals are served with good Cretan wines (to be paid extra), made with grape varieties that have been used since Minoan times.
Dinner is your choice from the menu and includes a starter, main dish and salad. Drinks, desserts and other foods are not included.

Breakfast from 8 am to 10:30 am
Lunch from 1 pm to 4 pm
Dinner from 5 pm to 9 pm

Dietary Restrictions
We can cater to most dietary restrictions with prior notice.

## Riding



















**Riding Experience**
This ride is suitable for intermediate to experienced riders. You must be able to control your horse at a trot and canter riding outdoors in a group.

**Pace & Terrain**
The program includes 6 riding days with a total of 32 riding hours, averaging 5 hours in the saddle per day. We cover a total of about 160 km.
We travel for a week through the Dikti Mountain Range, over the Lassithi high plateau, the Cretan south coast and the Greek countryside. The trail includes 3 days of riding across the mountains (slow pace over rocky paths) and 3 days of active riding across flat plateaus or through the country side.

**Tack**
We use English saddles. Every horse has his own saddle and bridle custom fit for every horse, regularly maintained and refit to follow the changes in the horse body. For bridles, we use a broken or double broken K&K Aurigan bit.

**Horses**
Here we stable 18 lovely horses and 1 pony. We have Arabians, Thoroughbreds and Warmblood horses. These breeds have a long breath and a never tiring will for the long distance riding. They are beautiful and well-trained holiday horses. Always eager to go, very relaxed in the mind, surefooted in the mountains and human orientated.
For the children we have a Welsh B pony. A real children's pony, very sweat, safe and with speed.
Our horses are trained following the classical dressage method (inspired by the Greek general Xenophon) to maintain the horse healthy and well balanced in its body. Or better explained by his own words: 'Anything forced and misunderstood can never be beautiful.'
Our horse work very hard on the long distances and in a warm climate. We believe we must do everything we can within our reach to make them feel as good as possible.
On 5 hectares of land, we built the stables by using natural materials like stones and wood. The stables are designed to be as close as possible to the physical needs of the horses.
We feed our horses by placing the hay in a slow feeder on the paddock floor. This means our horses are eating all day long creating a natural grazing behaviour, preventing colics or stumic sores and creating a healthy darm flora.

## Itinerary



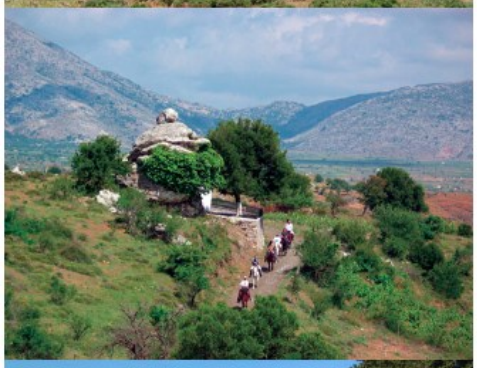
**Sample itinerary** - *subject to changes*

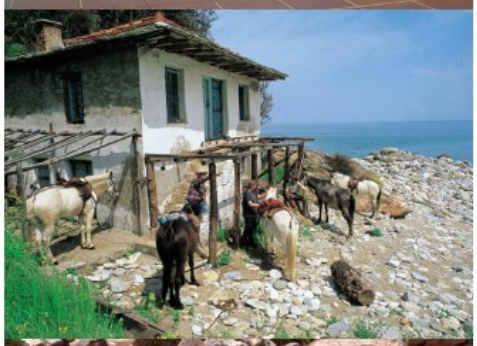
*Note: Starting 2025 this program is Self-Guided only, available any time with 2+ riders from March-May and Sept to Dec - suitable for Experienced riders ONLY.*

This is an adventurous trail of 160 km through the mountains. We make a quick canter over the Lassithi high plateau and meet the biggest colony vultures of Europe in the high mountains. We sleep on the south coast where we eat fresh fish and swim with the horses. The trail has 3 days over mountainous area where we travel slowly as we decent and ascent over rocky paths and 3 trail days we ride over the flat plateau or through the country side with its villages, olive groves, and wine yards.

**Day 1 (Sunday): Arrival**
Arrival in Heraklion (also known as Iraklion) and transfer to the four-star equestrian resort, Country Hotel Velani****, located near Chersonissos.
*Meals included: Dinner*
*Overnight at Country Hotel Velani****

**Day 2 (Monday): Ride to Sfendili hills**
Today we take an active trip in northerly direction. We ride up the hills of Sfendili, cross the Byzantine church of Avdou, ride quickly over the "Plateau of Mochos" and have an excellent view of the Psiloritis Mountains, the highest peaks of the island.







*3 hours in the saddle.*
*Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*
*Overnight at Country Hotel Velani*****

**Day 3 (Tuesday): Ride through the Gorge of Gonies**
Today the trail starts with a spectacular climb, riding through the Gorge of Gonies up from sea level to 1100 meters high, over the old and narrow donkey route. In the past, it was the only possible path to the Lassithi Plateau. We enjoy the breathtaking views and eat a lunch cooked in a traditional Greek oven. At the end of the day, we ride over the Lassithi Plateau. This fertile Plateau between the tops of the Dikti Mountains is known for its white windmills irrigating the land and the locals still working with their donkeys. Here, we will have a quick canter over the nice, flat plateau.
*6 hours in the saddle.*
*Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*
*Overnight in either Magoulas, Hotel Dionissos or in Dzermiado Hotel Kourites (subject to availability)*

**Day 4 (Wednesday): Ride across the Dikti mountains**
Today, we cross through the Dikti mountain range in a southern direction and you will experience the unique feeling of being truly alone with the horses, the mountains, and unspoiled nature. A good kind of loneliness. We may come across some rough, but friendly shepherds as well along the way. Transport to Country Hotel Velani **** for overnight, while the horses stay in the mountains
*5 hours in the saddle.*
*Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*
*Overnight at Country Hotel Velani*****

**Day 5 (Thursday): Ride to the Libyan Sea**
Today, we ride downhill through desert lands dried by the southern winds out of the very close continent of Africa. We will eventually meet the clear blue waters of the Libyan Sea and go for a refreshing dive. We can normally also go swimming with our horses, but only if sea conditions are safe to do so. Tonight, we will sleep next to the great sea and, of course, here we shall dine on fresh fish from the wood-fire.
*6 hours in the saddle and swimming with the horses.*
*Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*
*Overnight at Finikas Rooms in Keratokambos*

**Day 6 (Friday): Ride along the Anapodaris River**
Today, we start with a ride along the sea and coast before we will turn inland again. We follow the Anapodaris River which has cut out an impressive 5-km long gorge. Still now, the water continues to cut the gorge deeper. Careful you may grow dizzy from the incredible depth! Suddenly the land will become more friendly and accessible again; softer hills with many olive and wine yards. We cross through villages and let the horses drink in Lake Ini. Transport to Country Hotel Veláni**** while horses stay on trail
*6 hours in the saddle.*
*Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*
*Overnight at Country Hotel Velani*****

**Day 7 (Saturday): Ride back to Avdou**
We ride back to Avdou through the typical Greek countryside. We pass Greek villages where time has stood still. Feel welcome to stop and drink an Ouzo with the Cretans at one of the village squares. Next to our path rises the Dikti Mountains, which we will never forget.
*5 hours in the saddle.*
*Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner*
*Overnight at Country Hotel Velani*****

**Day 8 (Sunday): Departure**
Breakfast and departure.
*Meals included: Breakfast*

Non Riders
There are many activity options available - from Para-gliding to Caving, Mountain Biking and Hiking to Golfing (5 miles away), and Massages.

## Other Info

**Meeting:** Avdou
**Airport:** Heraklion International Airport
**Transfer:** Heraklion (Iraklion) Airport by taxi or public bus
**Distance:** 40 km
Private transfers are available from the airport (International or domestic), and the port. Or you can take a local bus to the hotel. Room available from 3:00 PM. Check-out by 11:00 AM.

**Tack:** English - Wintec
**Horses:** Arab, Berber, Thoroughbreds, Warmbloods, and Weslh ponies for children
**Pace:** Moderate with trots and canters. Occasional steep terrain, ~5 hrs/day. 160 km total
Walk | Trot | Canter |
**Level:** (3 out of 5) Intermediate
**Age:** Min 12
**Weight:** 210 lbs / 95 kg
**Riders:** Min 3 riders Max 9 riders

## Crete General

Crete, the island of surprises and contrasts. High mountains and deep gorges, archaeological sites alongside traditional villages where life continues in a relaxed and friendly way, clear blue seas bordered by golden sandy beaches. Zeus, the king of Greek gods, was born in a cave on Mount idi, the highest mountain. He represented hospitality and his spirit lives on today in the hearts of all Cretan people.

### Georgaphy

Crete is the largest Greek island. It covers 8,336 sq m with 1.100 kms of coastline. It is considered as one of the most prosperous areas in Greece. Its development has been favored by its geographical location, climate, diverse natural beauty as well as its unique cultural and historical treasures. Crete is renowned for its breath-taking mountain ranges and long sandy beaches running down to emerald-blue seas. This particular geography







allow the existence of a large number of rare flora and fauna species, such as the sea lily along the coastal zones, sea turtles caretta caretta in Rethynnon and Eleonoras Falcon falcon Eleonore in Lassithi. In the valleys and semimountainous areas, one can find more than 100 different varieties of flowers and plants, while in the high mountains and deep Cretan gorges the visitor may encounter interesting flora and fauna including the wild goat kri kri, which is found only in Crete.

**Climate**

Crete enjoys perhaps one of the best subtropical Mediterranean climates with over 300 days and more than 3,000 hours of sunshine each year. The light rainy season is normally confined to the period between November and March. Mild temperatures prevail year round.

**Population**

The population of Crete currently is approximately 600.000 people. The majority of inhabitants live in the four main towns of the island, Hania, Rethymnon, Agios Nikolaos and Heraklion, the capital. The remainder of the population is spread in smaller towns and scattered fishing and mountain villages.
Main Religion : Greek Orthodox
Language : Greek is the official language, but English and German are widely spoken.

## Rates and Dates 2026 - IT-GR-LAS

**Rates include:** Accommodations (Classic room while in Avdou), All meals, 6 self-guided riding days & Government taxes.
Riding helmets and mini chaps are available for free in the stables.

## Packages and Options

| Season | Description | EUR | ~US$ |
|---|---|---|---|
| A 2026 | 8 day ride (high) | €1900 | $2090 |
| B 2026 | 8 day ride (low) | €1865 | $2050 |

The US Dollar Rate is based on a EUR Exchange Rate of 1.1 and subject to currency fluctuation

## Transfer Option

**Description**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2026 | Transfer from Heraklion airport one way, per car (up to 4 pax) | €55 | $65 |
| 2026 | Transfer from Heraklion city center one way, per car (up to 4 pax) | €60 | $75 |
| 2026 | Transfer from Hersonissos one way, per car (up to 4 pax) | €30 | $35 |
| 2026 | Non-rider, dbl, pp - please inquire | | |
| 2026 | Child rates- please inquire | | |
| 2026 | Upgrade to Deluxe room, per room | €455 | $545 |
| 2026 | Upgrade to Panorama wellness suite, per room | €910 | $1095 |
| 2026 | Upgrade to Superior wellness suite, dbl, per room | €1050 | $1260 |
| 2026 | Additional single supplement (requested) when upgrading to larger room | €245 | $295 |
| 2026 | Mandatory Climate Crisis Resilience Fee (April 1st to October 31st period) 1.50 Euro per room per night | €14 | $20 |
| 2026 | Mandatory Climate Crisis Resilience Fee (November 1st to April 30th period) .50 Euro per room per night | €4 | $5 |

**Tour Dates**

| Season | Tour Dates | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| A 2026 | 03/15/2026 - 06/06/2026 | 8d / 7n | 8 day ride (high) |
| A 2026 | 09/13/2026 - 10/31/2026 | 8d / 7n | 8 day ride (high) |
| B 2026 | 11/01/2026 - 11/20/2026 | 8d / 7n | 8 day ride (low) |

**Min/Max:** 3/9

**There is a Self Guided trip Option available any time with 2+ riders from mid-March to early June, and mid-Sept to mid-Nov - suitable for Experienced riders ONLY**

Rates do not include:Drinks, Gratuities & Transfers from/to Heraklion, Climate Crisis Resilience Fee

Environmental resilience tax is 2 euro per room / per night from April 1st to October 31st, and 0,50 euro per room / per night from November 1st to November 22nd and from March 15th to March 30th. (Must be paid at the hotel, during check out)

# Reservation Form

**Tour :** _____ **Code #:** _____ **from:** _____ **to :** _____

| **The Travelers** (Last Name, First Name) | Male Female | Single room / or tent | Birth Date MM/DD/YY | Height | Weight | Special diets | Beginner | Novice | Intermediate | Strong Interm. | Advanced | ride English | ride Western | mostly arena | mostly hacking |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | ☐ | | | | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. | | ☐ | | | | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. | | ☐ | | | | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4. | | ☐ | | | | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Special Diets: _____

Your fitness level: Excellent ☐ Moderate ☐ Poor ☐ How long have you been riding? _____

How often do you ride? _____ Have you been on other riding tours? No ☐ Yes ☐ last trip when? _____

If Hidden Trails offers a transfer from the local airport/station: I would like the transfer to be included: YES ◯ NO ◯

In an emergency, name and phone number of contact: _____

Attention: Please, if there is more than one participant, all have to sign the reservation form - make copies if needed

With my signature I confirm my reservation of the listed program(s) under the Hidden Trails Booking Conditions. I'm aware, and I made all participants aware of the risk involved with these outdoor adventure activities. All participants have read and agree with the Hidden Trails *Booking Conditions* and the Hidden Trails *Recreational Activity Release and Indemnity Agreement* in this brochure or as listed on the Internet.
I (we) will sign and forward the *Recreational Activity Release and* Indemnity Agreement at least 10 weeks before trip starting date.

***Last Name and First Name (The Traveler)*** _____

***Street*** _____ ***e-mail*** _____

***City*** _____ ***State*** _____ ***Postal/Zip Code*** _____

***Phone (wk)*** _____ ***(hm)*** _____ ***Cell*** _____ ***Fax*** _____

***Date*** _____ ***Signature (mandatory)*** 1. _____

Please, charge a 25% deposit (minimum $ 350 per person) now and full payment 10 weeks before the travel date to my credit card.

***For payments by VISA*** ◯ ***or Mastercard*** ◯ (no debit cards)

Cardholder: _____

Card # _____ 3 digit Security # _____

Exp.Date: _____ Signature _____

Billing Address for Credit Card (if different than maling address): _____

I have enclosed a check for the deposit ◯

Additional Signatures:

2. _____

3. _____

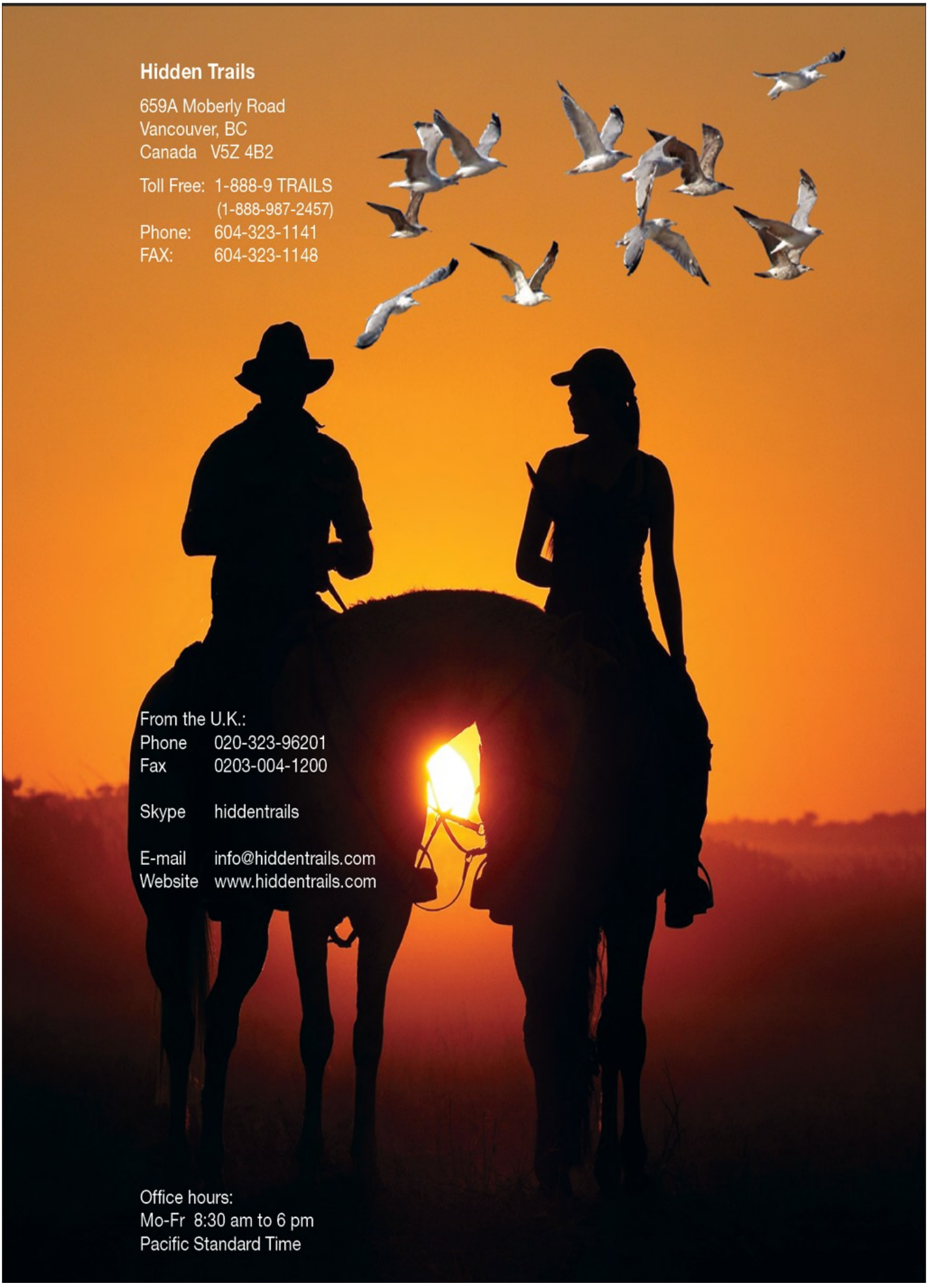
4. _____

***Travel Cancellation Insurance*** Credit Card required

Sign me (us) up ◯ initial _____

No, we will provide our own ◯ initial _____

***Hidden Trails Ltd. 659A Moberly Road Vancouver, BC V5Z 4B3 FAX: 604-323-1148 Phone: 604-323-1141***


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E-mail info@hiddentrails.com
Website www.hiddentrails.com
Office hours:
Mo-Fr 8:30 am to 6 pm
Pacific Standard Time