

EQUESTRIAN TOURISM IS GALLOPING BACK TO POPULARITY IN FRANCE



There is a new trend in tourism in France, a trend towards the “authentic”, a trend towards rediscovering nature and a slower pace of life. Equestrian tourism in France is in full swing at the moment.

53% of all people in France say that they would like to experience an equestrian vacation; it is also another way for foreigners to discover the country. **France's territories are rejoicing in the popularity of this activity which allows them to showcase their many qualities.**

The French Equestrian Federation has announced the following numbers: there are 2 million people who practice the sport, 2 500 equestrian associations and establishments, 350 accredited equestrian tourism centers, and 80 000 km of trails for riders.

Trekking on horseback is becoming fashionable once again, and the sector is booming due the increasing popularity of sustainable tourism.

Phoebé Perdreau, co-founder of CavalnGo, believes that the passion for horses has always existed, but that what has been lacking is proper communication to the public at large regarding the various professional organizations and the variety of possible equestrian tourism experiences.

“At CavalnGo, for example, those family members who do not wish to go riding can spend the day swimming in our pool or taking part in open-air sporting activities or can even take cooking lessons. This allows everyone to have a good time and to go back home with memories that they can share.

“We also offer packages combining equestrian and relaxation activities which allow our visitors to spend a day on horseback and then abandon themselves to a massage or a yoga class”.

She added that with the internet, prospective clients searching for equestrian tourism professionals can immediately have access to all the information required to easily plan their equestrian vacation.

According to a 2011 TNS SOFRES study, 2.2 million people ride horses or ponies and 14 million people in France have stated their intention to do so.

The socio-professional categorization of those individuals found in centers of equestrian activity has been determined to be as follows: 15% are staff workers, 20% are workers in manual labor professions, 22% are intermediate professionals and 23% hold executive level positions.

Christophe Leservoisier, President of “Cheval d’Aventure”, remarked that equestrian tourism in France is especially appealing to a female and family oriented clientele, something which was confirmed by Phoebé Perdreau: two thirds of riders are women and the remaining third are families; they are usually between 30 and 50 years old and 80% of them are either French or francophone.

This tourism sector seems to appeal more to individuals and groups rather than to companies due to the potential ramifications of injury by falling.

Riders from other nations, on the other hand, consider it to be a fun and enjoyable way to discover the country by sampling its nature and the local products offered up by the territories that they traverse on horseback.

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