

# Lassithi Trek, Crete

## Itinerary

### Day 1

Arrive at Veláni Country Hotel, hopefully with time to relax by the pool before dinner in the restaurant.

Your guides will meet you and the other guests and give you a briefing over dinner for the week ahead.

Please note that the itinerary may change depending on the weather at the time and other local conditions, but always with your best interests in mind.

Overnight at Veláni Country Hotel.



### Day 2

The introductory ride this morning takes you up the hills of Sfendili. Cross by the Byzantine church of Avdou, then ride over the plateau of Mochosm with an excellent view to the Psiloritis Mountains, which are the highest peaks on the island.

Return to the hotel for a late lunch and time to relax by the pool before dinner. (c. three hours in the saddle.)

Overnight at Veláni Country Hotel.



### Day 3

The trail starts with a spectacular climb. After riding through the gorge of Gonies you climb from sea level to 1,100 m. The trail follows a small old donkey route, in the past the only possible path to the Lassithi Plateau. Stop for lunch at a traditional tavern for food served fresh from the oven, with breathtaking views of the trail you have ridden.

In the afternoon ride over the Lassithi Plateau. This fertile plateau, in the heart of the Dikti Mountains, is known for its white windmills providing irrigation to the land. (c. six hours in the saddle.)

Overnight at Hotel Dionyssos, Magoulas.



### Day 4

Packing your lunch into your saddlebags this morning, you head out across the Dikti mountain range heading south. This is the land of the shepherd and you follow their trails through the mountains.

Stop to enjoy your picnic lunch, keeping an eye out for Griffon vultures. The remoteness of the area brings a calmness as you experience the special feeling of

being alone with the horses, the mountains and nature.

At the end of the day, you are met and transferred to Veláni Country Hotel for dinner and the night (a journey of c. 45 minutes). Your horses stay in the mountains for this night. (c. five hours in the saddle.)

Overnight at Veláni Country Hotel.

#### **Day 5**

Breakfast is at the hotel and then you return to the horses and follow the trail downhill through a desert land dried by the south winds out of Africa.

After stopping for your saddlebag lunch, you finally reach the clear blue water of the Libyan Sea and, conditions allowing, take your horses for a swim. (c. six hours in the saddle.)

Enjoy dinner of fresh fish in a restaurant right on the sea front.

Overnight at Finikas Rooms, Keratokambos.



#### **Day 6**

This morning you follow the sea for a while before turning inland. The trail leads you along the Anapodaris River and a 5km long gorge. Even now, the water continues to cut the gorge deeper and deeper. Reaching the end of the gorge the land becomes hillier with many olive trees and vineyards.

After finding a shady spot to enjoy lunch, the trail continues crossing through villages to Lake Ini.

At the end of the day, you are met and transferred to Veláni Country Hotel for dinner and the night (a journey of c. 35 minutes). Your horses stay near Lake Ini for this night. (c. six hours in the saddle.)

Overnight at Veláni Country Hotel.



#### **Day 7**

Returning to the horses this morning with your saddlebag lunch, you ride back to Avdou through typical Greek countryside, past villages where it seems that time has stood still. Perhaps there will be an opportunity to stop and drink an Ouzo with the Cretans at one of the village squares.

Finally the trail brings you full circle back to Odyssea stables. Hopefully there will be time for a dip in the pool before a farewell dinner. (c. five hours in the saddle.)

Overnight at Veláni Country Hotel.



#### **Day 8**

After breakfast you are transferred to Heraklion for your flight or to continue your holiday in Crete.