

GENERAL INFORMATION

A Region with a Rich Equestrian Tradition

Historic riding culture, modern equestrian sport and a wide range of leisure opportunities – Niedersachsen is one of the defining centres of German horse culture.

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Hanover, March 2026. Niedersachsen has long been regarded as one of Germany's most important horse regions. The horse shapes the identity of the federal state – both as a symbol in its coat of arms and through internationally renowned breeding lines such as the Hanoverian and the Oldenburg. The region's varied landscapes – including heathland, coastal marshland and river valleys – provide excellent conditions for the breeding, training and use of horses. They have also played a key role in the development of a rich and diverse equestrian culture.

Tradition and modernity – horse breeding and equestrian sport

One of the central places associated with equestrian culture is Verden. The town is often referred to as the 'riders' town' and is home to the German Horse Museum. Housed in a former cavalry barracks, the museum traces the development of the horse and its role throughout human history. Interactive exhibits allow visitors to explore different historic and modern riding styles as well as racing traditions. Equestrian sport and horse culture are also ever-present along the coast. The *Jaderennbahn* in Hooksiel is among the most traditional racecourses in northern Germany. It features one of the longest grandstands in the region and regularly hosts trotting races. Its location on the North Sea coast shapes both the atmosphere of the events and the venue's particular significance for regional equestrian sport.

Variety across different regions

Alongside classic races, Niedersachsen also hosts other events where horses take centre stage. One example is the *Duhner Wattrennen* in Cuxhaven, a traditional horse race held on the tidal flats at low tide, where a stretch of beach becomes a temporary racecourse. The race has a tradition spanning more than 120 years and, due to its location within the Wadden Sea UNESCO World Heritage Site, is unique both nationally and internationally. Another distinctive attraction in the state is the museum horse-drawn railway on Spiekeroog island. It is Germany's last horse-drawn railway and runs along a historic route from the station at Westerloog to the former lifeboat shed, offering insight into the island's history. The roughly 90-minute journey leads through salt marshes, sharing fascinating information about the island's natural environment and heritage, and includes time at the lifeboat shed to visit the small exhibition or take a break for tea or coffee.

The region's diversity extends beyond horse racing. In the Lüneburg Heath, carriage rides are a popular way to explore the landscape at a relaxed pace. In the Wendland region, trail riding is

particularly popular, supported by a network of riding-friendly establishments that provide overnight stops for multi-day tours. The heath is also home to the Dülmen wild horses, which can be observed in their natural habitat – a rare example of wild horses in Germany. In Bückeburg, in the Weser Uplands, visitors will find the Princely Riding School – the only active historic court riding school in Germany and one of just five worldwide. Here visitors can experience historic horsemanship based on non-violent methods, visit the royal stables and take part in guided tours.

Equestrian holidays and horse-related leisure activities

Visitors can look forward to a wide range of activities, excursions and accommodation options. More than 300 farm and riding establishments offer programmes ranging from first encounters with ponies to multi-day riding tours, with some farms also offering overnight stays in haylofts. Depending on the region, rides lead through forests, heathland or marshland. Along the North Sea coast, riding on the tidal flats is a particularly memorable experience. At low tide, guided tours take riders across the exposed seabed, including the route from Sahlenburg to the island of Neuwerk. Many establishments cater to families, while others focus on experienced riders or guests wishing to bring their own horse. For this latter group, ‘bed & box’ options combine accommodation with secure stabling for the horse. Depending on the establishment, training sessions or courses may also be available.

For further information (in German), please visit: www.reiseland-niedersachsen.de/pferdland-niedersachsen

Images at: niedersachsen-bilder.de

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Further Information

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About Tourist Board Niedersachsen (TourismusMarketing Niedersachsen or TMN)

The TMN is the central point of contact for tourism in Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony). The company was founded on behalf of the Niedersachsen Ministry of Economic Affairs, Transport and Housing in 2001 and, since January 2014, has been a wholly state-owned company. The TMN’s main task is to develop and implement measures for the future-oriented positioning of Niedersachsen in national and international tourism competition in cooperation with regional

tourism stakeholders. The focus is on regional and national marketing of Niedersachsen as a tourist destination, the development of brand concepts, Internet portals and quality management systems for tourism offerings.