

Aiken Equestrian Enthusiast Itinerary

Day 1

Welcome to Aiken, where even our street signs have horse heads and we have a cross-walk specifically for horse-back riders. When you arrive, get a taste of it all as you head straight to the [Aiken Thoroughbred Hall of Fame and Museum](#). Every horse on display has won an Eclipse Award and has spent time during its racing career in Aiken. You'll be wowed by the amount of winnings each horse represents, along with real racing silks and trophies on display. The museum sits on the property of [Hopelands Gardens](#), a 14 acre estate which opened in 1969 as a public garden, with 100-year old cedars, meandering trails and ponds.

For dinner, head over to [The Stables at Rose Hill](#), which is one of four stables in America, located on its original site, that has been re-purposed as a restaurant. Enjoy live music and quality food in one of Aiken's oldest estates.

Day 2

Wake up early and drive through the dirt streets of the "Aiken Horse District" and watch the horses train at the famed [Aiken Training Track](#), where 39 thoroughbred champions have trained. You just might see the next winner of the Belmont Stakes or the Kentucky Derby out for a morning gallop around the track. Afterwards, head on to [The Track Kitchen](#) where you're likely to run into all manner of equine industry staff. Order at the counter, help yourself to coffee, read the clippings on the wall and enjoy a home cooked meal.

Check out the events going on at [Katydid Farm](#), [Highfields Event Center](#), or [Bruce's Field](#) and you may be in for a treat to see a dressage event, hunter-jumper competition, steeplechase or even carriage races! Or head to the [Hitchcock Woods](#) to see the Aiken Hounds take part in their historic drag hunt every Tuesday and Saturday from October through March. Ride your own horse into the woods or rent one from [Seahorse Stables](#).

After all the action, head downtown for lunch at [What's Cookin](#), or [The Aiken Brewing Company](#) and then meander down Laurens Street for some equine-inspired shopping at stores like [Aiken Dry Goods](#), [Epona](#), and [Equine Divine](#). For dinner, head over to [The Red Pepper Café](#), sit on the patio, and let their fish tacos and drink specials make everything alright!

Day 3

Relish a good chai latte, fresh smoothie or and muffin at [Ridgecrest Coffee Bar](#) where local art surrounds you and in this laid back atmosphere you're welcome to bring a book and stay for a while. Another equestrian highlight you won't want to miss is the [Gaston Livery Stable](#). Take a tour of this historic stable, built circa 1893. The Barn is the only one remaining in South Carolina with a carriage lift. It is one of the only all brick, U-shaped barns with a carriage lift in the United States.

To wrap it all up, you'll need to head to the [Whitney Polo Field](#) and watch six chukkers of polo and stomp the divots during half-time to feel like you've gotten a true Aiken equestrian experience. Splurge and sit under the VIP pavilion with buffet style gourmet food and drinks, or pack your own tailgate and enjoy this unique experience from the comfort of your own tailgate set-up. The [Aiken Polo Club](#) hosts matches every Sunday at three during the fall and spring.