



Esprit Meraki Day Retreat

Dr Margaretha Montagu

Equine-Assisted Mindfulness and Meditation in the Foothills of the French Pyrénées

“I need to get away from all of this craziness for a while.”

Sometimes the day is perfectly manageable. You go about your business, do the things responsible adults do, and generally keep life moving along in a sensible manner. And then, somewhere around three in the morning, your brain decides it would be an excellent time to hold an emergency meeting about the current world chaos.

“Everyone thinks I’m fine... but I’m barely holding it together.”

3 am anxiety – when the mind refuses to switch off – is far more common than you might think. Many retreat guests arrive carrying that exact feeling: thoughtful, caring people who simply need a break from the relentless noise and uncertainty of modern life. They don’t necessarily need therapy, or drastic life changes, or a ten-step personal transformation plan. Quite often, they simply need somewhere peaceful to step out of the storm for a day – and discover some surprisingly effective stress management strategies shared by unlikely experts.

And that is precisely what tends to happen during a day retreat at Esprit Meraki – your temporary refuge from the escalating anxiety of modern life.

About the Day Retreat

Who: A limited number of Day Retreat Passes are available for a minimum of 2 people and a maximum of 8 people. Day Retreat Passes can be booked by couples, friends, a mother/daughter, on birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, or by work colleagues.

Where: Near Nogaro, less than 2 hours’ drive south-east of Bordeaux and 2 hours’ drive southwest from Toulouse

When: Fridays, usually, from March to December, but other days may also be possible, please inquire. Morning sessions start at 10h and afternoons sessions start at 14h

How: To book, please email: margarethamontagu@gmail.com with 'Day Retreat' as the subject line.

This Day Retreat Is For You If...

You feel worried, stressed, drained, exhausted and overwhelmed — but don't know what to do about it. If you were less stressed, you would:

- Sleep through the night without your brain scheduling a 3 am meeting to review everything that went wrong
- Say no and actually mean it — without the guilt, without the excuses
- Stop agreeing to take on work you don't have time for, don't want to do, and will resent by Thursday
- Notice when people were taking advantage of your good nature — and feel quietly confident enough to decline
- Have relationships that give back as much as they ask
- Make time for yourself without it feeling selfish or in need of justification
- Say what you mean, in the way you mean it, to the people who need to hear it
- Simply be yourself — not the curated, holding-it-all-together version, but the actual you



What Makes These Day Retreats So Effective?

Horses.

Horses are extraordinarily honest communicators. They don't do passive aggression, they don't say yes when they mean no, and they have never once sent a follow-up email clarifying

what they really meant. Spending time with them teaches us, quietly and without a single PowerPoint slide, what clear and confident communication actually feels like in the body.

A day spent with them could help you:

- Handle conflict more effectively — a horse has walked you through staying grounded in the presence of something large and unpredictable
- Say no without the guilt spiral — horses say no with their whole body and then immediately get on with their day
- Build relationships that are genuinely sustaining rather than quietly draining
- Connect more easily with less effort — presence is the whole game with horses, and with people too
- Communicate with more ease and considerably more effect
- Put yourself first without abandoning the people you love
- Know where your limits are, and hold them — not aggressively, not apologetically, just clearly
- Leave carrying less stress in your body than you arrived with — not suppressed stress, but stress genuinely, physically released

For the sake of clarity, there will be no horse riding during these retreats. Everyone's feet stay firmly on the ground.

The Day's Programme

Morning Session (2–3 hours)

- A short briefing session to discuss any concerns about working with the horses
- A walking meditation session with the horses — a powerfully stress-busting method you can add to daily life
- An equine-facilitated mindfulness session

Afternoon Session (1-2 hours)

- An equine-guided mindfulness meditation in the presence of the horses
- A debriefing session to discuss the experience and how to transfer learnings into everyday life and a discussion of what you have learnt and achieved — over tea, coffee, hot chocolate and pastries

What Guests Say

"This was an absolutely amazing experience. Life-changing, totally. Due to a seriously unfortunate experience with horses in my childhood, horses scared me witless. Today I not only overcame that fear, I learned how to gently defend my boundaries against two humongous Friesian horses. After this, no one is ever going to make me do anything that I am not 100% committed to do. The meditation sessions were out of this world. I have meditated before, but never like this. An unforgettable experience that I very highly recommend."

– S. Bradshaw



Pricing

Option 1: Morning *or* Afternoon attendance – **75€ per person**

Option 2: Morning, picnic lunch *and* Afternoon attendance – **149€ per person**

How to Book

Send an email to margarethamontagu@gmail.com with 'Day Retreat' as the subject, including:

- Your name and age
- The size of your group
- A little about why you're interested in the Day Retreats
- An indication of when you'd like to attend (usually Fridays, but flexible)

About Dr Margaretha Montagu

Dr Montagu (MBChB, MRCP, master NLP cert, Med Hyp Dip, Prof Life Coach Cert and EAGALA cert level 2) is an experienced medical doctor, medical hypnotherapist, NLP practitioner and equine-assisted life coach. She has worked in a variety of medical disciplines, including Psychiatry, and worked as a General Practitioner in Jersey, Channel Islands before she retired to France.

Despite her extensive qualifications, Dr Montagu is a warm, down-to-earth person with a personal, non-judgmental approach to problem-solving. She draws from many modalities including Cognitive/Behavioural Therapy, Positive Psychology, Solution-Focused Therapy, Equine-assisted Experiential Learning and NLP.

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