




in the saddle
holidays on horseback

*Gallop
across
golden
beaches*

*Learn cowboy skills on a
working ranch and explore
parts of the world that
vehicles can't reach*

*174
rides in
35
countries*

*Experience
the thrill
of a horseback
safari*

23rd EDITION

Welcome

Every year I'm excited to introduce the latest edition of our brochure. This is our 23rd year and I feel as inspired now as I did when In The Saddle first began in 1995.

We are committed to offering outstanding experiences and this brochure is your gateway to a world of exceptional riding holidays. We've packed it with information to capture the unique aspects of riding holidays.

If you yearn to head off on a pack trip into the wilderness, gallop with zebra across the plains of Africa or experience passage on a high performing Lusitano – we can take you there. If you dream of cantering through the surf on an endless beach, riding across the Andes or being part of a genuine cattle drive - we can make those dreams come true. Diverse, thrilling and often surprising, riding holidays are a unique way to experience the world. Wherever your journey takes you there is so much variety within riding holidays it's a passion that will last a lifetime.

I'm confident that we know our destinations. At In The Saddle we've teamed up with partners around the globe who are as committed as us in providing quality holidays. We've travelled there and ridden the horses. Our special skill is in matching rider to ride. So whether you travel solo, as a couple, with family or friends you can put your trust in us. I invite you to look through this brochure and get a sense of what to expect, but nothing beats talking through your plans with one of our riding specialists. They will be delighted to share their experiences and take you through the options.

We look forward to showing you the world of riding holidays – I'm confident you won't be disappointed.

Olwen Law

*Your
Riding Holiday
Starts Here*

This brochure is here to inspire you.
Find out more at www.inthesaddle.com including detailed itineraries, reviews and expert advice.
Call one of our travel specialists on **01299 272 997** or email rides@inthesaddle.com
Front cover - Mozambique. Inside front - Torres del Paine. Back cover - Namibia Horse Safaris.



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In The Saddle recommends you wear a hard hat on all riding holidays.

The information in this brochure has been checked and verified to the best of our knowledge but we do not guarantee the accuracy.

Date published April 2018



Foreword

by Susanna Forrest

Sometime around 3500 BC, our relationship with horses changed forever as we first tamed them. Soon we were using horses to ride, to drag wagons and carry packs. Chariots drawn by spidery equid shapes appeared on cave walls, and ancient clay tablets gave cuneiform instructions for training them.

Four hooves were better than two feet: horses became synonymous with migration and travel as they took us as fast as they could carry us across the vast expanses of Eurasia, west as far as Ireland, east to Korea and Siberia, south into India and Saudi Arabia. They helped us circle the Mediterranean with cavalries while bolstering African nations as far down the continent as they could survive the local insect life. When Europeans pushed into the Americas, Australasia and Southern Africa, they packed horses into the holds of their ships. Later, horses even made it to the Arctic and Antarctica on polar exploration missions, hauling sledges and eating polar bear meat as required.

The poles may have proved continents too far, but everywhere else that horses have gone, they've established themselves, reshaping nations around them. They transformed life for the people of the North American Plains, enabling them to hunt buffalo and expand their territory. In Argentina they were the foundation of Gaucho society. They made their way into indigenous art in Australia and royal courts in India.

Today, when we ride in a new country, we experience the wide-ranging creativity that horses encouraged in humans, from the very saddles we sit on to the architecture of stables and the history we learn – the wars fought and the trade routes we can still trace. Two equine ears frame 5,500 years of global culture and ingenuity – a rich and living heritage.

Susanna is the author of *If Wishes were Horses* and *The Age of the Horse: an Equine Journey Through Human History*. She has written extensively on man's long relationship with the horse from the industrial and agricultural past to the role of the horse in the twenty-first century as a tool in the fight against climate change.

How In The Saddle began



Spending some time researching I realised there was a gap in the market so putting together three of my great passions in life, travel, photography and horses, In The Saddle was born. That was more than 20 years ago.

Since then there has been a boom in active adventure travel and while not exactly mainstream, riding holidays have become a recognised way to experience the world. Today there is so much information and choice it can be bewildering, so now the work we do is even more important. In The Saddle has grown to a small dedicated team of fourteen based in a converted barn in Shropshire. We recognise that a holiday is for many people the most important purchase they will make during the year. Our aim is to support you through this process and we continually strive to do the best we can.

While we are proud to be the market leader in the UK, organising more riding holidays than anyone else, we are even more pleased that we have a 98% success rating. I still travel the world seeking out great new riding destinations but as with many jobs most of my time is spent in front of a computer. For us the greatest reward is the feedback from customers when they come back and tell us their trip with In The Saddle was their best ever holiday.

The idea of a travel company specialising in riding holidays first came to me during a six month sabbatical from my accountancy job. I was in Argentina, touring South America, an area famous for its equestrian culture – the Gauchos, estancias, Criollo horses and the home of polo.

I'd ridden in various countries around the world but it was all very hit and miss. You'd arrive somewhere and it was difficult to tell who was more bored the horses or the guides while at others the whole experience was fabulous. I knew there must be places where I could get great riding but I had no way of finding them. Horses had taken

me to some of the most beautiful parts of the world and even though their culture was a million miles from my own upbringing I'd made a real connection with people because of our shared love of horses. I thought, wouldn't it be great if there was someone you could go to who knew the best places to ride and who could help you find them.



ABOUT THIS PICTURE

Although it looks like a painting this is actually a photograph. It was taken at Dundlod in northwest India by equestrian photographer Dale Durfee and has hung in our office for the past 15 years. The Marwari breed has distinctive ears with tips that turn inwards, an adaptation to the semi-arid climate and sand deserts of Rajasthan. The image of a horse being schooled in between horse safaris takes up most of the wall so it's very prominent. For us it's a constant reminder of what we do. We see In The Saddle as the thin strand that connects people and horses and if we do our job well the whole process is seamless.



YOUR FEEDBACK

Customer feedback is central to In The Saddle. It helps us to continually improve the holidays we offer and ensure that any issues are picked up as early as possible.

We've been publishing all the feedback we receive for many years. It's one of the most read sections on our website and we know it really helps people choose the holiday that's right for them.

We recognise the importance of showing everything so you get the full picture - the occasions when things don't go to plan as well as the times when it does.



What We Do

Before we start to promote a new ride someone from In The Saddle visits the destination to ensure the quality of the experience meets our standards. There are many thousands of riding holidays around the world but we only work with a select few. The horses and guiding are the most critical aspects we check but these inspection visits are also vital to our role of matching the right customer to the right holiday. We know the riding holidays we provide all offer a high quality experience but each one is unique. There are many different aspects to a riding holiday and what suits one person in terms of the number of hours on horseback, the pace of riding, types of horse and accommodation may be very different for another person. There's no substitute for first-hand experience and it means we can talk to you with knowledge and confidence.

Our speciality is our in-depth expertise of riding holidays and because we spend our days organising holidays we also know the best flight routes to get to these destinations. We have contracts with a number of airlines so we often have preferential rates on flights - but we aim to be fully transparent on pricing so where better rates are available by booking direct with the airline or through a flight specialist we will always highlight these options.

We can also book extensions to your riding holiday so, whether you want a relaxing beach lodge after your African horseback safari or an epic train journey through the Canadian Rockies as the perfect accompaniment to your ranch stay, we can help you put together the complete trip.

PLANNING YOUR HOLIDAY

If you have an idea of the sort of riding holiday you are looking for you then visit our website www.inthesaddle.com which has plenty of information including day by day itineraries, lots of images and extensive customer feedback. Alternatively, whether you already know where you want to go or if even if you have just the seed of an idea, call us up and you'll get through to one of our specialists. They can discuss your plans, offer advice and give you ideas and inspiration. The same specialist will be on hand to answer questions from your first call to when you return from your trip.

Riding holidays by their nature are small group trips so they can fill up quickly. If your first choice is not available we will always come up with other great alternatives.

TRUSTED PARTNERS

We constantly seek out the best riding holidays and are always looking to improve our itineraries in conjunction with our local partners, many of whom we have worked with for over 20 years. Our partners employ the best local guides selected for their specialist knowledge and insight who will look after, entertain and inform you.

OUR CERTIFICATIONS

In The Saddle holds an Air Travel Organiser's Licence (ATOL) which protects holidays we sell which include a flight and we are bonded with ABTA for all holidays where we do not arrange your flight. Together, the ATOL and ABTA bond mean that any money you pay us is safe and assistance will be provided to you in the unlikely event of our insolvency.

AITO QUALITY CHARTER

We are members of AITO, the association for independent and specialist holiday companies. Its members strive to create holidays with high levels of professionalism and a shared concern for quality and personal service. The association encourages the highest standards in all aspects of tour operating.



★★★★★ AITO RATING

98% of customers rated their experience with In The Saddle as good or excellent

Riding holidays

*are essentially a simple
way of seeing the world,*

WHERE THERE ARE NO BARRIERS OF METAL AND GLASS
BETWEEN YOU, THE SCENERY AND THE WILDLIFE

LEAVING ONLY HOOFPRIENTS

We all want to limit our impact on the environment and the concept of sustainability, of respecting the destinations we visit, is at the very heart of riding holidays. Small groups travelling without vehicles are by their nature environmentally sensitive so it's not something that we need to shout about. Wherever possible guides and backup staff are recruited and trained from nearby towns and villages. The suppliers we work with are small, often family owned and run which means your money goes into supporting local communities. In identifying new destinations we work with tourist boards who are committed to encouraging growth in tourism away from the main visitor attractions which are often at capacity.

Uruguay, Coastal Estancias

Horses have been used by humans to travel for thousands of years and many of the great historical journeys were done on horseback. When you go on a riding holiday you are part of that ongoing tradition. Riding is about being in the moment, away from the distractions of the modern world. One of the comments we often receive when someone comes back from their holiday is that it felt like travelling back in time, to a time when life was less complicated.

Horses have shaped the world we live in and part of the fascination of travelling by horseback is coming face to face with different horse cultures around the world. Just look at the variety of saddles that have evolved in different countries. They all solve the same issue of how to ride comfortably over long distances but, the approach in, say, Mongolia, Argentina or even Spain is very different to how we do it in England. The differences and questions are endless - why are horses in Romania adorned with red tassels and why do Chileans use ornately carved wooden stirrups?



SO WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A RIDING HOLIDAY AND A HOLIDAY WITH RIDING?

On a riding holiday, riding will be the main activity and the horses are typically ridden by one or two riders over the week. Contrast this with the hotel which may have horses they hire out by the hour and which, over the year, will be ridden by many hundreds of riders.

On a riding holiday there may be other things to do but you should expect to ride on most days. We let you know how much riding there will be on each trip since it can range from two to eight hours per day.

On a riding holiday the horses and guides have been checked by In The Saddle so you can be confident that you will be provided with a horse that is fit and healthy, well trained for its job and a pleasure to ride.

At the booking stage we find out about your expectations and level of experience. We also provide your host with your details so they can match you up with a suitable horse. Some destinations like Horizon in South Africa have a herd of over 70 horses and take around ten guests at a time so there is a wide choice of horses and you may ride several different horses during your stay. Other places will have a smaller choice so it's vital to ensure that horse and rider are well matched.

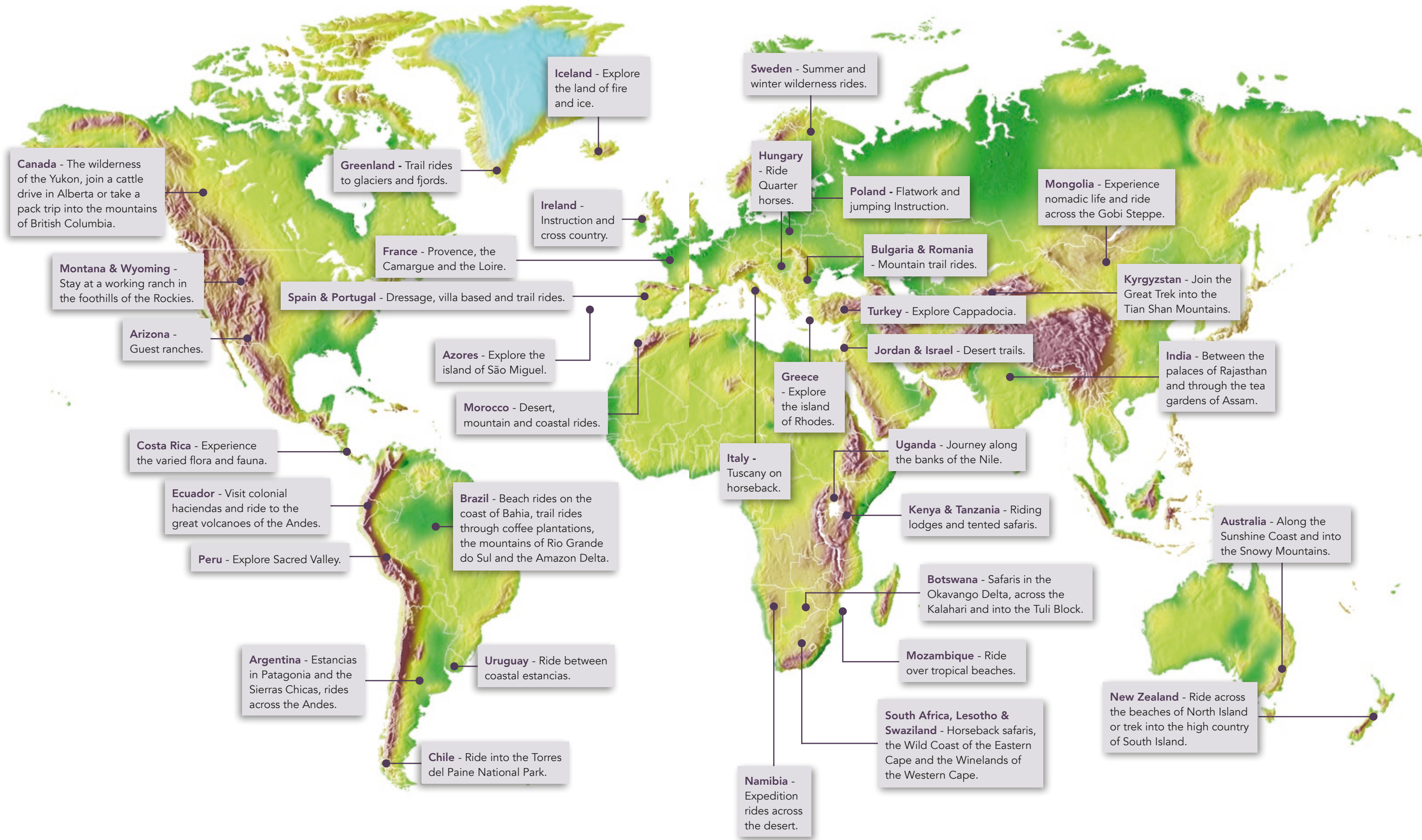
REAL LIFE EXPERIENCES

Authenticity is the Holy Grail of travel. One of the things you will know if you've been on a riding holiday is that you interact with people differently when you arrive on horseback. On the more adventurous trips you get to areas where very few outsiders visit so you will naturally generate a certain amount of curiosity. In other destinations where there is a strong horse culture being a rider will create an immediate link with the locals.

ESCAPING YOUR STRESSES

Many studies have shown the mental health benefits of being around horses and how they contribute to reducing stress. Holidays are also an opportunity to recharge and rebalance. On a riding holiday everything is looked after so you are free to enjoy the experience. The organising has all been done for you, the itinerary mapped out, routes checked, meals prepared and accommodation booked. So with the organisation being taken care of, you can simply enjoy the riding and the journey. You will be tired at the end of the day, sleep well and feel refreshed for the next day's adventures.

Where Can You Ride?



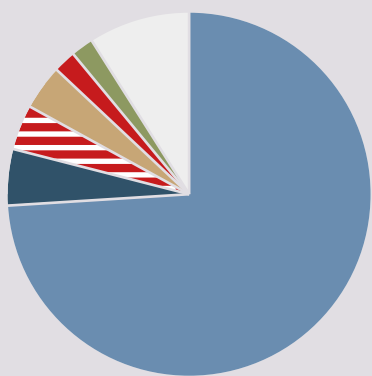
Who goes on riding holidays?

The vast majority of our customers are female and this has changed little since we first started arranging riding holidays. There are a number of family friendly places where we can take young riders from aged four or five but many of our destinations are for adults who can ride. We do not set an upper age limit on our holidays but you need to be open about any health issues and your level of fitness. Some rides are in remote areas with limited medical resources so we may suggest against a particular holiday but we will always do this in your best interests.

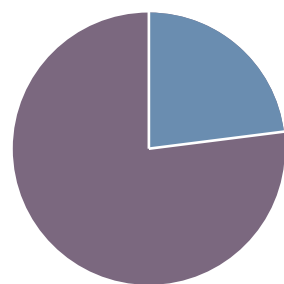
WHERE ARE THEY FROM

Most of our customers live in the UK but we have a broad spread of nationalities and over the past year we've organised riding holidays for people from 42 different countries.

A mix of nationalities is one of the features of riding holidays and adds an extra dimension to the holiday.

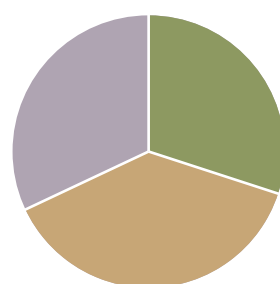


UK	74%
Norway	5%
USA	4%
Belgium	4%
Denmark	2%
Italy	2%
36 Other Nationalities	9%



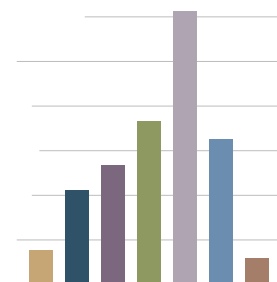
GENDER

Male	23%
Female	77%



GROUP SIZE

One	30%
Two	38%
Three or more	32%

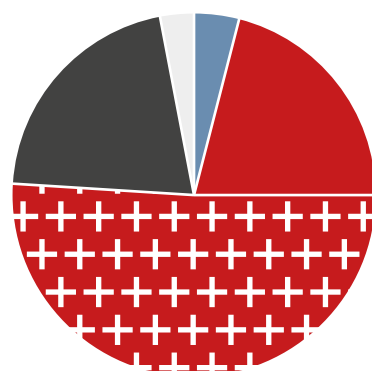


AGE

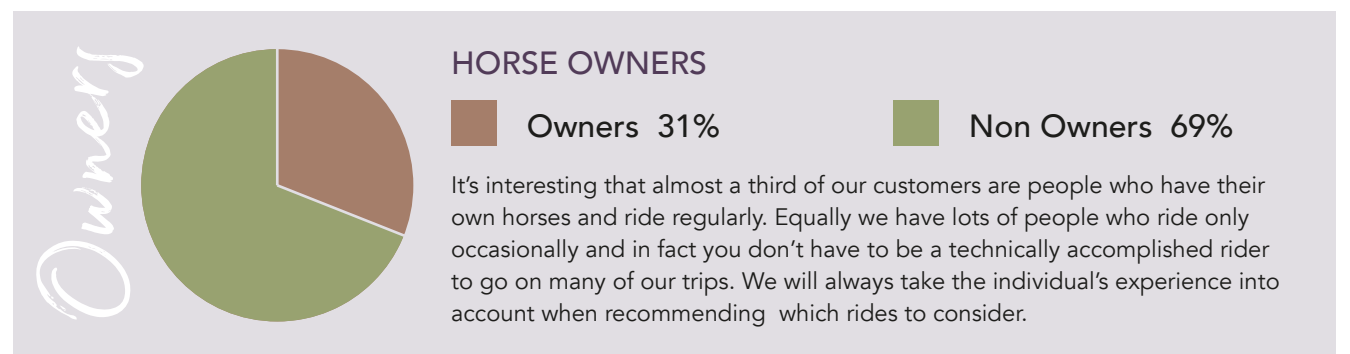
< 20	4%
20's	11%
30's	14%
40's	19%
50's	32%
60's	17%
70+	3%

EXPERIENCE CLASSIFICATION

This chart shows that most of the riders who booked with us last year were at the Intermediate Plus level. That means someone who has been riding for a number of years and is confident on a forward going horse at a steady canter over uneven ground. On each web page there is a detailed description of the riding that you should expect; however, this is just a guide. If a trip is classified as only for experienced riders it doesn't necessarily mean that it's fast paced. It could mean that there are long hours in the saddle through wilderness or that you're riding in game reserves where there are potentially dangerous wild animals.



Beginners	4%
Intermediate	21%
Intermediate Plus	51%
Experienced	21%
Non Riders	3%



HORSE OWNERS

Owners 31%

Non Owners 69%

It's interesting that almost a third of our customers are people who have their own horses and ride regularly. Equally we have lots of people who ride only occasionally and in fact you don't have to be a technically accomplished rider to go on many of our trips. We will always take the individual's experience into account when recommending which rides to consider.



Lagoa Verde and Lagoa Azul - Azores

NON RIDERS

Many of our rides are suitable for non-riding friends and partners. In most cases these are the centre based rides as moving non-riders to the next overnight stop is more challenging on the inn to inn rides.

Other activities are available for non-riders and the day can be structured so that friends and partners can share activities. For example on many of the horseback safaris a couple could do different things in the morning with one going on a wildlife ride and the other on a game drive in a jeep, then after meeting up for lunch, go together with a guide, tracking animals on foot. Other destinations have swimming pools, sports facilities or golf.

One trend we have noticed is riding holidays used as a way of encouraging non riders into giving it a go. Horseback safaris and ranches are particularly popular for this as there is nothing like having a purpose to the ride to act as an incentive to learn to ride.

Are Riding Holidays Safe?

We choose our destinations and inspect them so that we can offer you a choice of quality places to ride. We also want you to come back safe and sound. We have been organising riding holidays for many years and due to the number of people who book our holidays there are inevitably some accidents. There is an element of risk involved in riding a horse whether at home or abroad. The key difference between riding and other popular holiday sports like skiing, cycling or sailing is that you are on horseback and any horse no matter how well trained can behave unpredictably in certain situations. If you want a guarantee that you will be 100% safe that is not something we can offer. We will ask you to sign an Acceptance of Risk declaration before you travel so we know you are aware of the potential risks of horse riding.

One factor you must take into account is remoteness and that medical facilities abroad may not be at the same level as those in the UK. If you have a pre-existing medical condition which might be worsened in the event of a fall we may discourage you from choosing certain rides. It is always essential that you take out travel insurance that covers accident or illness.

Customer Stories

Over the last twelve months we've organised riding holidays for over two thousand people, our busiest ever year. Our customers come from all walks of life and that's one of the great things about riding holidays, everyone has that shared interest in horses and travel. We wanted to know what people get out of a riding holiday so we asked a few of our recent clients about their personal take on riding holidays.



DEBBIE PARROTT has ridden in Africa a number of times.

How have riding holidays influenced or changed your life?

Hugely! I am 65 and whereas getting off the horse is not my best manoeuvre, and only for the brave to witness, it is wonderfully invigorating to know that, in some shape or form, I am still out there! No boring granny here and not aiming for the high-backed chair in a home any time soon. It has also made me fall in love with the little things in life as you pootle along getting up close to the little creatures. Riding also inspired a travel article that was published in To Oldly Go which is a Hilary Bradt publication – an anthology of articles from travellers over 60; mine was about some of the things I saw and did at Ol Donyo Lodge.

Why do you choose to return to Ol Donyo Lodge?

Now that is a question I ask myself because I have always been a traveller who does not like to repeat - and I have travelled extensively. It's the whole package. The friendliness of the staff and the fact that every time there is something new on offer: different sites for bush breakfasts, sundowners, a new fly camp experience – one year I slept on top of the Kopjes (that's the trip I wrote about).

Originally we went back because we were so impressed with the horses – beautifully looked after and well schooled but not boring! I love watching them when they are let out over lunch time and they all head out in their mini-herd-groups - just like the school playground. Then they all return for hay at about three.

I love the ethos of the management - they are there to make your stay great - if you don't want to sit with other people over meals then you don't have to. We have always chosen to sit with others and I have met so many interesting people over the years from billionaires to National Geographic film makers, to fashion models, lots of professional photographers, some really snooty people and some down to earth ordinary people. They have all given us a huge amount of fodder to chatter about in the confines of our room! Never mind the horse safari – the dining room safari can be equally interesting. The additional factor now is that I have slowly become involved with a very small school out there in Mbirikani – and I like to look in on them.

So I go back to ride, to relax, to write, to see the school and simply because I love it.

DONNA AND PHIL DARBYSHIRE first caught the riding holiday bug in 2010 and since then they have been on two or three trips a year.

What do you think is special about seeing a country from horseback?

Firstly we enjoy riding, the challenge of different horses, different styles, finding out quickly how to get the best out of a horse that may be your companion for a week or so. We like seeing the country on horseback, it gives you a unique opportunity to see places, people, birds and animals that we believe the usual tourist doesn't get to see up close. It gives you a very different perspective. This has come in many forms over the years from the remote Spanish villages like Tavertet (Bandit Trail 2014) to having wild dog stroll in and out of our horses' feet (Motswiri, Okavango Delta 2013) and seeing the peaks of Torres Del Paine up close (Estancia Ride, Chile 2018).

How have riding holidays influenced or changed your life?

In general we now plan a holiday with the riding as our starting point, adding on a few beach or touring days at the end. The prospect of a full on riding week also pushes us to keep both generally and



riding fit, needed if you are going to enjoy an active week. It is a great way to relax, meet new people, many of whom remain friends and with whom we have arranged subsequent riding trips.

How do you choose which destination to visit?

We have created a 'wishlist' over the years and are working our way through this. We have just experienced South America for the first time, loved it and a new continent has now opened up to us! The colour coding of the rides helps us to narrow down our choices which we then discuss with In The Saddle to check it will suit us and our expectations.



Jan Sharpless, Michelle Tucker, Kate Buck & Kim Skyrme

JAN SHARPLESS has been on a number of rides in Europe and Africa. Her most recent trip was the Bottlenose Trail on the Portuguese Coast.

What do riding holidays mean to you?

Escapism! Time with friends, without a clock and out of the rat race. Immersing myself in a different culture and bringing those memories home to live off while choosing the next.

How do you choose which destination to visit?

It usually starts with a recommendation from In The Saddle. We let them know what we want from our

next adventure and as Abbie now knows our likes and dislikes she starts suggesting different rides. It is also down to money and we always read the guest reviews. In The Saddle have always sent their people out to trial the rides which is so helpful for any questions that we inevitably ask.

Which was your first riding holiday and what made you decide to book it?

Our first ride was a centre based one at Los Alamos for a hen party! We loved it so much we wanted more and decided then on trail rides. It has been a trail ride ever since.



Horse welfare is always the first thing we look at when we visit a possible new destination. It doesn't matter how luxurious the accommodation or how spectacular the scenery, if the horses aren't fit, healthy and suitably trained for their job, we know there is no holiday.

Although our rides are across many different cultures and some in countries much less developed than our own, we expect the horse care to be comparable to western standards. But that doesn't mean that the horses will be looked after in the very same way that you may care for your horse at home, for example many horses that we use are rarely stabled but live outdoors year round as a herd.



One example is Estancia Los Potreros in Argentina. We've been proud to have worked with the Begg family who own Los Potreros for the last 17 years. We asked Louisa and Kevin Begg to describe how they manage their horses and their approach to horse care.

"We are extremely privileged to have enough space to keep a large herd of horses, currently numbering just over 130, with around 80 that are for guest use. Although it may sound like a lot, our horses are grass fed and so we make sure that they are rotated well throughout the working week, and in addition we are a working estancia and so use the horses to work with the cattle. We truly believe that one of the joys of riding with us is the chance to try a different horse every ride and discovering a new 'favourite' every day!

As working horses, our horses are tough, sure-footed and with great temperaments. All of our horses have spent significant time with the gauchos before being brought into work with the guests, meaning they are responsive and forward-going but also extremely well-mannered, giving a fun but always safe ride. The gauchos are extraordinary horsemen and watching them on horseback is a true privilege. We love the relaxed style of 'gaucho' riding which feels very intuitive – one-handed with soft reins, and a relaxed seat – we also love the sheepskins over the saddle that make a long day in the saddle not quite so long!

We are one of the few places in the world where guests can try 'gaited' horses – in this case, the 'paso', an extra gait to the traditional walk, trot, canter and gallop. The Los Potreros gaited horses are based on the Peruvian Paso breed that came over to the north of Argentina via one of the trading routes from Peru. The origin of the estancia herd dates back over 35 years, when Robert Begg, Kevin's father, became enamoured with the breed and bought a stallion and three mares that had been brought over from Peru. Since then, breeding has continued apace, resulting today in around 45 wonderfully comfortable and forward going horses, all bred on the estancia. Over the years we have crossed in some additional blood, most notably Percheron, to arrive at a horse that gives our guests a fabulous ride, but that is tough enough to handle the hills and farm work with ease. Riding them is a truly unique experience and they are always favourites amongst our guests.

We believe that any horse that has spent their life working on the farm has the right to spend their final days on the farm. Most of our horses work well into their 20's, and once their working life is over they are turned out on the hills with the herd to live out their final years."



“time to relax and discuss the highlights of the day”



Early morning on a Namibia horse safari

A Typical Day on a riding holiday

Usually it's an early start, so after a light breakfast the first task of the day is tacking up. Some of the more "luxurious" rides will have a team of grooms and your horse will be prepped to go, but others are more participatory so any help getting ready will be appreciated. Don't worry if you are not familiar with the tack there will always be someone to check buckles and tighten girths.

The first ride of the week will be a good chance for the guides to see how well you've been matched with your horse. This is usually a gentle start with the pace quickening as confidence grows. Even for experienced riders there may be lots of new and unfamiliar things. On many trail rides

the horses are used to a loose rein and this may take some getting used to, especially if you are used to riding on a contact. Take time to familiarise yourself with the commands the guide uses. It's also important to let the guide know as soon as possible if you're not gelling with your horse, especially on a trail ride as swapping mounts will not be so easy later on.

The morning ride will be typically two to three hours with stops for watering horses and riders before a break for lunch. You may want to take advantage of these breaks to add or remove layers of clothing as the temperatures change. There will be saddle bags or ties to hold fast any



Los Alamos - Andalucía

discarded fleeces or coats. If you do use the ties remember to do them securely as a flapping coat is sure to distract your horse and turning up at your destination with less kit than you set out with is not a good start.

Depending on where you are in the world, lunch could be at a bar or restaurant or, on the more remote rides, a carefully chosen picnic spot by a river or under some trees for shade. Picnics may appear out of saddlebags but more often brought by a support vehicle. Then there is a chance to rest after lunch before another two or three hours in the saddle in the afternoon. One useful tip is to carry some snacks in a bum bag in case your energy levels get low.

As the sun gets lower in the sky you arrive back at base or your next hotel, lodge or camp. Once the horses are attended to there's time for a quick wash and brush up before drinks and dinner. The evening meal is a time to relax and discuss the highlights of the day as well as a preview of what's planned for tomorrow. Those with stamina may stay up later discussing the specific merits of their horse, but often tired muscles demand early to bed, before doing it all again with new experiences and new sights tomorrow.



Lunch break in the Alentejo

The Guides

Whenever we look at the different elements that make up a riding holiday the quality of the guides is always at the top along with the horses. Of course they need the training and knowledge to keep you safe and informed but beyond this, their ability to connect you with the land you ride through can turn a good holiday into an exceptional one.

On all our rides we try to use local guides wherever possible. Being led by someone for whom this is their home adds another dimension to the experience, making it all the more real.

It's difficult to single out a particular guide as each one brings their own character, individual skills and knowledge to the job but if you've ridden at **Macatoo Camp** in the **Okavango Delta** you may have been lucky enough to be guided by **Bongwe**. Like all great guides Bongwe is a natural people person and a born communicator, someone who can bring the smallest detail to life.



WE CAUGHT UP WITH BONGWE RECENTLY AND ASKED HIM A BIT ABOUT HOW HE GOT INTO GUIDING.

Where were you born and raised?

I was born in Gweta, near the Makgadikgadi Salt Pans about 200km from Maun. My family moved to Maun, the gateway to the Okavango Delta, when I was young.

What did you do as a young boy?

I learned to ride donkeys without a saddle or bridle, spending time at our family cattle post. I was always fascinated by the wildlife and the bush. When a little boy, I managed to get lost in the bush with my cousin for 18 days surviving on wild berries and water from stagnant pools. Eventually my father found us, but it didn't diminish my interest in being out in the wilderness.

Where did you go to school?

I went to school in Maun, walking 10km daily to and from, though occasionally I'd "borrow" a donkey. We had a wildlife club at school which I really loved.

What were your jobs before you came to Macatoo?

I worked for a livery stables for a while, where I learnt a huge amount about stable management, training young horses and riding with a saddle and bridle! Working with horses there led me to realise that I wanted a job that combined horses with wildlife.

What was your first job at Macatoo?

I joined African Horseback Safaris more than 18 years ago as a groom.

How have you progressed?

I already had my guides licence and I started to combine my work as a groom with being a back-up rider, moving through the ranks until I became head guide.

What do you enjoy most about the job?

Every day I feel lucky to be able to go out into one of the most pristine wildlife areas in the world to share it, explain it and be constantly amazed by it. The most rewarding times are when the guests are as excited as I am by the wildlife interaction that they are viewing, whether it's following a honeyguide bird or seeing a lion kill.

What is your day like?

My day starts with breakfast with the guests, looking at the tracks and evidence of the animals that have been through camp overnight. We ride for four hours in the morning, depending on the time of year, the flood levels and the game on the day. We could be galloping through the flood waters or making our way through mopane woodland. I have lunch with the guests and then take a siesta, before re-joining everyone for our afternoon activity, which could be a ride, drive, boat safari, mokoro or a bush walk – tracking game. Sundowners are a very important part for the day! After a three course dinner, we often sit round the camp fire exchanging stories until everyone heads to bed.

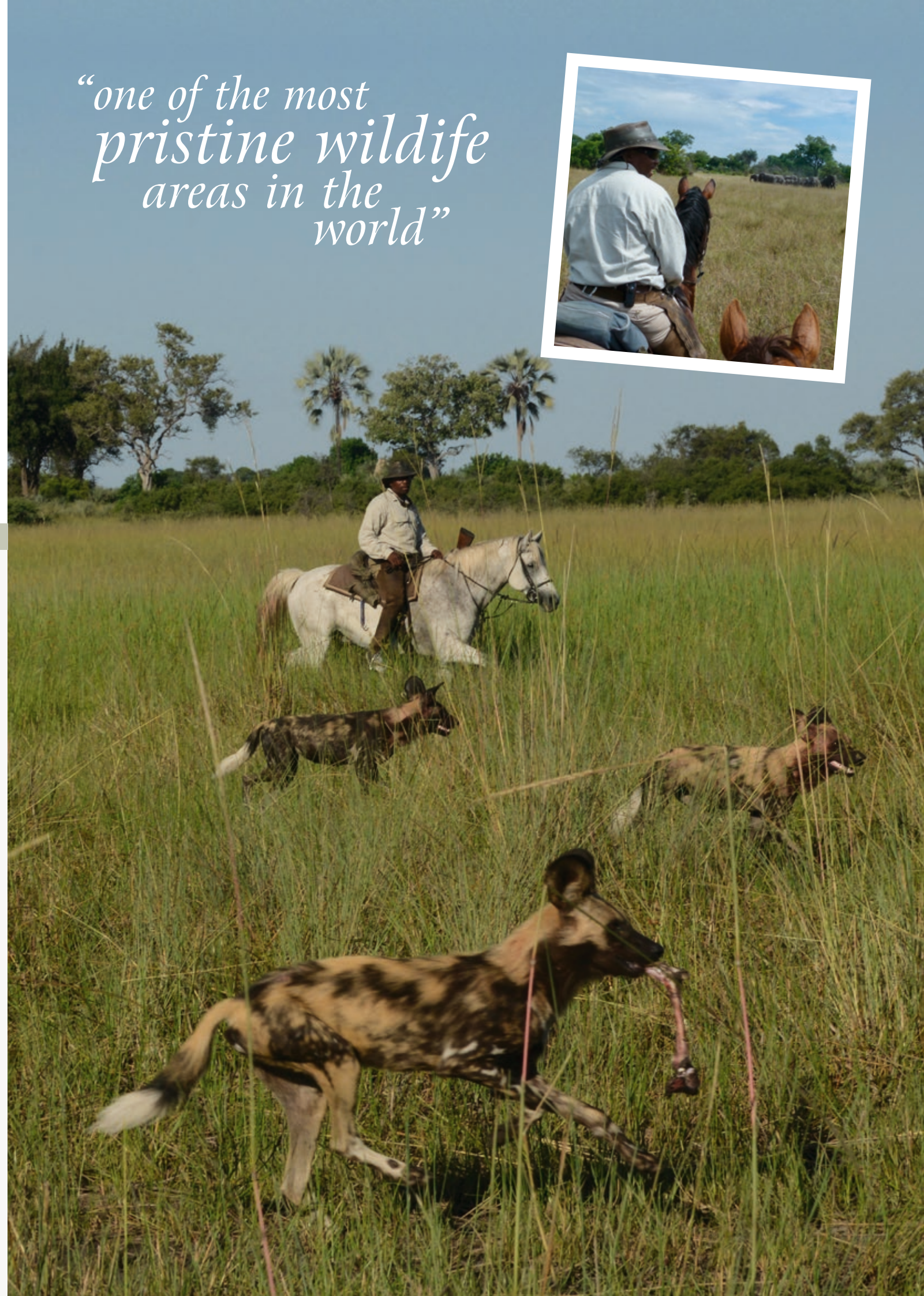
What do you do when you are not working?

I spend time with my family in Maun and working on my farm.

What do you think about the future of the Okavango Delta?

The Okavango Delta is a truly diverse area and I hope with its status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the support of the Botswana government and their prioritisation of anti-poaching and developing the tourism industry, that it will be kept as a pristine environment for generations to come.

*“one of the most
pristine wildlife
areas in the
world”*



Where will I stay?

There is often a perception that the accommodation on a riding holiday will be fairly basic. However, while there are some trips where you camp or stay in simple country inns, there are many more where the lodges, tented camps and country hotels are a key part of the overall experience.

At Los Potreros in Argentina each room has been tastefully furnished with antiques in keeping with the history and style of the estancia. In Ireland at Castle Leslie you stay in one of the country's few remaining stately houses still owned and managed by its founding family. At Monte Velho, our most popular dressage ride in Portugal, the guest rooms have been designed by the architect and owner Diogo Lima Mayer to create a contemporary, light and airy feel.

The common factor is that the accommodation is small scale, locally owned and managed.

It sits comfortably in the environment and is in keeping with the riding holiday experience. Our principle is that we stay in the best places available and we won't rough it for the sake of it but equally we don't compromise the riding experience for the lack of a nice hotel.

Ant's Lodges in the Waterberg of South Africa is a beautifully designed wilderness retreat where the thatched guest rooms blend naturally into the landscape. The tented safari camps in Africa deserve special mention as they combine comfort with the feeling of being part of the wilderness.

Accommodation is probably the main factor affecting the overall price of a riding holiday and it's important that you let us know your expectations

when choosing your riding holiday. We can then guide you to the trips that will provide you with the level of comfort you're looking for.

We often find the variation in accommodation can add to the experience. Sleeping out in the desert in your swag, gazing at a star filled sky gives you a sense of scale and your place in the universe but it also makes you appreciate even more the luxury lodge the following night.



Ant's Nest, South Africa

"we stay in the best places available"



Macatoo Camp, Okavango Delta



Monte Velho, Portugal



Castle Leslie, Ireland

Single Accommodation

Many of our customers travel on their own. In most cases we are able to waive single supplements provided you are willing to share a room; although sometimes a charge is on your invoice until we find a sharer.

If you would like to guarantee a single room, on some rides this is available at no charge all year or at certain times of the year.

Some of our rides are in remote areas and with very limited accommodation it may not be possible for you to have a single room.



Estancia Los Potreros, Argentina



Picking the Right Trip

Our job is to guide you through the decision making process. Choosing the trip that's right for you is essential to ensure you have a memorable holiday and also to keep you safe. There is now a huge choice of riding holidays and there are many more factors to consider than when choosing a normal holiday. The equestrian factor introduces subtleties and nuances that may not initially be apparent - for example, is looking after your horse something you want to do? On a number of rides this is welcomed, encouraged and on some of the expedition trips it may even be a requirement – on others there is an extensive support team so at the end of the day a groom will be there to swap your reins for a gin and tonic or chilled beer.

We upload lots of detail onto our web site and sometimes it's possible to identify your preferred holiday directly from this information. More often there is a sequence of questions and answers by email or phone. Our approach is to suggest a shortlist and help you refine this using our first-hand knowledge of the rides. We want to make sure your level of experience matches the holiday and will ask questions such as - how long have you been riding? and how often do you ride at the moment? Also, what's important to you? – to be in the saddle for as much as possible? beautiful scenery? a hot climate (or not)? to feel part of a group? to experience a different culture? or to ride a particular breed of horse?



“No travel company has a better understanding of riding holidays than In The Saddle.”

What to Pack

Detailed packing lists customised for each holiday are part of your pre-trip dossier but here are some common essentials.

HARD HAT

We will always recommend you wear a hard hat and on some destinations you won't be able to ride without one. There may be hats to borrow but we always recommend you take your own properly fitted hat. When riding in hot countries light weight vented hats are more comfortable and wide brims are available which shade your neck as well as your face. To protect your helmet either take it in your hand luggage or wrap it securely with clothes in your main luggage.

BOOTS

What's suitable for a dressage holiday in Portugal will not be OK for an expedition in Kyrgyzstan or a horseback safari in Africa but generally a short boot/half chap combination is ideal. This will give you protection for the lower leg while allowing flexibility of movement. On many trail rides there will be some walking on foot so you will need comfortable boots that will support your ankle and have a sole that is not smooth.

RIDING CLOTHES

It's all about being comfortable rather than stylish so don't take your best jodis. If you are buying new for your trip we recommend you wear and wash them a couple of times to make sure they are comfortable.



LAYERS

You'll be in the open and in some destinations in extreme environments where the weather can change quickly. Several layers that can be combined are much better than one thick coat or jacket.

WATERPROOF AND BREATHABLE

An outer layer that will keep you dry is important on many rides. But there's no point in keeping the rain off if you get too hot and sticky underneath so make sure your waterproofs are breathable like GORE-TEX, eVent or Patagonia's H2No.

BUFF OR NECKERCHIEF

So many uses for hot and cold climates and it only takes a tiny amount of luggage space.

LESS IS BEST

It's not just about what you take with you, it's what you leave at home. This is key advice on many of the expedition rides where your kit will have to travel on horseback. Even where there is a luggage support vehicle, you'll find it easier if you don't have lots of stuff to rummage through.





How to Book

- 🌐 Visit www.inthesaddle.com - find out more about each ride; filter your list of rides online; read the feedback for each trip.
- ☎️ Speak to a specialist travel consultant on 01299 272 997. Call us to speak with someone who has been on the trip. Our customers tell us that our intimate knowledge about the destinations and what makes them different is what makes us stand out from our competitors.
- ✉️ Email rides@inthesaddle.com with what you are looking for and we'll get back to you with some suggestions.



TIPS FOR GROUP BOOKINGS

Whether it's a special family celebration, a riding club event or simply a bunch of riding friends - group holidays can be great fun.

Many of the rides only take eight or ten people so you will need to plan in advance.

Ensure that everyone has a similar level of riding ability or choose a holiday where the group can be split according to individual riding experience.

Pick a leader who will co-ordinate the booking.

Keep everyone in the group informed. Your nominated leader can do this or we can include everyone in the correspondence. Each person will receive their own personal copy of the holiday documents.

Let us know if you want to be invoiced separately or all together as a group.

If you are waiting for one or two people to make up their mind remember they can always be added later. There's nothing worse than waiting for everyone to decide and then finding the date you wanted is no longer available.

TRAVELLING SOLO

It's wonderful to share the experience of travel with loved ones but busy modern lives mean it can be a challenge to co-ordinate plans with friends and partners.

If you haven't been away on your own before it may feel like a bold step but ultimately it can be really empowering. Other travellers and locals interact with you differently and are more likely to engage with someone who is on their own rather than part of a couple.

Often partners may not be such keen riders so there is a certain freedom about travelling on your own - you don't need to worry about whether the other person is having as good a time as you.

In many ways riding holidays are ideal for anyone travelling on their own. The groups are small and made up of people with the same interests. Friendships made on horseback endure beyond the holiday and we know of many cases where people will link up to go on future trips together.



Macatoo, Botswana

What's Hot for 2018

Since the start of the year our two top selling destinations have both been in Africa, Macatoo in the Okavango Delta in Botswana and Ant's Lodges in South Africa. Macatoo is for experienced riders as you ride out in areas where there are potentially dangerous animals – including elephant and lion while Ant's is suitable for all levels of rider. Overall trips to Africa are up 40% on the same period last year. Other African rides that have shown significantly big increases are Kaskazi Safaris in Tanzania, the Wild Coast rides in South Africa, trail rides across the Namib Desert and the new mobile safaris in Botswana run by David Foot.

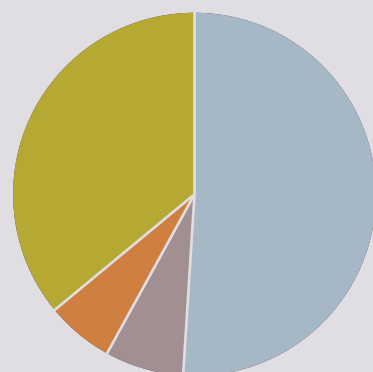


Tented Safari At Kaskazi, Tanzania



Ant Baber, Ant's Lodges, South Africa

Bookings



THIS IS WHERE YOU HAVE ALREADY BOOKED TO VISIT THIS YEAR

Europe	51%
North and South America	7%
Rest of World	6%
Africa	36%

In Europe the top places have been Los Alamos on the coast of Andalucia, the Green Island Trail in the Azores and Monte Velho the dressage instruction centre in Portugal. Growing interest in dressage instruction is evident with all three dressage centres Monte Velho, Quinta do Rol and Alçainca showing big increases. Bookings to Castellare di Tonda in Tuscany and El Bronco in Hungary have almost doubled reflecting a growing interest in Western riding and family riding holidays. Also very popular have been the trail rides in Bulgaria. We had great feedback on these rides last season and this has no doubt been at least partly responsible for the big increase in bookings for the start of 2018.



Los Alamos on the coast of Andalucia

In Latin America bookings for Peru, Argentina and Uruguay have all been very strong and in North America our new ranch holiday at The Hideout has proved very popular. Located in Wyoming in the Rocky Mountains, just east of Yellowstone National Park this is a full on working ranch but with an emphasis on comfort. So if you enjoy fine dining and luxury accommodation after an exhilarating day in the saddle you may want to check out The Hideout where their gorgeous log cabins await.



Castellare di Tonda



Quinta do Rol



The Wadi Rum, Jordan

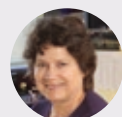
Elsewhere in Asia and the Middle East, Jordan has shown the biggest increase. Jordan has long been a country of peace and stability but the turmoil in the surrounding countries has no doubt had an effect on the number of people travelling there. There is however a growing

confidence reflected in a threefold rise in bookings to Jordan. The Jordan trips are a great example of what makes riding holidays different to normal holidays. The lure of riding Arabian horses through the Wadi Run and sleeping out in the desert as a Bedouin is just too strong.

Also showing big surges are our rides in Mongolia and Rajasthan in northern India. Like our Jordan trips a riding holiday here is the real deal where travelling on horseback transforms a holiday into an authentic cultural experience.

Meet our Team

Our travel consultants are all horse riders. They have travelled widely, ridden at the destinations and are genuinely enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge and experiences of seeing the world from the back of a horse.



**OLWEN
LAW**

Olwen set up In The Saddle in 1995 but is still very involved in all the day to day aspects. She has an encyclopaedic knowledge of riding holidays and loves to talk about anything to do with horses and travelling.



**JAMES
SALES**

James is Olwen's husband and has been involved in the business almost from the start. He works on all things technical and ensures our website and reservations systems are kept up to date.



**CHRIS
DAY**

Chris joined In The Saddle in 2003 and has a wealth of experience having visited more than 30 destinations over the last 15 years. Her passion is Iceland and she loves the challenging wilderness rides.



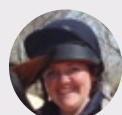
**ABBIE
WOOD**

Abbie has been with us for eleven years and has a wide portfolio including much of South America, Botswana, Namibia and the European dressage holidays.



**SARAH
DALE**

Sarah is one of our experienced consultants. Her key areas of expertise are horseback safaris and the trail rides in Spain and France.



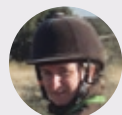
**REBECCA
(BECKY)
CLARKE**

Becky has visited many of the ranches in North America and is also an expert on Ant's Lodges in South Africa - one of our most requested holidays.



**LUCY
DOWNES**

Lucy looks after a wide portfolio of diverse rides including India, Hungary, Jordan, Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Spain, Turkey and a number of our rides in southern Africa.



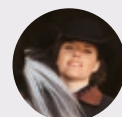
**HANNAH
MOSS**

Hannah covers rides throughout Europe and Africa. As a former riding instructor she is a natural choice for our dressage holidays in Portugal.



**IMOGEN
BROWN**

Imogen is responsible for Los Alamos, one of our most popular destinations on the coast of Andalucia in Southern Spain.



**CLAIRE
DOUGLAS**

Claire has recently visited the Azores and some of our most challenging rides in Mongolia. She also covers Ireland and gets involved with ranch enquiries.



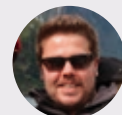
**LEAH
BUBB**

Leah has been with In The Saddle for less than a year. She is a pleasure to have in the office and has already learnt a great deal about our range of holidays.



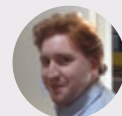
**LOIS
HOUSE**

Lois joined us at the same time as Leah. She is busy getting to grips with the different trips and has great attention to detail.



**ANDREW
LAW**

Andrew looks after our finances so if you have any questions about your account he is the best person to ask for.



**BARRY
SMITH**

Barry is our resident technical expert and keeps our computer systems running smoothly.

VISIT US AT A HORSE SHOW

Throughout the year we have a trade-stand at a number of horse shows and events across the country. These are great opportunities to meet our travel specialists and we're often joined by guides/owners from our overseas partners.



Badminton Horse Trials, Gloucestershire
2nd - 6th May 2018

Bramham Horse Trials, Yorkshire
7th - 10th June 2018

Burwarton Show, Shropshire
2nd August 2018

Burghley Horse Trials, Lincolnshire
20th August - 2nd September 2018

British Dressage Championships, Warwickshire
20th - 23rd September 2018

Horse of the Year Show, NEC
3rd - 7th October 2018

Olympia Horse Show, London
17th - 23rd December 2018

We may be tucked away in a corner of rural Shropshire which means most of our communication will be through email and phone but we love having visitors. If you would like to discuss your holiday plans face to face please come and see us: In The Saddle, Reaside, Neen Savage, Cleobury Mortimer DY14 8ES. Our office is open Monday to Friday 9am to 6pm (other times by arrangement).

As well as our team in the UK we work with a number of agents abroad. They are also riders and share our commitment to providing the best equestrian holidays.



BELGIUM
Stephanie Sap
www.vakantietepaard.be



DENMARK
Melina Woo
www.ridogrejs.dk



ITALY
Annuska Ghidotti
www.ilmondocavallo.com



NORWAY
Ingunn Kvamme
www.xxladventure.travel



A rider on a brown horse is being instructed by a man in a red shirt and hat in an outdoor arena. The rider is wearing a white shirt, patterned breeches, and a dark helmet. The horse is dark brown with black legs and is wearing orange wraps on its lower legs. The instructor is wearing a red shirt, brown breeches, and a tan hat. They are in a sandy arena with a wooden fence and trees in the background.

Instructional Riding Holidays

An instructional riding holiday is perfect “me” time - the chance, away from the pressures of day to day life, for you to learn new skills or improve your riding.

Georges Malleroni at Alcaínça, Portugal



I made good progress in a short time thanks to excellent instruction from both instructors and horses. Joao and Annie had different but complementary teaching styles and the beautiful and well schooled Lusitanos were a pleasure to ride.

Amanda after her holiday at Monte Velho

Monte Velho, Portugal



Abbie Wood

You might choose dressage instruction on a highly trained Lusitano stallion, the excitement of cross country jumping or the speed of polo. Or try your hand at Western Riding for the first time. And if you are completely new to horse riding, then we also have Learn to Ride holidays.

USEFUL TIP Take a video of you riding your own horse at home - the Instructor may find it helpful. And have someone video your lessons so that you can review them later.

WHERE YOU CAN GO

We have dressage instruction in Portugal; polo holidays in Argentina; Western riding instruction in Hungary and Italy; and riding centres in Ireland, Italy and Poland which offer flatwork and jumping. You can also learn to ride in the Azores.

WHEN TO GO

Most of the destinations offer year-round riding. However, it is worth doing some research into the weather at different times of the year. If you are working hard in a lesson would a hot sunny day drain your energy or give you a boost? Does the centre have an indoor arena where you can escape the worst that the weather might throw at you?

WHAT TYPE OF RIDER DO I NEED TO BE?

The most important thing is to be open to learn. For the dressage holidays you should already be riding at walk, trot and canter, but you need not necessarily have done dressage before – although it will help if you have done some reading and are familiar with the terminology.

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

You can eat, sleep, breathe horses all day long and spend your free time discussing hints and tips with like-minded fellow guests or perhaps watch the trainers work their own horses. The instructors will assess your riding and help you set realistic goals.

You will be amazed at what you might learn and how much you will improve in the space of a few short days. The skills you learn on a riding holiday could iron out a training issue with your own horse or might help improve your results at your next competition.



MONTE VELHO, PORTUGAL



Luxurious accommodation, top-class dressage instruction and super horses. Owner Diogo Lima Mayer is an architect and his skill is reflected in the stunning design of the accommodation and riding facilities, with each guest room looking out across the country estate. There is a lovely swimming pool, rooftop jacuzzi and spa to relax in when not riding.

The horses range from experienced and steady mounts to Grand Prix schoolmasters. As well as lessons you can also enjoy hacking out over the estate. You can ride once or twice a day, and book to have lessons, trail rides or a mixture of both. £



QUINTA DO ROL, PORTUGAL



Quinta do Rol is a family estate a short drive from Lisbon. Your lessons in the light and airy indoor arena are on beautifully schooled Lusitano horses and on a 1-1 basis, so you can concentrate wholly on what you wish to achieve, whether it be to strengthen your position, improve your lateral work or get the hang of one-time changes.

After your lesson, relax on the terrace or head back to the quinta for a dip in the pool. Accommodation is in one of four guest cottages each with between one and four bedrooms. ££



ALCAINÇA, PORTUGAL



Alcainça Equestrian Centre has been welcoming guests from around the world for over 30 years. The focus is on classical horsemanship, with the ultimate aim of achieving harmony between horse and rider. Senior instructor Georges Malleroni studied classical dressage under Nuno Oliveira, the great Portuguese master.

The one and a half hour lessons take place each morning and afternoon and you can choose to ride once or twice a day. Riders are split according to their ability, with a maximum of four in a group.

The en-suite guest rooms are close to the riding centre and there is a large swimming pool for use between riding lessons. £



CASTLE LESLIE, IRELAND



Castle Leslie is a 1,000 acre country estate in the heart of Ireland, one of the few remaining Irish estates still owned and run by its founding family.

Your riding programme is designed specifically for you depending on your ability and what you wish to do, which might include hacking across the estate, lessons in the arena, show jumping or cross country jumping or a combination of everything.

Most riders choose to stay in the Lodge, right by the riding centre, but you can also choose one of the unique rooms in the Castle. ££

OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL RIDING HOLIDAYS

What about Western riding instruction at El Bronco in Hungary or at Castellare di Tonda in Italy; riding instruction at Galiny Palace in Poland or Berardenga in Tuscany; a Learn to Play Polo Week at Estancia Los Potreros in Argentina or a Learn to Ride in a Week programme in the Azores?

INSPIRED TO LEARN?

Further information can be found on our website, where each destination has its own dedicated page with details on the location, riding, accommodation, dates, prices and weather, along with sample itineraries.

Speak to an expert on 01299 272997 or browse our full portfolio of riding holidays at www.inthesaddle.com

The image shows the interior of a large, light-colored canvas tent. In the background, a double bed with a black metal frame and white linens is visible. In the foreground, a large, light-colored wooden chest sits on the floor. To the right of the chest, a pair of brown leather boots stands upright. Further right, a dark brown leather bag lies on the floor. In the lower right corner, a green metal folding chair is positioned, with a black leather hat resting on its seat. The tent's entrance is open, revealing a bright, sunlit savanna landscape with tall grass and trees in the distance. The overall atmosphere is warm and inviting, with golden light streaming in from the entrance.

Tented & Mobile Horseback Safaris

*There is nothing so magical as being in the African bush;
the excitement of hearing the night time chorus through
the canvas and by day the adventure of finding
and encountering wildlife from horseback.*

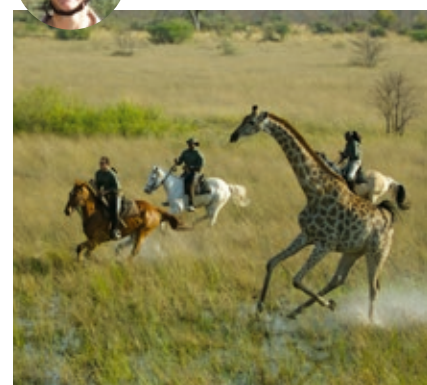
Maasai Mara tented camp, Kenya

On a tented safari you experience an era when those who journeyed through Africa set up camp each night under canvas. Nowadays your camp might be moved by pack donkeys or truck or it might be semi-permanent with solar powered lights, charging facilities for your cameras and a swimming pool for hot afternoons.



Sarah Dale

Kaskazi Horse Safaris, Tanzania



MACATOO, BOTSWANA



Macatoo sits on a sand island in the heart of the Okavango Delta. Animals you might see include giraffe, elephant, buffalo and many types of antelope. The camp is open all year round but for splashy canters and to experience the Delta in flood then you should visit between June and September.

The tents are spacious and set well apart from each other within the camp. Each tent has its own shower and flush loo. There is a welcoming mess tent and a swimming pool for hot afternoons. £££



TULI TRAIL, BOTSWANA



The Tuli Trail is a mobile tented safari moving camp throughout the week. The area is home to some large herds of elephant. It is also big cat country, so the likelihood of seeing lion, leopard and cheetah is high.

Each campsite is chosen to give you an experience of the different terrains within the Tuli. In camp there are bucket showers and long drop loos.

You should be an experienced rider happy with fast riding across the open plains as well as swinging canters, bending in and around the acacia trees along the way. £££



MAASAI MARA, KENYA



Gordie Church and his team will guide you on a once in a lifetime experience on a safari which will make you feel like you have stepped out of the set of "Out of Africa". The Maasai Mara is famous for its huge herds of wildebeest and zebra as well as lion, cheetah and leopard. You are also likely to see elephant, giraffe, hippo and buffalo.

Camp normally moves every second day to a stunning new location. The tents are luxurious and every little detail is taken care of, leaving you time to relax and become a part of this wildlife phenomenon. £££

USEFUL TIP Turn off your phone, ignore those emails and become one with the bush and nature.

WHERE YOU CAN GO

Botswana has the unique Okavango Delta as well as the vast Tuli Reserve. Kenya's Masai Mara and Tanzania are world famous for their herds of zebra and wildebeest. Visit South Africa and neighbouring Swaziland or journey through the Namibian desert.

WHEN TO GO

Most people choose to safari in the "dry season" when the skies are clear and there are few leaves on the bush making it easier to see the animals. Many of the mobile safaris can only operate in the drier months when the trucks are able to move camp. But a "green season" safari also has much to offer - the green bush is beautiful, many animals have young at foot and the prices are often less.

WHAT TYPE OF RIDER DO I NEED TO BE?

If you are riding in an area where you might encounter elephant or lion you need to be an experienced rider confident in walk, trot and canter in the open. You need to have good stickability and to be in control of your horse should you need to react quickly.

There are also safaris in South Africa, Namibia and Swaziland where you do not ride with any dangerous animals. On some safaris it is possible for non-riders to join you and enjoy game viewing by vehicle or on foot.

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

Viewing animals from horseback is wonderful and exciting, whether it's a beautiful giraffe peeping at you through the trees; a nervous zebra or wildebeest or a huge herd of elephant.

At the end of the day enjoy the quiet of your tent; or the camaraderie around the camp fire. Many people leave their hearts in Africa until they get to return.



CAMP DAVIDSON, SOUTH AFRICA



Camp Davidson is a tented camp which is run by Horizon, one of our most popular riding holidays. You can choose to spend your entire holiday at Camp Davidson or add on a few nights before or after a stay at Horizon. The spacious tents have en suite bucket showers and flushing loos and there is a small pool for hot afternoons.

There are many options for riding out over the Horizon lands and since you don't encounter any dangerous game this safari is suitable for novice to experienced riders, including children. You might see giraffe, zebra, hippo, kudu and other types of antelope. ££

OTHER TENTED & MOBILE HORSEBACK SAFARIS

Within Botswana you could choose a mobile safari in the Okavango where your luggage is taken by mokoro or pack donkey; or to ride on the Makgadikgadi salt pans. In Tanzania there are mobile safaris with Mt Kilimanjaro as your backdrop. Swaziland offers a mobile safari and an opportunity to learn more about this Kingdom. Namibia offers some of our most challenging expeditions.

NOT SURE WHICH SAFARI IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

To help you choose the right safari please email or call one of our experts on rides@inthesaddle.com or phone 01299 272 997.

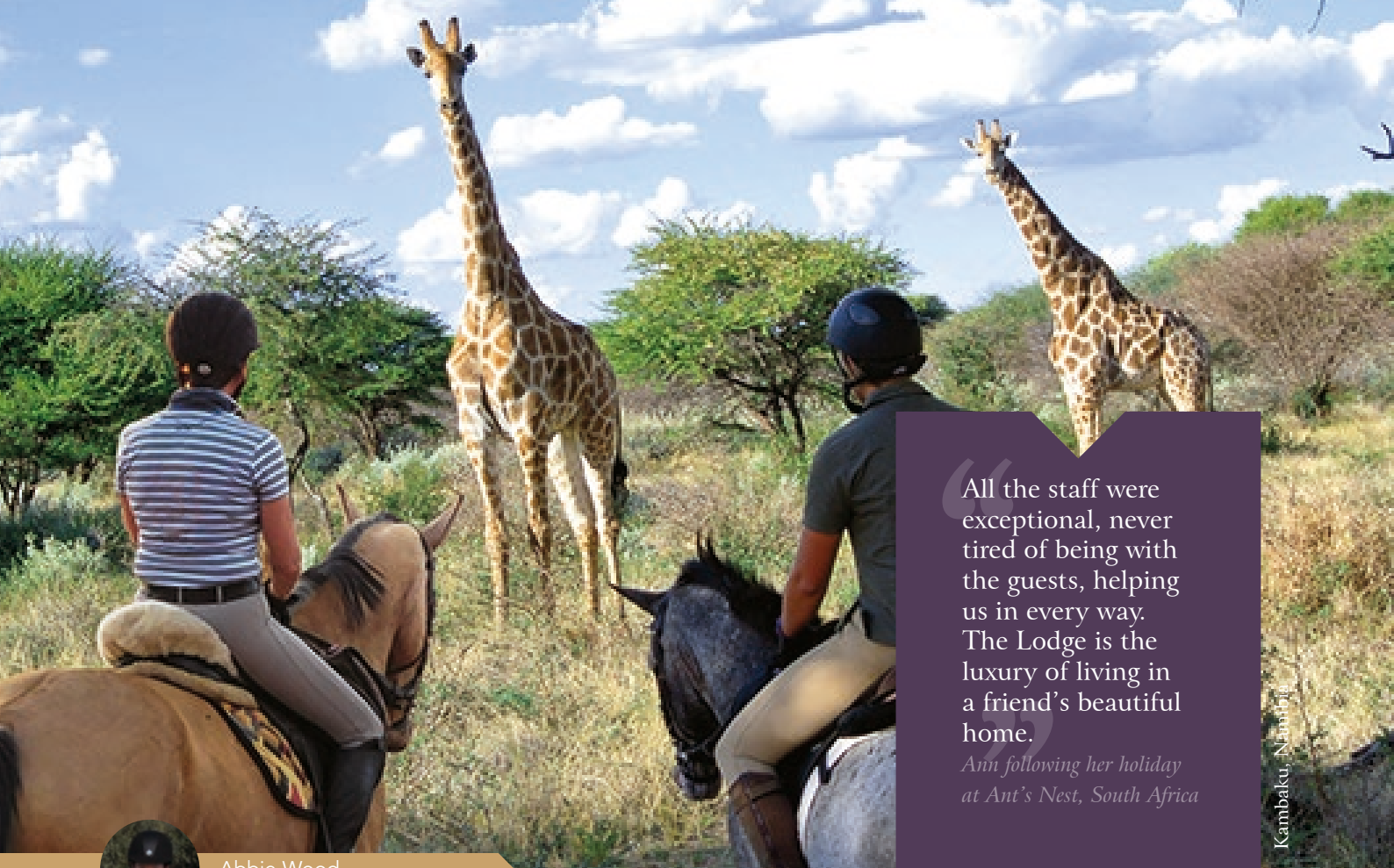
Each safari has its own dedicated page on www.inthesaddle.com with details of the location, riding, accommodation, dates, prices and weather, along with sample itineraries.

Lodge Based Horseback Safaris

A lodge based safari offers the best of both worlds – the excitement of a horseback safari and staying in a beautiful lodge at night.



World's View Cottage - Ant's Hill, South Africa



Abbie Wood

“All the staff were exceptional, never tired of being with the guests, helping us in every way. The Lodge is the luxury of living in a friend’s beautiful home.”

Ann following her holiday at Ant’s Nest, South Africa

Kambaku, Namibia

A lodge based horse safari is the perfect holiday - good horses; exciting riding; wildlife viewing; gorgeous accommodation with a comfortable bed and hot showers; along with elegant meals and dreamy sun downers.

USEFUL TIP Pack light since the lodges normally offer a laundry service, so that will leave you plenty of space to return with souvenirs of your African adventure.

WHERE YOU CAN GO

Our most popular lodge based safaris are in South Africa but you could also choose Kenya or Namibia.

WHEN TO GO

The lodges are open all year round. South Africa and Namibia are at their hottest between November and March which is also when rain is possible; but if you want to enjoy some downtime by the swimming pool and swimming with your horse in the dam then this is a lovely time to visit. Winter is between June and September. At this time rain is very unlikely and the days are perfect for riding although it does get cool at night.

It’s slightly different in Kenya which has almost the same temperature all year round but typically has most rain in April/May and again in November.

WHAT TYPE OF RIDER DO I NEED TO BE?

Most of the lodges accept all levels of riders from novice and nervous right through to experienced and confident. Some lodges also offer non-riding activities, so if you don’t fancy riding every day, there are plenty of other things to do.

If the lodge is in an area where you might meet elephant and lion then you need to be a capable rider confident in walk, trot and canter out in the open.

WHAT’S SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

The beauty of a lodge based riding safari is being able to have the adventure of game viewing from horseback and also the opportunity to relax beside the pool, perhaps pamper yourself with a massage or swap to a non-riding activity. They are an excellent choice for families and groups of friends where some might be keener on the idea of riding than others.



ANT’S LODGES, SOUTH AFRICA



Ant’s Lodges are two beautifully designed and luxurious lodges – Ant’s Nest and Ant’s Hill – on a large private reserve. Some people have their favourite; others choose to split their holiday between both lodges. The rooms and chalets at each lodge are beautifully furnished and very comfortable.

There is a big herd of horses to select from with a horse for every type of rider from beginner through to experienced. The horses live out alongside the game which means that on horseback you can get really close to observe the animals in their natural habitat.

Ant’s is a great choice for families, couples, friends and solo travellers alike. ££



HORIZON, SOUTH AFRICA



Horizon can be relied upon to offer a warm welcome, a friendly home and will ensure solo travellers feel part of the team. Sometimes people comment that they cannot tell who is a guide and who is a guest.

With almost one hundred horses to choose from, all riding abilities are welcome and in addition to riding out over their ranch and reserve, you can have also have a go at polocrosse and mounted games.

Combine your stay at Horizon with a few nights at the tented Camp Davidson. ££



WAIT A LITTLE, SOUTH AFRICA



At Wait a Little you might see all of Africa’s Big Five game in one visit. This safari offers a combination of staying at luxury tented accommodation and stunning lodges and is perfect if you like the idea of a mobile safari but don’t want to pack your suitcase every night.

The horses at Wait a Little are some of the best schooled horses to be found on safari in Africa. The riding is fast in places and since you may encounter elephant, lion or buffalo you do need to be an experienced rider. £££



OL DONYO LODGE, KENYA



Ol Donyo Lodge, with Mount Kilimanjaro as its backdrop, is simply stunning. Situated between Amboseli, Tsavo East and the Chyulu Hills, the lodge is perfectly situated to allow you to ride in one of the largest wilderness concessions in Africa.

This exclusive lodge offers fine dining and gorgeous guest chalets each with private plunge pools. The riding is tailored to your wishes and preferences. As well as riding there are many non-riding activities including night game drives and visits to Masai villages and schools. £££

OTHER LODGE BASED HORSEBACK SAFARIS

At Borana Lodge in Kenya you ride in the foothills of Mount Kenya; Kambaku lodge is south of Etosha National Park in Namibia and caters for all ages and families; the Okapuka Arabians in Namibia suit experienced fit riders; on the Nile Horseback Safari in Uganda you ride alongside the Nile and stay at some stunning lodges; Moolmanshoek in South Africa breeds both Boerperd and Arabian horses and offers exciting riding in the mountains.

TO DECIDE WHICH LODGE BASED SAFARI WOULD SUIT YOU BEST

Email rides@inthesaddle.com or call one of our experienced team on 01299 272 997 and check out the images and feedback on each lodge at www.inthesaddle.com



Western Riding and Ranches

*Once you've ridden Western on a well-trained horse
you may find it difficult to go back to English.
The slightest shift in your body weight
and the horse will turn or stop.*

The Ranch at Rock Creek, Montana

Western riding can be enjoyed by all ages and abilities, whether you visit the wide open spaces of Montana or Wyoming, or the working estancias of Argentina. Closer to home you might choose to ride Western in Italy, Hungary, Greece or Israel.



The Hideout, Wyoming



Rebecca Clarke



ROCKING Z RANCH,

MONTANA

Set in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, this small family ranch has a focus on natural horsemanship. You are encouraged to be as involved as you would like in the grooming and care of your horse. As well as riding out across the beautiful countryside, there is also the opportunity for some cattle work or team penning.

With over sixty horses the ranch can accommodate all levels of rider. As well as riding, there are also a number of other activities such as clay shooting, archery, fishing or hiking.

Relax with the family in the evenings or soothe tired muscles in the hot tub. ££



LOS POTREROS,

ARGENTINA

Los Potreros is a working cattle estancia and stud farm in the north of Argentina where you are welcomed by the family who have lived on the estancia for four generations. Every day is different. One day you might take your horse for a canter across the hilltops; on another you might help the gauchos round up the young horses.

The much loved and well trained horses are the main reason to visit and you are bound to love the very smooth "running walk" of the Paso Peruanos. Accommodation on the estancia is simple but very comfortable in one of the beautifully restored bedrooms of the farmhouse. ££



WHITE STALLION RANCH,

ARIZONA

White Stallion Ranch is a very popular guest ranch where you get to ride past the giant saguaro cactus, so long a symbol of the American West. From fast or slow to flat or mountainous, there are rides to suit everyone. Instruction is available and there is also the chance to try your hand at team penning in the arena. The weekly rodeo features barrel racing, roping and steer wrestling – a highlight for all.

There are also lots of non-riding activities such as tennis, volleyball or badminton, as well as a heated pool and indoor hot tub. £

USEFUL TIP If you haven't ridden Western before, we recommend a lesson before your holiday or when you arrive. It's a different style of riding that sometimes takes a bit of getting used to.

WHERE YOU CAN GO

To meet some real cowboys who still work their cows from horseback, then you need to visit a ranch in North or South America. We have working ranches in Montana and Wyoming, USA; Alberta, Canada and in Argentina. There are also great ranch holidays in Arizona, USA.

But we also have some destinations in Europe which offer instruction and trail rides on Western trained horses, such as in Hungary, Italy, Israel and Rhodes.

WHEN TO GO

There is no one answer to this because we have ranches in so many different countries so you need to check the best time for each one. Some ranches are open all year round such as in Hungary or Arizona or Los Potreros in Argentina. However our ranches in Montana, Wyoming or Alberta, Canada are best visited in their summer from May to September.

WHAT TYPE OF RIDER DO I NEED TO BE?

It really doesn't matter. Almost all of our Western riding holidays offer great riding for all abilities, whether you are experienced or just starting out – it's what makes Western riding so accessible to all. Most of the time, there is also the opportunity for instruction as well.

For our trail rides in Israel and Rhodes you should be confident at walk, trot and canter.

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

If you've never ridden Western before or just had a dream of being a cowboy or cowgirl, these holidays allow you to bring those dreams to life.

You can get as involved as you want to with the horses and sometimes there is an opportunity to help with cattle work, which is particularly exciting on the working ranches in North and South America.



CASTELLARE

DI TONDA, ITALY

A country resort and spa in the middle of a working wine estate, it's the perfect base to explore the Tuscan landscape on well-trained Criollos, Fjord horses or Quarterhorses. There are horses gentle enough for beginners as well as more spirited horses suited to experienced riders. Choose from three different itineraries depending on your experience level and whether you wish to focus on trail rides through the countryside, or have time for reining lessons or prefer some non-riding time to explore Tuscany.

Accommodation is in one of a number of apartments within beautifully restored farmhouses. £

"The horses are beautifully trained. I did not believe that absolute beginners could head out safely and happily while experienced riders got to go at speed but it is made possible by the terrific group of horses that have been so well trained. The "paso" is a treat and it is also really educational to sit on a horse who knows cattle work."

Nancy after her holiday at Los Potreros, Argentina

OTHER WESTERN RIDES

You could try your hand at Western riding at El Bronco in Hungary or join a trail ride in Israel or on Rhodes. Other ranches include Huechahue in Argentina, Hidden Hollow Hideaway, Nine Quarter Circle Ranch or The Ranch at Rock Creek in Montana, the Hideout in Wyoming, Lucasia or Tyslos in Canada.

INSPIRED TO TRY WESTERN

Further information can be found on our website, where each destination has its own dedicated page with details on the location, riding, accommodation, dates, prices and weather, along with sample itineraries.

Browse our full portfolio of riding holidays at www.inthesaddle.com or speak to an expert on 01299 272 997.

Beach Riding Holidays

*Dreams are made of this... the roar of the ocean;
the wind in your hair; the excitement as you
feel your horse's hooves sink into the sand.*





Lucy Downes

If I were to imagine a perfect picture of galloping through the sea next to white tipped waves, turquoise sea and rugged coastline - the Wild Coast would fulfil that picture superbly.

Diane after her holiday at the Wild Coast, South Africa

Catalonia, Spain

Riding by the ocean is a glorious feeling. Whether you're meandering along the water's edge or stretching at full gallop on perfect sand; a beach riding holiday is hard to beat. Listening to the sea and watching the sunset at the end of an exciting day is something truly special.

USEFUL TIP Don't forget your sun protection or sunglasses and a buff over your face can stop you getting a mouthful of sand from the horse in front.

WHERE YOU CAN GO

We have wonderful beach rides all over the world. Los Alamos in Andalucia, Spain is our most popular. Other places in Europe offering beach riding include Portugal, Iceland, Greece and Catalonia, Spain.

In Africa you can really let loose on the deserted beaches of the Wild Coast in South Africa, on the coast near Essaouira in Morocco and in Mozambique. Further afield, we have beach rides in Australia, New Zealand, Brazil and Uruguay.

WHEN TO GO

You can ride on the beach, somewhere in the world, anytime in the year. Even in the middle of summer, riding along the coast is superb since the sea breeze keeps you and your horse cool (just don't forget your sun protection). If you are riding in a popular tourist area then you might not be permitted to ride along the water's edge at certain times, although if that means you ride along the beach at dawn then it's an experience not to be missed!

WHAT TYPE OF RIDER DO I NEED TO BE?

It is important that you are confident in walk, trot and canter. One of the best things about riding on the beach is being able to have a blast! Flat hard sand is the perfect terrain for fast riding, so feeling confident and being in control of your horse in the open is essential.

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

Being beside the sea on a beach riding holiday offers so much variety - from galloping up a beach, crossing rivers and estuaries to riding along a cliff top looking out to sea. It is always worth keeping a look out for dolphins, whales and other marine life hiding in the waves.



LOS ALAMOS, SPAIN



From Los Alamos, on the Atlantic Coast of Spain, you head out on a different route each day, riding through sandy forest tracks and along the beach.

When you are not riding you can relax by the pool and on Thursday (the horse's rest day) you visit the Royal Andalucian School of Equestrian Art in Jerez to see a display by the stallions and carriage driving. You stay during the week at a lovely hacienda set in spacious gardens with a swimming pool. Los Alamos is very popular and we have guests returning year after year to ride their favourite horse. £



WILD COAST, SOUTH AFRICA



We think the Wild Coast has the most spectacular beach riding in the world. Day after day you explore rocky headlands, rolling hills and vast tracks of superb golden beaches. You will lose count of the number of beach canters and gallops.

Fit and experienced riders may choose a seven night journey along the coast staying at different guesthouses, with some long distances to cover and many river crossings.

We have other less challenging trails or you could choose to stay all week at the horses' base at Kei Mouth and all of these offer fantastic beach riding. £



BAHIA BEACH RIDE, BRAZIL



Bahia in Brazil is known for its golden sands and emerald seas and is the perfect spot for an exotic riding holiday. There are plenty of great beach rides and much more including delicious food of African influence and listening to the exciting rhythm of the salsa.

During the week you stay in comfortable guesthouses and hotels including in the colourful town of Trancoso and the remote and pretty village of Caraiva. £££



AFRICAN PARADISE, MOZAMBIQUE



Imagine a tropical beach with white sand, palm trees and azure waters - this is exactly what you get in Mozambique. You ride along totally deserted beaches and splash through the warm waters of the Indian Ocean. At night stay in a comfortable lodge overlooking the ocean.

Your guides, Pat and Mandy, moved from Zimbabwe with over 100 horses they had rescued from various Zimbabwean farms. The horses, mainly Thoroughbreds and cross breeds, are well behaved and enjoy their new life on the coast. Mandy's book "One Hundred and Four Horses" is well worth a read. £££

OTHER BEACH RIDES

Elsewhere in Europe there is a great beach gallop on the Alentejo Trails in Portugal or on some of the itineraries in Catalonia in Spain. If the tide is right you might swim with your horse on Rhodes and you can ride Icelandic horses on the beach at Snæfellsnes in Iceland. The Essaouira Coastal Trail in Morocco has exciting beach riding on forward going Arab stallions. Further afield, you could join the Bush & Beach ride in Australia, South Kaipara in New Zealand or the Painted Birds trail on the coastal estancias of Uruguay.

FINDING IT DIFFICULT TO CHOOSE?

Browse our full portfolio of riding holidays at www.inthesaddle.com, email us at rides@inthesaddle.com or speak to an expert on 01299 272 997.

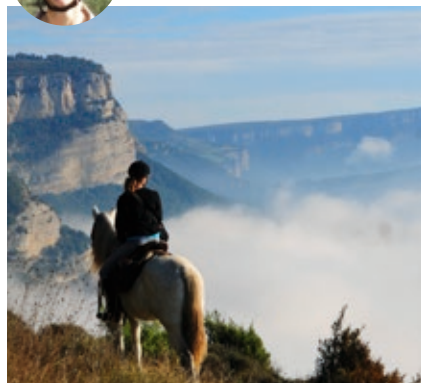
Trail Rides

A trail ride is a journey on horseback - each day different to the one before – as your horse becomes your means of transport.





Sarah Dale



SPAIN, CATALONIA

Catalonia has many hours of sunshine, mild winters and is pleasantly warm in summer making it perfect for trail rides throughout the year. There are many different itineraries to choose from, all offering long hours in the saddle and faster riding wherever possible.

Some trails take you along the coast where you ride through unspoilt villages and have long canters through the countryside. Others follow old herdsman's trails into the high Pyrenees with the scenery changing from soft rolling hills, through beech forests to flat topped mountains.

At night you stay in guesthouses and small family-run hotels. ££



INDIA

A key element of many Indian rides is the beautiful Marwari horse. Some trails are in rural Rajasthan; others are in Punjab in northern India (and we have a centre based ride in Assam).

Many itineraries are scheduled to coincide with colourful fairs such as the Pushkar or Nagaur Fairs in Rajasthan or the Hola Mohalla festival in the Punjab. It is also possible to extend your time in India to visit the sights of Jaipur, the Taj Mahal at Agra or journey to Ranthambore to hopefully see tiger.

Each night you stay in fascinating places, including magnificent forts and palaces. ££



ALENTEJO TRAILS, PORTUGAL

These very popular trails are on Lusitano horses on the Atlantic coast south of Lisbon. Each trail includes a variety of terrain: cork-oak plantations, wheat-fields, vineyards and groves of olive trees. Some routes also take you onto the wild Atlantic beaches and alongside lakes and reservoirs.

Lusitano horses are beautiful and calm by nature to ride, and therefore lend themselves perfectly to trail rides and long and enjoyable canters along the way.

You spend your nights in beautifully renovated former farmhouses, local guesthouses and small hotels. £

USEFUL TIP Pack light – you won't want to have to carry a heavy bag in and out of your hotel each day and it will make repacking each morning much easier.

WHERE YOU CAN GO

Within Europe you might choose holidays in Bulgaria, France, Greece, Iceland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden or Turkey.

Further afield we have exciting trail rides in Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, India, Israel, Morocco, Peru, South Africa, Swaziland and Uganda.

WHEN TO GO

Since you are moving on each day you do have to keep going, even if it's been raining all week or you are experiencing a heatwave. Although we can't rely on the weather we do schedule the trips for the best time of year.

So, depending on where you want to go; when you can take holiday and your preferences for riding in the heat or cold, we should have something for you.

WHAT TYPE OF RIDER DO I NEED TO BE?

As trail rides tend to cover longer distances most days, you need to be a competent rider at walk, trot and canter out in the open on a well behaved horse. You do also need to be physically fit since the option for a day off isn't easily available.

Some rides will have longer hours in the saddle when compared with others; some will be faster with plenty of fast canters; others mainly at a walk due to the mountainous terrain through which you travel.

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

The wonderful sense of achievement on reaching your destination each day and at the end of the week; of completing the journey; the many special memories of the places you have seen and people you have met throughout the way.



UGANDA

Our journey along the Nile heads north from Lake Victoria, sometimes within sight of the river, at other times riding through farmland or rainforest. A real highlight is meeting the men, women and children living here.

The horses are a pleasure to ride and there are many opportunities for trots and canters on the sandy tracks. During the week you stay in beautiful lodges in stunning settings, including one which is completely surrounded by the white water of the Nile.

We recommend you stay on in Uganda to visit the endangered Mountain Gorillas; something to remember for ever. £££

OTHER TRAIL RIDES

Choosing four destinations to highlight has been very difficult because we have so many wonderful trail rides all over the world. Within Europe these include Bulgaria; Provence, in the South of France; the Gredos and the Sierra Nevada mountains in Spain. Further afield, in the Sacred Valley in Peru; in Uruguay; staying in colonial haciendas in Ecuador and riding through the deserts of Morocco.

NOT SURE WHICH TRAIL RIDE IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

To help you choose the right ride please email or call one of our experts on rides@inthesaddle.com or phone 01299 272 997.

Each trail has its own dedicated page on www.inthesaddle.com with details of the location, riding, accommodation, dates, prices and weather, along with sample itineraries.

Expeditions on Horseback

Venturing into the wilderness with just the bare essentials, your horses and companions, brings home what is important in life.





“If you want to escape from ‘civilization’ and have a real wilderness experience this trip is the one. I have ridden in other remote places but never felt so at one with the country around us - bald eagles coming for breakfast... what could be better!

Barbara after her trip to the Yukon

Pyrenees, Spain



Chris Day

An expedition is all about the personal journey you make. Your sights might be set on reaching a particular vantage point, but once the trail has begun your goal may change to finding a dry place to pitch your tent.

USEFUL TIP All the expeditions are different and whilst every care is taken with the description, itinerary and packing list, there is nothing like talking to someone who has been to help you prepare.

WHERE YOU CAN GO

From the glaciers and fjords of Iceland to the steppes of Mongolia, we have expeditions all over the world. Crossing the Namib Desert is a feat of endurance or you may prefer to strip away the luxuries and join a pack trip in Yukon or British Columbia. Crossing the Andes from Argentina into Chile brings challenges of its own, whilst Kyrgyzstan takes you on a cultural journey of discovery.

WHEN TO GO

The weather is important when you are living out of a pack and under canvas and the guides choose the best time to run their expeditions from personal experience. Each continent has different seasons but we have somewhere to tempt you away throughout the year.

WHAT TYPE OF RIDER DO I NEED TO BE?

For your safety and your own enjoyment of the expedition, you should be at least an intermediate rider with good general fitness. Some rides require more expertise due to the challenging nature of the terrain but for all of them you need to be prepared that things may not go according to plan so a ‘can do’ attitude is essential.

WHAT’S SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

A holiday should relax you and rejuvenate you. A riding expedition is no different but will also give you a wonderful sense of achievement and the satisfaction of overcoming a challenge. By the end of your adventure you will have travelled to places few have seen and been touched by the raw beauty of the lands before you.



ICELAND



Riding expeditions in Iceland take you across deep glacial filled rivers and high into the mountains, through deserts and lava fields to green valleys and beaches, whilst volcanoes tip the horizon and you are never far from a glacier.

Riding at a fast tölt, with a herd of up to 80 loose horses, each ride in Iceland is a different adventure. In the light evenings you may well hear tales of the trolls and elves that dwell in the mountains and valleys through which you will pass! In this country you will believe that anything is possible. Accommodation varies from sleeping bags in remote mountain cabins to comfortable farmhouses. ££



NAMIBIA



These are some of the most challenging rides in the world. Nowhere else can you ride for so fast or for so long and yet, with preparation, it is within the capabilities of most riders. You might choose to cross the oldest desert in the world on horseback; or to visit Damaraland, a place of vast open spaces and amazing colours or to visit the second largest Canyon in the world.

Whichever trail you choose, riding in Namibia is a feat of endurance and challenge not to be taken lightly. A highlight of these trips is the opportunity to sleep in the open under the African night sky. £££



JORDAN



Following in the footsteps of Lawrence of Arabia, the ride in Jordan visits some of the most interesting areas in this fascinating country. After visiting Petra your ride starts in Wadi Rum, known simply as the Valley of the Moon. Pink sands stretch as far as the eye can see as you ride through the desert, broken only by the bizarre rock formations. The horses are Arabians, highly prized amongst the Bedouin people and selected for their ability to cope with the deep sands of the desert.

Accommodation is a simple camp, where you can choose to sleep in a tent or under the stars. ££



MONGOLIA



Mongolia is a vast place of unexpected and unlikely encounters. One of the greatest riding countries in the world, there is no other nation that depends so much on horses. Almost half the population are semi-nomadic and part of the charm of the rides are the families you meet along the way. The rides take you over diverse landscapes, from the open steppes to remote valleys and high into mountainous forest taiga.

Accommodation can vary from spacious gers with made up beds, to basic camping. As the temperatures drop rapidly at night, you will find that a good quality sleeping bag will have been a very worthwhile investment. £

OTHER EXPEDITIONS ON HORSEBACK

You could discover the Arctic wilderness of Lapland; ride high into the mountains of British Columbia; paddle through a mountain lake on the Andorra Trail; invite Bald Eagles to visit for breakfast in the Yukon; climb high into the kingdom of Lesotho; splash through the floods of the Okavango Delta in Botswana; explore the back country of South Island, New Zealand or watch a traditional horseback game of Ulak Tartish in Kyrgyzstan.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT RIDING EXPEDITIONS

Email rides@inthesaddle.com or call one of our experienced team on **01299 272 997** and check out the images and feedback on each ride at www.inthesaddle.com

Family Riding Holidays

*A family riding holiday is a time for you
to be together which will create
memories for a lifetime.*





Horizon, South Africa

We have a selection of holidays that cater for the whole family which might include non-riders, young children, or teenagers wanting some excitement. We will help you find the right holiday to give the ideal balance of riding and spending time together.



Rebecca Clarke

USEFUL TIP In our experience children like spending time around the stables before or after the ride making new friends. The most stunning scenery in the world doesn't always excite a teenager.

WHERE YOU CAN GO

The weather in South Africa makes it a great family location and we have super holidays at Ant's Lodges, Horizon and on the Wild Coast.

Ranch holidays are also ideal for families, mainly because Western riding is so accommodating of all abilities, so you could choose El Bronco in Hungary, Arizona, Montana or Argentina.

Or for instruction try Castle Leslie in Ireland; Galiny Palace in Poland or Berardenga in Italy.

WHEN TO GO

The African lodges, ranches in Arizona or Argentina are open all year. European riding holidays are typically from March to October. The ranches in Montana are only open from May to October.

WHAT TYPE OF RIDER DO I NEED TO BE?

Some places will take children of all ages, with the youngest on lead rein or in the arena; others have a minimum age of twelve to join the daily trail rides; in some cases it's possible for children to ride in the arena while parents join more challenging rides; other places prefer the family to ride together as a group. So, it's important to decide what your family would prefer to do on their holiday.

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

One of the best things about a riding holiday is that each day is planned out for you; all you have to do is turn up at the stables at the right time to ride. That makes it particularly relaxing as a family holiday since Mum (or Dad?) doesn't have to think "what will we do today?"



ANT'S LODGES, SOUTH AFRICA

A stay at Ant's Lodges is a perfect family holiday. All riding abilities can be catered for with horses for experienced riders as well as steady ponies for children. You will be amazed at how close you can be to the animals and since there are no elephant or lion all levels of rider can be safely taken out on horseback. If you prefer to stay on your own feet, the guides will take you on guided bush walks or vehicle game drives and cycling safaris are also available. The accommodation is lovely and there are a number of suites and family cottages each with two bedrooms. ££



EL BRONCO, HUNGARY

El Bronco offers a combination of trail rides and Western instruction so that as a family you can learn a new skill as well as enjoy riding together. There are also non-riding activities including carriage rides. The ranch has superb facilities with several large riding arenas as well as a swimming pool and a wellness centre. There are four hours of riding per day and all levels and abilities are catered for. The ranch breeds their own Quarter-horse, Appaloosa and Paints so there are always plenty of horses available. £



GALINY PALACE, POLAND

Riders of all abilities are welcome at Galiny Palace. There are lead rein classes for children under six and older children can have beginner lunge lessons. More competent children and adults can have flatwork and showjumping lessons in one of the indoor or outdoor arenas. Experienced riders can also enjoy hacking out over the estate and it is also possible to have a go at carriage driving too. When not riding there are many other activities available including cycling; tennis; table tennis; boules and volleyball as well as a wellness zone and a Russian banya. £



NINE QUARTER CIRCLE RANCH, MONTANA

This is a traditional ranch holiday particularly suited for families. The ranch has a stunning setting and each day several groups set out from the corrals to explore this beautiful wilderness. Morning and afternoon rides are available for everyone and there are also all day rides for experienced riders. Younger children may ride in the arena or out on the trail on slower rides. When not riding you might choose to fish (whether a beginner or an accomplished fisherman); cool off in the mountain stream fed natural pool; play volleyball or softball with new friends or relax and do nothing. ££

Our family have various levels of riding experience but we were all given the perfect horse to suit our ability. The rides were very varied with lots of cantering if desired and beautiful scenery to admire on the longer treks. Anne-Marie after her holiday at Rocking Z, Montana

OTHER FAMILY RIDING HOLIDAYS

Other ideal family destinations include Horizon Horseback Adventures and the beautiful Wild Coast in South Africa; an Estancia stay at Los Potreros in Argentina; White Stallion Ranch in Arizona combines sunshine, desert and Western riding; cross-country and estate rides at Castle Leslie in Ireland; game viewing in Kenya at Borana; or learning more about natural horsemanship at Rocking Z in Montana.

WE CAN HELP YOU DECIDE

To help you choose the holiday that's right for your family email or call one of our experts on rides@inthesaddle.com or phone 01299 272 997.

Each holiday has its own dedicated page on www.inthesaddle.com with details of the location, riding, accommodation, dates, prices and weather, along with sample itineraries.

Centre Based Rides

Unpack, settle into your room and enjoy great riding out each day as well as time to relax and get to know the surrounding area.





Lucy Downes

I rode six horses throughout the week. All of which were responsive, gentle, extremely well mannered and trained.

My confidence grew throughout each ride.

Elizabeth after her holiday in the Azores

Ol Donyo Lodge, Kenya

Sometimes known as “petal rides”, your riding on a centre based stay will take you in a different direction each day. Each evening you return to familiar surroundings. They are the ultimate relaxing riding holiday.

USEFUL TIP Follow our packing list recommendations but do check the weather forecast just before you go, in case some unseasonal weather is forecast.

WHERE YOU CAN GO

We have centre-based riding holidays all over the world. Our most popular riding holidays are all centre-based - Quinta da Terça in the Azores, Los Alamos in Spain, Macatoo in the Okavango Delta, Botswana and Ant's Lodges in South Africa.

If you prefer Western riding we have El Bronco in Hungary, Castellare di Tonda in Italy and a number of ranches in North and South America. First class riding instruction is available on centre-based holidays in Portugal, Ireland, Poland and Italy.

WHEN TO GO

With so many places all over the world we can offer you a great riding holiday every month of the year.

WHAT TYPE OF RIDER DO I NEED TO BE?

Each holiday is different: some can take all levels of rider; others are only for experienced riders, either because of the pace of ride or the wildlife you might encounter. If you are unsure you have the appropriate riding experience please do ask.

One of the great benefits of a centre-based holiday is the flexibility to skip a ride and just relax. Staying right at the stables means it's normally possible to ride different horses throughout your holiday until you find the perfect match.

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT IT?

Staying at one base allows you to settle in and really get to know the guides and your hosts. We often receive feedback about the family, friendly atmosphere, and guests requesting their favourite room when returning to destinations such as Los Alamos or Quinta da Terça.



THE GREEN ISLAND TRAIL, AZORES



This holiday is on São Miguel, the largest of the nine islands which make up the Azores in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. Your home for the week is Quinta da Terça, one of the oldest houses on the island. You can truly relax, settle into your comfortable room and enjoy beautiful meals throughout the week.

There are a number of different holiday options depending on how many hours in the saddle you would like. Most also include a number of guided non-riding options so that you can experience the key sights of the island such as a boat trip to see whales and dolphins. £



LOS ALAMOS, SPAIN



What makes Los Alamos so popular so that people return year after year and might book their next trip at least a year in advance?

It's probably a mixture of the great horses; the fact that Rachel always gets the perfect match of rider and horse; the glorious beach riding; the fast and furious gallops up the fire breaks in the forest; Rhiannon's homely cooking; Andrew's wit and charm; single rooms (at no extra charge); the sunny weather (it can be cold and wet on occasions, but it's normally a good deal better than the UK); or is it the wine and chocolate that is continuously replenished in the fridge? £



EQUUS SILVANIA, ROMANIA



Romania is an exciting and different riding destination with majestic castles, medieval towns, stunning scenery and wildlife such as wolves, bears and lynx (although these aren't easy to see). This is a centre based holiday for experienced riders and each day you ride out from Equus Silvania on day rides with saddlebag picnics.

Weather permitting there is an extended ride into the mountains where you camp overnight and one day is a rest day for the horses and an opportunity for you to experience a little of the history of the area. On certain weeks there is also a moving on Transylvania Trail. £



TYSLOS LODGE, CANADA



Tyslos Lodge is at the north end of the pristine 52 mile long Chilko Lake which is surrounded by jagged peaks and is one of the most impressive areas in British Columbia. Getting there means a one-hour charter flight from Vancouver.

Once you have arrived at this wild and remote place you spend your days on horseback exploring the valleys and climbing high for some amazing vistas. Everyone gathers in the impressive log lodge for meals and the rooms are in one of a number of log cabins. If the wilderness beckons it is also possible to head out on pack trips for a number of nights. £££

OTHER CENTRE BASED RIDES

We have many other great centre based riding holidays which include: ranches in North and South America such as Hidden Hollow Hideaway, Huechahue and Zuleta; safaris in Botswana, Kenya, Namibia and South Africa; the tea gardens ride of Assam in India; the beautiful beach riding of Mozambique and New Zealand and the exciting winter riding in northern Sweden.

INSPIRED?

Further information can be found on our website, where each destination has its own dedicated page with details on the location, riding, accommodation, dates, prices and weather, along with sample itineraries. Browse our full portfolio of rides at www.inthesaddle.com or speak to an expert on 01299 272 997.

Riding Holiday Calendar

JANUARY

It is summer in Southern Africa, Argentina or Chile so a great time to visit. The trail rides in Ecuador are running. Arizona has a dry cool winter perfect for riding.

Closer to home there are trail rides in Spain across the plains of Extremadura and along the coast north of Barcelona. Apart from these, holidays in mainland Europe are restricted to instructional ones. Castle Leslie in Ireland and Galiny Palace both have indoor areas which means they can stay open all year. Dressage instruction in Portugal is also possible year round or you might visit the island of São Miguel in the Azores.

Winter rides in the snow are possible in northern Sweden or the Carpathian mountains of Romania.

It's a great time for a trail ride in the southern deserts of Morocco or in northern India to visit the Nagaur Fair. In the Okavango Delta the water lilies come into bloom.

FEBRUARY

It is still a great time to join the Estancias rides in Torres del Paine or the Grande Traversee from Argentina to Chile.

The first Portuguese Alentejo Trails get running. Rides in Israel start now and run through to the end of the year with a break from June to August when it's too hot.

This is a good time for the safaris in northern Tanzania. Following the December rains the grasslands are fresh and green hosting large herds of plains game.

MARCH

The first of the rides in Provence and to the Camargue take place; the season also starts in the Sierra Nevada, Spain.

Los Alamos on the coast of Andalucia, Spain and El Bronco in Hungary are open year round.

The Northern Lights winter rides run in Iceland.

In northern India the Hola Mohalla ride is timed to coincide with the Sikh festival. It's possible to extend your trip to visit the hilltop town of Simla and the Holi festival of colour.

APRIL

By Easter most European rides are now running including Bulgaria, Pyrenees, Romania (lodge and centre based rides), northern Portuguese Wolves and Wild horses, the Chateau rides in the Loire, trail rides in Rhodes and Tuscany.

In Namibia temperatures have cooled enough to start the rides across the desert - these run until September.

The Sacred Valley rides start in Peru and run through to the end of October.

In Israel the rides move away from the southern deserts to the cooler highlands around Galilee.

MAY

In Botswana the floods usually arrive in late May or early June bringing life to the Okavango Delta. Large herds of lechwe and buffalo start to form.

It's getting warm in the desert and the Moroccan horses are moved to where it is cooler for the coast and mountain rides. May is also the start of the main season for the Montana and Wyoming Ranches and for the rides in Mongolia.

Mlilwane safaris start in Swaziland.

JUNE

Tsylos Lodge opens in British Columbia and further north the first pack trips head into the Yukon. There is cattle branding at Lucasia Ranch in Alberta but this popular week gets booked up very early.

June is also the start of the Icelandic rides, the Glaciers and Fjord trips in Greenland and the mountain rides in Kyrgyzstan. These continue until September.

In the savannah of Kenya the "long rains" mean plenty of grass bringing in herds of zebra and wildebeest. The mobile safaris into the Maasai Mara run from now to September.

The transhumance ride takes place as the horses are moved from Extremadura to the Sierra de Gredos.

The rides in Mozambique are possible year round, but between June and October it is drier.

JULY

Tsylos pack trips start. It is the Naadam games in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia and so a popular time to visit.

Summer trail rides start in northern Sweden. As temperatures rise across Europe many of the rides in low lying areas switch to a programme of shorter hours in the saddle or find routes which take them into higher mountains. The next two months are peak season for many of the mountain rides in central and southern Europe.

The flood waters are at their highest in the Okavango Delta and so there are plenty of splashy canters.

AUGUST

Lucasia hold their main summer Cattle drive. It's always booked a year in advance.

It's peak season for the ranches in Montana, Wyoming and Canada.

In Kenya and Tanzania the plains are drying up allowing faster canters and with wildlife concentrated around remaining waterholes, game viewing is good. With less vegetation big cat sightings are also good at this time of year.

It is the middle of winter in southern Africa which means dry warm days perfect for riding - however nights can be chilly, especially on the upland rides such as in Swaziland or at Moolmanshoek.

OCTOBER

The first pack trips head into the Southern Alps of New Zealand and the trail rides into Torres del Paine National Park in Chile start up. Temperatures have cooled in Arizona so it's a good time to visit White Stallion and Tombstone ranches.

There are horse round-ups in Iceland bringing the animals down from the summer grazing.

The Fairs and Festivals ride takes place in Rajasthan, northwest India; it's also the time of the Pushkar Fair.

October has some of the best game viewing in Botswana as the temperatures start to rise, the undergrowth dies back making wildlife easier to spot.

The horses in Morocco are moved back to the warmer south of the country. It's the autumn Transhumance ride moving from the Sierra de Gredos back to Extremadura, Spain.

NOVEMBER

The Golega Horse Fair in Portugal happens in the middle of November.

Pack trips start into the Snowy Mountains of Australia. The rides between Argentina and Chile across the Andes also take place. Between November to April is a great time to visit Uruguay.

Summer rains start in much of southern Africa - hot during the day with possible heavy showers. The evenings are warm.

DECEMBER

There are special Christmas and New Year weeks at Los Alamos and also a Christmas ride in Rajasthan.

Summer arrives for the Western Cape rides in South Africa while the winter rides start in Sweden with the option to stay in the Ice Hotel.

It is hot in Botswana and South Africa and rain is possible but this brings new grass and means plentiful wildlife with lots of young antelope being born.





in the saddle

holidays on horseback

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