



RIDE WORLD WIDE BRAZIL 2024

RIDE INFORMATION

These rides take place in Coxilha Rica, a high plateau in the interior of the Southern state of Santa Catarina, a beautiful, diverse landscape and the heart of gaucho territory. The rides follow routes riding from fazenda (ranch) to fazenda and you are welcomed by friendly, music loving gauchos and their agile criollo horses. Rolling hills of open grassland and forested valleys stretch for miles and miles and the sense of vastness is inspiring. The hospitality of the region is exceptional and delicious barbecues and caipirinhas await you at every stop. UNESCO maintains that the gaucho way of life is the liveliest equestrian culture in the world. The Brazilian Gauchos live in the southern states of Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul and most have roots in Europe due to the large numbers of immigrants, pioneers from Portugal, Spain, Italy, Germany, Austria, Holland and Belgium, who arrived there in the 18th & 19th centuries.

DATES

The rides are run between September and April. Please see the dates set out at the end of this information sheet and contact us for availability. Set date rides will be confirmed when there are a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 14 riders. Private rides for groups can be run by arrangement on request from dates to suit between September and April, subject to availability. Please contact us to discuss dates, your plans and availability.



HORSE

The horses used are mostly the local Criollo breed and there are about 35 horses at the base. They average around 15hh and are very well suited to the terrain, used to working cattle, and are a responsive and enjoyable ride. An unusual addition to the herd are some "curly haired" horses. These horses are hypoallergenic meaning that they cause very little reaction / irritation to people who are usually allergic to horses. For any keen rider unfortunate enough to be allergic to horses this is the place to come! The horses are trained western style so are used to neck reining and a relaxed riding style, with a loose contact with the mouth.

TACK

Tack is South American style with saddles similar to western, covered with a large sheepskin - very comfortable for long hours of riding. Rain ponchos are supplied, tied to the saddles, and saddlebags are provided for personal belongings though vehicles transport most equipment.

RIDING

The rides include an average 6 hours riding a day, usually with a long break for lunch. The route progresses from 'fazenda' to 'fazenda' and there is a chance on one day at least to get involved with cattle work, helping the gauchos. The rides are usually lead by Paul Coudenys, of Belgian origin, who speaks fluent English (as well as French, Dutch, Spanish & Portuguese) or sometimes by either Simon Vergara or Chalas Bernardo Salazar, both passionate horseman from Colombia. Riders are also accompanied by local gaucho companions who are on hand to help with tacking up, untacking and so on. The horses are generally prepared / tacked up for you. Rides are run for a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 15 guests.

WEIGHT LIMIT

There is a rider weight limit of 120 kgs (18 ½ stone) on these rides but please contact us to check suitable horses are available if your weight is over 90kg.



PACE

The pace of the rides will vary during the trip according to the terrain and ability of the group, but overall it is moderate with lots of good chances to canter across open fields and rolling grassland.

RIDING EXPERIENCE

To participate in these rides you must be a reasonably competent rider who is used to riding in open country and over varied terrain. One of the joys of this ride is the relaxed attitude - you are encouraged to spread out and take your own line, perhaps canter up to the top of a hill to see the view or take a photo when you feel like and so on. As a minimum to join one of the set date rides, you should be comfortable, well balanced and secure in the saddle at a walk, trot and fast canter and able to control a well schooled horse at all paces. You will always enjoy your trip much more if you are reasonably riding fit and if you are not used to riding for several hours a day, we strongly recommend regular practice before you go to get used to the hours you will spend in the saddle.



TERRAIN

The rides take place in rolling hills at an altitude of around 1000 meters (3300ft). This is excellent cattle country and the terrain is predominately large open fields, interspersed with some stands of woodland, including 'Araucaria' (monkey puzzle), a very different tree here and a truly wonderful sight in their native environment. There are rivers to cross and small lakes where you may swim the horses. Some valleys are thick with sub tropical forest and you follow paths through this beautiful lush vegetation.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is in authentic working 'fazendas' (ranches). These are often lovely colonial buildings of the 18th century, built of stone and wood with tile or corrugated iron roofs. The properties have wonderful charm but the standard of rooms does vary and on some nights accommodation is quite simple. Rooms are mostly twin / double but some of the fazendas have 3 or 4 beds to a room. There are usually 2 or 3 bathrooms which are shared between the group - these may be a short walk away, down a corridor or downstairs. On each night there will be a hot shower and a comfortable bed so there is not too much hardship. Single rooms cannot usually be guaranteed but will be allocated if at all possible. Beds at some of the fazendas are quite small so if you are tall you may prefer to put your mattress on the floor.



MEALS

Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included each day and a real effort is made with the food on the ride. Brazilian cooking is influenced by a mixture of European, Indian, African and Asian cuisine. The main dishes in Brazil are rice and beans (feijao) and sauces, with lots of meat or fish and salads. Each region has its own speciality and in the south the delicious grilled meat (churrasco) is a great favourite among gauchos and visitors alike. The meals prepared on the ride are mainly cooked on wood burning stoves, adding that special flavour, and you will eat delicious homemade dishes of the Santa Catarina district. Local drinks are included - bottled soft drinks, local beer and wine, as well as 'caipirinha's' and 'Cachaça' a kind of local rum.



WEATHER

The climate in southern Brazil is sub-tropical, warm to hot and very pleasant for riding. Winter is June to September, the coolest driest months with temperatures falling below 10 degrees C. December to March is summer and can be hot, with daytime temperatures up to and above 30 degrees C, though a little cooler in the evenings. In spring and autumn, September to December and March to June, the evenings and mornings are cooler but days can still be hot, up to 25 C. Rain storms are possible throughout the year and there can often be short sharp rainstorms.

WHAT TO BRING

We will send you a list when you book.



ITINERARY

Example itinerary - Gaucho do Brasil Ride An example itinerary for the 7 night ride is set out below although please note that this is only an example. **On each date the ride is different**, using different Fazendas etc and riding a slightly different route. Day by day arrangements are also subject to change and may be altered if your guide considers this advisable or if local conditions require.

Day 1 You will be met on arrival at Florianopolis airport (before 12 noon). There will then be a transfer, departing at about noon, to Coxilha Rica and Fazenda da Chapada near the town of Lages. The drive takes around 3 hours, usually with a stop for a late lunch on the way (own expense). A welcome drink when you arrive at fazenda and meet the horses, Daniel the owner of the farm, and the gauchos who will be your companions for the trip. Time to settle into the comfortable double rooms before dinner. After a delicious dinner you can join your hosts for a drink at the bar of the fazenda. The gaúchos will doubtless bring out guitars and accordians, serenading you with the local music. (D)



Day 2 After breakfast you saddle the horses early and leave around 09.00 in the direction of Fazenda Ferradura. You ride through beautiful rolling green countryside, dotted with Araucaria trees, and across pristine rivers. After a ride of 4 hours you arrive at the typical fazenda where lunch is waiting. After a good meal and a siesta you set off riding again towards Fazenda Rodeio Bonito through the beautiful landscape of Coxilha Rica. You may join the well-preserved colonial Tropeiro Route which for 250 years was the trade route along which cattle and mules were driven between Rio Grande do Sul and Argentina to Sao Paulo. The gauchos would spend months away from home, riding thousands of kilometers, driving their cattle to market. The route, a corridor made of stone, about 4 meters wide, was built by slaves and runs for hundreds of kilometres through Coxilha Rica and the State of Santa Catarina. Tropeiro means Trooper - the route of the troops. Dinner and the night at Fazenda Rodeio Bonito. (B,L,D).

Day 3 After a hearty breakfast you mount your criollos and set off through a rugged Coxilha landscape towards Fazenda Dona Vera. The route is up and down, over rolling hills, with trots and canters, river crossings and through valleys with waterfalls. Arrive at a small farm where Dona Vera will have prepared a delicious lunch. There should be time for a siesta before you set off on the afternoon ride. Climbing to the top of a green mountain you have a fantastic panoramic view of the Coxilha which, since colonial times, has been a great cattle region. Most of fazendas (cattle ranches) consist of several thousand acres and the buildings are over 200 years old. In the afternoon you ride for another 3 hours, returning to Rodeio Bonito by a different route. After a refreshing shower and a delicious dinner, a soft bed awaits you. (B,L,D)



ITINERARY cont.

Day 4 Breakfast and set off riding. Set off riding at about 09.00, heading for the high pampas of Coxilha Rica - the views are wonderful. The group of horses, the Gauchos, the landscape, the sense of freedom - all make for a wonderful ride. Stop for lunch in the countryside and in the afternoon ride on, another 3 hours, to Fazenda Lua Cheia (meaning 'full moon'). A fantastic berbecued lamb will be prepared by your hosts Dido (a vet) and Sonia. Dinner and the night at Fazenda Lua Cheia (B,L,D)

Day 5 After breakfast you saddle up and, depending on the season, perhaps give the Gauchos a helping hand at the farm rounding-up some cattle or sheep. Drive the herd to the corral, where they are either vaccinated or receive some treatment, giving you a chance to watch the Gaúchos perform their daily duties- their way of life has changed little in the last hundred years, with horses still the most important part of their everyday work. You may want to learn how to rope cattle, or let the gauchos teach you the tricks of the trade! After lunch, the ride continues to the Colonial Fazenda São João, a Portuguese style fazenda in time for a cold beer or a warming Pinga (local rum). Dinner and the night at Fazenda Sao Joao. (B,L,D)



Day 6 Set off across the pampas again, you regularly meet gauchos from the different fazendas who are busy at work and you might see round-ups and cattle work in the corrals taking place. Climbing and descending, one slope after the other, there are regular opportunities for a good canter across open grassland. In the afternoon you arrive at Fazenda Ferradura and are welcomed by the owner Gaucho Benjamin Krüzen. A delicious dinner is being prepared for you. Dinner at the night at Fazenda Ferradura. (B,L,D)

Day 7 After breakfast you set off on your last day in the saddle heading for Fazenda da Chapada. Daniel, the owner of the farm, will welcome you with Caipirinha & hugs. The ladies of the house makes us a delicious dish while the musical talented gauchos bring their best songs, guitar, and accordion into the barn. The bottle of Pinga is passed around and sometimes the gauchos may even dare to dance! A chance to enjoy some local warmth and colour. Overnight at Fazenda Chapada. (B,L,D)

Day 8 Breakfast and at around 08.00, after saying goodbye to the horses and gauchos, you set off driving about 3 hours to Florianopolis. Arrive Florianopolis at around midday for your return flight or onward journey. (B)



DATES & RATES 2024

Please note that due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, ride rates are now quoted in US Dollars. The sterling price will be the equivalent sterling rate using the USD/sterling exchange rate in force when you book/pay.

Gaicho do Brasil Ride

17th to 24th January

3rd to 10th February

5th to 12th March

12th to 19th October

9th to 16th November

USD 2980 per person (7 nights)

Rates assume a minimum of 5 people

Small group supplement for 4 riders USD 650 per person

Small group supplement for 3 riders USD 800 per person

Other dates are sometimes possible for private groups on request

Rates **INCLUDE** all riding, guiding and equipment, 7 nights shared accommodation, meals as indicated, local drinks, and transfer by vehicle from / to the airport in Florianopolis on days 1 & 8.

Rates **EXCLUDE** international flights to Brazil and taxes, personal medical / travel insurance (compulsory), USD 33 booking sales tax, personal expenditure such as laundry or telephone calls, transfers outside set times, local departure taxes, any visa fees or any tips you might wish to leave.

Single rooms - If you are travelling alone and would like a single room then we will do our best to book this for you. There is not usually a charge for this but single rooms **cannot be guaranteed** and will depend on group size / mix etc.



FLIGHTS & TRAVEL INFORMATION

The meeting point for these rides is in Florianopolis (airport code FLN) and arrival should be before 12 noon on the first day. At the end of the ride you are driven back to Florianopolis, usually to arrive about noon, so flight departures should be after 14.00 on day 8.

Flights to Florianopolis from London are usually via São Paulo. British Airways fly every day to São Paulo. Tam (Brazilian Airlines) also fly from London direct to São Paulo. It is also possible fly with one of the US airlines via North America. Rates vary with the season and airline but expect to pay between £800 and £950 per person for an economy return. **Please contact us if you would like further information on flights or for a flight inclusive quote (our ATOL number for flight bookings is 6213).**



GENERAL VISA & HEALTH INFORMATION

(NB this is a brief outline - further information will be sent to you if you make a confirmed booking)

Visas If you hold a full British Passport and are visiting Brazil for a holiday only and staying less than 90 days you do not need to arrange a visa in advance.

Health No inoculations are legally required for Brazil if travelling from Europe. The TravelHealthPro website (NaTHNaC) recommends most travellers to the Santa Catarina state are vaccinated against Tetanus, Diphtheria and Hepatitis A. A Rabies vaccination may also be recommended. If you are travelling on in Brazil after the ride you might need additional inoculations - you should in any case consult a health professional for further and more detailed advice.

(DRAFT 11/02/2024)

