



RIDE WORLD WIDE SPAIN

GEORGE SCOTT RIDES, ANDALUCIA 2024

RIDE INFORMATION

These rides take place in the Sierra Morena in southern Spain, an area of sparsely populated rolling hills stretching across northern Andalusia. They are run by George Scott, who was born in Seville and has lived and breathed the Andalusian way of life since he was a child. As a boy he loved to explore the wild and unspoilt countryside on his horse, learning folklore and traditions from the local people. The hills of the Sierra Morena held no secrets for him and in recent years, with the permission of neighbouring landowners, he has been re-discovering and, in some places, painstakingly restoring, old cattle-driving routes, many of which have remained untrodden for decades. The Sierra Morena is situated north of Seville, the capital of Andalusia and without doubt one of Spain's most beautiful cities. The Sevillanos are an extremely proud and passionate people and to many, 'Sevilla' is not just a place, it is a way of life. These rides, under George's personal guidance, introduce you to the magic and romance of this part of the country.



DATES

Rides are run between March and mid-June and from mid-September to early December with itineraries usually 3 or 5 nights. A 7 night ride following a route west towards Portugal is also planned once a year and tailor made itineraries can be arranged on request. Please see dates below and contact us to discuss plans and check availability.

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HORSES

The horses used are all owned by George and are Hispano-Arab, Anglo-Hispano, Anglo-Arab and Andalucian crosses ranging from about 15hh to 16hh. There are about 15 horses in all, selected for their good nature and endurance. They are calm and well-mannered but also energetic, fit and a delight to ride.

TACK

Tack is a mix of Spanish and English style. There are a few traditional Spanish vaquero saddles which have a high back and pommel but most are lighter weight, more similar to an Australian stock saddle and very comfortable for long hours of riding. There are also some English saddles. Most of the horses are ridden in snaffle bits. Saddle bags are provided as are ponchos and waterproofs when necessary.



RIDING

The standard 3 and 5 night trips include riding on 3 and 5 days respectively. They follow a place-to-place route, with between 5 and 6 hours in the saddle on each riding day, covering around 20 to 35kms. George aims to lead each ride personally, normally accompanied by one or two back-up riders who are on hand to help with the horses. Rides are usually run for groups of at least 6 and not more than 12 guests (although often less). Back up throughout is excellent, with horses prepared and looked after for you (you are welcome to help if you wish), a support vehicle transporting luggage between accommodation and a back-up vehicle meeting the riding group at lunchtime each day.

WEIGHT LIMIT

95kgs (15 stone) in riding clothes - if you are close to this please contact us before booking to ensure a suitable horse is available.

PACE

The riding pace is relaxed and moderate overall. Generally riding in the morning is slow, mostly at a walk although there may be some opportunities to trot and canter depending on terrain. Riding in the afternoon may be a little faster, but again depends on the terrain. Overall the pace is leisurely and relaxed.

RIDING EXPERIENCE

Rides are aimed at reasonably experienced riders and to participate you should be well balanced, secure in the saddle and able to control a well-schooled horse in open country at all paces. Although you don't need to be an expert, you must be used to riding in open country, over different terrain and at a varied pace. You also need a reasonable level of riding fitness as you will be in the saddle for long riding hours on consecutive days; you may also be asked to get off to lead occasionally if the ground requires.

SAFETY

A basic medical kit for both horses & riders is carried by your guide with a more comprehensive kit available in the vehicles. Guides carry mobile phones and in an emergency, a vehicle can access most points of any ride within 30 minutes.

TERRAIN & WILDLIFE

The area you ride through is one of rolling hills - there are no high mountains - with vegetation that is a mix of ancient cork, holm and Mediterranean oak forest, olive groves, wild pasture and open meadow. There are small rivers and streams to cross and the occasional vineyard. Riding is predominantly on winding sandy **cont. over**

TERRAIN & WILDLIFE cont

paths and gravel tracks, often on privately owned estates, and overall the going underfoot is excellent for horses (there may be a little road work, but you seldom come across a tar road). Birdlife includes eagles, griffon and black vultures, flycatchers and brightly coloured bee-eaters and you may see red and fallow deer, wild boar, foxes and if you are very lucky, could catch a glimpse of the rare Iberian lynx.

ACCOMMODATION

The first night of most rides is spent at Taramona, a XVI century farmhouse where the horses are based. The house has been restored in its traditional style and has a cosy kitchen with fireplace where breakfast is eaten, a beautiful upstairs dining room, and a number of different outbuildings with traditional brick ovens and fireplaces where atmospheric dinners may be served. Bedrooms are simple but comfortable, most with their own bathroom (although sometimes these are shared). One night may be spent at a traditional and unrestored farmhouse, where there is no electricity, nor indoor bathroom (there is a loo and shower (with hot water) in the outbuildings) - but where beautiful high-ceilinged rooms, tiled walls and open fireplaces provide the ambiance for a candle-lit dinner served in the mirrored upstairs dining room.



On some rides nights are in George's magnificent Rajasthani-style safari camp (inspired by his visits to Jodhpur) which has big walk-in tents, with colourful linings, proper beds, kelims on the floor and a hot shower (shared) - eating traditional Andalucian food cooked over open fires, with candles and oil lamps dotted around the camp, flamenco gypsies playing wild music and the chance to sit or dance under the night sky, this is a magical experience. Sometimes a more simple mobile camp is used, with bell tents and proper beds. The beautiful family finca, Trasierra, in which George grew up and now renovated as a country house-cum-guest house, may be used on one night and can be booked for private groups, with the horses based there if required.

MEALS

Breakfast, lunch and dinner every day on the ride is included. Breakfast is generally in Spanish style - bread, cake or croissant, yoghurt, fruit, cheese and ham, with eggs (from the chickens at Taramona) and bacon usually also on offer. Lunch is a substantial picnic, eaten at a long table set up in the countryside. There are often tapas such as Iberian ham (you will see the black Iberian pigs foraging for acorns in the forest), local cheeses and olives before the main courses, which may be a gazpacho soup followed by a dish of lentils and chorizo, or grilled pork and vegetables. Dinner is cooked by the chef who travels with you, with menus carefully chosen to highlight traditional and local specialties and use locally sourced ingredients - after drinks and tapas you might have a delicious risotto, a dish with lamb from one of the farms you ride through or with sea bass from the Atlantic coast. Tea, coffee and a good-varied bar (wine, beer, spirits and a selection of soft drinks), are all included. Meal-times are generally a little later than in England - breakfast is usually around 8.30am, lunch at around 2 to 2.30pm and dinner served at about 9pm. Vegetarians and those with other particular diets can be catered for with advance notice - please tell us of any special diet requests when you book.



WEATHER

The climate in this part of Spain is nearly tropical and winter months are best for riding with gentle temperatures that range, on average, from a daytime maximum of 18 to 22°C and a minimum at night of around 8 to 10°C. In February, March and November the average number of days with rain is about 5 a month.

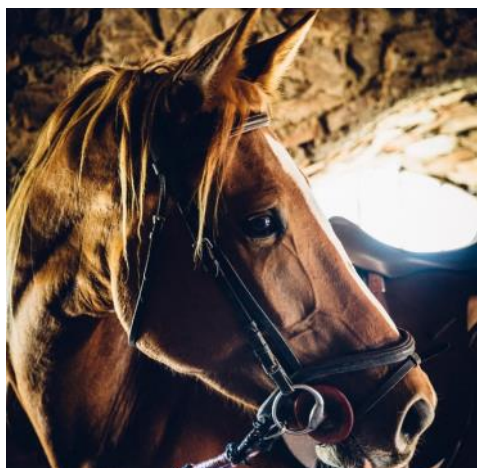
WHAT TO BRING

We will send you a list when you book.

ITINERARY

Each trip itinerary is different. There are many routes to explore, several farmhouses where you might stay, and the camp is re-located every season. George's ethos is for each trip to be individual and routes, direction and the order of accommodation used are intentionally changed almost every ride. Below is an example of a 3 night ride itinerary - but note that this is only an example - there's always some element of surprise!

Day 1 Met at Seville airport usually around 16.30 to 17.00, and driven about 1 ½ hours to Taramona, a traditional farmhouse where the horses are based, about 85km north of Seville near Cazalla de la Sierra. Time to settle in and perhaps meet the horses before drinks, dinner and the night at Taramona. (D)



Day 2 Breakfast, before setting off (usually at around 10.00 although will depend on the weather) and riding for about 2 ½ hours, perhaps climbing to one of the highest points of the mountain range where there is a panoramic view of the Sierra and Pantano del Pintado lake. Head down to the lake where the back-up team are waiting with aperitifs, tapas and a delicious safari-style lunch. After lunch and a siesta, mount up to head off again riding to meet the ancient cattle trail of Garagantafria which climbs back up the hills to Taramona. Arrive in time for tea and cakes and afterwards aperitivos around the fire whilst supper is being prepared. An atmospheric dinner, surrounded by fire torches and candles. (B,L,D)

Day 3 After breakfast set off on a beautiful 3 hour ride descending to the Rio Beneliija and traversing your way up stream to stop under an ancient Mediterranean oak tree which has become a favourite spot to set up the lunch tables. This part of the ride is the wildest, covering untrodden ground. After lunch you ride "La Canada Real de la Senda" with majestic views towards the Ribenar del Hueznar. On this stretch there are some beautiful open fields where you can enjoy a few canters. After crossing the river you climb up to George's wonderful Rajasthani tented camp. Here you spend the night lit only by oil lamps, firelight & candles. The comfortable beds are warmed by hot water bottles. Dinner will be cooked over a wood fire and served under the stars. (B,L,D)



ITINERARY cont.

Day 4 Breakfast, and leaving the Rajasthani behind, set off into a completely different landscape. Descend to the Ribera del Hueznar River which you follow downstream until diverting up the Camino Viejo to reach the traditional village of Cazalla de la Sierra. Here you have a chance to see the local architecture and village life as you wind your way through the streets ad head to lunch which will be waiting by a lake, served under the shade of the open lunch tent. After lunch ride through the parkland formed by Mediterranean oaks and fields until finally arriving back at your initial starting point, Taramona. Tea will be waiting for you and you will have time to freshen up before departing to Seville airport for onward travel. (B,L)



DATES & RATES 2024

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

3 day ride - 2500 Euros per person

21st to 24th March
28th to 31st March
11th to 14th April
16th to 19th May

30th May to 2nd June
13th to 16th June
12th to 15th September
19th to 22nd September

3rd to 6th October
10th to 13th October
19th to 22nd October
21st to 24th November

5 day ride - 4500 Euros per person

2nd to 7th April
7th to 12th May

21st to 26th May

15th to 20th September
24th to 29th September

Ride to Portugal (7 nights) - Euros 7000

21st to 28th April

Rates are based on a minimum of 6 ride participants.

Other dates are run for private groups on request and may be added through the season - rides are run between March and mid-June and mid-September to mid-November.

Please contact us with your preferred date / time of year to check availability.

Rate INCLUDES twin / double accommodation, all riding, guiding (including English speaking guide) and equipment, meals (dinner Day 1 to lunch Day 4 / 6 / 8) and aperitifs, wine, beer and soft drinks with meals, support vehicle and back up throughout and transfers from / to Seville on the first and last days with the group at set times.

Rate EXCLUDES International flights / travel to Seville and taxes, any visa fees, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have with cover to ride), any gratuities you wish to leave and personal items such as shopping, telephone calls etc.

Single rooms - if you are travelling alone then every effort will be made for you to have your own room / tent, however you may be asked to share with another rider (same gender) in certain circumstances.

FLIGHTS & TRAVEL INFORMATION

The ride meeting point is Seville, either at the airport or in the centre of town. There is no pre-set meeting time and transfers will be co-ordinated depending on the travel plans of the group - however the transfer will not be before 14.00 and we usually suggest arriving at around 16.00. On the return you will be driven back to Seville in the afternoon and departing flights should be **after** 16.00.

British Airways and Easy Jet have direct flights from London Gatwick to Seville but not every day; Ryanair have direct flights from London Stansted but only on certain days. You can also fly to Seville from London via Madrid (or other major Spanish cities) and can also take the high speed AVE train from Madrid to Seville (approx. 2 hours). Fares to Seville vary but expect to pay from around £150 to £250 per person economy return. If you would like help booking flights or a fare quote please contact us - we can book British Airways scheduled flights for you. Our ATOL number for flight bookings is 6213.

Extra nights in Seville You may like to plan an extra night or two in Seville, highly recommended as a beautiful city that is well worth a visit - and also means you can be more flexible with flight arrival / departure times etc. We can suggest / help book accommodation if required.

GENERAL VISA & HEALTH INFORMATION

(NB brief outline only - further information will be sent if you make a confirmed booking.)

Visas Holders of a full British passport do not need a visa for visits to Spain whatever the length of stay, although for visits of over 90 days residence permits are required. Please check up to date requirements with the Spanish consulate before travel.

Health No vaccinations are needed by UK, EU or US residents to enter Spain (according to the Spanish and World Health Organisations). If you have a particular condition requiring special medical treatment, in case of emergencies you should carry a letter from your own doctor translated into Spanish describing your condition and the medicine / treatment required.

(DRAFT 15/01/2024)

