

Holiday special

‘I’d be bored stiff on a beach’

Thinking about a riding holiday? Caroline Bankes asked the equi-trip cognoscenti to share their insight on the best venues, value and how to prepare for the trip of a lifetime

Master of the Mid Devon hunt

HUGO, 48, has been on about 20 riding holidays all around the world, including eight trips to Kenya, a 400-mile trek across Argentina, Georgia, Spain — twice — Morocco, Greece, Bulgaria, Tanzania, and many parts of Asia including Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan.

His most recent was to Jordan where he spent his honeymoon riding “fantastic little Arab horses through the desert”. All his trips have been organised through Ride Worldwide, a Devon-based company run by Nigel and Ruth Harvey.

“For people who go hunting, a riding holiday is the only one to go on — they would get bored stiff on a beach,” he says. “You get to ride strange horses and experience different cultures.”

Hugo takes a riding holiday each spring and says the cost is “half the price of a day ski pass and a damn sight more fun”. Every trip has been memorable and the only place he is not quite so keen to return to is Morocco as he had to ride stallions, which made chatting to fellow riders tricky. He also found that the horses were not treated as well as on other trips.

As a seasoned traveller, Hugo has a list of holiday essentials: tea bags, a silk sleeping bag liner, a shortwave radio, so he can listen to the World Service, half chaps, a waterproof coat and gloves, as “the reins can be ropery”.



"For people who go hunting, a riding holiday is the only one to go on. It's damn good fun"

Hugo de Ferranti

Hugo de Ferranti enjoying one of his many trips (H&H strongly recommends wearing a hat)