

Rancho la Paz

Torreblanca del sol - E-29640 Fuengirola/Malaga

E-Mail: info@rancho-la-paz.com

Fax: (0034) 952 590264



8- days Doñana trail

Doñana trail – on sandy ways under the pine forest to the world famous pilgrim town El Rocio

Every year to Pentecost more than one million of pilgrims with horses, bull carriages and jeeps from all parts of Spain make their way to the Paloma Blanca, the virgin of Rocio. She might be the richest in own land and cattle, gifts from grateful believers, protecting horses and cows.

In the southwest of Sevilla you follow the pilgrim ways to El Rocio. The environment of the National Park Doñana offers pine forests, oak trees, dunes, marshland and hunting ground. Thousands of migrant birds pass the winter months here.

Dates & prices:

Scheduled dates for the Doñana trail in 2015, for groups we can organise special dates also.

NO SEASON:
Rider: Euro 1.190,-
Non rider: Euro 570,-
Single room supl: Euro 150,-
22.03.15 - 29.03.15
20.09.15 - 27.09.15

Day 1: Arrival in Malaga and transfer to La Paz, accommodation and dinner with meeting about the trail.

Day 2: Departure after breakfast to "Puebla del Rio", where the horses are waiting. From here you follow in the tracks of the "Hermandad de Triana" from Sevilla that go on a pilgrimage to Rocio annually at Pentecost. In the shade of the pine trees after crossing the river "Quema" you reach Villamanrique. Have a late lunch there before you drive to your accommodation in Rocio. "El Rocio" is a tiny village partially surrounded by pine forests and partially by wetlands. The first impression is: a place without asphalted roads, just big sandy ways and where each house has its own post for tying up horses. Houses that are prepared to accommodate numerous families and their friends, with stables on the backside for their horses. In El Rocio nobody lets the possibility for a festival out and mostly during the weekends you can hear them sing and dance Sevillanas, the typical dances. You stay in a typical hostel in the centre.

Day 3: From Villamanrique you take sandy paths that invite to gallops in the shade of the pine trees all the way to the "Palacio del Rey". This is the last place to rest for a lot of pilgrims and their horses on their way to the "White Dove". In the afternoon you ride in El Rocio and come by the famous church from the "Paloma Blanca - la Virgen del Rocio ". Before you leave the horses try some tapas with a drink at one of the bars on the way.

Our suggestion: visit the wetlands near the village at daybreak or sundown with lots of rare birds and "wild" horses in the wetlands.

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Day 4: El Rocio is surrounded by the largest and most interesting Natural and National Park in Europe: "Parque Doñana". The "migrating" dunes, the forests, the wet- and dry lands and the rare animals are all strictly protected. Today you have the chance to go on an excursion by Landrovers to admire the nature (not included but can be organised by your guide). In the afternoon do it as the people here – discover the town by horse. Here everybody moves with a horse, so you can find them waiting for their rider at a shop; friends with their horses having a beer together; young children with carriages moving to visit some friends.

Day 5: You and the horses pass another day in the surrounds of El Rocio. After a coffee on horseback you start your way to a shady picnic under pines. The rest place is the last rest of "Matriz" – the pilgrims from Almonte on their way to Rocio and gets used by a lot of people spending a day outside with family and friends mostly during the weekends. Your way back is the same the mares and foals get driven once per year from the wetlands to El Rocio and Almonte: For centuries, even long before Doñana was declared a nature preserve, wild horses have been living in this area. Especially near Marismas (the wetlands) where they can find water and food all year round. Most of the horses belong to farmers in the area but some horses were given as gifts to the Paloma Blanca. Once per year they are all driven to Almonte where the foals get marked and the youngsters get picked out for their future training. Of course it is a big festival...

Day 6: Summer in Andalusia can well be associated with heat and dust, but here even in the hottest months you have the shadow in the pine woods and green everywhere. Sandy and soft ways offer a great opportunity for extensive and fast canters. You pass "Cabezudos", a tiny village ruin where only one guard lives. Today no car can follow you on these ways – so you take your picnic in the saddle bags. In the afternoon you follow the ocean breeze to Mazagon. Now you are not far from the Portuguese border. The horses will be left near the seaside.

Day 7: You will never forget what is in store for you and your horse today: The most beautiful beach from Mazagon to Matalascañas: an up to 200 m broad white beach, to the right the Atlantic surf and to the left high rocky cliffs of different shapes. Not only you, even your horses, are anxious to let it all out: on this endless beach, in the Atlantic breeze, the waves beneath their hooves and the rest of the group alongside. In between you can freshen up in the waves; after all there are 36 km of this amazing beach. At Matalascañas your horses get loaded and you can enjoy a lunch in a venta. In the afternoon you drive back to La Paz.

Day 8: Transfer to Malaga airport.

(Subject to modifications)

General information:

This program is for experienced riders who do not like the mountains and the altitude so much but enjoy sandy flat ways. Very adapted for complete groups.

You ride with Andalusia mares and geldings in Spanish saddles with long stirrups and hackamore on one hand; a very easy and comfortable way of riding for riders and horses. You ride in walk or gallop.

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You should have good riding experience in the open country and be able to have a horse under control in the gallops.

Weight limit 95kg

About 5 hours riding every day.

Arrival and departure:

With your booking you have transfers at given times from and to Malaga airport included.

Special transfers (Euro 30,-) can be booked extra and give you more flexibility with your flight booking.

This program can be combined with any program of La Paz.

Included services:

8 days / 7 nights in double room, single room with supplement, full board (table wine included), lunch as picnic, 6 riding days, German and English speaking guide, horse with equipment, transfers from and to Malaga airport at given times and during the trail from hotels to the horses

Accommodation at La Paz and a typical hostel in the centre of El Rocio

Minimum of 4 clients to take place. Bookings from 6 clients up can get a closed group (no other clients). Special dates can be asked

On arrival and departure is no riding program.

Have in mind our special offers for the Andalusia trails:

As new client we offer you a gratis day before the trail to get used to riding style and horses.

If you have been at any program of La Paz before you get 10% of the trail price.

Please note on the booking