

Short horse-riding break in the Sierra de Aracena

- Stunning scenery and charming villages
- All transport included
- Carefully planned itinerary
- Two full day guided horse-treks ride from local stables
- Back-up and vehicle support, as well as advice and recommendations
- Three nights in Posada del Castaño
- Option of additional night(s) in Seville

This three night break is offered by Posada del Castaño - a recently converted village guesthouse in a beautiful mountain region of south-west Spain. For more details about the Posada del Castaño see: www.posadadelcastano.com

The trip is ideal for couples or small groups of friends who enjoy horse-riding and exploring traditional, out of the way areas. The itinerary starts and ends in Seville, though pick ups can be made by special arrangement from other airports in the region such as Jerez, Faro, Beja or Malaga.

Details of the itinerary are as follows.....

Day 1 – Arrival and transfer to Posada del Castaño

You'll be met on arrival in Seville and taken directly to the mountains and to your base in the tiny village of Castaño del Robledo. The Sierra de Aracena lies just 1½ hrs to the north-west of Seville but might easily be in a different country. After you've had time to settle in to the charming surroundings of the Posada you can get to know a little of Castaño del Robledo – perhaps with the help of Craig or Sasha – and once back in the Posada you'll sit down to a 3-course dinner - a delicious first foray into the region's culinary delights. *Overnight Castaño del Robledo*

Day 2 - Circular horse trek from Galaroza via Fuenteheridos and Valdelarco (4½hrs riding + stops)

Today, after breakfast in the Posada, there's a short 7km taxi ride to neighbouring Galaroza where you'll be mounted up for today's ride.

Riding in the Sierra de Aracena

The Sierra de Aracena's diverse landscape of narrow valleys and broad vistas, splashing streams, rocky mountain paths and quiet cork groves lends itself perfectly to exploration on horseback. One of the best ways to appreciate this varied and expansive terrain is to see it from the saddle - our horses do all the work and we have a great vantage point from which to enjoy the scenery!

You'll follow narrow forest tracks and cross splashing streams on your way to the village of Fuenteheridos, then head northwards through the undulating landscape of Valdelama. Dotted with small farms and cork groves these mixed pastoral and arable lands provide a diversity of fruit, vegetables and other produce. There are many delightful rural scenes as you pick your way through the many tracks and trails towards Navahermosa. Your sure footed mounts easily negotiate the cobbled path and stream through the narrow valley of Talenque, home to numerous hawfinches and warblers. You later emerge into a startling landscape of steep gorges and wide valleys wherein we find the pretty village of Valdelarco. A welcoming tapas bar provides an ideal spot for lunch (not included) and afterwards the route back to Galaroza crosses rocky, cork strewn hillsides before coming sharply down into the village itself.

After your ride to day you'll be transferred directly to Aracena. Here you can visit the famous caves and explore the ruined hilltop castle above. There are several recommended restaurants where you can dine this evening (not included) and later we'll bring you back to the Posada by taxi. *Overnight Posada del Castaño*

Day 3 – Horse trek from Galaroza to La Nava and return (4½hrs riding + stops)

Today after breakfast we transfer back to the stables for today's ride to La Nava. Initially we head out through the village before emerging onto dirt tracks that meander through chestnut groves and stands of cork oak. Our

Accommodation On The Trip

Your accommodation will be in a recently renovated guesthouse in the charming village of Castaño del Robledo, in the Natural Park of the Sierra de Aracena. The guesthouse retains all the original rustic character and rural charm that typifies this delightful region. From the rustic terracotta floor tiles to the age old, chestnut roof beams, the house blends both charm and practicality. In addition to en-suite double rooms the house boasts lounges, a dining room and a terrace overlooking a traditional cobbled patio.

Our Horses

We work with a highly professional and fully insured riding outfit with years of experience and a stable of healthy Andalucian crossbreeds - all highly accustomed to the terrain and with easy-going temperaments which permit handling by riders of varying experience. The horses are fit, sure-footed and responsive and are individually chosen to suit their riders.

We use comfortable Spanish trail saddles (similar to Western style) and, while there is no jumping, there are several opportunities for cantering should you wish. The ride is suitable for beginners.

NB: Hardhats are not compulsory in Spain though the stables do have some available free of charge.

trail narrows along a ridge and we pass through a succession of gates before emerging into a broad valley that descends very gently through Holm Oak to the small village of La Nava. The track here is wide and gravel covered and is ideal for those who wish to canter especially on the return leg as it's slightly uphill.

A couple of small bars in La Nava offer a selection of tapas for lunch (not included) after which we return to Galaroza. There you'll bid farewell to the stable staff and your guide before returning to Castaño by taxi for your last evening meal at the Posada . *Overnight Posada del Castaño.*

Day 4 - Seville

After breakfast a short drive brings you to the neighbouring village of Fuenteherdos where you'll board a comfortable air-conditioned coach to Seville. As there are two buses per day you can choose to arrive in Seville at 09.05 or 18.20 (Sun; 12.00 or 18.35). The tour ends at the bus station in Seville where luggage lockers available. You're then free to enjoy the city's marvellous atmosphere and many historic attractions before continuing your onward travel.

NB: If you wish to add a night in Seville at the beginning or the end of your itinerary we will be happy to make a hotel reservation on your behalf.

Included in the trip

- All transport from/to Seville
- Local transport in the sierra
- Accommodation throughout the trip
- Breakfast throughout the trip
- Two evening meals
- Two days guided horse-riding

Not Included in the trip

- Flights to/from Seville
- Lunches two days of horse-riding
- Dinner in Arcena
- Entrance fees to monuments and museums
- Airport taxes
- Accommodation in Seville
- Transfer out from Seville city to airport

Rates:

The price for the trip in 2009 is **299 euros per person** based on minimum two people who share a room. There is a single supplement of 50 Euros for those requiring a single room throughout the trip.

Bookings can be made for any dates (subject to availability) and couples or groups of up to 16 people can be accommodated. Group discounts apply for 6 or more people - the bigger the group the bigger the discount. Please contact Posada del Castaño for details.

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