



A resort ranch near Tucson, ideal for families, with plenty of activities besides riding.

Arizona - Tanque Verde Ranch



Open all year
Arrive/depart any day
1 - 4 hours riding per day
Price from £1,061 (7 nights)

Tanque Verde is one of the top resort ranches in America. Activities include horse riding, mountain biking, hiking, tennis, fishing, swimming and La Sonora spa.

The Riding

Lessons in Western riding are available for all levels. Beginners and novice riders will ride at a walk. More experienced riders can join the lope rides. Children aged between four and eleven have their own kids' club with a riding programme.

Located in the rolling foothills of the Rincon Mountains the ranch has over 200 horses. The riding trails explore the rugged and unique Sonoran desert with towering cacti all around. There are morning or afternoon rides plus some day rides and breakfast rides. Private rides, at extra cost, and team penning are also available. Western lessons are offered in the afternoon. There are 74 fully air conditioned spacious rooms each with beautiful desert views. The ranch has a well deserved reputation for delicious food and a varied menu.

Nearest Airport

Tucson. Transfers included at set times.

Tanque Verde combines well with a visit to Monument Valley, the Grand Canyon and Las Vegas (see p 261).

See inthesaddle.com for prices, trip reviews and photo galleries.





Ride superbly fit endurance horses along the coastline, beaches and Redwood forests of northern California.

California - Redwood Coast



Runs April to September
Set departures & private groups
6 nights / 5 days riding
4 - 6 hours riding per day
Price from £1,528

The Riding

You should be a competent and confident rider. There are plenty of opportunities for long trots and canters on logging tracks through the Redwood forests and on the long sandy beaches.

Children are welcome as part of private groups.

Nearest Airport

San Francisco.

Self drive to start of ride.

Owner and manager Lari Shea has competed extensively in endurance for many years. Her horses include such breeds as Akhal-Teke, Arabians, Appaloosa and Quarter Horses and many have won high placings at endurance races.

On a set departure week, there are an average of twelve riders making for a highly sociable affair. On most days the group is split according to experience level with riders taking shorter or longer routes and meeting up a few miles further on.

Ride on miles of sandy beaches; on coastal headlands with the waves crashing on the shore way in the distance; and twist and turn through the huge Redwood forests.

You stay all week in beautiful Mendocino and travel out each day to meet your horses which are transported separately to the trail head.

See inthesaddle.com for prices, itinerary, trip reviews and photo galleries.





A working ranch just south of Calgary in the foothills of Alberta's Rocky Mountains.

Canada - Lucasia Ranch



Open May to October
Arrive Sunday
6 nights / 5 days riding
4 - 6 hours riding per day
Price from £960

The Riding

The ranch can take all levels of riding ability. The gentle pace of the riding is set by the terrain and respect for the horses. Children over twelve years old are welcome.

Nearest Airport

Calgary. Transfers available at extra cost.

Established in 1881, Lucasia Ranch is a 4,000 acre family owned and run working ranch. Join the cowboys as they ride around the ranch, checking over the 600 head of cattle and the breeding horses.

The ranch has a herd of over 80 horses, many of them homebred. A stay during the branding week or one of the cattle drives will give you an insight into the modern rancher's life and offer more challenging riding.

The ranch accommodates an average of six to eight guests.

We can arrange for you to combine your ranch stay with a visit to the Calgary Stampede in July, or to visit Banff or Lake Louise high in the Rockies or to journey by train through to Vancouver (see page 260).

See inthesaddle.com for prices, details of the accommodation, trip reviews and photo galleries.





Explore the mountain peaks and alpine meadows of the Coast Mountains of British Columbia.

Canada - Tsylos



Open June to October
Arrive Sunday
7 nights / 6 days riding
4 - 6 hours riding per day
Price from £1,479

The Riding

The riding is Western style and suitable for riders confident at walk, trot and canter. There are some long hours in the saddle so you need to be reasonably fit. Pace is dictated by the terrain which is very mountainous so much is at a walk, particularly on the pack trips; however there are trots and canters where the ground permits.

Nearest Airport

Vancouver. Transfers included at set times.

Tsylos lies in the British Columbia wilderness at the northern end of Lake Chilko. Chilko is one of Canada's largest lakes and is also one of its most beautiful; surrounded by a panorama of jagged, snow-capped peaks with the dissolved minerals giving the water a vivid aquamarine colour.

This is a remote and isolated place where logging and ranching take second place to nature, yet it takes just an hour to travel the 180 miles from Vancouver by light aircraft.

Riders can either base themselves at the main lodge and explore the hidden valleys, waterfalls and roaring creeks of the Coast Range or join a pack trip to venture further into the mountains where glaciers, wildlife and alpine lakes offer endless photo opportunities.

Accommodation at the lodge is in comfortable ensuite cabins or rooms; whilst on the trips everything is carried by pack horses and you stay in simple two man dome tents, or, on mild summer nights, sleep out under the stars.

See inthesaddle.com for prices, details of the accommodation, trip reviews and photo galleries.





A working ranch where you can learn from real cowboys, skills such as roping and cutting cattle.

Colorado - Cattle Company



Open May to October
Arrive/depart any day
3 - 6 hours riding per day
Price from £1,491 (7 nights)

The Riding

Beginners will start on steady horses and as their experience and confidence grows may move onto more challenging horses. There are lots of hours in the saddle and you will need to take responsibility for yourself when riding in a group of other riders.

Nearest Airport

Denver. Transfers available at set times at extra cost.

Colorado Cattle Company in the north-east of the state is an authentic working ranch which is now organised to take guests and teach the skills of the cowboy. No matter what your riding experience they can take you from raw beginner to roping from horseback in a week!

Rise early to work with the cowboys as every horse is checked and fed. After breakfast the job to be done will depend on the time of year. In spring the ranch will be busy with branding and moving pairs to summer pastures. From July to September you might be moving cattle, gathering bulls, checking water, salt and fences, as well as looking for strays and driving them back where they belong. In autumn there are several cattle drives a week as cattle are shipped to winter feedyards.

Throughout the year the afternoons are an opportunity to learn the correct way to handle a rope from a horse and how to read and work cattle. Even cowboys deserve some time off so the roping and cattle work only takes place during the week; at weekends visitors can join trail rides over the ranch.

See inthesaddle.com for prices, trip reviews and photo galleries.





A working cattle ranch in a remote setting between the Castle and Crazy mountains in central Montana.

Montana - Bonanza Creek Ranch



Open June to September
Arrive Sunday
6 nights / 5 days riding
3 - 5 hours riding per day
Price from £1,157

The Riding

All riders must be comfortable in the saddle, able to control a horse and ride at a trot. On the Advanced Rider weeks you must be able to safely gallop in open country. Experienced Rider weeks are for those who know how to ride and are comfortable at a canter in open country but prefer a more leisurely, scenic ride. Children eight years or over are welcome on certain weeks, see web site for dates.

Nearest Airport

Bozeman. Transfers available at set times at extra cost.



This is big sky country with beautiful open scenery and high wooded valleys. Bonanza Creek is owned and run by the Voldseth family who have been ranching here for over 100 years.

The ranch is suited to guests who prefer to ride every day. The ranch horses are well schooled, responsive and enjoy their work. Explore the wonderful Montana landscape on horseback, taking in breathtaking views across meadows, wooded mountainsides and past sparkling lakes. Rides are split according to ability and Western lessons are available. There are morning and afternoon rides, cattle herding and team penning plus wagon rides and evening cook outs. In June and late August/September, the ranch accepts Adults only.

Accommodation, for an average of 10 guests, is in very comfortable log cabins and guests eat together in the main lodge.

A stay at the ranch combines well with a visit to Yellowstone National Park (see page 262) or Glacier National Park.

See inthesaddle.com for prices, trip reviews and photo galleries.



A family owned and run guest ranch with the emphasis on natural horsemanship.

Montana - Rocking Z Ranch



Open all year
Arrive/depart any day
3 - 6 hours riding per day
Price from £840 (7 nights)

The Riding

There are horses to suit all riding abilities. The pace is varied from walk on the steeper slopes to a faster pace on the open spaces.

Western riding instruction is available. Children from the age of six years can learn to ride in the corral and go on trail rides if capable.

Nearest Airports

Helena and Great Falls. Transfers included from Helena or at additional cost from Great Falls.

The ranch has over fifty horses, all much loved and well mannered. Most are trained using Parelli Natural Horsemanship techniques.

You are encouraged to be involved in grooming and saddling your horse and the wranglers will show you the Western reining and Parelli approach.

The itinerary is flexible with a mixture of half day and all day rides. Explore the beautiful Montana valleys, or ride up into the Rocky Mountains, where on a clear day there are views of up to 250 miles. Try your hand at moving cattle, barrel racing and roping. Non riding activities include archery, fishing and hiking. Massage treatments can also be arranged.

Accommodation is in one of eight spacious en-suite rooms at the ranch. Stay for two weeks and use the ranch as a base to explore the local area. In July and August there are a number of local rodeos nearby.

See inthesaddle.com for prices, trip reviews and photo galleries.





A wonderfully remote ranch in its own valley at the base of the Crazy Mountains.

Montana - Sweet Grass Ranch



Open June to September
Arrive Sunday
7 nights / 6 days riding
3 - 5 hours riding per day
Price from £1,103

The Riding

The ranch has over forty horses to suit all kinds of riding experience. The pace is set by the terrain which ranges from high alpine meadows to the foothills and out into the lower rolling country of the winter ranch. There is a choice of long all-day rides, as well as morning and afternoon rides.

Nearest Airport

Billings. Transfers available at set times at extra cost.

Guests at Sweet Grass are welcome to take as active a part as they like in all aspects of ranch life. There is cattle work on most weeks, moving cows between pastures. In June the land is lush and green and the meadows are literally blue with forget-me-nots. July is time to drive the cattle to the higher mountain summer grazing. In August there are long all day rides into the high mountains and in September the cattle need bringing back to their winter pastures.

When you are not riding there is good fishing in the creek, ponds and lakes around the ranch. Trout fishing in the rivers fed by the snow-melt from the mountains is especially good. You can swim in the creek or try out some of the many hiking trails. There is no TV and there are no organised activities other than riding.

Accommodation ranges from rooms in the main ranch house to traditional log cabins. Many of the cabins have their own fireplace or wood burning stove.

See inthesaddle.com for prices, trip reviews and photo galleries.





Work alongside the cowboys as they undertake their daily tasks.

South Dakota - Fortune Ranch



Open April to October
Arrive/depart any week day
variable hours riding per day
Price from £975 (8 nights)

The Riding

You should be confident at all paces, able to look after yourself and keep up with the ranchers. The pace of riding varies with the terrain and the type of work. Not suitable for children under 16 years.

Nearest Airport

Rapid City. Transfers available at extra cost.

The Fortune family work cattle in much the same way as their grandfathers did with horse, rope and neighbour helping neighbour. The ranch runs a herd of Black Angus on 10,000 acres of South Dakota Badlands and prairie. This is a homestay experience and just one or two guests at a time are taken in as part of Charlie's family, living and working alongside Charlie and his father Bob.

The ranch calendar is dictated by the seasons and also very much influenced by the weather. May, June and late August to early October will see the most action. You should be prepared to get up early and ride from first light if necessary. Sometimes you trailer the horses to help on a neighbouring ranch and on some days there may be no riding, if there are other jobs to be done.

Try to make time to stay on and visit Mount Rushmore, the Black Hills and the Badlands National Park, where bison still roam free.

See inthesaddle.com for prices, trip reviews and photo galleries.





Challenging rides in the foothills of the
Big Horn Mountains.

Wyoming - Renegade Rides



Runs May to July
Set departures
7 nights / 6 days riding
4 - 7 hours riding per day
Price from £1,309

The Riding

You should be a fit and experienced rider, confident to canter and gallop in a group of horses over rough terrain. You are also expected to brush and saddle your own horse. You ride Western style with a loose rein at all times.

These rides are demanding in terms of distance, pace and terrain and are not for the timid or inexperienced rider.

Nearest Airports

Worland and Cody. Transfers included from Worland or at additional cost from Cody.

Your guide, Belinda Daugherty, is full of knowledge of the area and will lead you on a fast, fun ride through this rough and rugged land. Be prepared to lope through knee-deep sagebrush and gallop through grassy meadows.

Belinda has different itineraries running from late May to early July. Each ride has a different theme, but all include challenging riding over a variety of terrain; from open hilly sagebrush covered Badlands, to giant red cliffs and deep limestone canyons. The views are unsurpassed and the wildlife abundant. You are likely to see antelope, coyotes, eagles and sage grouse.

The rides are limited to seven guests, which provides a very personal riding experience. During the week you will either work with local ranchers "gentling" colts, move cattle, or horses or visit the local rodeo. Most of the rides have two or three nights camping.



See inthesaddle.com for prices, detailed itineraries, trip reviews and photo galleries.