

# PORTUGAL - WOLVES AND WILD HORSES

## ITINERARY

### Day 1

Shared transfers are possible from Porto Airport at set times on Saturday. Your flight should arrive in Porto no later than 14:30. The transfer normally leaves at 15:00. Your return flight should depart after midday on the day of departure.

Please note that these transfers are at pre-set times on Saturday. If you choose to book flights outside of these guidelines then you will need to hire a car at the airport or pay for a private transfer.

Arrive at Ecotura Country House which is 2 km from the village of Castro Laboreiro.

Settle into your room and relax after your journey. Later meet your hosts and guide over dinner and learn about the week ahead. Dinner each night is normally at about 20:30.

Ecotura Country House is a traditional mountain house, built in the early twentieth century and recently restored. The house is in a tiny hamlet of three houses about 2km from the village of Castro Laboreiro.



There are six bedrooms.



One of the bedrooms at the guesthouse

Four of the rooms are twin rooms with en suite bathroom. One is a small room for single occupancy with its bathroom just across the corridor. The sixth is a small suite over two floors with double bed, sitting room, small kitchen and bathroom.

The house has central heating, an open fireplace and a fully equipped kitchen.

## Day 2

The following outlines the proposed itinerary for the week but the weather and local conditions may mean that the day by day itinerary varies. Over the course of the week the plan is to have three half day rides and three all day rides.

Breakfast ingredients are left for you to have your own breakfast at a place and time to suit you. Today sets the pattern for the week.

At around 10:00 you will be collected and taken to the stables at Pedro & Anabela's home on the other side of Castro Laboreiro (a drive of about 10 minutes). After matching horses to riders you set off on your first ride in the beautiful tracks of Peneda Mountain.

After your ride you normally wash down the horses and return them to their fields and go by car to have lunch in the gardens of the guest house. Later you visit the visitor centre of the National Park and learn more about the area through which you will be riding.

(About 3 hours riding)



### Day 3

Today is a full day ride which takes you towards the Valley of the Wolves. This is an area full of biodiversity. There are occasionally sightings of wild animals and you can often spot the wild Garrano herds in this valley.

Lunch today is a picnic in the mountains.

(About 5-6 hours riding)



## Day 4

Today you ride towards the source of the Laboreiro river, at the top of the mountain. Here there are a concentration of small springs which come together to start the Laboreiro River. On the way you pass Rodeiro village, the highest village in the region.

Lunch is a picnic in the mountains.



From the Laboreiro valley you pass to the south side of the mountain. On the descent you pass several old hamlets and cross the Laboreiro River using an old bridge from the 13th century.

(About 5-6 hours riding)

## Day 5

This morning you might choose to take part in a yoga session before breakfast. You then have a morning of leisure before an early lunch.

This afternoon's ride follows the ancient transhumance trails that were also used to reach Spain. Head out of the Winter Valley and cross near Arreiro Lake in the direction of the Castro Laboreiro village. As you ride there are views of the mountain and the oak forest in the Winter Valley.

Dinner tonight is at a local restaurant rather than the guesthouse.



(About 3-5 hours riding)

## Day 6

This morning is a non-riding visit to Castro Laboreiro's medieval Castle and the Peneda pilgrimage sanctuary and village. This huge and beautiful sanctuary in the middle of the mountain was built in the 18th century.

Return to Ecotura to enjoy lunch in the gardens.



In the late afternoon you tack up the horses for a sunset ride to track and hopefully find the wild Garrano horses.

If the weather is not favourable, today may be swapped around so you are riding earlier in the day rather than at sunset.

(About 2-3 hours riding)

## **Day 7**

Your final ride heads east towards the border with Spain. On the way you may see the Garrano horses and also the amazing megalithic monuments which represent the largest megalithic necropolis in the Iberian Peninsula.

Lunch today is in the mountains.

The ride continues with the possibility of some long canters.

Your final dinner will be at the guesthouse.

(About 5-6 hours riding)

