

Buena Vista, Spain

Itinerary

Day 1

This is a challenging circular trail through the east of the Alpujarra and Sierra Nevada National Park, riding over diverse and varied terrain at high altitude. During the ride, you climb to the Peñon del Puerto, an altitude of over 2,700 m, following the ridge east to the Puerto del Lobo and the Altos de San Juan.

Ride through the southern slopes of the Alpujarra following the ancient Moorish paths and forestry tracks between the picturesque white villages. Seemingly endless vistas of mountains and plains give an amazing sense of space and wilderness.



As much of this ride is at high altitude, you must be fit both on and off the horse. On three days there will be sections where it is necessary to lead your horses due to very steep and rough terrain for up to an hour or more. It is therefore essential that your riding boots have non-slip soles that are safe and comfortable for walking.

There are two long days of about eight to nine hours riding and on those two days there are a couple of long downhill walks.



Please understand that the following is the proposed itinerary, which is subject to change due to local conditions – perhaps paths have been damaged by winter snows or the weather is unusually difficult.

Dinner and overnight tonight in a comfortable guest house in Bubion.



Day 2

After breakfast it is a short drive (5 km) to the stables where you will be introduced to your horse for the week.

Today you head east to the village of Trevelez. At 1,486 m Trevelez is the highest village in Spain; it is also famous for its air cured ham (serrano ham).

The ride starts with a leisurely morning allowing you to become acquainted with your horse. Following a combination of tracks and bridle paths through pine and oak woods you cross over into the valley of La Taha passing the villages of Pitres and Portugos.

After a picnic lunch in the shade of the pines you join the main forestry track leading to the village of Trevelez. During the afternoon there are opportunities for some good trots and canters. The final descent into

the village is approximately a 15 minute walk on the old bridle path. (Approximately 6 hours riding)



Overnight and dinner in the comfortable Hotel La Fragua situated in the old Berber section of the village.

Day 3

Continuing east this morning you cross the river of Trevez and follow the centuries old bridle path winding its way along the Moorish irrigation channel. Leaving the oak woods below the path climbs steeply through pine woods to approximately 2,200 m to join a forestry track leading over into the valley of Berchules.



After a picnic lunch in the shade of the woods the trail continues along the forestry track, passing high mountain farms and pastures. The track follows the contour of the valley deep into the mountains, maintaining an altitude of approximately 2,000 m. There are wonderful views of the high Sierras ahead and the valley below. During the afternoon some nice canters. (Approximately 6 hours riding)

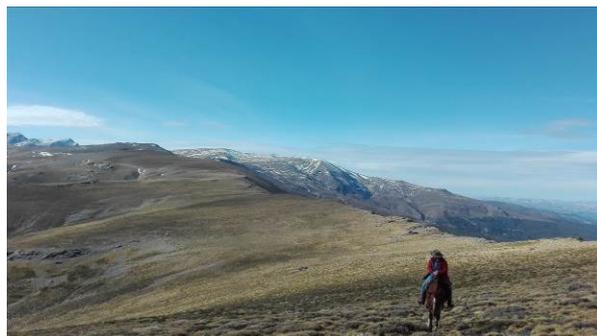
The horses spend the night up in the mountains and the riders are driven down to the village of Berchules, a journey of approximately 45 minutes.

Overnight and dinner at Hotel Berchules.

Day 4

A longer ride today as the spectacular route take you up to approximately 2,800 m, following the ridge forming the very backbone of the east mountains of Sierra Nevada.

After breakfast you drive back up the mountain to the horses. The first 4 kms of the ride continues on the main forestry track until you pick up the path leading across country, high into the mountains. You will stop for a picnic lunch en route.



On reaching the summit you leave the path to follow the vast open ridge east to the peak of San Juan. It is difficult to convey in words the grandeur, space and wilderness of these mountains.

From San Juan it is a steep and stony descent on foot of approximately 40 minutes. Mount up again and ride the final hour down to the edge of the pine woods. (Approximately 8 hours riding)

The horses spend the night here and you are driven to the village of Yegen, a journey of about an hour.

Overnight and dinner in Yegen.

Day 5

Today's ride takes you over to the north face of Sierra Nevada and another day of spectacular views and unspoilt nature. The terrain is very varied as you make your way west, crossing numerous steep summer pastures and snow fed mountain streams. You will stop for a picnic en route.

Following small and often steep cattle paths you cross deep gullies and ravines, mountain streams and old irrigation channels passing through small summer farms, now just used for cattle and sheep.

Dropping down to the tree line, follow the path through the shade of the pines to reach the mountain refuge of Postero Alto (1,900 m). (Approximately 6 hours riding)



Overnight and dinner in the high mountain refuge of Postero Alto. It is necessary to share bedrooms and a shower room.

Day 6

The morning starts with a climb of nearly 1,000 m to cross over the Puerto de Trevelez to the south of Sierra Nevada. Near the summit there are often snow drifts, where you may stop to rest the horses at the snow fed streams.

Once on the south side you follow small cattle and sheep trails maintaining an altitude of approximately 2,500 m. There are spectacular views across the valley to the snow capped peaks of the Mulhacen and Alcazaba; at 3,486 m and 3,378 m these are two of the highest peaks in Spain.



Late morning you ride along an old Moorish irrigation channel for about 30 minutes, often the channel is running and both horses and people enjoy the cool splashing water.



In the early afternoon you commence the descent to the tree line where you will stop for your picnic lunch.

Later in the afternoon you follow a steep and narrow path down to the river of Trevelez. The descent takes approximately two hours, of which at least an hour and a half is on foot. (Approximately 8 hours riding)

Overnight in the comfortable hotel Fragua in the village of Trevelez.

Day 7

Today is a shorter ride. Following the forestry track through pine and oak woods you return to the stables high above the villages of the Poqueira.

This route not only offers wonderful views out over the Contraviesa Mountains and the Mediterranean Sea, but some good opportunities for canters. (Approximately 3 to 4 hours riding)

Say goodbye to your horses and enjoy a late lunch in the village of Capileira or Bubion. This afternoon is free for some last minute shopping and a well-deserved siesta.

Overnight in the village of Bubion and farewell dinner.

Day 8

Depart for Malaga after breakfast.

Accommodation



On this itinerary you stay six nights in small, family run village hostels and hotels in twin bedded rooms with en-suite facilities and one night (night 5) at a high mountain refuge.

The mountain refuge (refugioposteroalto.es) is at 1,900 meters on the edge of the pine woods. Each room has bunk beds sleeping a maximum of 8 people per room. The rooms are spacious and all have windows to the outside. There is a communal shower room. Normally one room is allocated for ladies and another for men. Depending on the numbers staying at the refuge it may be possible for couples to have their own room. The food is basic but plentiful as they are catering for mountaineers and hikers. Breakfast is tea, coffee, hot chocolate, biscuits, and sweet buns, etc. nothing cooked.

There is no single supplement if you are prepared to share a twin room. This may mean that you have a twin room to yourself or in some hotels you will have a slightly smaller single room.

If you do not wish to share then it is usually possible to guarantee a single room (on 6 nights) by requesting it in advance and paying a single supplement.

If you have requested a double bed, please note that this is not guaranteed as there are only a limited number of rooms with a double bed at the guesthouse. However, in these instances and in common with many continental hotels, the two beds can be put together to be, in effect, a double bed.



Your bags are transferred by the support vehicle. You should be aware that you will have to carry your own bags to and from your room – so try not to have excess luggage. Anything you do not need for the week may be left at Bubion and we suggest bringing an extra bag so that you can separate the things you will not need on the trail.