



SPAIN: CATALONIAN COAST TRAIL YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

Swimming with your horse, riding, relaxing and sunbathing on this breathtaking Mediterranean Coastal Trail which starts off in the Mediterranean Pyrenean wilderness with its rolling foothills heavily forested with oak, cork and beech and finishes on the most spectacular part of Catalonia's coast.

We canter and gallop our way through forests of rosemary and thyme by the river Fluviá and out of the rolling hills onto the plains to visit Sant Marti Sesserres, an incredible XII century church and rectory. The Pyrenean foothills provide a dramatic backdrop to the medieval castle and village of Sant Llorenç de la Muga. The Alpera wine region offers olive groves and vineyards with intense natural beauty and obligatory sampling of the local vino at a charming bodega.

At the end of a long days riding enjoy the spa and massage facilities in the exclusive and carefully chosen small hotels along the route.

We stop at Boadella, a lake surrounded by breathtaking mountainous scenery, for a refreshing swim with the horses. Always a pleasure for both people and horses. We venture through the Aiguamolls natural park which is home to flamingos and exotic birds before reaching Spain's eastern-most point, the huge peninsula of Cap de Creus, with its spectacular views of the rugged coastal rocks bays. Talavera Bay is an authentic smugglers cove with a fantastic beach and crystal clear waters. Soak up the lunar landscape of Cap de Creus, inspirational to one of Spain's most famous artists Salvador Dali and to all who visit.

The Mediterranean Coastal trail is an exhilarating ride discovering one of Spain's most wild and beautiful coastlines with an unforgettable experience: swimming with your horse!

DAY 1 – ARRIVAL AT THE FARM

Pick up at Barcelona or Gerona airport and transfer to the farm for the dinner and the night.

The camp base is a 11th century Farmhouse perched high up on a ridge overlooking the Pyrenees.

Here you will meet the family, the guide and the team.

At dinner we will go over the week's program, you will be told about the special characteristics of our Andalucian trail horses. After dinner you will be given an introduction to the weeks programme with an opportunity for a one-to-one conversation designed to find every rider their perfect horse.

Finally you will discover how to play the 'Champagne rules' under which anyone found guilty of holding up the ride at any point is obliged to buy a bottle of local cava for the group that evening, making for lively dinners!

DAY 2 – THE TRAIL BEGINS

After breakfast and tacking up, we leave our base following a ridge with spectacular views of forest, rosemary and thyme. We pass by Besalú, a medieval village and the gateway to the Pyrenees. Down to the river Fluviá, out of the rolling hills onto the plains, we canter and gallop through olive groves and fields of wheat, past country farmhouses and churches and into the foothills of the Pyrenees.

Our destination for today is Sant Marti de Sesceres, an XII century church and rectory, here we settle the horses for a well earned rest and we are driven back to Can Jou. Before dinner we will try some of the wines of the Empordà.



DAY 3 – THE WILDERNESS RIDE

The Mediterranean Pyrenean wilderness stretches out before us, foothills heavily forested with oak, cork and beech, the spectacular vastness of the Pyrenees. Today you will notice the fitness of the horses as at the end of the day's trail they are still enthusiastic about a long gallop. Before lunch we lead our horses along a winding forest track.

Picnic by a mountain river, a swim, a rest and then we ride through the ancient medieval village of Sant Llorenç de la Muga with its castle in the background. We tie up the horses and have a drink in the local cafe, and then on to our hotel for the night. "La Central" an art nouveau palace of blue ceramic tiled towers, a haven of peace and tranquillity, an exclusive Spa Hotel, renowned for its delicious cuisine, hydro-massage pool and relaxing saunas, very welcome after 3 days in the saddle.

Now we are on the edge of the Albera, the oldest wine growing region of the Iberian peninsula.

DAY 4 – SWIMMING WITH THE HORSES AND THE COASTAL VINEYARDS

A day of lively riding and excitement, because we are going to swim with the horses in a lake. An unforgettable experience!

Today we leave the mountains and ride through the Alvera wine growing region, olive groves and vineyards, an area of intense natural beauty.

In the morning we stop at Boadella, a lake surrounded by breathtaking mountain scenery, for a refreshing swim with the horses. Always a pleasure for both people and horses.

The village of Cantalops, in the heart of the wine region, is our destination for today. Here we will settle the horses and visit one of the famous bodegas for a wine tasting session. Here you get the opportunity to taste some of the best local wines (even the French come here to buy it!).

We will be driven back to hotel "la central" for another comfortable night.

DAY 5 – ALONG THE PLAINS TO THE CATHEDRAL OF CASTELLÓ D'EMPÚRIES

Heading out across the plains with some long trots and canters. Hard working, responsive horses enjoying the pace. Today we pass through some interesting villages, like Peralada famous for its cava, casino in the castle and big Empordà farmhouses, follow a beautiful river and enjoy the wide open space.

We stop near the lovely town of Peralada for lunch with cava ofcourse!

This evening our destination is Castelló d'Empúries. In ancient times this was the capital of the region, a village dominated by its spectacular cathedral.

Our hotel has an outdoor swimming pool where you can relax on one of the sunbeds on the delightful patio or you can do some shopping, enjoy some excellent tapas or cold drinks at one of the terraces and sample the local nightlife.

DAY 6 – AIGUAMOLLS, THE NATURAL PARK

After an excellent breakfast on the magnificent roof-top terrace of the hotel overlooking the cathedral with the Mediterranean on one side and the gentle curve of the Pyrenees on the other, we saddle up again to continue our journey through the Aiguamolls. The Aiguamolls is a natural park, home to flamingos and other exotic birds.

We will ride out of this medieval village through the northern part of the Aiguamolls park over a small mountain range and on to the Cap de Creus peninsula. From up here the views are spectacular, kilometres of rocky coast, cliffs and little bays.

We will have lunch in a pine forest near a lake where you can swim.

In the afternoon we will ride down out of the mountains through an idyllic vineyard of beautiful terraced vines.

Our evening destination is Port de la Selva, an active fishing village in the small bay on the northern side of the peninsular. Our hotel for the night has an excellent spa and is situated right on the edge of the port.

You can enjoy a swim in the sea & a delicious fish dinner next to the sea.



DAY 7 – RIDING ON THE MOON

Today we ride further along the Cap-de-Creus, a peninsula of sculptured rock full of flowering shrubs, a truly lunar landscape. This is Salvador Dali country, the area inspired many of his paintings. This morning we will have spectacular views of the Mediterranean coast.

We lead our horses down to Talavera Bay, a smugglers cove and fantastic beach, where we have a picnic, a swim and do some sunbathing.

Following a lovely afternoon on the beach we ride on to the ridge above the village of Cadaques. You and your horse will be driven back to Sant

Jaume de Llierca where get back on our horse for a short ride to arrive in Can Jou.

After saying goodbye to your horse we will celebrate our arrival with a glass of Cava on the balcony overlooking the resting horses.

Tonight a final farewell supper, a glorious end to a wonderful journey.

DAY 8 – A GOODBYE BREAKFAST

After breakfast, transfer for Barcelona/Gerona Airport.