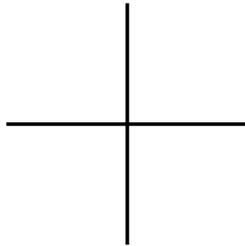


Top 10 Horseback Rides - Travel

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Photograph by Jure Kravanja, My Shot



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A ride through this stunning part of Italy is a happy combination of idyllic Tuscan landscape seen from the backs of fine horses and a chance to study some of the world's great art treasures in Florence and Siena.

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Saddle up for an adventure.

From the National Geographic book [*The 10 Best of Everything*](#)

Valle de Bravo, Mexico

The ride circles the beautiful lake of Valle de Bravo. The route takes one high into the surrounding mountains, through a magnificent forest of Montezuma pines, with spectacular views of the azure lake far below. Guests stay in a lovely villa with charming hosts. The horses and tack compare well with the best European rides.

Masai Mara, Kenya

For sheer excitement and adventure, this ride through the Masai Mara in Kenya wins hands down. Flat-out gallops on excellent polo ponies, alongside zebras and wildebeests, past elephants, giraffes, lions, and dozens of other animals is a thrilling experience that one could never get from inside a Land Rover. Hemingway-style camping and superb service are other pluses. Close contact with the proud Maasai in remote areas adds to the fascination.

Loire Valley, France

The great castles of the Loire Valley are arguably among the finest legacies history has left us. Chenonceau, Cheverny, and Chaumont are outstanding examples of the tremendous flowering of French culture of the period. The history is brought alive by staying each night in real castles still in private hands and riding into courtyards over drawbridges like knights of old. Especially lovely: a long, wild gallop along the tree-lined banks of the Cher River heading for Chenonceau.

Tuscany, Italy

A ride through this stunning part of Italy is a happy combination of idyllic Tuscan landscape seen from the backs of fine horses and a chance to study some of the world's great art treasures in Florence and Siena. The renovated castle (Castello di Tocchi) where guests stay keeps the ancient charm while providing modern comfort. The host, who also runs a cooking school, is marvelously entertaining, and the preparation of food and choice of wine are celebrated here with near religious fervor.

Quebec, Canada

We often forget that Quebec is something of a foreign country within Canada itself, with a different language and culture that is basically French. The Inn to Inn Ride on the Gaspé Peninsula on the Gulf of St. Lawrence passes through magnificent forests, skirts the seashore, and overnights in a string of inns. The fall foliage season with the blazing maples is one of nature's wonders.

Jerez and Seville, Spain

Visiting a riding center near Seville in Andalusia combines excellent riding with fascinating introductions to the rich culture of this area of southern Spain. Guests on this trip enjoy performances of some of the best flamenco dancers and visit the breathtaking show at the Royal Riding School in Jerez, which is such a tribute to the beauty and athleticism of the horse. Riders take lessons in dressage and jumping, and can also ride through the countryside.

Rajasthan, India

The palace-to-palace ride in Rajasthan on fine Marwari endurance horses is considered an exotic tour. The palaces themselves are impressive architectural gems. The food and service are exquisite.

Cappadocia, Turkey

Of all rides, the one through Cappadocia wins the prize for richest in history: Greek, Roman, early Christian, and Ottoman. The horses perform extremely well, taking riders over fascinating terrain and through interesting villages. Part of the trip includes a stop in Istanbul, among the world's most beautiful cities.

The Andes, Peru

A ride through the sacred valley of the Inca, from Cusco to Machu Picchu, on a Peruvian Paso is a haunting, spiritual experience. The dramatic setting in the Andes features sheer cliffs and lush valleys.

Estancia, Argentina

The horse still plays a vital role in Argentine country life; the nation has one of the world's great equestrian traditions. The self-sufficient Estancia Huechahue at the foothills of the Andes enables guests to see how gauchos actually live and to ride with them, providing an unusual chance to understand this powerful culture. The ranch is a base for pack trips high into the Andes.

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Under their white fur, polar bears have black skin.

A fox can use its tail to communicate with other foxes.

Koalas often return to trees they consider their territory.

A giraffe's heart weighs about 25 pounds.

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