

Catalonia Coast Trail, Spain

Highlights of the trail include:

- * Delicious tasting of wine and cava
- * Visit to the medieval village of Perelada
- * Accommodation at the former castle of Espolla
- * Breath taking beach ride at the crack of dawn
- * Visit the P.R.E Horse Stud

Day 1

The Catalonia Coast Trail is a 7 night trail ride offering 6 glorious days' riding in the varied scenery of the wild coast. The coastal mountains of Cap de Creus and the miles of sandy beaches of the Bay of Roses provide a contrast to the extensive plateau. The highlight of the trail is the long ride on the beach. Visit wine cellars (including wine and cava tasting), enjoy simple, comfortable accommodation and delicious Catalan cuisine.



You should be at least an intermediate rider fit enough for between 3 to 5 hours in the saddle each day. The first 3 days of riding is often at a slower pace due to the terrain covered.

You ride across the very easternmost part of Spain, crossing green hilly landscapes, through medieval towns and onto the beaches of the Mediterranean.

Please note that it may be necessary to lead your horse on foot on one of the days of this trail for about 30 minutes. The ground can be rocky and uneven and most of the time it will be downhill. It is important

that you wear boots which provide support for your ankle and which have a non-slip sole.

The following is the proposed itinerary but please note that changes are possible due to weather and local conditions. On occasions the itinerary may run in reverse.

Please note that between June and September (inclusive) we do not ride close to the ocean's edge due to the number of people on the beach. Instead we may ride in the sand dunes and paths beside the beach in sight of the water.

You are met and transferred to your accommodation, which is a typical Catalan natural stone house dating from the 17th century or another guesthouse.

After settling in you will all meet for supper where you will discuss the week ahead.

Day 2

You will be transferred to Mas Alba to meet the horses and start the ride. Sunlight breaks through the deep green of a tropical, jungle like area. Bamboo narrows the paths and the atmosphere reminds us of Costa Rica. The trail leads you along the river Fluvia winding across hilly terrain.

You ride through lovely river valleys and discover a nice place for the first picnic. In the afternoon, you continue your way, trotting and cantering until you arrive at the accommodation for tonight.



Day 3

For more information contact in the saddle. Tel: 01299 272 997 Fax: 01299 272 935, Email: rides@inthesaddle.com, Internet: www.inthesaddle.com

Today, you follow winding paths through the flood plains next to the river until you reach a Catalan village. You clatter through villages built of stone. Lunch is a long picnic before riding on towards the coast.



At the end of the bay, near to the beach, is your hotel where you spend the night. (NB: depending on the season you might stay overnight in a beautiful mill dating back to the 16th century). The old mill has small apartments which have a double bed on a balcony and two beds downstairs with one bathroom. This may be booked as two single rooms.

Day 4

This morning you have an exciting early morning ride along the beach. Please note that the speed on the beach depends on the rivers, weather, sea, sand and waves and the pace is always with the best interests of the group in mind. It isn't always possible to gallop along the water's edge (please note during some out of season weeks, the beach ride may take place late in the afternoon instead).



After an adventurous beach ride you follow the river Fluvia and make your way onwards through fruit orchards and beside rice fields.

Finally we arrive at Catalonia's oldest stud the P.R.E. (Pura Rasa Espanola) Andalusian horse stud.

Enjoy a picnic lunch looking upon their paddocks which are filled with their beautiful Andalusian horses happily grazing. After lunch you are free to explore the stud farm at your leisure.

This evening you are treated to traditional Spanish cuisine.

Day 5

The terrain this morning allows you to trot and canter to medieval town of Castello with its magnificent cathedral.

You continue to ride across sunflower and corn fields before reaching Perelada, the centre of wine growing. In the afternoon you can visit the enormous castle, its wine cellars and the private library of the monastery. You will learn not only about Cava but enjoy some Cava tasting too. Stay overnight in the village.



Day 6

Today you follow the path of the river Llobregat and then ride through the wild landscape at the foot of the Albera Mountains. Cork and stone oak forests now dominate the landscape with the occasional vineyard interrupting.

You visit a family owned vineyard near here and taste one of the best wines from these lowlands.

Lunch today will be to your own account.

After lunch, you ride along the laboriously built up terrace, and ancient olive trees line the path. Numerous colourful flowers grow in the flood plains of Orlina. You may pass round rock formations and Celtic tombs from pre-Christian times.

The lowlands of the Ampurdan resemble an amphitheatre surrounded by mountains, whose exit is at the Gulf of Roses.

Then you head towards the village of Garriguella which lies in the wine growing district. Overnight near the village



Day 7

Today's ride climbs up and over some of the coastal mountains, the last foothills of the Pyrenees. Having reached the crest, a breathtaking panoramic view on the entire Gulf of Lion up to the mysterious mountain Canigo awaits you. After a delicious picnic lunch near to the beach you travel back to Garriguella.

Tonight enjoy your last supper together.



Day 8

After breakfast, transfer to Barcelona or Girona.