

Dali Beach & Coast Trail, Catalonia, Spain

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

Highlights of the trail include:

- * Visiting the castle of Púbol
- * Riding through villages built of sandstone
- * Fantastic beach ride
- * Visiting the "Theatre Museu Dalí" in Figueres
- * Riding through the natural reserve of Cap de Creus

Day 1

The Dalí Beach and Coast Trail is based on the so-called Dalí triangle that consists of the villages Pubol, Figueres and Cadaques. The Dalí Beach and Coast Trail connects the charm of the Empordanet region with the long sandy beaches of the Bay of Roses and the wild coast of the Cap de Creus. The life of the famous artist Salvador Dalí will be brought closer to you by this wonderful ride through diverse countryside.

You should be at least an intermediate rider fit enough for between 4 to 6 hours in the saddle each day. 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. The itinerary may run in reverse.

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.

Please note that you are not accompanied by the riding guide to the castle of Púbol, the Dalí Museum or Dalí house so you can wonder around at your own pace. There are local guides at the Dalí house and if you are particularly interested in Dalí and wish a local guide with you at the castle and museum this might be possible to arrange (at extra cost).

You are met and transferred to a beautiful situated country hotel, a typical Catalonia house built of nature stone, dating back to the 17th century. meadows,

forests and horse pastures. The unique light transforms the surroundings into a picturesque painting.

Overnight here (or at another similar guesthouse nearby).

Day 2

A relaxed first day's riding. From Mas Alba you enter into the magic of the Empordanet. From its rolling hills and soft countryside you can see century old villages in the distance. These magical villages were built of honey-coloured stones and their narrow alleys, gardens and planted fields give you an idea of the strong inheritance of farming roots in the area. There will be a picnic stop near the river Ter and in the afternoon you can pick up the pace as you ride through Mediterranean woodland areas towards the village at the foot of the Gavarra hills. Here you stay in a Catalan guesthouse.



Day 3

Continue riding through the magical old villages of the Empordanet. With echoes of the horses' hooves on the old paving stones, you will be taken back in time in this hidden area of Catalonia. When you reach the village of Pubol you can visit the 14th Century castle of Gala, which Dalí gave to his wife, Gala, as a gift. Here you will tether your horses and have the chance to visit the castle before carrying on to the picnic.

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

After stopping for lunch, continue riding to the beautiful village of Peratallada. Overnight in Peratallada.



Day 4

This morning you may trot and canter across the plain of Ullastred, which was a big lake in the Iberian times. A smooth trail leads you through mellow sand dunes and Mediterranean pine forests, up to the rough looking coastal mountain of Montgri. You will ride onwards through the meadows and forest stopping for an open air 'restaurante Buffalo'.

Later you follow paths that lead you through sand dunes to the sea. You stay overnight in a hotel directly at the "Playa Grande", (or another similar guesthouse nearby). This hotel provides basic, old fashioned accommodation.



Day 5

Awake to the sounds of the waves. Smell the coast, the wind and the salty air - you are right at the sea with your horses. You will want to enjoy the beach ride before the crowds and so it is an early start so that you on the beach by 6am.

As the sun rises, you ride along the water's edge; your horses playing with the waves - they love the refreshing water.



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 canter or gallop along the water's edge.

After your mornings ride you will arrive at Joncar (or similar).

In the afternoon you can go to Figueres and visit the theatre-museum of Dali. According to the painter, anyone who wants to be up to date with the latest culture must come to Figueres. Dali built his museum over the charred remains of the city's old main theatre and his idea was to convert it into a centre of Western and European spirituality. Going shopping (or just window shopping) in the late afternoon was a common activity for Salvador Dali. After the visit to the museum you can enjoy the city too.

Day 6

After riding inland through the rice fields of a natural park, you reach Castelló de Empuries with its magnificent cathedral.

Ride through sunflower and corn fields over the plains of the Alt Empordan. In long canters you cross the marshlands of Aiguamolls. This protected land is surrounded by the coastal mountain range of Rodas. At the foot of the mountain, have a picnic in the open air 'restaurante Buffalo'.



Afterwards you ride up the hills of Rodas into the Cap de Creus, where the last mountains of the Pyrenees descend into the sea.

Your accommodation tonight is usually at a typical Catalan farmhouse in Roses (on occasions an alternative guesthouse may be used of a similar standard).

Day 7

A long morning's ride along an old merchant path which winds its way through stony terrain, until you reach the home of Salvador Dali.



Today you will have a picnic at the beach next to Dali's unique house.

You will then be transferred to your accommodation for your final night and farewell dinner. This is usually at a guesthouse in the Bay of Port-Lligat. Here you may be given the choice of upgrading to a room with a sea view (this costs an extra €25 per person and is payable locally). Please note on occasions an alternative hotel is used of a similar standard.

Day 8

After breakfast you are transferred to Barcelona or Girona or you might choose to join another trail.