

Mediterranean Trail - New Year, Spain

Itinerary

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:

- * Festive supper on New Year's Eve
- * Start the New Year with a canter along the beach
- * Some faster riding through the lowlands of the River Ter
- * Riding through sand dunes and pine forests
- * Picnic on the highest point of the steep coast of the Costa Brava
- * Clatter through interesting old villages
- * Two days of riding along the beach (may not actually be in the water)

Day 1

The Mediterranean Trail is a 6 night circular trail ride with 5 days riding. You should be at least an intermediate rider fit enough for between 4 to 7 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. This itinerary may also run in reverse.

You are collected and transferred to a Catalan restored mill or similar. If you stay at the renovated old Mill, please note that this has small apartments which may have a double bed on a balcony and two beds downstairs with one bathroom. This may be booked as two single rooms.

Meet with your guide over dinner to learn about the week ahead.

Monday

You are transferred to Mas Alba, the base for the horses. Setting off you ride through oak and pine forests and head towards the mountains. In a hidden valley you cross a small stream.

The river Fluvia winds through hilly terrain. At a brisk pace, you ride through the meadow and discover a nice spot for your first picnic.

In the afternoon, you will trot and canter returning to the first guesthouse.



New Year's Eve

The River Fluvia meanders wildly through the countryside all the way to the sea. A picnic awaits you with a glass of cava.

After lunch you follow the Fluvia. You cross the river and ride through a wild meadow. At the mouth, you look out over the Gulf of Roses. You are on the Mediterranean Sea in Spain!

A palm tree drive leads us to "Mas del Joncar".

Tonight you will celebrate New Year's Eve with a festive supper (€45 per person, payable locally), which will include vermouth and appetizers, a 3 course supper, followed by a New Year's cake. Plus of course, wine and Cava.

The Spanish people greet the New Year with twelve grapes traditionally. These, it is tradition, must be consumed one by one at midnight at the beat of the New Year. Whoever manages to eat all the grapes in the expected time, it is said, a year of prosperity and

happiness will be waiting! At midnight Cava will set off the New Year!

New Year's Day

Start the New Year off with a lovely canter along the beach, which should help clear any cobwebs away from your party head, following the celebrations last night. 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.



Return for lunch and an afternoon at your leisure. Perhaps you have a siesta or borrow a bike and cycle to the village or the beach.

Thursday



Today you ride through rice fields of the wide plain and through the coastal pine forests. On horseback you pass the pearls of the Catalonian coast: Pals, Palau-Sator and Peretallada. Old city walls surround the nested stone houses. On the patterned paving stones of the narrow streets, you can still recognize the grooves and gravel of horse-drawn carriages of bygone days. Dolores and Luis await you with their cosy accommodation. In the evening, the hosts will grill delicious meat and vegetables from the garden.

Friday

The terrain is flat, the ground is soft and sandy. The well-trained horses trot and canter along the river "el Ter". Orchards alternate with cereal fields and deep green poplar forests provide you with the necessary shade. On a romantic hill next to a small church, the red and white tablecloth lights up. Lunch is a picnic today. After a siesta you ride over soft rolling hills back to the riding stable Mas Alba. After saying goodbye to the four-legged trail partners, you transfer back to Peretallada where you have a farewell dinner.



Saturday

After breakfast, transfer to Barcelona or Girona.