



RIDE WORLD WIDE

Argentina

Estancia La Rosita, Corrientes 2012

Ride Information Sheet

Estancia La Rosita is in Argentine Mesopotamia in the north east of the country, an area rich in history and legend, and with terrain vividly different from the vast windswept expanses of Patagonia, or the rolling hills of the Sierras Chicas. Semi-tropical and ringing with the song of frogs, Corrientes is a landscape of extensive grassland liberally sprinkled with water meadows, domain of the capybara (the giant guinea pig like creatures of the South American wetlands), where cattle and horses wade up to their bellies. This is still a place where the gaudily-garbed gaucho lives on horseback - and there is a saying “ One gaucho Correntino is equal to ten from the rest of the country”.

As well as being Jesuit country, Corrientes is also steeped in the myths of the indigenous Guarani people and is also the birthplace of rather more tangible legends such as the Argentine hero Jose de San Martín, one of the Liberators of Spanish South America. It is also reputed to be the birthplace of Gauchito Gil, an Argentine folk hero, a man so famous that not only are there numerous scarlet roadside shrines in his honour, but also a brand of the herbal tea, 'mate', a tradition in itself, named after him.

Estancia La Rosita is home to your host Fernando Landgraf and his family, and has been part of his mother's family estates for generations. The estancia was built in the last century in typically Corrientes style with a low roof and wide terrace, surrounded by lush garden and is set in 6000 acres populated by cattle, horses and plenty of wildlife. While keeping the authentic flavour of Corretino estancia living, the refurbished estancia is comfortable and the hospitality terrific. Passionate about the land he grew up in, Fernando delights in telling his guests stories of the area and the local 'estancieros', most of whom seem to be extended family.



Dates Stays at La Rosita can be arranged between March and November for anything from 2 nights to 2 weeks although a minimum of 6 to 7 nights is generally recommended to ensure you get the most from your visit. There are set dates for the progressive 'Gaucho Ride' - see details below - but otherwise stays at the Estancia are flexible - so on request. Please contact us to check availability.

Riding When based at La Rosita there are generally morning, afternoon and full day picnic rides to explore the estancia and surrounding area (there are many routes to choose from) as well as opportunities to help the gauchos work with the cattle and horses. Stock work is a central feature and you are encouraged to try your hand at whatever task is to be carried out that day. The colourful gauchos love to show off their skills and are delighted if you join in, however inexpertly. Riding hours are flexible with the vast flat landscape to ride across, including water meadows, long straight sandy tracks, native woodland, and grass land - whatever the direction the going is excellent for fast riding and a race with a ñandu (the South American ostrich) can be huge fun. Moonlit night rides are an option, conditions permitting, and looking for cayman (the South American crocodile) by torchlight in the numerous lagoons adds a certain frisson.

The progressive 'Gaicho Ride' follows a traditional cattle droving route through southern Corrientes, riding from one working estancia to the next, averaging 20 miles a day about half of which is done at the easy loping canter for which the criollo horse is known. To allow for a fresh horse each day, spare horses accompany the group, running loose alongside.

Rides are generally limited to a maximum of 12 guests (though often groups are smaller when riding out on the Estancia when riders can easily be split according to ability) and are lead by Fernando your host, with one gaucho for every three riders. There is a weight limit for riders of about 95kgs / 15 stone but please contact us to check suitable horses are available if your weight is close to this (some heavier experienced riders may also be taken by prior arrangement).



The Horses La Rosita has over 50 horses specially selected for guests (the Estancia has more than 120 horses in all). Most of them are Criollo crosses mixed with quarter horse and thoroughbred, around 15-16hh. The majority are bred for working cattle, are agile and sensible, yet are also extremely responsive, athletic and forward going making them great fun to ride. The horses are ridden western style and are used to neck reining. They go best when ridden with a loose, relaxed contact with the mouth. The horses are prepared for you by the gauchos as the tack is typically Argentinian, a local variation of the traditional Argentine gaucho 'recardo' saddle topped with a thick sheepskin, designed for comfort for both horse and rider over long distance. English saddles are available though the traditional Correntino saddles are recommended. Saddle-bags are provided for longer rides.

Pace When riding on the Estancia, the pace can be varied to suit. The going is perfectly suited to fast riding with expansive open landscapes and wide sand tracks but the riding can also be leisurely and relaxed for those who prefer. On the Gaucho Ride the pace is approximately 50% at a canter, though in places the native woodland is fairly dense meaning the pace has to be rather more measured - you are free to move on where the going allows and there are often energetic canters across open water meadows.



Riding Experience With a good selection of fun, forward going horses and lots of open, varied going, Estancia La Rosita is super choice for those who like to move on. It is excellent for intermediate riders and above who are comfortable, relaxed and secure in the saddle at a walk, trot and fast canter - although the choice of horses and flexible riding arrangements mean confident but less experienced riders can also be catered for. The going on and around the Estancia includes open grassy plains, broad tracks through eucalypt plantations as well as more sinuous routes through smaller native woodland, with rivers and lagoons to cross so it helps to be used to riding over varied terrain. If you do not ride regularly at home we strongly recommend you accustom yourself to the time you will spend in the saddle with regular training in the weeks and months before you go.

Terrain This is cattle country with sprawling vistas and open skies. While riding from the estancia and on the Gaucho Ride you cover a range of terrain, the majority of which is excellent for fast riding with few natural hazards such as holes or stones. Extensive water meadows, lagoons to wade across, open pampa, forests and native woodland, and mostly sandy underfoot means it is an area well suited to people who like a little speed. Due to the sparse population, the lack of intensive agriculture and the lush growing conditions, there is plenty of wildlife such as ñandú, capybaras (the world's largest rodent), foxes, rabbits, cayman, otters, turtles and a wide variety of birds.



Accommodation Accommodation at La Rosita itself is quaint, traditional and comfortable, and of a good standard. A family home, the estancia has a cosy, relaxed and enchanting atmosphere, and Fernando, his family and staff will make you feel very welcome. Guest accommodation is in 6 twin guest rooms, each with its own bathroom in 2 traditionally roofed single storey houses surrounded by lush jungle garden with a swimming pool and sun deck. Guests also have free use of the drawing room in the main house, for example to meet in for drinks before dinner which is eaten at a long table by candle light and with waiter service. On the Gaucho Ride you stay at four different estancias, each one unique and with comfortable guest accommodation. Standards vary a little and on some nights bathrooms may be shared.



Meals Meals play an important part in your stay at la Rosita and you will have a blend of European and traditional Correntino food. Breakfast is generally fairly light, bread with ham, cheese or jam, and coffee and tea as well as juices. For day rides and on the progressive Gaucho Ride, a back up vehicle will generally meet you for lunch, be it a picnic or a meal at a local 'pulperia'. Dinner is traditionally a large meal in Argentina and generally eaten late - never before 9pm and sometimes not until 11pm. Argentinean beef is justly known to be for its excellence and is a very popular item, often served as part of a traditional 'asado' (barbecue) along with chorizo or lamb, accompanied by fresh salads, bread and cheeses, washed down with Argentinean wine. Other traditional dishes include Chicharron, (a plait of beef or lamb), guiso (a thick soup cooked with maize or pasta usually with meat as well), torreja (leek and rice patties) and chipa (hot fresh baked tapioca and cheese balls, light and fluffy and perfect with a cold beer before dinner). **cont. over**

Meals cont. Pudding generally pays homage to the Argentine sweet tooth, with such favourites as pastelitos (sweet pastries) and dulce de maní (fudge with peanuts). Argentinean wine, which is included with lunch and dinner, is excellent. Vegetarians will be catered for as far as possible but please give us prior notice of any special dietary requirements.

Weather Temperate subtropical weather makes La Rosita a good place to visit pretty well year round, with average winter temperatures of around 16°C. However the heat and humidity in midsummer (December, January and February) combine to make for uncomfortable riding and we suggest avoiding stays during these months. Rain is a possibility at any time of the year, though showers are generally very short-lived.

Other activities Visits to a rural town close by to attend “carreras de cuadreras” (typical country races of 400mts) and regional fiestas are colourful excursions. Or you might want to experience a Correntino cattle auction, take tango or regional cooking classes - and there is even a casino in nearby Esquina. The area is also well known for its fishing, including Dorado (*Salminus Maxillosus*), Pacu (*Piractus Mesopotamicus*), Pati (*Luciopimelodus Pati*), Surubi (*Pseudoplatystoma*), Manduvi (*Surubin Lima*). The season runs from January to December. The bird watching in this region is spectacular with the marshes and rivers attracting ducks and waders and the tropical vegetation hosting parrots and other colourful birds.



What to bring We will send you a list of things we suggest you bring when you make your booking.

Gaicho Ride Itinerary - Please note the estancias listed are the standard itinerary though this may vary according to numbers on the ride and local conditions. We recommend arriving at La Rosita a day or two before the ride starts to give you a chance to relax and get used to the riding style.

Day 1 - Early morning arrival in the town of Esquina in Corrientes province. Met on arrival and transferred by car to Estancia la Rosita (about 25 mins). A good breakfast and the chance to rest before heading off on your introductory ride to get acquainted with the horses and the way they are ridden. After lunch, another ride out, or perhaps try your hand at polo on the estancia's own polo ground, alternatively simply relax by the pool in the garden. Later, a candlelit dinner in the dining room of the 19th century part of the estancia. (B,L, D)

Day 2 - Breakfast and set off for a long day in the saddle, about 22 miles in all, plenty of time to adjust to the local way of riding. Lunch is a typical Argentine asado (barbecue) on the shores of a lagoon, followed by an equally traditional siesta in a hammock in the shade. The afternoon's ride finishes at the end of a tree lined drive at the simple but cosy estancia La Amistad. On arrival at La Amistad a welcome cold drink before enjoying a massage should you wish. Dinner and the night at la Amistad. (B,L,D)



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Day 3 - Breakfast and mount up on new horses, after running loose alongside you yesterday these are fresh and perfect for another energetic day's riding. Yesterday's horses enjoy their rest as they lope along with the group as you pass through and between lagoons inhabited by alligators and capybara. Lunch and siesta at an old cattle station before continuing on to the next estancia, the aptly named Buena Vista, a splendid colonial house of late XIX century and built on the only hillock for miles. It has a delightful garden filled with lush tropical plants and an enticing swimming pool. Time for a swim before drinks on the veranda and a good dinner. (Approx 5 hours riding). (B,L,D)

Day 4 - An early start from Buena Vista and head across the wide pampa, and to La Teresita, an estancia that not so long ago needed a wall around the homestead to protect the inhabitants from outlaws from the nearby forests. Lunch is at a typical roadside general store called 'Boliche de Campo' or 'Pulperia'. On arrival at La Teresita your hardest task is to choose between an evening ride, a ride in a sulky, or a drink in a general store with the local gauchos. Dinner and the night at the estancia. (Approx 6-7 hours riding). (B,L,D)

Day 5 - Today's ride takes you through pastures, pampas and native forests to the Corrientes River. Lunch and siesta on shores of the river before trying one the best known gaucho games "carrera de sortijas", a rigorous test of eye hand co-ordination and one done on a galloping horse. Ride back to Estancia La Teresita. You are driven back to La Rosita in time for a special farewell dinner and renditions of the 'chamame', the typical Corrientes music, before transferring to Esquina for your overnight return luxury bus to Buenos Aires. (Approx 3 hours riding). (B,L,D)



Estancia Based Itinerary - Itineraries for a stay at La Rosita are flexible and tailored to suit. Below is a sample of a 7 night stay.

Day 1 - You will be collected from the overnight luxury sleeper bus in Esquina and driven half an hour or so to Estancia La Rosita. Settle in and if you wish there will be time for a morning ride. Lunch and a siesta before an afternoon ride with tea taken on the shores of a lagoon. Return to the estancia with time to relax before a pre-dinner drink on the veranda and a delicious three course dinner. The night at the estancia. (L,D)

Day 2 - Breakfast and the morning spent riding alongside the gauchos as they gather up cattle and drive them back to the yards around the estancia in preparation for the afternoon's work. Lunch and a siesta before a lasso demonstration and the opportunity to try your hand at close quarter cattle work which could include vaccinating, drenching, branding and general husbandry. Then return the cattle to their grazing grounds before riding back to the estancia for a swim before dinner. Night at La Rosita. (B,L,D)

Day 3 - After breakfast ride out towards the town of Esquina, crossing land that is perfect for some fast riding. Lunch in Esquina and then a boat trip to explore the islands on the Paraná and Corrientes Rivers. Road transfer back to La Rosita at sunset and time to relax before dinner and the night. (B,L,D)

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Days 4 to 6 - Three full days based at La Rosita with the option to ride out morning and afternoon, full day rides to neighboring farms, or join the gauchos with any cattle work. You may want to take a break from riding and spend more time on the river, perhaps to try some fishing for the wonderful Dorado. Local fiestas and rodeo are regular occurrences so there might well be opportunities to visit these events - and there is always time to relax by the pool. Nights at Estancia La Rosita (B,L,D)

Day 7 - A full day ride to explore the nearby rural town of Libertador, stopping for lunch at a picturesque “boliche de campo” (kind of country bar), situated by an arm of the Barrancas River. In the afternoon return to the estancia for dinner and the night. (Approx 6 hours riding). (B,L,D)

Day 8 - A good breakfast to fuel you for a morning of stick and ball polo followed by a match in the afternoon. Tea on the polo field and then time for a swim and drink before dinner. After dinner transfer to Esquina for the overnight bus back to Buenos Aires. (B,L,D)



2012 Rates

Please note that due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, ride rates are now quoted in USD. The sterling price will be the equivalent sterling rate using the USD/sterling exchange rate in force when you book/pay. These rates supersede rates quoted in our brochure.

The Gaucho Rides

10th to 14th March	10th to 14th August
10th to 14th April	10th to 14th September
10th to 14th May	9th to 13th October
10th to 14th June	10th to 14th November
10th to 14th July	

Gaucho Ride - USD 1840 (single supplement USD 360)

Special Group Rate - For a group of 7 riders one goes free

Estancia Stays - USD 175 per night (single supplement USD 45 per night)

Rates **INCLUDE** all riding accommodation (NB generally rooms are twin share but some single rooms may be available if the Estancia is not fully booked - please ask but please also note that single rooms cannot be guaranteed unless you are prepared to pay a 25% supplement), all meals, drinks, guiding services, equipment and return transfers Esquina-Estancia La Rosita.

The rate **EXCLUDES** International flights to Buenos Aires, transfers to Esquina, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have), any visa fees, tips (see note below) and any extra nights accommodation.



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Flights and travel information To get to Estancia La Rosita we recommend the very comfortable overnight sleeper bus (approx USD150 return) from Buenos Aires to Esquina (7-8 hours) 18 km from La Rosita. You are then met on arrival and driven the half hour or so to the estancia. Alternatively you can fly to either Santa Fe or Corrientes and transfer to La Rosita from Santa Fe or Corrientes Airport (by car, 340 km, additional cost).

British Airways currently have daily flight departures to Buenos Aires, usually leaving London Heathrow at about 21:00 arriving Buenos Aires at about 10:30 the next day. Iberia and Aerolineas Argentinas also have daily flights from London via Madrid to Buenos Aires. Other options are via the continent (eg Air France or Lufthansa) or via the USA. Fares start at about £700 per person economy return London to Buenos Aires (direct flights will be more) although this will vary depending on the date required, airline and availability and how long in advance you book. Please call us for more flight information or if you would like a fare quote. We would be happy to book flights for you (our ATOL number for flight sales is 6213).

A Note on Tipping Tips for the staff at the Estancia are entirely at your discretion and are **NOT** compulsory although they will of course be appreciated. If you would like to leave a tip we recommend you leave it with Fernando, your host, to distribute. The amount of any tip is entirely up to you but if asked for guidance your host will tell you that something around USD 10 a day (to be split between all staff) is probably about average (taking into account American guests).

General visa and health information (NB this is a brief outline - further information will be sent to you if you make a confirmed booking)

Visas If you hold a full British Passport and are visiting Argentina for less than 3 months, you do not need to arrange a visa in advance although visa requirements are always subject to change and you should always check up to date requirements before you travel

Health No jabs are required as a condition of entry from the UK and Europe. The Hospital for Tropical Diseases in London recommends that you ensure you are up to date with Polio, Tetanus, Typhoid and Hepatitis A. If you are not up to date with these you should visit your GP or a travel clinic about 4 weeks before departure. Though if you are planning to travel on to Iguazu Falls it is recommended that you have both a yellow fever inoculation. Also you should note that malaria is present at Iguazu.

(Draft 13/10/11)

