



# RIDE WORLD WIDE

## Spain

### The Sierra Nevada 2012

#### Ride Information Sheet

These rides explore the foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountain range, which runs east to west, just south of Granada and north east of Malaga in south-east Spain. Although it is less than 100 miles or so from Malaga and the developed coastline of southern Spain, this inland area is still incredibly unspoilt and there has been little change in the local way of life over the centuries. The main industries are the cultivation of almonds, figs and vineyards and much of the farming is by traditional methods with mules and oxen still used to plough the fields. The area, which is part of Andalucia, also has a great tradition of horses for both riding and work and they are a wonderful way to explore its remote, unspoilt whitewashed villages and wild mountain scenery. The rides are run by an English lady, Dallas Love, who has lived in this part of Spain for many years and is a very experienced guide. They are an excellent choice for experienced riders who want to explore an unspoilt part of rural Spain on a responsive, well looked after horse that is a pleasure to ride but the quality of the horses and care with which they are chosen and schooled, means they are also a good choice for less confident riders.

**Dates** Rides are run between March and November for 7 nights (with 6 days riding) from set dates, usually Saturday to Saturday. 'Short Breaks' of 4 nights, including 3 full days riding are also offered, usually from Saturday to Wednesday, on certain dates. During mid-summer a more challenging 7 night itinerary, the Marquesado Ride, is offered which crosses the Sierra Nevada range. Other dates are also possible on request for groups when there are no set date rides. Please see the dates overleaf and contact Ride World Wide to discuss availability.



**The Horses** The horses used for these rides are mostly Andalucian crosses of a medium build and between about 15hh and 16hh. They have all been schooled personally by Dallas, who guides the trips, and are a real delight to ride being extremely responsive, forward going, fit and well mannered. Dallas selects her horses carefully for their endurance and temperament and they are all also very sure footed, coping easily with varied, and sometimes steep and difficult, terrain. Tack is similar to English style military saddles with sheepskin covers on the saddles and saddle bags provided.

**Riding** There is usually about 6 hours riding a day on the rides broken up with rest / refreshment stops, a break for lunch and short periods of walking when the terrain is steep or rough where you need to dismount and lead your horse for 15-20 minutes (often downhill). The riding is relaxed, the aim being fun for both horse and rider. Where the ground allows, you are free to canter, but equally, if you wish, you can just amble gently along, enjoying the lovely scenery. Either way the rides are a real pleasure. Groups are limited to a maximum of 12 guests and all rides are accompanied by Dallas personally. Dallas is English but has been living in this part of Spain for many years. She is a very experienced guide and also easy going, relaxed and a pleasure to ride with. There is no strict weight limit on the rides but if you are 90kgs / 14 stone or over, please call us to check availability of horses.

**Pace** The pace of the rides is varied but as it is limited in places by the terrain, it is quite slow to moderate overall. In some areas the going gets quite rough and the horses have to walk. There are also a few steep upward climbs on narrow paths (rewarded with wonderful panoramic views!) and sharp descents where you will be asked to dismount and lead your horses for 20 minutes or so. This is particularly the case on the Contraviesa Ride where there are a number of places each day where you will need to dismount and lead and one descent to the Trevezlez Gorge is not suitable for those who suffer from vertigo! However, there are usually also good opportunities to trot and canter each day as well as some wonderful long open stretches along wide forest paths and dry river beds where you can move on fast.

**Riding Experience** To join the rides you should be a reasonably experienced rider, who is comfortable and secure in the saddle over varied going and is able to handle a well-schooled horse outside at all paces. The rides are specifically aimed at competent riders who will appreciate a well schooled, well looked after horse that is a pleasure to ride, but there is a good selection of horses and several that are suitable for less experienced, less confident, riders. You will enjoy all the rides much more if you are reasonably riding fit and have a reasonably good level of general fitness as riding hours are fairly long and you are riding from place to place (and it is difficult to stop half way!). If you do not ride regularly at home, we recommend you put in some regular training in the months before you go to accustom yourself to the hours you will spend in the saddle.



**Terrain** The terrain on the ride is varied and includes almond and olive groves, dry river beds, wide forest tracks, grassy mountain pasture and steep, narrow mountain paths. There is some road work in the vicinity of the villages each day - however many of these roads are narrow cobbled streets where you are just as likely to meet a mule as a car! In many of the villages horses and mules are still stabled under the houses and there are water troughs where you will water the horses on the corner of many streets. In a few places the paths you follow are narrow and become quite steep. There are no fierce drops, but if you are very nervous of heights you should bear this in mind when selecting the ride.

**Accommodation** You will stay in small village hostels ("Posadas") and comfortable local hotels with twin bedded rooms. The hotels are quite simple and rooms are generally fairly small, but they are clean and comfortable, all have an en-suite shower or bath and loo and there is plenty of hot running water. Two nights on the Contraviesa ride will be spent at the Morayma Hotel just outside Cadiar which is one of the most charming country hotels in the area and has a swimming pool. On the Marquesado Ride, one night is in very simple accommodation, in a mountain refuge (sleeping bag required). Your luggage is transported for you from hotel to hotel by vehicle but there are no porters or lifts in the hotels so once there, you will have to carry your own bags. Rooms are twin bedded and if you are booking alone a single supplement is payable for a single room. Bed linen and towels are provided but you may want to bring another towel as those provided by the hotels are often rather small. English is not widely spoken at the rural hotels but Dallas will translate for you!

**Meals** Breakfast and lunch every day are included on all itineraries and dinner on most nights is also included in the rate. Dinner on one night of the 7 nights itineraries, and three nights on the Short Breaks, are excluded and on these nights you are free to visit local bars and restaurants. Breakfast is provided by the hotels and is simple - bread or toast, butter, jam and tea or coffee. Lunch will either be a picnic carried with you in saddlebags and eaten sitting on the grass with the horses tied up around - delicious local cheeses, hams, fresh bread, salads etc. - or eaten at a local restaurant or bar depending on the route you are riding. Dinner is eaten at local restaurants which usually offer a good selection of dishes (many of the smaller bars also provide delicious tapas when you order a drink - a wonderful appetiser before dinner!) The excellent specialities of the area include garlic soup, chicken with almonds, rabbit with garlic and peppers and a thick Andalucian soup made with ham and beans. There may also be other typical Spanish dishes such as gazpacho and paella on offer. There is a sufficient selection to cater for vegetarians but please let us know of any special dietary requirements when you book. Wine, spirits and other drinks are not included.



**Weather** The southern climate and long summers in this part of Spain, tempered with the cooling effects of the altitude, make it an ideal destination for riding from early spring right through to early winter. Spring comes early to the region and almond trees start to blossom in February and March, then, from March to May wild flowers begin to appear. From March to early May day time temperatures in the area are usually between about 10 and 20 degrees C, although it rarely gets below 15 degrees C at the lower altitudes at which you ride during these months. Showers are possible at this time of year. From late May to July day time temperatures range from about 15 to 30 degrees C and in August and early September, they can reach 35 degrees C, however at these times of year the rides take you higher into the hills and a cool breeze normally keep temperatures down, ensuring it is still very pleasant to ride (temperatures at altitude are normally at least 5 degrees cooler than lower down). In October and November temperatures start to drop back to the 20s C and there may be the odd shower. As you are high, evenings even in summer, can be quite cool.

**What to Bring** We will send you a clothing list with suggestions of what to bring when you book.

**Itineraries** Three 7 night itineraries are offered - the Contraviesa Ride, the Alpujarra Ride and the Marquesado Ride. In spring and autumn, when it can be cold and possibly foggy at altitude, the lower route, the Contraviesa Ride is used and this will also be used at other times if the weather is bad. In summer, the route goes slightly higher where the mountain air is fresh even in August - The Alpujarra Ride. Also on set dates during the summer months, the beautiful but demanding Marquesado Ride takes you across the Sierra Nevada to some of the most spectacular and remote parts of this mountain range. The 4 night short breaks are offered on set dates throughout the season. The following are examples of the itineraries although do note that they are only examples and may be varied by your guide if weather or local conditions require (please enquire for the 7 night Marquesado itinerary).

### **The Contraviesa Ride - Example itinerary**

The Contraviesa mountain range lies between the Sierra Nevada mountains and the Mediterranean Sea. This area is warmer and more arid than the Sierra Nevada itself due to the proximity of the coast and this ride is offered during the cooler spring and autumn months. At this time day time temperatures in the Contraviesa rarely drop below 15 degrees C and can reach the mid 20's in May. Spring arrives in the region about 6 weeks earlier than in the Sierra Nevada and you will begin to see wild flowers as early as March. The early winter months are also lovely and rarely cold. This route offers a tremendous range of scenery and vegetation and you can literally ride from winter to spring and back in a week.

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**Day 1** You will be met at Malaga at about 4pm and driven to your hotel in Bubion, a village in the Poqueira valley of the Sierra Nevada. The drive from Malaga, along the winding mountain roads up to Bubion, takes about two and a half to three hours. Bubion is about an hour and a half from Granada. Accommodation in Bubion is in a simple but comfortable village hotel and there will be time to settle into your rooms after the journey before meeting your guide, Dallas Love, who will take you for dinner in a local restaurant. Overnight Bubion. (D)

**Day 2** Breakfast in the hotel at around 9am, after which you will be collected and driven the short way to the stables to meet the horses. Set off, riding westwards through pine woods and evergreen holm along a combination of forest tracks and bridle paths. Stop for a picnic lunch with views over the Taha valley and the Contraviesa mountains. In the afternoon continue along a main forest track, ideal for some good canters, and later down a steep descent, about 20 minutes on foot, through woodlands and pasture, leading you into one of the main ravines. There is then a steep climb out of the ravine to join the main track leading down into the village of Trevelez. Trevelez, the highest village in Spain (about 4700 ft), is also famous for its hams and you often see them hanging in the drying houses in the village. After stabling the horses in a barn belonging to a local farmer, there is time for a drink in a local bar, a rest and shower before dinner. The night at a comfortable hotel in Trevelez. About 6 hours riding. (B,L,D)

**Day 3** Meet for breakfast at about 9 am. Set off, first leading the horses through the village, then mount up and take the old Moorish bridlepath, climbing steadily through oak and pine woods to an altitude of about 6,500 ft. The views stretch for miles and you realise you could ride for days meeting no one but the occasional shepherd. After a picnic lunch you join one of the forestry tracks for a gentle descent through pasture lands and small farms to the village of Berchules, where the night is spent. After settling the horses in a paddock owned by a local farmer, a drink and hot shower before dinner in a comfortable family run hotel. About 6 hours riding. (B,L,D)



**Day 4** Today's ride is a little shorter and the morning ride takes you down through almond groves and open scrubland to the town of Cadiar. From Cadiar it is necessary to join the road for 10 minutes or so, to reach the foothills of the Contraviesa mountains. Here you join a track through almond, fig and grape farms to the Morayma Hotel, the most charming hotel in this area, built amongst almond and fruit groves and overlooking the Guadalfeo river. You will stop for a picnic lunch en-route and arrive at Morayma early afternoon. Dinner and night at the Morayma Hotel. About 4 hours riding (B,L,D)

**Day 5** Breakfast at the hotel and begin riding back to the village of Trevelez by a lower route. Once across the Guadalfeo river the route takes you through a number of tiny whitewashed villages on the lower Aplujarra hills. In sections you will be on small secondary roads but you are more likely to meet a herd of goats than a car. Stop for a picnic lunch day by a pretty stream in the shade of chestnut trees. In the afternoon is a steady climb on a bridle path to the pine woods above Trevelez, the descend on an old Moorish path, where you will need to dismount and lead the horses in some places, to the village of Trevelez. Dinner and night in Trevelez. About 6 hours riding (B,L,D)

**Day 6** The ride today takes you back to the stables, crossing the steep ravine, Barranco la Bina. You will need to dismount and lead the horses for about 20 minutes. Once across the ravine you join the main forestry track for the final 15kms. There are lots of chances for trots and canters before reaching the stables. A late lunch in Capileira then transfer to Bubion. Dinner is not included today and you are free to choose from the tapas bars and restaurants in Bubion. About 4 hours riding (B,L)

**Day 7** Breakfast at the hotel and your final day's ride high into the valley Poqueira, claimed by many to be the most beautiful valley in the region. The route follows a combination of small bridle paths and tracks, with stunning views of snow capped peaks. On a clear day you can see across the straights to Africa and the mountains of Morocco. Return to Bubion for farewell dinner and the night. About 5 or 6 hours riding. (B,L,D)

**Day 8** After breakfast in the hotel you will be driven to Malaga airport for your journey home. (B)

### Example itinerary - The Alpujarra Ride

The Alpujarra is the name given to southern part of the Sierra Nevada mountain range, a region that has a rich cultural and historical heritage as well as much of botanical and geological importance. The itinerary for this ride is very similar to The Contraviesa Ride, but after spending the third night in Berchules you ride higher into the mountains above the village, following ancient Moorish bridlepaths that wind up through the valleys and gorges.

**Day 1** You will be met at Malaga at about 4pm and driven to your hotel in Bubion, a village in the Poqueira valley of the Sierra Nevada. The drive from Malaga, along the winding mountain roads up to Bubion, takes about two and a half to three hours. Bubion is about an hour and a half from Granada. Accommodation in Bubion is in a simple but comfortable village hotel and there will be time to settle in after the journey before meeting your guide, Dallas Love, who will take you for dinner in a local restaurant. Overnight Bubion. (D)



**Day 2** Breakfast at the hotel, then you will be collected and driven the short way to the stables. After allocating horses, set off riding east towards the village of Trevelez, the highest village in Spain and famous for its cured hams and river trout. The first hour and a half or so of the ride is along old mule paths, then you head through open country and woodland until you reach the neighbouring villages of Pitres and Portugos. The morning's ride will be quite slow to give you a chance to get used to your horse and lunch will be at a bar in the village of Portugos. After lunch, continue on along paths and broad forest tracks amongst pines and oaks where there are lots of opportunities to canter. Arrive at the village of Trevelez in the late afternoon. After stabling the horses in a barn belonging to a local farmer, there is time for a drink in a local bar, a rest and a shower before dinner. The night at a comfortable hotel in Trevelez. (B,L,D)

**Day 3** Meet for breakfast in the hotel then set off riding over totally different terrain past mountain farms and through pine forests. The route takes you out of the village and up a steep, rocky path where you will lead the horses for about 15 or 20 minutes. After mounting up, follow paths through evergreen forest and out on to open pastures at an altitude of about 2,500 metres with wonderful views over the villages below. On a clear day it may be possible to see across the sea to the mountains of Morocco. A picnic lunch and then continue through the mountains riding in an area almost impossible to get to except by horse. As you gradually descend, the vegetation becomes greener and you join a path leading to Berchules, where the night is spent. The horses may have to be led a short way as the path becomes quite rocky. After settling horses in a paddock, a hot shower before dinner and the night in a comfortable family run hotel in Berchules. (B,L,D)

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**Day 4** Breakfast then set off leading the horses for about 20 minutes until the path evens out. Berchules takes its name from the old Spanish word 'Berchel' meaning literally 'mountain garden' and it is easy to see how the area got this name. A picnic lunch by the river then leave the narrow paths for one of the Sierra's broad forest tracks and return to the village by a different route. Dinner and second night in Berchules. (B,L,D)

**Day 5** Today you will descend to the River Guadalfeo and head back west to Trevezlez. The landscape changes abruptly in the morning and, leaving the alpine like Sierra behind, you ride through small terraces of olive, almond and fig trees. After lunch in one of the small whitewashed village, start the gradual climb to Trevezlez. Dinner and overnight in Trevezlez. (B,L,D)

**Day 6** A shorter ride today takes you back to Bubion. Following the forestry tracks through pine and oak woods you eventually arrive back at the stables high above the villages of the Poqueira valley. The route offers wonderful views over the Contraviesa and the Mediterranean Sea with lots of places to canter. A late lunch in the village of Capiliera and the night in the Casa Sevillana in Bubion. Dinner is not included today and you are free to choose from the tapas bars and restaurants Bubion. (B,L)

**Day 7** The final day's riding to explore the remoter parts of the Poqueira valley with the Mulhacen (the highest mountain in Spain) forming a wonderful backdrop. A picnic lunch out riding and then ride back to Bubion for a well earned drink. A farewell dinner and the night in Bubion. (B,L,D)

**Day 8** After breakfast in the hotel you will be driven to Malaga airport for your journey home. (B)



### **Example itinerary - Short Break**

**Day 1** Own arrangements to drive to Bubion (or meet Malaga at about 4pm and driven to your hotel in Bubion), a village in the Poqueira valley of the Sierra Nevada. The drive from Malaga, along the winding mountain roads up to Bubion, takes about two and a half to three hours. Accommodation in Bubion is in La Casa Sevillana, a simple but comfortable village hotel and there will be time to settle in after the journey before meeting your guide, Dallas Love, who will take you for dinner in a local restaurant. Overnight Bubion. (D)

**Days 2 - 4** Three full days riding with a picnic lunch and the routes are planned in such a way that you ride over totally different terrain each day. On one day you follow small paths high into the mountains with spectacular views of the Mediterranean, on other days explore the hidden valleys and ravines of this mountainous region and canter along some of the quiet forest tracks on the lower slopes, where the going is softer. Dinner is not included and you are free to explore the tapas bars and restaurants of Bubion. Overnight Casa La Sevillana. (B,L)

**Day 5** Breakfast in the hotel and your onward journey (transfers to Malaga can be arranged). (B)

## Dates and Rates 2012

**Please note** that due to constantly fluctuating exchange rates, ride rates are now quoted in euros. The sterling price will be the equivalent sterling rate using the euro/sterling exchange rate in force when you book/pay.

### Contraviesa Ride

10th to 17th March	15th to 22nd September
24th to 31st March	29th September to 6th October
8th to 15th April*	14th to 21st October*
	27th October to 3rd November

**Price - Euros 1240 per person** (twin accommodation).

The supplement for a single room is 160 Euros for the week, payable in Spain

### Alpujarra Ride

21st to 28th April	26th May to 2nd June
29th April to 6th May*	25th August to 1st September
12th to 19th May	2nd to 9th September*

**Price - Euros 1240 per person** (twin accommodation).

The supplement for a single room is 140 Euros for the week, payable in Spain

**Rates quoted above INCLUDE** - All riding, 7 nights twin hotel accommodation, meals (dinner Day 1 to breakfast Day 8 except for dinner on the sixth night when you are free to explore local bars and restaurants), and also transfers from / to Malaga at set times with the group.

### Marquesado Ride

10th to 17th June*	11th to 18th August
1st to 8th July*	

**Price - Euros 1303 per person** (twin accommodation).

The supplement for a single room is 160 Euros, payable in Spain (not available on 1 night)

**Rate INCLUDES** - All riding, 7 nights twin hotel accommodation, all meals, and also transfers from / to Malaga at set times with the group.

\* **NB** these rides run Sunday to Sunday, others Saturday to Saturday

### Short Breaks

19th to 23rd May	14th to 18th July	9th to 13th September**
2nd to 6th June	28th July to 1st August	
23rd to 27th June	1st to 5th August**	

**Price - Euros 488 per person** (twin accommodation).

The supplement for a single room is 80 Euros, payable in Spain

**Rate INCLUDES** - 3 full days riding, 4 nights twin hotel accommodation, breakfast and lunch each day and dinner on the first night (transfers from Malaga can be arranged if required, 35 Euros each way, payable direct in Spain).

\*\* **NB** These rides start on different days, all other Short Breaks are Saturday to Wednesday

**Rates EXCLUDE** - International flights to Malaga, dinner on Day 6 (or days 2, 3 & 4 for the Short Break) as indicated above, personal medical / travel insurance (which you must have), any visa fees, your bar bill, extras at hotels such as telephone calls, laundry etc and any tips you wish to leave (and transfers between Malaga and Bubion for the Short Breaks).



**Single rooms** - All rates are based on twin hotel rooms and if you are travelling alone or would like a single room the single supplement will be payable on arrival in Spain (if you are travelling alone but are prepared to share a twin room please tell us as we can sometimes arrange this - although we cannot guarantee to do so as it depends on other guests being willing to share!)

**Flights and transfers** - The meeting point for the 7 night rides is Malaga airport. Transfers by car / minibus at set times on the first and last days of the rides are included in the ride rate. The meeting times are usually 16.00 on Day 1 at Malaga airport. On the last day (Day 8) you will be driven back to Malaga, generally arriving late morning. If you arrive later on Day 1, or if you need to leave very early on Day 8, a private transfer will be required and there will be an extra cost for this.

For the Short Breaks we can arrange transfers from / to Malaga - these are 35 Euros per person each way, payable direct in Spain.

British Airways (Tel: 0844 493 0787) has direct flights to Malaga from London and several of the budget airlines (eg. Easy Jet, Ryan Air and flybe.com) also have flights from regional airports such as Luton, Stansted, Liverpool and Bristol (www.ryanair.com, www.easyjet.com and www.flybe.com). Airfares to Malaga vary depending on the airline, season and how far in advance you book but expect to pay around £150 to £220 for an economy return (although excellent deals are often available with the budget airlines). We can book British Airways flights to Malaga for you (our ATOL number is 6213) or you can contact the airlines direct or via their websites for bookings. (NB please check with us that arrival / departure times are suitable for the ride pickup before you confirm your flight)

**Additional information on the area for non-riders and riders before or after the ride** - Andalucia is the southern-most region of Spain incorporating the crowded beach resorts of the Mediterranean coast and the rather quieter Sierra Nevada Mountains. The historic cities of Seville, Cordoba, and Granada are found in this region and the influences of the Romans, Moors, Jews and Christians are all evident. The closest city to the ride area is **Granada** which lies at the foot of Sierra Nevada, between the Darro and Genil rivers and is one of the most interesting in eastern Andalusia. Because it was the last city recaptured from the Moors by the Catholic Monarchs in 1492, Granada has an unmistakable Arab flavour. One of its oldest districts, the Albaicín, was declared a World Heritage Site, together with the Alhambra and the Generalife. Should you wish to spend some time in this fascinating city, we can help with accommodation.



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

**Visas** If you hold a full British passport you do not need a visa for visits to Spain whatever the length of stay, although for visits of over 90 days residence permits are required. Please check up to date requirements with the Spanish consulate.

**Health** No vaccinations are needed by EEC residents to enter Spain (according to the Spanish and World Health Organisations). If you have a particular condition requiring special medical treatment, in case of emergencies you should carry a letter from your own doctor translated into Spanish describing your condition and the medicine / treatment required.

(draft 25/01/12)