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trail riding worldwide

The Dartmoor Crossing

Weight limit: 95kg

Nearest airport: Exeter

8 days / 7 nights / 5 days riding

A progressive ride around Dartmoor staying at different B&B's and hotels each night. A unique riding adventure, you'll enjoy fabulous horse riding across the Dartmoor landscape on high quality, forward going Quarter horses. You'll be guided through incredible scenery, past prehistoric settlements, neolithic stone circles, ancient tin mines and beautiful forestry, this trail is a real showcase of Dartmoor's natural beauty.



The Riding

The terrain involves crossing streams, shallow rivers, undulating ground and up and down steep inclines and would not be suitable for novice or inexperienced riders. Each day you'll explore the diversity of Dartmoor, from high up on the rocky moors with spectacular views to meandering down wildflower-filled bridleways, if you're lucky you may even spot the occasional herd of wild ponies and their playful foals. This trail involves riding well off the beaten track where there are no roads or fences to slow you down.

Level of Riding and Fitness

This is a progressive trail ride for intermediate riders onwards. You should be confident riding at a walk, trot and canter in open countryside. Riders should be relaxed in the saddle and ride with soft hands. Riders do need to be reasonably fit as there is between 4-6 hours in the saddle each riding day. Hard hats and boots with a heel are compulsory at this destination.

Age range is 18 to 65, experienced 14 – 17 year olds are accepted if accompanied by a riding parent/guardian. Upper age limit is discretionary depending on rider fitness and experience. The maximum weight is 15 Stone (95kg).



Guides & Group sizes

Your guides, Phil and Mandi, are experienced local farmers with a herd of around fifteen horses to offer guests. This destination specialises in a personal, laid back trail experience.

The maximum number of riders in a group is 8.

Horses & Tack

There is a selection of fantastic Quarter Horses at this ranch. Known for their calm attitude and appetite for work, all are western trained, very sure footed, a pleasure to ride and cross the terrain with ease. Heights range from 14:3 to 16:2hh. Your hosts for this ride often start and back their own horses to suit the type of work, all must be sensible with good manners. In total there are 15 horses, all are fit, forward-going and sure footed on the Dartmoor terrain.

The tack is Western, you'll also be provided with saddle bags for carrying daily essentials. In total you will cover around 130kms on this trail.



Accommodation & Dining

Accommodation is provided at different B&B's and hotels each night. These range from a traditional 16th century Devonshire pub with rooms to a welcoming bolthole perched on the banks of the beautiful West Dart River, with lush, green countryside in every direction. Rooms are twin or double with en suite (single rooms available for a supplement). All rooms include towels and Wifi.

Breakfasts are usually buffet style offering a choice of a more continental breakfast such as pastries, cereal, yogurt, fruit or a traditional full English; bacon, eggs, beans toast etc. Lunch is a picnic eaten at a picturesque spot on the trail that includes sandwiches, crisps, fruit and a biscuit. Dinner is not included but can be provided by the accommodation you stay at (usually modern British cuisine such as fish and chips, burgers, pies) or at other local eateries which your host will be happy to recommend to you. Vegetarian or other dietary requirements can be accommodated with advanced notice.

Itinerary

Day 1

Arrive in the afternoon at Exeter airport, bus or train station where your host Phil will be waiting for you. Transfer to your hotel (a 45 min drive) and check in. At the hotel you can discuss the week ahead with your hosts and make arrangements for dinner that evening. The hotel has its own restaurant serving traditional British food or there are other restaurants within walking distance.

Day 2

You will be collected by your host Phil and taken to his farm a few miles away where you will meet the horses. Saddle up and get to know your horse on a trail ride of around 4 hours through the moor on open land. Stop for a picnic lunch en route before circling back towards the farm to enjoy warm scones and a cup of tea. You'll then be transferred back to your hotel for the evening. Dinner at the hotel or a local restaurant (not included).

Day 3

Today will be a faster ride than the day before and there will be some good opportunities for some long canters. You'll begin the day's trail at Meldon Farm and ride for approximately 4-5

hours (stopping for a picnic lunch) to reach the small village of Two Bridges perched on the banks of the West Dart river.

Day 4

Today's destination is Widecombe located around 25km away. You'll be riding around 3-4 hours east across Dartmoor through lush fields before reaching the quaint and charming town of Widecombe. Your accommodation for the evening is at a farm B&B close to the town.

Day 5

Today you can enjoy a circular trail ride from Drywell Farm of 4-5 hrs, overnight at Drywell again.

Day 6

Today you'll be riding for 3-4 hours over Hameldown Hill for some spectacular views before staying overnight at a hotel in Chagford.

Day 7

Today's ride will see you travel back to the starting point of the trail, a distance of around 25km. This will be your final day of riding through the dramatic scenery of Dartmoor. Once you arrive back at Meldon Farm it's time to say goodbye to the horses and enjoy tea and scones before transferring back to your hotel for a final dinner.

Day 8

Depart after breakfast



Price includes

- 5 full days of riding
- Trail riding horse, tack and saddlebags
- Twin/double room
- Breakfasts
- Lunches
- Tea, coffee and cake
- Luggage transfer

Not included

- Flights
- Transfers
- Evening meals
- Drinks

Flights & Airport transfers

The closest airport is Exeter. Return transfers from Exeter Airport, train or bus station from £80 per booking.

Please plan to arrive at Exeter after 2pm on the first day of your holiday.

Depart after 9am on the last day of your holiday.

What to bring

Please use the packing list as a guideline, bearing in mind the time of year you are riding.

Your hosts farm sits at 800 ft, and you'll ride up to 2,000ft where it can be quite a bit cooler than at the farm, we strongly recommend warm riding wear and good riding waterproofs

- Riding hat (there is a limited supply of hats so we recommend bringing your own)
- Boots with heels are mandatory
- Comfortable warm riding wear
- Chaps full or half (optional)
- Waterproof coat
- Lip balm and sun cream
- Sunglasses
- Casual evening wear
- Camera

Climate

Dartmoor has a temperate climate which is generally wetter and milder than locations at similar height in the rest of England. January and February are the coldest months with mean minimum temperatures around 1 °C (34 °F). July and August are the warmest months. The weather is very changeable so we recommend being prepared for hot days, sudden heavy rain as well as cold winds and basking sunshine at any time of year. This ride involves travelling from 800 ft up to 2000 ft, where the temperature is cooler so we recommend dressing in layers.

Health

For health and vaccine recommendations, please consult your healthcare provider at least 8 weeks before your trip.

Country specific information can also be found at National Travel Health Network and Centre website: <https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/countries>.

Travel documents

For entry requirements to the UK for non-UK citizens, please visit the Foreign Travel Advice website: <https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control>

Having the correct travel documents is entirely your responsibility.



Currency & Tipping

The local currency in the UK is the British Pound. We recommend bringing enough money for evening meals and drinks out. Almost all establishments will accept cards.

Tipping your guide is at your discretion.

Riding declaration

"I am an experienced rider and able to mount & dismount unaided. I have a firm seat and I'm confident and in control at all paces over rough terrain (including rising trot, light seat canters and gallops) and have a good level of current riding fitness. I do not suffer from any illness or disability that could prejudice my safety or that of others."

Cancellation policy

Payment & Cancellation Terms

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Holidays are confirmed with 20% non-refundable deposit. The full balance is due 56 days before start date.

If you cancel your booking less than 56 days before the start date of your trail we are entitled to receive full payment, less refunds as follows:

42 days or more before booking date - 50% 30 days or more - 30%

less than 30 days - nil

Book with confidence – Covid Guarantee:

If a ride operator is closed or you are unable to travel – due to lockdown:

1/ The deposit is reissued as a rebooking voucher to rebook anytime.

2/ Any balance payment will be refunded to you in full within 1 week of departure date.

Insurance

All saddletravel.com customers are required to take out appropriate travel insurance that covers horse riding and holiday cancellation. Proof of insurance details will be required during the booking process.





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