



## Estancia Beach Trail

Weight limit: 95 kilos

Nearest airport: Montevideo

8 days / 7 nights / 6 days riding



Ride on deserted beaches, over shifting sand dunes through tropical palm groves, and protected wetlands while you spot shipwrecks and marine life such as dolphins, whales and seals on this diverse riding expedition across Uruguay. Further inland, you'll ride with the gauchos and

practise your cattle driving skills at traditional estancias on Criollo horses before relaxing in the evening with excellent food and wine. An undiscovered gem in the heart of Latin America.

### The Riding

The pace of this trail is reasonably fast and includes lots of canters on the grassy pastures and firm beaches. There are many opportunities to gallop on the seemingly never-ending coastline although riders can also stay at a canter if they prefer. The scenery encompasses tropical wetlands, green, sun-drenched vineyards, woods and forests and some of the finest beach riding in the world. Riders must be comfortable in all paces and happy to do some fast riding in open spaces on an obedient and responsive horse. Riders need to be in good physical condition, you will be in the saddle for between 4-6 hours per day.



## Guides & Group sizes

As well as being experienced horsemen and women, your guides on this trail have a thorough knowledge of the extensive local wildlife and birdlife. All guides are multilingual Spanish/English and the group size is between 2-8.

## Horses and Tack

The horses at this destination are a real highlight of riding in Uruguay. A pleasure to ride, they are chosen for their responsive and willing nature. One or more spare horses accompany the group in case a change is needed. The horses are the local Criollo breed: ideally suited to the terrain. The Criollo is a strong horse with an excellent forward-going walk and willing character. Western style saddles are used with a sheepskin cover and all horses are trained in neck reining so only a very light contact with the horses mouth is necessary. Your guides will tack up the horses each day although you are welcome to help if you want to.

## Accommodation & Dining

Accommodation is in twin or double rooms with single rooms available for a supplement. You'll be staying in a mix of charming seaside hotels and traditional estancias. All rooms include a private bathroom and are clean and comfortable.

The food and wine provided at this destination is considered an integral part of the holiday experience and you will certainly eat well. After a full day riding, you'll sit down to enjoy fully prepared meals that reflect the local cuisine. All meals are prepared with completely natural and fresh products of the region. Red meat, fish and wine are specially recommended, but vegetarians can be easily catered for.

## Itinerary

### **Day 1: Montevideo**

Today is set aside to relax and explore the coastal city of Montevideo. Wander down the wonderful promenade next to the sea called Rambla to your downtown hotel. Enjoy lunch at the lively Port Market and a short walking tour of the Old City. Accommodation at Don Boutique Hotel.



#### **Day 2: Fortín de San Miguel**

After breakfast, you'll be driven to the Brazilian border and into Rocha, arguably the most beautiful province in Uruguay with pristine beaches, emerald shores and a great network of lagoons. Head to Estancia La Rosada where you will meet the horses and have lunch. After lunch, enjoy a wonderful ride at the estancia to get to know your horse. Continue on to Fortin de San Miguel, where you can admire the views out across an enormous stretch of fresh water – one of the largest lagoons in South America; the Merín Lagoon. This area is home to a wide variety of birdlife. Dinner and accommodation at Fortín de San Miguel Hotel.

#### **Day 3: Barra de Chuy beach**

After breakfast, you'll be transferred to the town of Chuy, a very curious town straddling the border. Saddle up and head out on the 3-4 hour ride towards the coast.

After a picnic lunch, riders can recharge with a siesta before enjoying a fast-paced ride along the wonderful, isolated beach of Barra Chuy. You can enjoy a long, exhilarating canter alongside the Atlantic Ocean before arriving at La Coronilla where you'll stay at a small beachside hotel.

#### **Day 4: Santa Teresa national park**

Today you'll ride south alternating between beaches, sand dunes, pine forests and coastal hills. You might spot dolphins in the water as you head towards the Santa Teresa National Park; 3000

hectares of forest containing over 2 million trees, most from other parts of the world. After a picnic lunch you can enjoy riding along the forest trails and down to the beach where you'll pass a shipwreck buried in the sand, one of many along this treacherous coast. Continue along the coast towards the lovely town of Punta del Diablo. Dinner and overnight at Posada Terrazas de la Viuda.

#### **Day 5: Cabo Polonio**

The day starts with a drive to the coast where you'll meet the horses and ride to the hidden Brioso Lagoon and along the beach of Valizas. After a picnic lunch, you'll ride on to Cabo Polonio, a charming fishing village which can only be reached by horse or SUV truck. This fascinating region is known for the huge area of shifting sand dunes. Dinner and accommodation at Posada La Perla.

#### **Day 6: Wetlands, Lagoon & Ombu Forest**

After breakfast, visit the lighthouse, and spot the many seals and sea lions that make up one of the largest populations of seals in the world; you may even spot a migrating whale. Depending on the time of year riders can take a dip in one of the most beautiful beaches in the country before riding towards the wetlands of Rocha. Journey alongside the Castillos Lagoon and across the untouched landscape of palm groves and Ombu forest. In the afternoon you'll reach the traditional Estancia Guardia del Monte where you'll spend the night.

#### **Day 7: Cattle and sheep work with the gauchos on the estancia**

After breakfast, take a morning ride along the estancia's fields. You'll have the chance to work alongside the gauchos and their trusty dogs as they tend to the cattle and sheep on this working ranch. The friendly gauchos all seem to have been born on a horse and it is a real treat to be riding with them. Enjoy lunch at the neighbouring estancia Barra Grande before riding back to Guardia del Monte for dinner and overnight.

#### **Day 8: The small town of Castillos**

Start the day with a final breakfast of homemade bread, jams and cakes before starting the ride towards the small town of Castillos where you will visit a local gaucho store selling traditional bridles, typical riding "bombachas" (riding trousers), gaucho hats and colorful ponchos. Have a last picnic lunch and then say goodbye to the horses before heading back to Montevideo, arriving in the city at around 5pm.



### Price includes

- 7 days riding
- 7 nights accommodation in twin or double rooms
- Airport transfers at set times
- Breakfasts
- Lunches
- Dinners
- Mineral water
- Luggage transport

### Not included

- International flights
- Dinner on Day 1
- Alcoholic drinks

## International flights & Airport transfers

Do not book flights until you have received the Booking confirmation email from saddletravel.com.

Transfers are available from Montevideo international airport. On day 8 flights should be booked for after 19:00 or stay an extra night in Montevideo.

## What to bring

- Riding hat
- Jodhpurs or other comfortable trousers
- Riding boots
- T-shirts and long-sleeved shirts
- Sunhat
- Sunglasses
- Warm layers - At times the evening temperature drops
- Casual clothes & shoes for evening
- Raincoat
- Insect repellent
- Sun cream
- Camera
- A copy of your passport

## Climate

The weather in Uruguay is variable, but you can expect somewhat warm spring and autumn temperatures, although there may be some cool days (especially early in the morning or at night) and perhaps some rainy days too. The average temperature at this time of year is 18-20C.

## 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 France for UK citizens, please visit the Foreign Travel Advice website:  
<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/uruguay/entry-requirements>

For any other nationalities, please contact your local embassy to check entry requirements.

Having the correct travel documents is entirely your responsibility.

### Currency & Tipping

The local currency in Uruguay is the Uruguayan Peso although US dollars are also widely accepted. We recommend bringing enough local currency for any additional drinks you may want to purchase such as wine with dinner.

Tipping your guide is at your discretion, gratuities are greatly appreciated.

### 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 (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

saddletravel.com

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