



The Horse Drive is a true cowboy experience, both highly rewarding and extremely physically demanding. One should take precautions in evaluating their own capabilities and bear in mind the challenges one may face before taking part in this adventure.

PLEASE READ EACH SECTION CAREFULLY!

Overview

Horse drives are similar to cattle drives with a major difference - Speed! You will drive a large herd of saddle horses for 62 total miles over the course of two days. We allow the horse herd to lead and we follow their pace. This means that you need to be **comfortable** in a trot or gallop. It is not enough to simply **tolerate** this pace. We do not give horse-riding instruction in the days prior to the drive, rather, we provide instruction on herd movement and strategy. This is not meant for first-time riders.

During the Great American Horse Drive you will:

- Help move a large herd of saddle horses on open range
- Ride 20+ miles per day
- Ride 6-8 hours per day
- Ride at a trot for long distances
- Ride on different terrains
- Opportunity to live in a cowboy/ranch style accommodations (Not a resort)
- Experience varying weather patterns

Environment

Colorado is a beautiful, high-altitude, dry climate that has *no set weather patterns*. We've had years where the sun beats down and we reach 80-90 degrees, and we've had years with snow and frigid temperatures and wind, rain, or hail. You need to prepare for any of these conditions, as our horses don't stop for rain! The terrain on which you will be riding consists of stints of uneven rural dirt roads and asphalt on the highways. We highly recommend guests include an extra day of travel in Denver, or Steamboat, Colorado prior to arrival at the ranch to acclimate to the high altitude and dry weather. Drink plenty of water, prior to arrival, and remember that the consumption of alcohol greatly increases the risk of dehydration.

Riding Ability

As stated above, the Great American Horse Drive is not geared for the beginner rider or individuals who may have health issues. Seasoned horseback riders with cross country experience will be better physically and mentally prepared for this adventure. Horseback riding requires that you have control of your upper body, good strength in your legs and the ability to control the movement of your body while you are on the horse. If you don't have control of your body you are at risk of coming off the horse, or at the very least injuring the horse by rocking around on his back. Horses don't like discomfort any more than we do and they will respond to protect themselves if they are in pain.

Here is a guide for determining your riding ability:

BEGINNER: A rider with little or no experience.

NOVICE: A rider who is comfortable and in control at the walk and/or trot but has limited experience at an extended trot and/or cantering.

INTERMEDIATE: A rider who is confident and in control in all gaits including a posting trot, canter and gallop, but does not ride regularly.

STRONG INTERMEDIATE: An intermediate rider who is currently riding regularly and is comfortable in the saddle for at least 6 hours per day. A rider who is able to post a long trot and is comfortable in cross country riding.

ADVANCED: All of the above plus the ability to handle a spirited horse in open country.

****** We do not accommodate children under the age of 13 unless they are strong intermediate riders and are accompanied by an adult.

Physical Conditioning

Those who are in above average physical condition are at a much higher advantage when it comes to keeping up on the Great American Horse Drive. However, it takes more than pure athletic ability to ride the horse drive successfully. It is more important that you are conditioned for **this type of riding**. We highly suggest workouts that increase your inner core strength and exercises that enhance your riding muscles.

Please be honest about your riding ability, weight, personal health conditions and your fitness level. If someone has signed up who is not in the best condition to ride or who does not have the appropriate skills, it can create instances when that rider holds back the entire group. We want every participant to be as successful as possible and enjoy this outstanding experience. Please don't hesitate to call us to discuss your physical conditions and/or concerns so we can help you assess your skills and ability!

****** We ask that you please evaluate any health problems or medical procedures that you have had and strongly suggest that you receive a physician's approval if you have any of the following conditions:

- Heart Problems
- Moderate to Severe Joint, Neck or Back Problems
- Hip Replacement, Knee Replacement, or any other Moderate to Severe Surgeries

Living Quarters

There is no charge for accommodations and clients are welcome to stay with us on our working ranch or if preferred, they can head into town to rent their own hotel room for the week. It is important to know that our living quarters are true western bunkhouses in a rustic ranch setting. Each room has a minimum of two beds/bunk beds and as many as six. Please expect to share your room with at least one other person. There is a common bathroom for the bunkhouses with showers, sinks, and toilets. The ranch is located 13 miles outside of Craig, so we have very limited cell phone service and internet is not available. Be aware you may need to go into town to make phone calls. You may even want to disconnect for the week and truly embrace the cowboy lifestyle!

Meals

Sombrero Ranches has a full time cook and we provide three meals a day for our family and staff. Guests are welcome to join us for meals at no additional cost. The serving schedule is posted daily along with a menu of the meals for the day, though it is subject to change. We serve ranch style family meals which consist of meat, potatoes, vegetables and salad. Because there are so many guests and staff, we can't accommodate other dietary needs, so you will need to make other arrangements if you have specific restrictions.

Thank you for reading our introduction letter, we understand it is a lot of information and can be overwhelming! Please call or email the office with any and all questions or concerns. We want our riders to be as prepared as possible so each person can make the most out of their one of a kind Great American Horse Drive experience!

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