



**RIDE ANDES URUGUAY
EMERALD COAST RIDING TOUR**

Season: mid-October to end April

Uruguay -tranquil, unpopulated and with the long-established gaucho culture and pristine coastline, is made for riding!



RIDE ANDES

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Introduction

Discover South America's lesser-known riding paradise, journeying on place to place through the wetlands, pastures, palm trees, woodlands and crossing the dunes to the ocean to canter along perfect beaches. Taking in a surprising variety of landscapes packed with natural and cultural interest in the company of the local gauchos.

Testimonial

"Uruguay, our second adventure with Ride Andes, was like our first Ride Andes tour in Ecuador - absolutely fantastic! My husband and I have quickly come to expect from Sally Vergette and Ride Andes: (1) Fabulously fit horses that absolutely suit our very different riding styles and the varied pace and terrain; (2) immersion into the lifestyle and culture of the countries we visit; (3) day after day of delightful and interesting riding, exploring, cuisine and accommodations. What a vacation!" Kris, USA.

Emerald Coast Riding Tour

Nights are spent in a variety of excellent and unique lodgings: traditional estancias, beachside hotels with pools & hot tubs, charming Posadas. Each place has quiet, relaxing verandas on which to soak up the serenity. All rooms with private bathrooms.

What You Need To Know?

- 8 day itinerary
- Fixed date departures/Private groups (tour can be adapted)
- Maximum 8 guests on fixed departures
- Single riders very welcome (single rooms available or twin share)
- Pace moderate with faster canters on beaches and grasslands.
- Excellent option for families (private groups only) itinerary adjusted accordingly
- Riding in a variety of landscapes (including UNESCO Natural Biosphere Reserve)
- Season: mid-October to end April
- Flexible start day for private groups
- Non-Riders welcome! Various activities available.

Emerald Coast Itinerary

Overview:

DAY 1: Montevideo – Tour of the Capital City & Port Market.

Overnight at Don Boutique Hotel

L

DAY 2: Estancia Life & 18th Century Fortín de San Miguel.

Dinner & Overnight at Fortin de San Miguel

B, L, D (approx. 3 hours riding)

DAY 3: Barra de Chuy Beach – Brazilian Border & Pristine Beaches.

Dinner & Overnight at Parque Oceanico

B, L, D (approx. 5-6 hours riding)

DAY 4: Santa Teresa National Park, Dolphins & Shipwrecks.

Dinner & Overnight at Posada Terrazas

B, L, D (approx. 6 hours riding)

DAY 5: Biosphere Natural Reserve, Cabo Polonio, Shifting Sands & Sea Lions.

Dinner & Overnight at Posada Valizas

B, L, D (approx. 6 hours riding)

Day 6: Wetlands, Hidden Briosso Lagoon & Ombu Forest.

Dinner & Overnight at Guardia del Monte

B, L, D (approx. 6 hours riding)

DAY 7: The Fascinating Wetlands of the Castillos Lagoon.

Dinner & Overnight at Guardia del Monte

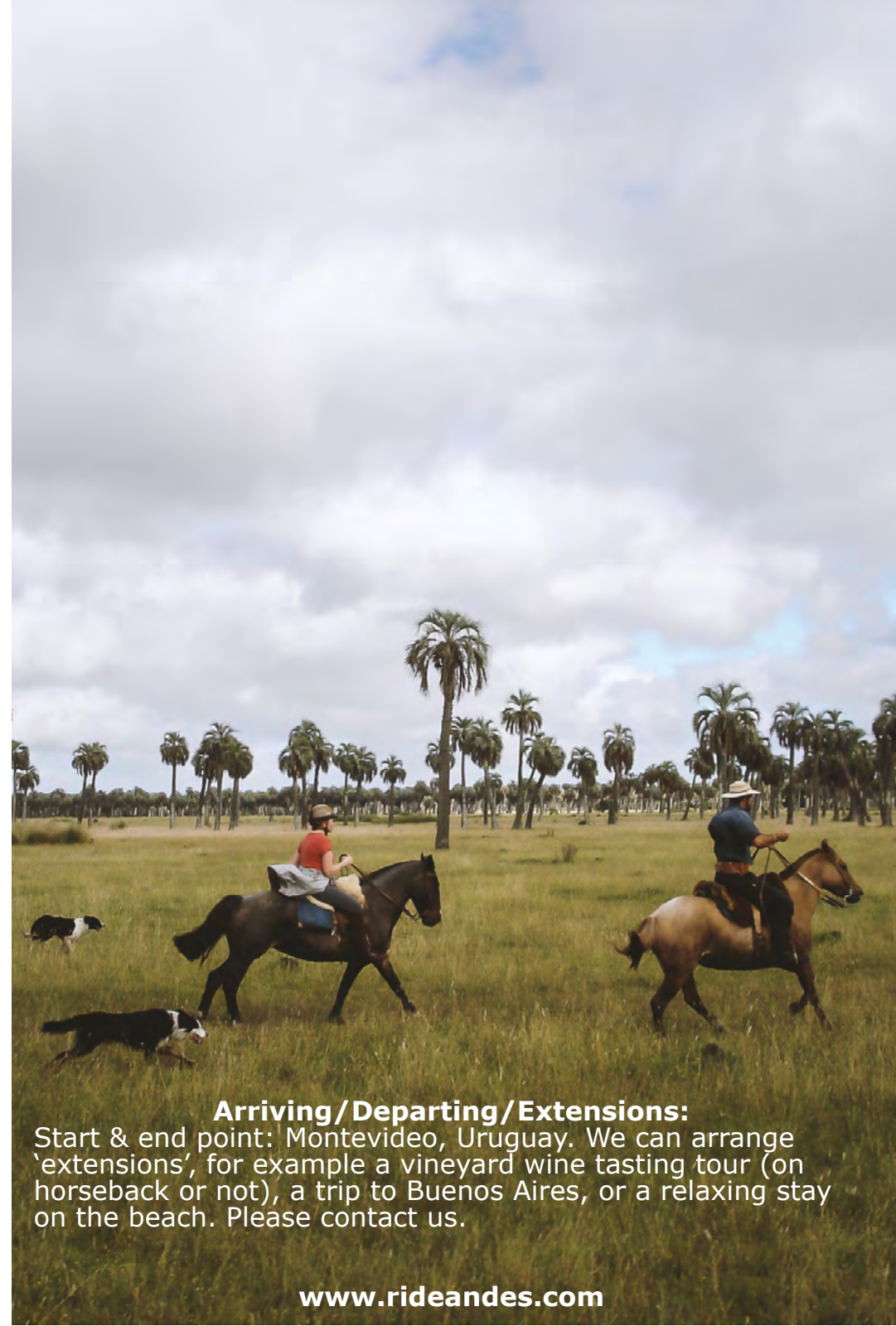
B, L, D (approx. 6 hours riding)

DAY 8: Cattle & Sheep Work with the Gauchos at the Estancia.

Final Day

B, L (approx. 5 hours riding)

End of Services



Arriving/Departing/Extensions:

Start & end point: Montevideo, Uruguay. We can arrange 'extensions', for example a vineyard wine tasting tour (on horseback or not), a trip to Buenos Aires, or a relaxing stay on the beach. Please contact us.



Detailed Itinerary:

DAY 1: Montevideo – Tour of the Capital City & Port Market.

Today is set aside to relax and explore the city of Montevideo. Guests are met at the airport/port and driven past the beaches along the estuary shoreline boulevard called the "Rambla" to the downtown hotel. Meet the group and enjoy lunch at the lively Port Market and then a short walking tour of the "Old City" of Montevideo with a local, bilingual guide. The guide will also help with changing money, suggestions for a dinner location and anything else you need to arrange or answer questions you may have.

Overnight at Don Boutique Hotel

L

DAY 2: Estancia Life & 18th Century Fortín de San Miguel.

After breakfast, we will be driven to the Rocha Province, arguably the most beautiful province in Uruguay with pristine beaches, emerald seas and a beautiful network of lagoons. We will arrive to Estancia "La Rosada", inland of the village of La Coronilla. After lunch, once guests are settled on their horses, enjoy an introduction ride through the estancia lands in order to get to know our horses and tack. After a typical "merienda", we continue on to the Brazilian border and Fortín de San Miguel, built in the same stone as the nearby fortress started in 1737 by the Portuguese. Located on what is now the Brazilian border the "Merín Lagoon"-one of the largest fresh-water reserves of South America, stretches away northwards. This area is home to a wide variety of birds and has many different native trees and bushes. Relax around the hotel swimming pool.

Dinner & Overnight at Fortín de San Miguel
B, L, D (approx. 3-4 hours riding)



DAY 3: Barra de Chuy Beach – Brazilian border & ride along a pristine beach.

After breakfast, we will be driven to 'Chuy', a very curious town straddling the border where guests can step into Brazil and hear the locals speak an intriguing language made up of a mix of Spanish and Portuguese. Continue on to meet our horses to start a 3-4 hours ride towards the coast. We ride along cattle droving tracks. After a picnic lunch, riders enjoy a pleasant "siesta" -discovering that gauchos' saddles are as comfortable to sleep on as they are to ride on! In the afternoon, we will enjoy a fast-pace ride along the wonderful, isolated ocean beach of 'Barra Chuy'. Visitors seldom reach this beach so we can enjoy exhilarating canter with no signs of habitation as we ride across the pure white sands alongside the Atlantic Ocean. Many shoreline birds of the area are spotted, for example cormorants, terns & sandpipers. We arrive 22km (14 miles) further south to "La Coronilla" and stay at a beachside hotel with outdoor & indoor swimming pools, Outdoor & indoor jacuzzi (hot tub) and a whole ocean.

*Dinner & Overnight at Parque Oceanico
B, L, D (approx. 6 hours riding)*



DAY 4: Santa Teresa National Park, Dolphins & Shipwrecks.

Out the hotel and straight onto the beach. After a canter, we come across a shipwreck buried in the sand. The coastline is littered with shipwrecks but luckily, The HMS Beagle with Charles Darwin aboard did not succumb to this fate - Darwin spent quite some time in Uruguay collecting species, most likely starting to formulate his theories of evolution while here.

Riding southwards, promontories allow us a good view of the ocean and we often see dolphins feeding in the bays, sometimes turtles. Alternating between beaches, pines and native scrub we arrive at the Santa Teresa National Park. The centre piece of the park is a fort, construction starting in 1762 by the Portuguese but completed by the Spaniards, who took it by assault just a year later. This was just the beginning of a dizzying succession of conquering, losing and reconquering the fort; it was not until 1825 that the independence forces finally captured the fort helping pave the way to establish Uruguay. Your guide will fill you in on the details.

After a picnic lunch in the national park we will enjoy riding along the forest trails in the 3000 hectare park (7413 acres) back to the beach, continuing along the coast to the picturesque village of Punta del Diablo.

*Dinner & Overnight at Posada Terrazas
B, L, D (approx. 6 hours riding)*

DAY 5: Biosphere Natural Reserve, Cabo Polonio, Shifting Sands & Sea Lions.

The day starts with a drive down the coast where we will ride into the desert! This area has been declared a Biosphere Natural Reserve by UNESCO. We ride to Cabo Polonio - an isolated fishing village turned tourism spot, which can only be reached by horse or 4x4 - perched on a cape between the ocean and a sea of sand dunes.

Riding between high sand dunes, the horses drinking at a freshwater oasis, it is easy to imagine that we are right in the middle of a desert.

Emerging onto the beach, we pick up the pace and soon arrive at Cabo Polonio visible on the horizon. A swim on one of the two magnificent beaches, lunch at a charming restaurant on the beach and then guests can visit the light house and observe the sea lions and fur seals offshore. These sea lions make up the largest population in South America. Migrating whales are also occasionally spotted (October-November). We then begin our ride through another part of the dunes, under pine trees and along the banks of an estuary to the village of Valizas.

*Dinner & Overnight at Posada Valizas
B, L, D (approx. 6 hours riding)*

DAY 6: Wetlands, Hidden Brioso Lagoon & Ombu Forest.

After breakfast, we ride along Valizas beach, hopefully sighting dolphins and, at certain times of the year, whales. Then, turning inland, ride through shady pine forests to the hidden Brioso Lagoon and continue into a landscape of palm groves and pastures to the wetlands area. The bird life is fascinating, normally we see a huge variety of birds on this ride as we leave the beaches to cross woodland, pastures and wetlands arriving at the lagoon- for example the small, communal burrowing owls atop their mounds, the great rhea, seriema (road runners), black necked swans, roseate spoonbills, herons... Stopping to enjoy a picnic lunch on the way we then continue on to Castillos Lagoon through an Ombu Forest with ominously named strangler figs alongside the curious ombu 'trees', arriving at the charming Estancia Guardia del Monte, a traditional working estancia.

*Dinner & Overnight at Guardia del Monte
B, L, D (approx. 6 hours riding)*





DAY 7: The Fascinating Wetlands of the Castillos Lagoon.

The day starts with a lovely breakfast of homemade bread, jams and cakes, served in the oldest, slate-built, part of the house with views out to the lagoon. The site of the estancia was once an outpost for Spanish soldiers then became a productive ranch. Our ride begins by skirting the lagoon, a host of birds wading along the water's edge, possibly a capybara dashing into the reeds as we approach. Onwards towards the neighbouring estancia Barra Grande - crossing wetlands and passing through enchanting forest of Ceibos, Coronillas and many other native trees, draped with 'old man's beard'. We arrive at a local wood-constructed 'rancho' for a typical "Uruguayan asado" lunch and the opportunity to try the famous 'mate' drink served in a gourd and sipped through a silver 'bombillo'. After a siesta and a walk in the curious and quite unique Ombu forest, we ride back to the Estancia across the grasslands and checking the cattle as we go.

*Dinner & Overnight at Guardia del Monte
B, L, D (approx. 6 hours riding)*

DAY 8: Cattle & Sheep Work with the Gauchos at the Estancia.

Morning ride on the estancia pastures, joining the gauchos and a chance of working alongside them and their trusty dogs as they tend to the cattle and sheep on this working ranch. The tasks will vary depending on the time of the year, but the gauchos always welcome a bit of help checking and moving the sometimes reluctant bovines and skittish sheep. Riders can see how to count the animals (not as easy as it first appears!) and also put the animals in the corrals. Sometimes a lame animal has to be caught and tended to. The wonderful, friendly gauchos with their berets, their knives tucked into their colourful belts all seem to have been born on a horse and it is a delight to be riding with them. Lunch is served at Guardia del Monte before some final canters, riding towards the small town of Castillos where we say goodbye to the horses, swap to a vehicle and visit a local "gaucho store". Traditional bridles, typical riding "bombachas" (riding trousers), gaucho hats and colourful ponchos are available to admire and buy! We will then be heading back to Montevideo - to the airport, port, the city, or to start an extension tour (for flights/ferries out today, we will advise earliest time we can get you to airport/port).

*B, L (approx. 5 hours riding)
End of Services*

2020/2021 Prices from:

Length	double/twin per person	Single Supplement	Rider Weight supplement (90- 100 kg. 198-220lbs)
(8D/7N)	from USD 3890	USD 550	USD 350

Included:

All accommodations; all meals and water (except 1 day, only lunch); English speaking guide; 7 riding days; horses and grooms services & 7 nights (Private Bathrooms); all necessary transfers/transport as per itinerary.

Not included:

Appropriate medical insurance (mandatory), visa (as necessary), international or national airport taxes, laundry service, soft and alcoholic drinks, personal expenditure, tips, and all services not mentioned in the detailed description.



F.A.Q's

Horses & Tack: During this ride, riders usually stay with the same horse (as long as the rider is happy!). Our intention is for riders to build a bond with their horse and enjoy not only the landscape and ride but also the company of their horse! As always one or more spare horses will accompany us in case a change is needed. The horses are the local Uruguayan Criollo breed and criollo cross: ideally suited to the terrain. Criollo is the horse breed in Uruguay, Argentina and the south of Brazil. The breed was developed from horses that were brought from Spain in the 17th century and then bred in this region. Criollo is a strong horse with an excellent walk and good character. We use local saddles, a sort of flat 'western' type saddle (no pommel/horn) with a thick sheep skin atop. Neck reining (western 'one-hand' indirect rein riding) – people adapt very quickly but the guide and gauchos are on hand to give some advice. This tack is very suitable for long days in the saddle.

Accommodation: The accommodation provided in this program includes charming seaside hotels and ranches located in the areas we visit, all of which include a private bathroom. They are clean, comfortable and provide a very good service. You will be able to get good night's sleep in pleasant surroundings. If you are sharing your room, please let us know in advance if you prefer twin or double beds.

Meals: After a full day riding, as well as a good lunch (most days not a picnic), it is comforting to know that you can return to delicious and varied meals that reflect the local cuisine. All menus are prepared with completely natural and fresh products of the region. Red meat, fish and wine are especially recommended, but we can easily cater for vegetarians or any other dietary requirements as long as we are warned in advance.

Climate: You can expect warm sunshine in the spring and autumn, although we might also get some cooler moments (especially early in the morning or at night) and perhaps an occasional rainy afternoon. The temperature at this time of year deleted text is excellent for riding. December to mid-February, the summer months, can be very hot and the rides (private rides only) are adapted accordingly. More details given in the travel notes for each ride.

Clothes & Equipment: Travel notes will be sent with useful information including a suggested packing list and guide contact details etc.

Emergencies: In case of an accident, our guides carry a mobile phone so that they can contact assistance (local emergency services/back up vehicle/our Doctor in Quito) – the mobile phone coverage is generally excellent.

Health Services: In general, public sanitation and health care in Uruguay are very good. In the event of illness or accident during your stay, you should be prepared to pay for assistance. Upon return home you can submit a claim for reimbursement according to the specifications of your insurance policy. Visa and Master card are credit cards commonly accepted.

Safety: Ranked as the ninth "most livable and greenest country" in the world and first in all the Americas, Uruguay is ranked highest in Latin America on the Global Peace Index. Risk of disease is minimal in the areas we visit. While petty theft can be an issue in the capital, while accompanied by your guide you are in good hands.

For further information please contact:
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Important Notes

- Booking will be confirmed upon receipt of the corresponding deposit (A 30% non-refundable payment will be required upon confirmation and balance of payment will be required no later than 45 days before beginning of the tour).
- **Exceptional postponement/cancellation** policy in place due to circumstances directly related to Covid-19, please request full details.
- We reserve the right to alter the itinerary due to circumstances beyond our control.
- Prices can alter without prior notice (preceding a confirmed booking)
- Appropriate medical insurance is mandatory and the responsibility of each guest/booking agent.
- It is the responsibility of the individual guest/booking agent to ensure that participants have the necessary riding skills to take part in the chosen tour.
- Rider weight limits are in place, please refer to each itinerary for details.
- Guests are strongly advised to bring and wear their riding helmets while riding during the tour.
- Guests will be required to sign a responsibility release before starting a tour.

About Ride Andes:

Sally Vergette, an English rider, moved out to Ecuador in 1996 and shortly afterwards founded Ride Andes specializing in tours 'journeying on' through magnificent parts of South America. In 2003, using her knowledge acquired in Ecuador and with a local business partner, she was the first to set up estancia to estancia riding tours in Uruguay.

Ecuador is still her base but Ride Andes is involved in providing spectacular riding tours – many itineraries designed by Sally - in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Chile-Argentina, Colombia and Uruguay. Sally is still very active in all aspects of the rides in these destinations but is now supported by excellent local guides and only leads a few of these tours.



For further information please contact:
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