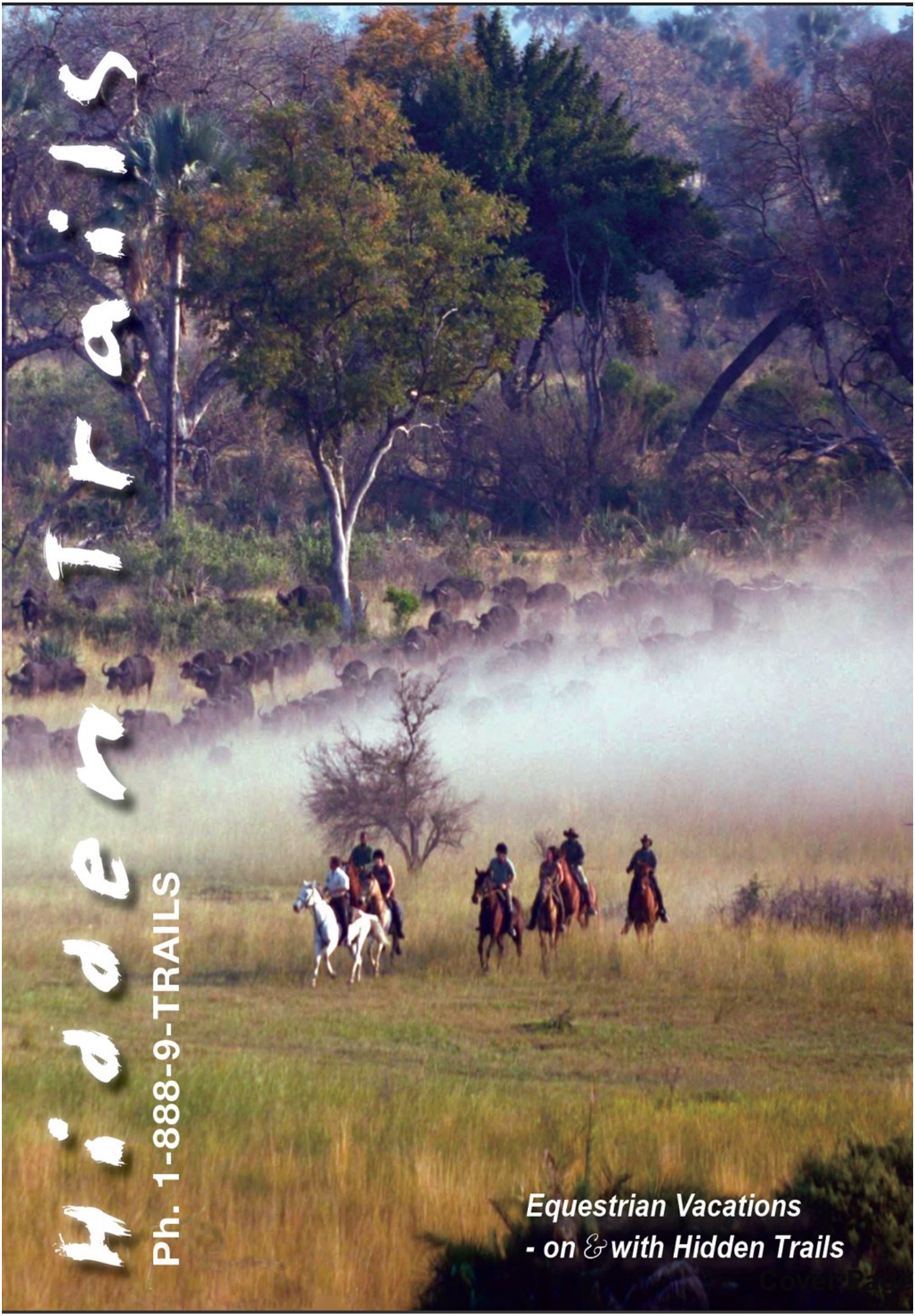
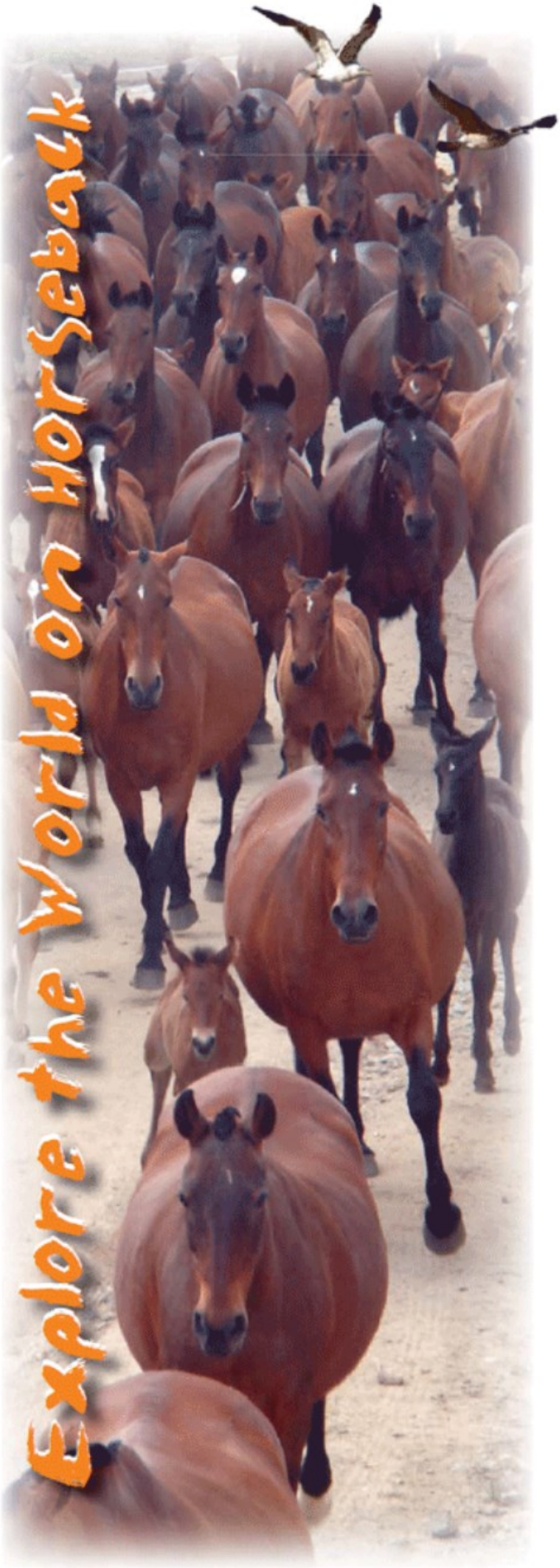

Hidden Trails
Ph. 1-888-9-TRAILS
Equestrian Vacations
- on & with Hidden Trails

About Hidden Trails



Hidden Trails is owned and operated by nature enthusiasts who love horses and adventure activities. We have been involved with riding and other outdoor vacations for over 20 years.
With our partners Voyage du Cheval (France), Pegasus (Germany) as well as Equitour (Switzerland and France) we have collected the best riding destinations all over the world in some hidden places we would like to share with you.

These rides are about galloping on endless beaches, forging rivers, cantering through forests, trotting along age-old trails, gazing at beautiful vistas and encountering foreign cultures. But most of all, these trips are about getting away from the cycle of too much work and never enough free time.

Escape from the rituals, which long ago froze our nights and days into little more than routine and away from the worries of our new tense times. It is so satisfying when we take the plunge of adventure - it's unfortunate that we invent so many reasons to put aside living our dreams of adventure. It is sometimes a tangled web that we weave through life. Some of the threads reveal a work-a-day world of commitments, duties and obligations. Other threads are of a quiet fabric of hope, responsibility and refreshment.

On our adventures you see the real country, its back country and meet the locals. The love for horses has no boundaries but possesses a common language we all speak and understand. The majority of the overseas rides are from inn to inn, some from castle to castle and a few are camping rides.
You will experience new countries and their customs and make new friends. The Hidden Trails trips are the best you can find.

They have been tested by our staff or associates and received our stamp of approval. If you are considering a special riding vacation anywhere in the world, call us first and let our experienced consultants match the perfect trip with your dream.
We will listen to you and give you objective advice to help you choose the best destination and adventure.

Your vacation is the most precious time of the year and we are committed to making it the most memorable time of your life. Wherever you go, have a great time and bring back some peace of mind.

Thank you for your continued support.

Hidden Trails
Phone: 604-323-1141
Fax: 604-323-1148
Toll Free: 1-888-9-TRAILS
from within the USA or Canada or

E-mail: info@hiddentrails.com
Website: www.hiddentrails.com

Address:
659A Moberly Road, Vancouver BC Canada V5Z 4B3 or
4406 Tennyson Road, Willmington, DE 19802 USA

Toll Free from the U.K.:
Ph: 0- 808 189-0420
Fax: 0-808-280-1860

Toll Free Worldwide:
Skype: hiddentrails

Dressage and Trail in Tuscany - Italy, Europe

Tour Code: IT-SR04
8 days / 7 nights ~$1,500.00
Dates: March to November

Trip Rating :
Difficulty :
Lodging:

Tack: English saddle; general purpose and dr...
Horses: Lusitanos, Arabs, Anglo Arabs, Sella I...
Pace: 2-3 riding hours / day, the trail ride...
Walk,Trot,Canter,

Airport: Florence

Introduction

Tuscany, Italy
Strategically positioned midway between Siena and Florence sits a handsome, stone farmhouse villa dating from the 1700's and owned by Gianni and Cristina, a couple who have dedicated their lives to the equestrian arts. The farm estate appeals particularly to visitors with a passion for horseback riding and dressage, for the De Marchis offer everything from basic beginner riding lessons to advanced dressage training, complemented with day long trail rides through the gorgeous surrounding countryside. In fact, the center is recognized as one of the top "ranches" in the Tuscany area. Instruction is available for both the rider just starting out in dressage as well as for experienced dressage enthusiasts around the world. With the emphasis on correct basic schoolwork, riders are also encouraged to work on carefully prepared exercises in the lateral movements, transitions, canter and counter-canter as well as work from the ground. For the most advanced level of riders visiting the farm, riders also have the possibility to work on the piaffé, passage and flying changes.

The riding program offer a wide variety of choices and easily be modified to your riding level and the type of riding you want to improve on.
Meals are all taking together at a long rustic table in front of the fireplace - a wonderful place to swap stories of the day with your fellow riders. The chef is an undiscovered gem - you will taste some of the best typical cuisine of Tuscany.

Accomodation

Accommodations
This is a stationary ride where all nights are spent at the same location.

Description
Guests are hosted in an 18th century country villa featuring terra-cotta floors, wooden beamed roofs etc. The house has 9 guest rooms (all with ensuite bathrooms and AC) and 1 apartment with kitchenette.
On the ground floor is a rustic living room with country antiques, comfy sofas, and piano enhanced by a vaulted brick ceiling and worn terra-cotta floors, off which are 3 bedrooms.
Upstairs, the main gathering area is the dining room, which features a massive fireplace and a seemingly endless wooden table. This room gives access to more bedrooms, each decorated with touches such as dried flowers, white lace curtains, and, of course, equestrian prints.
WIFI is available in common areas.

There is no laundry service at the facility, but there is a laundromat and laundry service in Barberino val d'Elsa, which is the closest town. It is about 30 minutes' walk, but we can offer a ride should you like to visit.

Room Options

Linari: a special light and a beautiful view of the Castle of Linari.
1 double bed - can accommodate a max. of 2 people

Robinia: a special light making the room very warm. It has the view on the background of a Robinia tree
1 double bed (or 2 single beds) - can accommodate a max. of 2 people

Pozzo: a very appreciated room in the hot summer because it is one of the coolest.
1 double bed (or 2 single beds) - can accommodate a max. of 2 people

Maneggio: a cozy single room. The only one with private but separated bathroom.
1 french bed can host only 1 person

Cavallo: a very spacious room with a special light at the sunset.
1 double bed or two single beds- can accommodate a max. of 2 people

Piccionaia: a charming and exclusive place on the top of the tower with 6 windows giving a wonderful panoramic view over the valley.
1 double bed + 1 single bed - can accommodate a max. of 3 people

Volta (upgrade): a very spacious room and with an independent exit to the garden and a large bathroom with bath tub.
1 double bed + 1 single bed (or 3 single beds) - can accommodate a max. of 3 people

Teatro (upgrade): a very large and silent room with arched ceiling.
1 double bed + 2 single beds - can accommodate a max. of 4 people

Mangiatoia: a very appreciated room in the hot summer because it is one of the coolest.
1 double bed (or 2 single beds) - can accommodate a max. of 2 people

Appartamento "Stallina": a very nice apartment with garden and a nice view over the valley.
1 double bed + 3 single beds - can accommodate a max. of 5 people

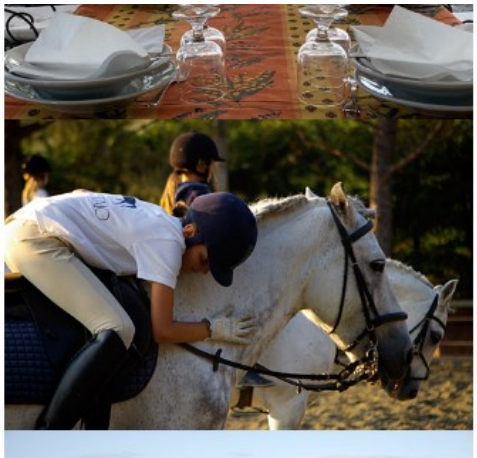
Room Occupancy
If we are unable to find another rider to share the room with you, a single supplement fee applied.
Single room accommodations are subject to availability.

Meals
Half board is included in this packages with breakfasts and dinners. Lunches are not included, but can be ordered daily. Often riders will go into the village, town or all the way into Florence or Siena to sightsee for half a day after or before their lessons.

Forget a diet here! Four courses are served for dinner and a good Chianti wine is always at your disposal (for an extra fee). The products are genuine and fresh, using olive oil that is produced at the farm. The cuisine is typical of Tuscany and delicious. The meals are served in the big dining room on a long table in front of the open fireplace.

A few of our specialties include: Lasagne, Malfatti, Tagliatelle, Pappardelle, Pizza, Ribollita and home-baked Bread.
Our main courses specialities include Gabry Roast Beef, Turkey Roulade, Loin with Spinach, Artichoke and Zucchini Tortini.
Our desserts include Ricotta and Chocolate Torte, Tiramisu, Raspberry and Yoghurt Mousse, "Granny and Grandpa's Torte" and many more.

Dietary Restrictions
We cater vegetarian food upon request.



Riding

Riding Center
The riding center has been recommended by the English T.T.T. (Training the Teachers of Tomorrow) association. The quality of tuition is excellent and caters mainly to the novice to good intermediate rider. Instructors and guides are BHS, GEA, FISE UISP.
Riding lessons are taken in one of the two training arenas and are in English, Italian, French or German. There are usually up to 20-24 riders at the center, but the riding groups are kept small (max 4 rider per session) and divided into different level groups.

Horses
We have approximately 30 horses, among which Lusitano, Anglo-Arab, Sella Italiano, Holsteiner, Arab, Kwpn, Maremmano, Merens and Pony breeds.

Riding Experience
Although these rides out are calm and always accompanied by a qualified guide, they are not suitable for beginners. In most cases, we follow small country paths or go across the Tuscan countryside.

Age Restriction
Please note we cannot guarantee hacking/trail riding for children under 14 years old. We can confirm it only once we have seen them riding.

Staff
A very dedicated and friendly team will welcome you at the riding center in Tuscany.

Coming from an equestrian family, Pietro started riding as a child and at the age of 19 he had already obtained the titles of Instructor both with FISE and with the British Horse Society, through which he became an "accredited Professional Coach". After several years in England, in 2020 he decided together with Natalie to return to Italy to take care of the development of the equestrian center.
Although Pietro has had an excellent competitive career, his true passions are coaching and training. Always interested in respectful training of the animal, with extensive knowledge in dressage, jumping, eventing and relationship with the horse, it can be said that Pietro is a complete trainer, or as many have defined him, "a true horseman".
According to all his pupils, Pietro's strength lies in explaining in an extremely logical way the training, and not just the how. A calm and open approach make him an appreciated coach both by top level riders (Pietro has also taught Grand Prix riders s.o. E 4* complete) and by those who do not yet have much experience but want to increase their knowledge.

Natalie has over 10 years of experience teaching, starting as a hobby back in the UK which then evolved into a profession over in Italy. With her calm and patient manner she has great success in helping riders to gain confidence and believe in their abilities. Coming from a 'horsey' family, she started with showing as a child, competing at the Royal International and Horse of the Year show, the two most important events in England.
She has trained with Olympic showjumper Geoff Billington, renowned coach Susie Gibson, and also dressage legend Dorothy Johnson to name a few.

Itinerary

There are 2 riding packages available:
- Beginner Program: 6 riding lessons
- Intermediate Program: 6 dressage lessons

These packages can be customized to your needs... It is possible to book additional lessons.

Lessons
The lessons are divided into three groups:
- Beginners can learn riding from the very first steps.
- Intermediate riders can extend their knowledge and skill or partake in the riding out.
- Experienced riders can take dressage lessons and combine this with riding out.

Note: Please observe that the beginners' program is only for *real* beginners (absolute beginners or riders that are able to do walk and trot but not canter). Riders that are confident with the three paces can reserve the dressage program for the lessons or be aware to pay the price difference if they are unsure and book the beginners program but then become assessed as experienced enough by us.

The riding lessons are taken in the training arena adjacent to the house and last for about 45 minutes each. The lessons are in small groups (3 students max), which are arranged according to riding skills. It is also possible to pay a supplement in case you wish to get a private lesson. The lessons are in English, Italian or French.

Classical Dressage Training
The training method is based on supplying and loosening up the horse to achieve elasticity and lightness in the use of the aids. We follow the very traditional principles of classical riding, but which are also practiced by riders competing in modern dressage.
The professional foundation is based on the academic style and the qualification is derived from the benefit of several years of training with Portuguese master Pedro Batista De Almeida, a pupil of the great Nuno Olivera. Mr. De Almeida spent his career as the technical director responsible for the Portuguese National Stud which has more than 100 stallions.

Non riders
The swimming pool of the riding center gives splendid views over olive groves and vineyards. If you enjoy sporting activities, there are tennis courts about 10km away, and golf courses in Florence, Castelfalfi and Siena.

Sightseeing
The riding center is an excellent base for touring the heart of Tuscany (you should have a rental car). Florence and Siena are just 30 minutes by car.
Castel del Nero's Spa, is located just 10 minutes' drive away from the riding center and offers all the charm of a castle and a beautiful garden.

Hiking / Cycling
This is also an ideal place to explore the Tuscan countryside by foot or by bicycle. The beautiful trekking routes of the Chianti-valley can be reached by car very easily or you can hike or bike to the villages of Barberino Val d'Elsa and Tavarnelle directly from the riding center.

Cooking Lesson
We organize weekly cooking classes (extra cost - inquire for rate). Thanks to granny's tools and techniques, you will learn to prepare Tagliatelle, Ravioli, Tortelli, Desserts and even Casereccio bread, which you can then enjoy with the other guests.

Yoga
Yoga lessons (extra cost - inquire for rate) for riders and non-riders are available throughout the year. The practicing of yoga is in fact very useful for riders because it will improve your balance and will teach you to breathe correctly, in addition it will increase your flexibility and capacity of concentration and body awareness. The lessons are suitable for absolute beginners or advanced yoga practitioners and will be held either early in the morning or in the late afternoon / early evening. If the weather allows an outdoor lesson, you will be doing yoga in the garden or by the swimming pool, otherwise inside. We provide matrasses and blankets if needed, all you need to bring is comfortable clothing.

Wine Tasting
Every Friday we can arrange a wine tasting (extra cost) for our guests at a local producer with great quality. This is subject to his availability. In case this local producer is not available we address our guests to other wine tastings.

Other Info

Meeting: San Filippo
Airport: Florence
Train station: Train: Florence SMN Bus: S.Filippo
Transfer: Florence airport or Florence train station
Distance: 22 mi
Pick-up/ drop-off for this trip is possible from San Filippo, Poggibonsi train station, Florence airport/ city centre, or Pisa airport. Prices may vary based on driver availability and time of the day (nigh supplement)
There are also train connections and bus options.

Tack: English saddle; general purpose and dressage., Italian saddles

Horses: Lusitanos, Arabs, Anglo Arabs, Sella Italiano, Holsteiner, Kwpn, Maremmano, Merens and Pony breeds

Pace: 2-3 riding hours / day, the trail rides are generally calm: mainly walk and trot, sometimes canter. Hacking out is not available for beginner riders.

Walk | Trot | Canter |

Level: (2 to 5 out of 5) All riding levels

Age: Min 6

Weight: 190 lbs / 85 kg

Riders: Min 2 riders Max 4 riders

Centered Riding

During your stay we can organise a clinic of Centered Riding held by the qualified instructor Hilary Bradford.

Centered Riding is a method of teaching and learning riding which addresses how the rider's mind affects the body, and how both interact with the horse. It stresses good use of the body in horse and rider, making riding more balanced, athletic, and less stressful for both. Centered Riding uses a knowledge of equine and human anatomy, balance and movement along with body awareness methods, the body-mind connection, mental imagery, and techniques from Tai Chi, the Alexander technique, and sport psychology. These techniques, adapted to the needs and desires of each individual, can help riders work in balance and harmony with their horses, to achieve their athletic best, and to make riding a safer, more enjoyable lifelong pastime for all.
Originally developed by Sally Swift, Centered Riding created a new way of expressing the classical principles of riding, answering the question of "how", when the riding instructor says "what" to help to communicate with your horse.
Centered Riding applies equally to all English and western riding disciplines. It is used by riders of all ages, levels and riding interests, from beginners, pleasure riders and therapeutic riders to trainers, instructors and Olympic competitors, and is taught by Centered Riding instructors around the world.

Hilary Bradford was born in London and has been living and working in Italy for many years. Hilary has been a Centered Riding instructor since 1998, updating in the USA in 2000 and twice in Holland in 2004 and 2006. Hilary supervised the Italian edition of Sally Swift's best selling book Centered Riding published in Italy in 2003.
Hilary has worked with Wendy Murdoch and Susan Harris, two leading instructors of CR who both have their own internationally recognised teaching methods. In particular with Wendy, Hilary has assisted at numerous clinics in Italy, Switzerland and Holland and has had the opportunity of working with James Connor (Italian Dressage Team) and Roberto Arloldi (Italian Jumping Team). She has worked alongside Linda Tellington-Jones and Edie Jane Eaton at various clinics and uses TTeam (Tellington-Jones Equine Awareness Method) in her work. Hilary writes every month in Junior for Cavallo Magazine (Italy's leading equestrian monthly publication). She is a freelance instructor and her pupils vary between professional and amateur riders of all ages and disciplines. She follows her 12 year-old daughter Kate with her first pony, King. She currently resides in Northern Italy near Como and will travel for lessons and courses teaching in either English or Italian.

Rates and Dates 2024 - IT-SR04

Rates include: Accommodations, Half board (breakfast and dinner) with mineral water, 6 riding days (1 lesson per day) & Transfers from/to San Filippo
Some helmets can be provided

Packages and Options

Season	Description	EUR	~US$
A 2024	8 days - Intermediate Program	€1365	$1500
	Option to add 4 extra lessons (10 lessons total)	€280	$310
B 2024	8 days - Beginner Program	€1275	$1400
	Option to add 4 extra lessons (10 lessons total)	€220	$240

The US Dollar Rate is based on a EUR Exchange Rate of 1.1 and subject to currency fluctuation

Rates Note: Note: Rooms are cleaned daily - change of towels only once during the week - additional changes can be requested
Additional riding lessons are available for an extra fee
Lunches can be ordered a la carte.

Transfer Option

Description

2024	Transfer from Florence airport (max 4 pax), one-way, per car	€100	$105
2024	Transfer from Pisa airport (max 4 pax), one-way, per car	€170	$175
2024	Transfers from San Filippo included		
2024	Single supplement	€210	$230
2024	Children discount (6-14 year old) - please inquire		
2024	Tourism tax, per week, per person (older than 14 years old)	€10	$10
2024	Upgraded room, cost pp (double occupancy)	€105	$115
2024	Non-riders - please inquire for rates		

Tour Dates

Season	Tour Dates

Weekly from Saturday to Saturday
Shorter stays might be possible (min 2 nights) - please inquire

Rates do not include:Lunches, Airport transfers & Gratuities.

Reservation Form

Tour : _____ **Code #:** _____ **from:** _____ **to :** _____

The Travelers (Last Name, First Name)	Male Female	Single room / or tent	Birth Date MM/DD/YY	Height	Weight	Special diets	Beginner	Novice	Intermediate	Strong Interm.	Advanced	ride English	ride Western	mostly arena	mostly hacking
1.															
2.															
3.															
4.															

Special Diets: _____

Your fitness level: Excellent ☐ Moderate ☐ Poor ☐ How long have you been riding? _____

How often do you ride? _____ Have you been on other riding tours? No ☐ Yes ☐ last trip when? _____

If Hidden Trails offers a transfer from the local airport/station: I would like the transfer to be included: YES ☐ NO ☐

In an emergency, name and phone number of contact: _____

Attention: Please, if there is more than one participant, all have to sign the reservation form - make copies if needed

With my signature I confirm my reservation of the listed program(s) under the Hidden Trails Booking Conditions. I'm aware, and I made all participants aware of the risk involved with these outdoor adventure activities. All participants have read and agree with the Hidden Trails *Booking Conditions* and the Hidden Trails *Recreational Activity Release and Indemnity Agreement* in this brochure or as listed on the Internet.
I (we) will sign and forward the *Recreational Activity Release and* Indemnity Agreement at least 10 weeks before trip starting date.

Last Name and First Name (The Traveler) _____

Street _____ ***e-mail*** _____

City _____ ***State*** _____ ***Postal/Zip Code*** _____

Phone (wk) _____ ***(hm)*** _____ ***Cell*** _____ ***Fax*** _____

Date _____ ***Signature (mandatory)*** 1. _____

Please, charge a 25% deposit (minimum $ 350 per person) now and full payment 10 weeks before the travel date to my credit card.

For payments by VISA ☐ ***or Mastercard*** ☐ (no debit cards)

Cardholder: _____

Card # _____ 3 digit Security # _____

Exp.Date: _____ Signature _____

Billing Address for Credit Card (if different than maling address):

_____

I have enclosed a check for the deposit ☐

Additional Signatures:

2. _____

3. _____

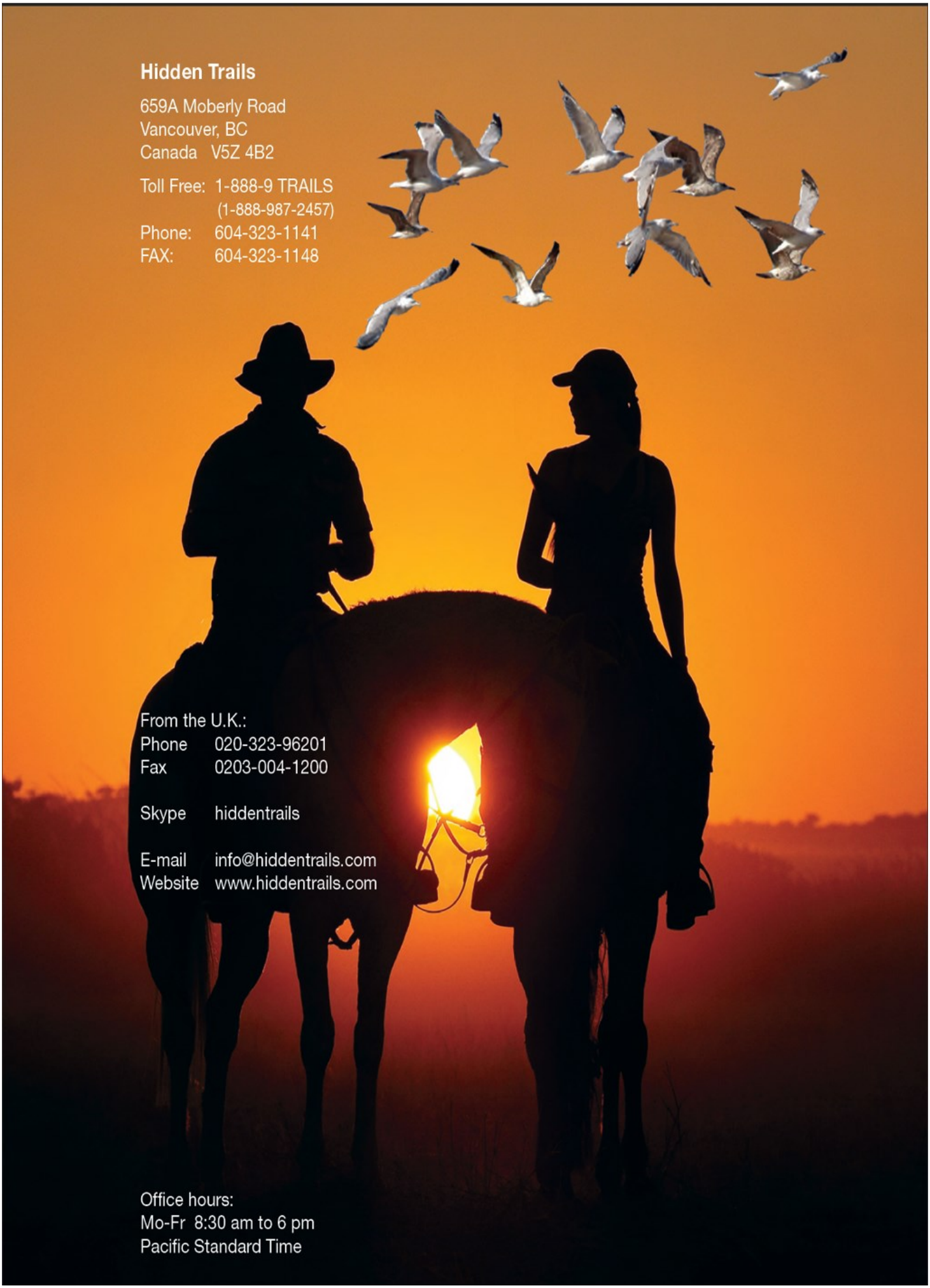
4. _____

Travel Cancellation Insurance Credit Card required

Sign me (us) up ☐ initial _____

No, we will provide our own ☐ initial _____

Hidden Trails Ltd. 659A Moberly Road Vancouver, BC V5Z 4B3 FAX: 604-323-1148 Phone: 604-323-1141


Hidden Trails
659A Moberly Road
Vancouver, BC
Canada V5Z 4B2
Toll Free: 1-888-9 TRAILS
(1-888-987-2457)
Phone: 604-323-1141
FAX: 604-323-1148
From the U.K.:
Phone 020-323-96201
Fax 0203-004-1200
Skype hiddentrails
E-mail info@hiddentrails.com
Website www.hiddentrails.com
Office hours:
Mo-Fr 8:30 am to 6 pm
Pacific Standard Time