



Chico Basin Cattle Ranch Colorado

UNITED STATES

A riding holiday with a purpose for tough riders looking for "the real deal". Experience a week on an authentic **Colorado working ranch**. With a strong focus on environmental conservation your days are spent riding in the company of cowboys, moving cattle and sorting calves. Immerse yourself totally in the practices of a modern cattle ranch and spend a week as a real **Colorado cowboy**. This working ranch holiday is suitable for strong intermediate to advanced riders who enjoy working hard a part of a team, and who want to learn about ranching traditions from the inside.

Ranches and Cattle Drives	8 Days/5 riding days	From £2,440		Open to non-riders
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ITINERARY

Highlights

- A family run working cattle ranch 30 miles from Colorado Springs.
- Ride alongside the cowboys, moving cattle, sorting and monitoring the various herds.
- Farming 87,000 acres the ranchers pay particular attention to conservation, wildlife and the environment.
- A very intimate ranch experience, with normally no more than 4 guests at a time (up to 6 for private groups).
- Enjoy the freedom of riding in vast open spaces.

Day 1 — 1 : EUROPE -COLORADO SPRINGS-RANCH (Saturday) - No riding

Quality Inns & Suites Garden of the Gods

Flight to Colorado Springs - flights not included.

On your arrival into Colorado Springs, we suggest a night at a hotel in this charming city. Make the most of the opportunity to rest up and get over your jetlag before the great week ahead of you at the ranch! Please note that this night is not included in the advertised price, as you are free to make your own plans and book your preferred hotel. We are happy to provide you with a detailed quotation.

This night in the hotel will allow you to rest up before you head out to the ranch the following day and help you recharge before a busy week working with the cowboys. In the evening, you will be free to try one of the local restaurants and explore the town a little.

Flights and hotel night are not included in the price.

Day 2 — 2 : RANCH (Sunday) - No riding

 Chico basin ranch

After breakfast, a wrangler will pick you up at the hotel around 1:00pm to drive you to the ranch.

Sunday is a rest day. You can arrive early in the afternoon and use the free time to settle in, explore the area and meet the team.

Day 3 — 3 : RANCH - 4-8 hours riding

 Chico basin ranch

Your first day at the ranch!

The team provides all the equipment and supplies necessary for you to cook yourself your own breakfast and picnic. You will meet the team at the HQ, make sure to bring your packed lunch with you!

A typical day includes heading out on the ranch for part of the day, either on horseback or in a vehicle, and then spending time doing other activities in the afternoon. Guests are invited to join in on everything that it takes to make the ranch work: checking fence, monitoring grass growth and water, fixing pipeline leaks, working in the leather shop and machine shop, moving cattle, welding, grazing planning, and more. We recommend that guests take time to ride at home before coming so that they can fully enjoy the adventure of working on a horse with cattle when it does happen. We do not recommend that people with less than strong intermediate to advanced riding skills or low physical fitness participate in our programs as riding days can include trotting for long hours to reach cattle. Every day will not include riding, but when we do ride, guests need to be ready to ride long distances at a steady trot.

Ride back to the Ranch and get ready for a hearty dinner, prepared by the team and taken family-style, all together. Every night, you will be welcome into the home of one of the staff or dinner (rotating between each staff member).

IMPORTANT: The following program is provided as an indication, it is by no means exhaustive but reflects all the activities in which you are asked to participate.

The weeks are dictated by the life on the farm, your desires and your experience. Every evening, you will discuss the following day's programme with the wranglers.

Day 4 — 4 : RANCH - 4-8 hours riding

 Chico basin ranch

Today marks your first experience at driving cattle.

Gather the cattle and drive them in the right direction. Depending on your abilities and your experience, you will be asked either to push them from the back or to catch the runaways.

Chico Basin is an eco ranch - in order to preserve the pastures, the cattle have to be moved often from one pasture to another. The cowboys will be delighted to tell you more about their techniques and traditions - no need to push them!

Breeding is done in the most natural possible way - no hormones, no antibiotics, which only means one thing: a mean steak dinner in the evening!

Day 5 — 5 : RANCH - 4-8 hours riding

 Chico basin ranch

After a hearty breakfast (of your own making), a long ride will take you through the vast grassland of the Ranch.

Checking and mending the fence might be on the menu today. You will cover long distances to check the entirety of the estate, with some good gallops to keep up the pace. You will also make the best of this ride and check the herd - it is important to check for signs of illness or wounds. In the springtime, you might also spot a newly born calf!

You will be back at the Ranch in the middle of the afternoon, with some time to relax before dinner.

Day 6 — 6 : RANCH - 4-8 hours riding

 Chico basin ranch

If you are lucky and going to the ranch in the spring time, you may be able to participate in a big branding day.

This traditional event is an absolute necessity at the Ranch. It allows wranglers and ranchers to identify their animals as they sometimes get mixed up with other herds. Branding is traditionally done around springtime.

After going through the cattle to identify the individuals that need to be branded, fires are lit and it's time to get down and roll up your sleeves. Learn how to use a lasso to catch the calves, before branding and vaccinating them.

You will be assigned a task suiting your experience fitness levels. Some guests stay on horseback and control the herd, while others work with the calves. Make sure to tell the wranglers what you are comfortable with.

Day 7 — 7 : RANCH - 4-8 hours riding

 Chico basin ranch

Several cows and their calves must be moved to another pasture. You ride slowly to make sure you don't lose any calves, still weak and definitely not too quick! By now, you should be able to drive cattle and overcome any obstacles you might encounter. Gates no longer stop you!

You might also have a chance to get close to some birds and deers.

Day 8 — 8 : COLORADO SPRINGS- EUROPE - No

After breakfast, you say your goodbyes to the team - or rather, your "see you next year". If your flight is late enough, you might go for one last morning ride.

Transfer to Colorado Springs (payable locally) or extend your trip with a Colorado road trip. Please contact us for extensions.

Flight to Europe.

DATES & PRICES

DEPARTURE	RETURN	PRICE WITHOUT FLIGHTS	STATUS
02/03/2024	09/03/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
09/03/2024	16/03/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
16/03/2024	23/03/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
23/03/2024	30/03/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
30/03/2024	06/04/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
06/04/2024	13/04/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
13/04/2024	20/04/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
20/04/2024	27/04/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
27/04/2024	04/05/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
11/05/2024	18/05/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
18/05/2024	25/05/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
08/06/2024	15/06/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
22/06/2024	29/06/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
06/07/2024	13/07/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
13/07/2024	20/07/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
20/07/2024	27/07/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
27/07/2024	03/08/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure

03/08/2024	10/08/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
17/08/2024	24/08/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
24/08/2024	31/08/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
31/08/2024	07/09/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure
07/09/2024	14/09/2024	£2,440	Guaranteed departure

Price details

- Flights or transportation to your destination (international/domestic) are not included, but can be booked on request - please contact us for rates.
- Rates are per person, calculated on the basis of a 6-night's stay and are based on a shared bedroom and bathroom. The groups are composed of 2 to 4 riders maximum. Private groups can be of 6 riders.
- Longer stays are possible, but all arrivals at the ranch are on Sundays. There is no horseback riding on the day of arrival and there are no guided activities on Saturday afternoon or Sundays at the Chico Basin Ranch. If you spend 2 weeks at the ranch some non riding activities will be proposed like fishing, hiking or others activities outside the ranch (to be paid additionally and locally). Please contact us.
- Your first night at the hotel is not included but we would be happy to add to your quotation.
- Guests who book 2+ weeks will receive 10% off their stay.
- Transfers to or from Colorado springs are not included. Count about \$75 per car each way, payable locally.
- Tips to the local team are compulsory in the USA and represent around 15-20% of the cost of your stay. These are payable locally. Please factor in around \$420-\$550.
- An electronic travel authorisation (ESTA) is required to enter the USA. It is your responsibility to organise this. Please visit <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/> and contact us if you need help.

Please Note

The itinerary may be modified at anytime for security reasons, meteorological or events beyond our control such as blocked roads, rivers in flood, drought, strikes and local holidays. Equus Journeys, our local partners and their local guides will always strive to find the best solution and will alter the itinerary as needed.

The names of the hotels and accommodation are given for information only and depending on availability, they may be modified without notice and replaced by another of a similar standard.

Price includes

SUPPORT TEAM

1 English speaking ranch team

LOGISTICS

2-3 horses equipped with western saddle and bridle per rider

ACCOMMODATION

At the ranch: 6 nights in a double room in a lodge with a sitting room and shared bathroom

MEALS

Full board from dinner on arrival day at the ranch to breakfast on the check-out day

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT

Saddle bags

Price doesn't include

MEALS

Beverages and personal extras

TRANSPORT

International flights that we can book for you upon request
Transfers by car from Colorado Springs to the ranch
Visa fee (ESTA) - this must be arranged in advance

EXTRAS

Tips to the local team are compulsory in the USA. For Chico Basin, we suggest around 10% of the cost of your stay

INSURANCE

Cancellation and travel insurance are not included. Please note that insurance is mandatory. We recommend taking out an insurance policy as soon as your trip is booked in case of cancellation.

Optional

ACCOMMODATION

One night at a hotel in Colorado Springs on arrival

EQUESTRIAN INFO

Horses

The ranch has more than twenty quarter horses, all of which have been born and bred at Chico. They are all broken in on the ranch and are excellent ranch horses that know their jobs. They are trained throughout the year by the wranglers and are between 14.2hh and 15hh.

All horses are ridden western style.

Guide & local team

English speaking staff.

The ranch is supervised by an environment protection association. The terrains and fields of the ranch are managed in an ecological and holistic way. The wranglers and the staff are either employed or volunteers. They are very friendly and do their best to make the most of your stay. Some of them are sometimes a little talkative because of their shyness. Go first and talk with them!

Minimum riding ability

MINIMUM RIDING ABILITY

This trip is for experienced riders not afraid of hard work. You have to be comfortable at all paces in some open fields.
Children under 8 years old can ride inside the ranch. Over 8 years old and if matching the riding level children can join the outside activities accompanied of their parents.

We do not recommend that people with less than strong intermediate to advanced riding skills or low physical fitness participate in our programs as riding days can include trotting for long hours to reach cattle.

Rider weight limit: 105 kg / 16st4 / 230 lbs.

PACE

You will 4-8 hours riding depending on the ranch activities.
Long canters and trot or jog (sitting in the saddle) depending on what needs to be done - working directly with the cattle will be, on the other hand, slow.

TACKING ABILITY AND PARTICIPATION

You will be asked to groom, tack and untack your horse.
You may wish to take part in the daily tasks of the ranch like watching the cattle, mending fences...

TRIP CONDITIONS AND REQUESTED EXPERIENCE

An experience of Western riding style and cattle work are not compulsory for this stay, but is recommended. Days in the saddle can be very long and this is a real working ranch experience - very far from the romantic idea of a guest ranch.

Every day will not include riding, but when we do ride, guests need to be ready to ride long distances at a steady trot.

Although the Chico is a serious working ranch, the team will not expect you to do more than you want. We can leave ample time for relaxing or other self guided activities such as: fishing, swimming, hiking, and birding as requested.

EQUESTRIAN EQUIPMENT

Western tack

Front saddle bags

A rope to attach your jacket at the back of the saddle

We recommend our riders to wear a helmet to the correct standard and you should bring your own to ensure a proper fit.

TRAVEL INFO

COMFORT

Accommodation is in a bunkhouse with only two rooms available to guests. Each room is spacious and comfortable and has a double and two single beds (bunks). Guests who don't know each other are not expected to share a room. All bedding and towels are provided.

Both rooms share a bathroom and open plan kitchen sitting area. A washing machine and tumble dryer are available.

Guests prepare their own breakfast and a sack lunch in the kitchen in their facility with provided groceries, and dinners are shared and prepared by staff in their personal homes, or brought down to Maycamp and enjoyed together.

WiFi is available although signal in the rooms can be very weak.

MEALS

The fridge will be packed with ingredients for you to prepare your own breakfast (cereal, toast, yoghurt) and lunch (bread, cheese, cold cuts, chocolate bars, fruit..).

Dinners are prepared by the staff and taken all together in their personal homes.

If you wish to drink alcohol you have to bring some as the ranch doesn't have a license to and is a BYOB type. (Bring Your Own Bottle).

CLIMATE

Plains of Colorado

- Dry winters with an occasional wind-blown snow. Some very cold temperatures alternating with some surprisingly warm days.
- Windy springs with highly changeable weather, an occasional blizzard, large temperature changes and an occasional gentle soaking rain or wet snow to help nurture the grasslands.
- Low-humidity summers with hot days and comfortable nights -- The Threat of big thunderstorms is always there, and the Plains see some of the most ferocious hail storms of the entire continent.
- Pleasant falls -- often dry.

Overall it is a semi-arid with precipitations gradually increasing as you go eastward into Kansas and Nebraska. Dry winters, wetter springs and summer, highly changeable weather, often windy, and some occasional monstrous thunderstorms with damaging hail.

TIPS

Tips are compulsory in USA. Local team expects to get 10% of the cost of your stay.

PACKING LIST

Head

- Equus Journeys strongly recommend that you wear a riding helmet and that you take your own to ensure a correct fit.
- Sunhat for when not riding

- Sunglasses - with a cord attached so they don't fly off when riding
- Buff or bandana

Upper body

- Thermals (long or short sleeved)
- Long sleeved shirts provide protection from the sun and are an extra layer
- T-shirts
- Lightweight fleece or jumper
- Warm fleece or jumper (and a spare in case one gets wet)
- Warm and waterproof jacket - it can rain at any time of year and the evenings can be particularly cold

Legs

- Lightweight, comfortable riding trousers or jodhpurs - we recommend riding in them at home before taking them on holiday to ensure they don't rub
- Shorts
- Casual clothes for the evening

Hands and Feet

- Comfortable riding boots. We recommend western boots or short boots with half chaps but you may wish to take long chaps. We don't recommend taking your favourite long leather boots in case they get damaged
- Sandals, flip-flops or trainers
- Gloves - your hands are particularly exposed to the sun whilst riding

Nightwear

- Pyjamas

Other useful items

- Camera and high capacity memory card. Spare battery
- Bumbag for carrying your camera and small items whilst riding
- Headtorch or small torch
- Water bottle (2 litres or 2 x 1 litre) - 1 bottle will be provided by the ranch
- Swiss army knife
- Small plastic bags for rubbish
- Ear plugs (for light sleepers)

Medical kit

- Any medication you regularly take
- Sunscreen and lip balm - should be high factor
- Insect repellent, preferably containing deet
- Blister plasters in case of any rubs
- Antiseptic cream, plasters, aspirin, anti-histamine, insect-bite salve etc...
- Spare prescription glasses/contact lenses
- Eye drops
- Imodium or similar anti-diarrhoea medication
- Re-hydration sachets
- Antiseptic wipes
- Handwash gel

Our Recommendations

- Backpacks cannot be worn whilst riding. We recommend a small bumbag or a coat with pockets so that you can carry small items with you during the day (passport, camera, sunscreen, lipbalm etc)
- We recommend travelling in your riding boots and carrying your hat and some riding clothes in your hand luggage - then if your luggage goes astray you are still able to ride!
- We recommend taking a copy of your passport and insurance documents with you in case you lose your originals

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

1. **Travel light.** It's a little known fact, but the lighter you pack, the better for the environment as heavy bags will produce higher emissions (when flying a plane or driving a car!).
2. **Reduce plastic waste.** Take your favorite reusable bottle with you. Avoid single-use bags, cups, or straws.
3. **Preserve nature.** Always take your rubbish with you during the ride and recycle them. Leave all the flowers or plants as you found them, and never

get too close when observing wildlife. Make sure to use eco-friendly products such as body wash or laundry detergent (if camping) to protect both your skin and the environment.

4. **Choose your experiences carefully.** Respect animal life by not participating in any activities that abuse wild animals (shows, elephant rides, etc.).
5. **Support local populations.** Buy local handicrafts, be respectful of customs, and learn about the culture of local communities.
6. **Share!** Raise awareness among your family and friends about sustainable tourism.

For more information please [see this page](#) .