

The Heart of the Tramuntana

4 days in the saddle, two nights at the monastery in Lluc and one night in the Refuge at Tossals Verds



This trail is for the more ardent adventurer, who is prepared to stay overnight at a comfortable but basic refuge in dormitory bunk beds as well as in the simple rooms with en suite facilities in the monastery at Lluc. It is an exhilarating and tiring trip, where you are likely to meet like-minded people of different nationalities who share your love of outdoor activity.

Day 1

Starting from the stable in Pollenca Bay at 9am, you will prepare your horse for the trip ahead and then ride by road to Pollenca town. Take a break near the Roman Bridge in Pollenca, before setting off on the old road to LLuc. Soon you will be riding through dense holm oak woodland as well as more open spaces and along the river bed, as you climb steadily towards LLuc. There are many tracks with lovely and frequently changing scenery. You will stop for lunch along the way at a beautiful finca, where the owner cooks with the best of local produce and serves it to her guests in her home.

At the end of your first day you will see the magnificent monastery coming into view. You will take your horse to a lush field, un-tack and feed them. You might fancy a drink in the bar now before finding your monastery cell. The rooms are simple and comfortable with private bathrooms – but be prepared to make your own bed! An excellent typically Mallorquine menu awaits you in one of the Monastery restaurants.



Day 2

After breakfast the next day, groom your horse and tack up for the journey towards to peak of Galilea. You will find more of the charcoal burning platforms which are also on the old road from Pollenca to LLuc. These are from the time when charcoal was an essential commodity on Mallorca. It was used to turn the lime stone into quick lime for farming, to make mortar and paint for buildings and as a cooking fuel. Your horse will now take you on an exhilarating journey up steep tracks to what feels like the top of the world. In fine weather you will see the most stunning views of the Mallorcan coast line before descending into a wide valley with views of Puig Major – Mallorca's highest mountain. Birds of prey can frequently be seen circling in the sky. You continue towards a densely wooded landscape and then along narrow, winding and eventually steeply rising track – before descending to the Refuge at Tossals Verds.

There are often charming donkeys to share the horses' field, which includes a shelter for tying up, grooming and feeding. At the refuge you can order water, wine, beers, coffees and a few spirits before being served a communal set meal shared at trestle tables with the other guests. You will sleep in a dormitory so try not to snore too much! There are separate men and women's toilet and shower rooms.



Day 3

Breakfast is again served communally, after which it's time to saddle up for day 3, packing a picnic lunch prepared by the Refuge. Today you will retrace parts of the route of the previous day, with some differences. Notice particularly how the ground cover changes from scented pine and thick undergrowth to bare mountain side with tiny wild flowers. Having seen many smaller ice houses along your way, today you will visit an enormous snow house close to a long abandoned building called 'the house of Galilea. This would have fed the smaller ice houses with compacted snow from the mountain tops in winter, ready to be carried down to the towns for use in summer.



Admire the astonishing views of the coastline before beginning your descent down a beautifully restored stone stairway (which is part of the recently completed Rota de Piedra en Sec) where you will need to dismount and walk because it is a little slippery under hoof for your horse. Then continue riding through the varied landscape until you return to the monastery and your horse to its green field. You will be well into the routine of un-tacking and feeding your horse now. Your party may choose to dine on this second evening at LLuc in the more informal circular bar restaurant on the outer edge of the monastery site, where the food is excellent.



Day 4

After breakfast on the final day groom your horse and tack up for the downward journey home and notice the horses' sense of excitement as they return to their most familiar territory. At first you will take a different route to the one you first arrived by, through what looks like an enchanted wood, eventually returning to a familiar landscape and the shallower inclined of the Tramuntana. Stopping again in Pollenca, you will enjoy an excellent Mallorcan lunch such as paella with wine – served in a small bar frequented by local people. Now the final ride back to the stables where you will complete your second day's riding at about 6pm.