



Sustainability Code of Good Practice

Horse Riding & Pony Trekking

As part of our commitment to advancing sustainable tourism, we encourage our tourism partners to improve their sustainability performance by providing them with the guidance below.

- ✓ Ensure applicable legal **permits & permission** to access activity area are in place
- ✓ Ensure **insurance** for participants and team is in place
- ✓ Identify **health & safety** risks, implement management systems, and provide appropriate safety equipment, including suitable, well-fitted tack
- ✓ Ensure enough team members are available in case of **emergency**
- ✓ Monitor activity **area conditions** (including weather) in advance & during the activity
- ✓ Be familiar with activity area, ensure that **navigation and communication** tools are in good working order, and pack spare tack in case breakage occurs during the ride
- ✓ Maximise local **economic benefits** through employment and purchasing
- ✓ Avoid single use & disposable items, pack out what you take in, and pick up **rubbish** found along the way
- ✓ Use **eco-friendly products**, e.g., for cleaning purposes
- ✓ Be **waterwise** and take pro-active measures to use water sparingly
- ✓ Minimise **energy** used in the activity as part of a climate action strategy
- ✓ Provide **information in advance** about your sustainability actions, activity accessibility, what to expect, and what to bring with
- ✓ Provide best practice in **animal welfare** – “Five Freedoms” – freedom from hunger & thirst, discomfort, pain / injury / disease, fear / distress, and freedom to express normal behaviour
- ✓ Ensure **caretakers** are suitably equipped, trained, and experienced to provide best practice care
- ✓ **Train horses / ponies** to ensure reasonable standard of behaviour during activity
- ✓ Keep detailed **records** of behavioural incidents with horses / ponies used for activity
- ✓ Ensure horses / ponies are adequately **fit & healthy** for the nature of the activity
- ✓ Monitor **physical health** of animals, including checks for lameness and shoe condition (if applicable), providing veterinary advice / care as needed
- ✓ Ensure animals on same activity are **familiar** with each other, to prevent incident
- ✓ **Groom** animals prior to saddling
- ✓ **Plan routes** to maximise safety of riders and animals, and avoid trails after significant rainfall
- ✓ **Screen riders** ahead of time to ensure activity is suitable for their fitness and level of ability, especially children
- ✓ Manage **group size** to minimise impacts and ensure a safe guide : rider ratio
- ✓ Obtain written confirmation, e.g., via **indemnity**, that participants are aware of activity risks
- ✓ Provide ‘**test ride**’ opportunity to ensure riders are confident with allocated horse / pony
- ✓ **Brief riders**, pre-departure, about do’s and don’ts, safety, what to expect, hazards to be aware of, logistical considerations, applicable conduct (including handling horses / ponies, communication, etiquette around other users, vehicles, other animals and in populated areas, etc.), not disturbing / removing flora and fauna, and rubbish collection and disposal

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For more sustainable tourism guidance and to provide feedback, visit www.travelife.info/sustour/codes

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Sustainability Code of Good Practice

Horse Riding & Pony Trekking (continued...)

- ✓ In sensitive environments, clean riders' footwear, horse / pony hooves, coats and equipment before activity starts, and provide weed-free feed for preceding 48 hours to **prevent spread of invasive species**
- ✓ **Secure loose items** to prevent entanglement with riding equipment
- ✓ Stay on **designated trails** and remain in the middle of the trail to avoid widening
- ✓ Cross properties at **gates / stiles**, and leave them behind as you found them
- ✓ Cross **watercourses** at designated points or available bridges, otherwise at firm / stony sections to avoid erosion, and at 90° to bank / shore
- ✓ Do not allow horses / ponies to **remain in or be washed** in natural watercourses
- ✓ Water horses / ponies at **designated water points**, where possible
- ✓ Do not allow horses / ponies to **graze** on natural vegetation in the activity area
- ✓ Do not allow animals to **roam freely** during rest stops
- ✓ Provide food at **overnight rest stops**, and keep animals in a designated area that allows sufficient space (minimum 15m² as a guideline)
- ✓ **Rotate use** of different overnight / rest stops to minimise cumulative impacts
- ✓ **Share information** about local nature & culture, as well as social development / conservation projects that participants may want to support
- ✓ Repair and compensate for any **damage** caused to the activity area
- ✓ Participate in conserving activity area **integrity**; notify authorities of concerns and participate in rehabilitation projects



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