

A group of approximately seven horses are swimming in clear, turquoise water. The horses are of various colors, including dark brown, black, and light brown. They are moving from left to right across the frame, with their heads and backs visible above the water. The water is bright and clear, with some white foam from the horses' movement. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

**RIDE ANDES CHILE-ARGENTINA  
IN THE STEPS OF THE PIONEERS**

Season: November to March

*Chile to Argentina: Deep into the untouched Andes*



Photo by @jpverdesoto



RIDE ANDES

rideandes@rideandes.com  
www.rideandes.com  
@ride\_andes  
facebook.com/RideAndes

WhatsApp, Tel. 24/7:  
+593 999 738 221

## Introduction

Travel back in time along disused paths through the Chilean Andes on this adventure, visiting the lost valleys where the first pioneers settled. We cross rivers and traverse ancient forests en route to Argentina. You will discover the azure lakes of Northern Patagonia and the glaciers that feed them, experiencing the original pioneer's way of life, all in the tranquillity of a pristine wilderness.

## Testimonial

"Even by Ride Andes standards this trek was remote. We rode into another world –where the road had ended three days ride ago and the condors had no competition from planes in the spotless sky...The courtesy and charm of the people we met in this pioneering land was only surpassed by the perfect manners of our glossy Criollo horses!"  
Karen C.

## In The Steps Of The Pioneers

Each night is riders find themselves in a pioneer's home, savouring traditional home-cooked recipes, cooked with local ingredients. Spend the evening sitting around the woodburning stove listening to their fascinating tales of how they arrived in these valleys via the waterways - carving an existence out of the thick undergrowth. For two of the nights, a private island awaits to host you, only accessible by boat.

## What You Need To Know?

- 8-day itinerary, Chile to Argentina, no camping
- Season: November to March
- Fixed date departures/Private groups (tour can be adapted)
- Maximum 10 riders on fixed date departures
- No camping needed; bedrooms maximum 3 people, shared bathroom
- Steady pace - mountainous areas & forest trails mean no fast paced riding
- Single riders welcome (availability of single room depends on group size)
- Great family option - but must manage 6/7 hours riding on some days
- Not suitable for those with severe allergic reactions to bee/wasp stings

## **In The Steps Of The Pioneers Overview:**

### **DAY 1: Disconnecting**

*Dinner & Overnight at a riverside house at El Traidor.  
B, L, T, D (approx. 2 hours riding, 4 hours transfer)*

### **DAY 2: The Early Settlers Domains**

*Dinner & Overnight at Santo Domingo.  
B, L, T, D (approx. 5 hours riding)*

### **DAY 3: Stunning Scenery - Fjords, Estuaries, Volcanoes...**

*Dinner & Overnight at a riverside house at Las Rosas.  
B, L, T, D (approx. 2 hours riding, 4 hours transfer)*

### **DAY 4: The Ventisqueros Valley, Ancient Forests & Glaciers.**

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

### **DAY 5: The First Settlers & Larch Forests.**

*Dinner & 2nd Overnight at Ventisqueros.  
B, L, T, D (approx. 5-6 hours riding)*

### **DAY 6: Suspension Bridge & Private Island.**

*Dinner & Overnight on the private island, in wood built houses.*

*B, L, T, D (approx. 7 hours riding)*

### **DAY 7: Valdivian Forest & Lago Azul**

*Dinner & 2nd Overnight on the private island, in wood built houses.*

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

### **DAY 8: No Man's Land & Crossing into Argentina\***

*B, L, (approx. 1 hour riding, 50 minutes navigation on the lakes, 3 hours private transfer to Bariloche)*

### **End of services**

#### **\*February & March itinerary change:**

### **DAY 8: Leisurely Walk, Ferry Crossing & Vehicle back to Puerto Varas.**

For your safety, due to low autumn water levels, the itinerary has to be changed and guests arrive back at the Puerto Varas, Chile ride start point.



### **Arriving/Departing/Extensions:**

Start & ending point: Start point Puerto Varas (Chile), end point San Carlos de Bariloche (Argentina). We can use our extensive knowledge to help arrange 'extensions' in Chile and in Argentina, please consult with us.



## **Detailed Itinerary:**

### **DAY 1: Disconnecting**

We leave Puerto Varas with a morning transfer towards the Andes. As the journey begins, views of the Llanquihue Lake and the Calbuco and Osorno Volcanoes come into focus. We arrive at the edge of the Reloncaví Fjord, the area well-known for its salmon fishing industry. On the way to our first ferry crossing, we journey up the Río Puelo Valley. Time for lunch before crossing the Puelo River and, at the same time we disconnect -crossing into an internet and telephone free area. A little further on, at Río Manso, we meet our horses and team of baqueanos (local horsemen). The packhorses are loaded - with terrain too difficult for carts, this is one of the many skills that the settlers had to learn fast. Guests get to know the horses that they will be riding for the first few days and also start to appreciate the rare peacefulness that this area exudes. Once everyone is comfortable on their horse, we set out through fertile farmland and along the beaches, arriving late afternoon at the home of a baqueano and his wife on the river's edge.

*Dinner & Overnight at a riverside house at El Traidor.  
B, L, T, D (approx. 2 hours riding, 4 hours transfer)*

### **DAY 2: The Early Settlers Domains**

Today we continue exploring this corner of the Chilean Lake District, barely touched by human intervention and where nature still reigns. In the days of the early settlers this stretch of river was on the 'main' track out of the Andes, but times and routes have changed and the primary vegetation in these beautiful valleys remains intact for us to enjoy. After a day riding largely on narrow tracks through the pristine forests, we once again approach the river heading to our overnight stop. We may meet some of the few farmers that cultivate the valley floors, living near the river as the water courses were vital to the early settlers. Arriving in time for tea at another baqueanos house, we settle in for the evening.

*Dinner & Overnight at Santo Domingo.  
B, L, T, D (approx. 5 hours riding)*



### **DAY 3: Stunning Scenery - Fjords, Estuaries, Volcanoes...**

After another home-cooked breakfast, a longer day in the saddle today as we cross plains, forests, and white sandy beaches along the pebbly riverbeds of several tributaries of the Puelo River. This area is almost uninhabited, so we are unlikely to meet anyone until we arrive at the shores of the main river. Here we will meet up with the fresh horses that will take us on the rest of our journey across the Andes - along with a new team of horsemen that will ably look after us along the way. After lunch, once guests are settled on their new steeds, we continue along the banks of the Puelo River through the native vegetation. Guests soon bond with these level-headed, strong local 'Criollo' horses that have been developed over the years to cope admirably with the terrain. Late in the afternoon, we arrive at Las Rosas, to stay with one of our horsemen and his wife, at their house on the shores of the Puelo River.

*Dinner & Overnight at a house at Las Rosas.  
B, L, T, D (approx. 6 hours riding)*



#### **DAY 4: The Ventisqueros Valley, Ancient Forests & Glaciers.**

Today, we will continue our ride into the Río Ventisqueros Valley. An incredible day encircled by mountains awaits us, passing through ancient woodlands, across open spaces and along the riverbanks – the river fed by the glacier high above the head of the valley. We will be crossing dense forests, passing self-sufficient small holdings and, just as the locals have to do, we will ride across the wide Ventisqueros River to reach our remote destination. After enjoying lunch on one of the Ventisqueros river beaches, we will continue on to the little farm where we will be hosted for two nights by Bernardita who lives in one of the most isolated parts of this region.

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

#### **DAY 5: The First Settlers & Larch Forests.**

Today, we venture even further up the valley, with beautiful views of the Ventisqueros Glacier above. Our route takes us across the property of the very first settler of the valley who arrived here in 1950. The trail then leads us through a huge expanse of forest alongside the bubbling river and after crisscrossing the river, we will ride through a forest of larch (*Fitzroya Cupresoyde*). These tall conifers are native to the area and known for their longevity. No one lives in this remote and virgin region; it is exhilarating to know few people ride into this barely touched valley. We have lunch near the Raquelita River and return to Bernardita's house in time for a mid-afternoon swim in the clear blue river.

*Dinner & 2nd Overnight at Ventisqueros.  
B, L, T, D (approx. 5-6 hours riding)*

## **DAY 6: Suspension Bridge & Private Island.**

This morning we will set off on our longest ride. Another route that has primary forests, river crossings and waterfalls against a backdrop of glorious mountains in a pure, pollution-free environment. After a relaxing lunch, we cross the Puelo River over a suspension bridge; this solidly built construction has greatly helped the pioneers. This place is particularly spectacular due to its waterfalls and the rushing water under the bridge. After crossing, we follow trails along the mountain slopes to Las Rocas Lake. At the end of the ride, we leave the horses to graze on the banks of the lake and a motorboat takes guests to a private island, a remote haven with 360 degrees of amazing views surrounded by the quiet of the cordillera. Guests can unwind on the decks of the charming wood-built houses and take a swim in the crystal-clear waters of the lake.

*Dinner & Overnight on the private island, in wood built houses. B, L, T, D (approx. 7 hours riding)*

## **DAY 7: Valdivian Forest & Lago Azul**

Today we will leave the island to meet the horses and the baqueanos on the shores of the lake. After a quick stop at the farm - La Colina, where riders can glimpse farm life in the heart of the cordillera, the journey continues to the Lago Azul for lunch on a beach. After the picnic, we ride back towards Las Rocas Lake through parts of the ancient Valdivian Forest. There are only a few temperate rain forests in the world. The Valdivian Forest is characterized by very dense undergrowth, bamboo, ferns and Chilean rhubarb as well as evergreen trees. Chile's national flower, the copihue (*Lapageria rosea*) is a pioneer species that grows in undisturbed areas of this forest.

At the end of the ride, we return by boat to the private island. The owner's mother settled on the island in 1950 and it is fascinating to listen to the tales of constructing a dwelling here - everything arriving by boat across the lakes and up the rapids.

*Dinner & 2nd Overnight on the private island, in wood built houses.*

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





### **DAY 8: No Man's Land & Crossing into Argentina\***

Today we change countries - we ride a short way to the Chilean border post, Retén Paso El Bolsón; jumping off the horses with passports in hand, riders complete the formalities. Now in no man's land - between the Chilean and Argentine border posts- we ride down to Inferior Lake, the official harbour of the frontier and the end of our ride. It is time to say farewell to the horses and baqueanos.

From here we take a motorboat for 45 minutes along two lakes, crossing the rapids between Argentina and Chile. After going through customs and immigration on the Argentine side of the Andes, we meet our transfer that takes us to a restaurant for lunch and then to Bariloche, passing through El Bolsón. The small city of Bariloche, surrounded by lakes and mountains, is an ideal location to slip back into 'civilisation', particularly with the aid of their delicious chocolates and Argentinian wines.

*B, L (approx. 1 hour riding, 50 minutes navigation on the lakes, 3 hours in total private transfer to Bariloche)*

### **End of services**

#### **\*February & March itinerary change:**

#### **DAY 8: Gentle Walk, Ferry Crossing & Vehicle back to Puerto Varas.**

For your safety, due to low autumn water levels, the itinerary has to be changed during February and March. It is beautiful scenery and -with the boat rides and walk, a lovely way to finish this Andes adventure. After breakfast, leave the island by boat, normally a 15-minute trip to the little dock. A gentle walk from the dock to the farm, where the horses are based. Then a vehicle transfer to the ferry (approx 1 hour). The ferry takes about 45 minutes then continue to Puerto Varas (approx 3 hours).

*B, L (approx. 1 hour vehicle transfer to ferry, 45 minute ferry crossing, 3 hours minibus transfer to Puerto Varas).*

### **End of services**

**2021/2022 Prices from:**

<b>Length</b>	<b>double/twin per person</b>	<b>Single Supplement</b>	<b>Rider Weight supplement (89- 98 kg. 196-215lbs)</b>
(8D/7N)	from USD 4290	Please consult	USD 290

**Included:**

All accommodation (\*exact options confirmed at the time of inquiry); all meals (from day 1 lunch to final day lunch); a half bottle of wine per person for dinner on riding days; English speaking guide & local guides "baqueanos"; riding on 8 days (except February/March route: 7 days riding); horses, packhorses & spare horses; ponchos & saddlebags; grooms services; all necessary transfers/transport as per itinerary; all local taxes, private reserve & national park entrance fees. VHF communication radio. Briefing evening before ride.

**Not included:**

Appropriate medical insurance (mandatory), visa (as necessary), international or national airport taxes, dinner day 8, personal expenditure, tips, and all services not mentioned in the description above.

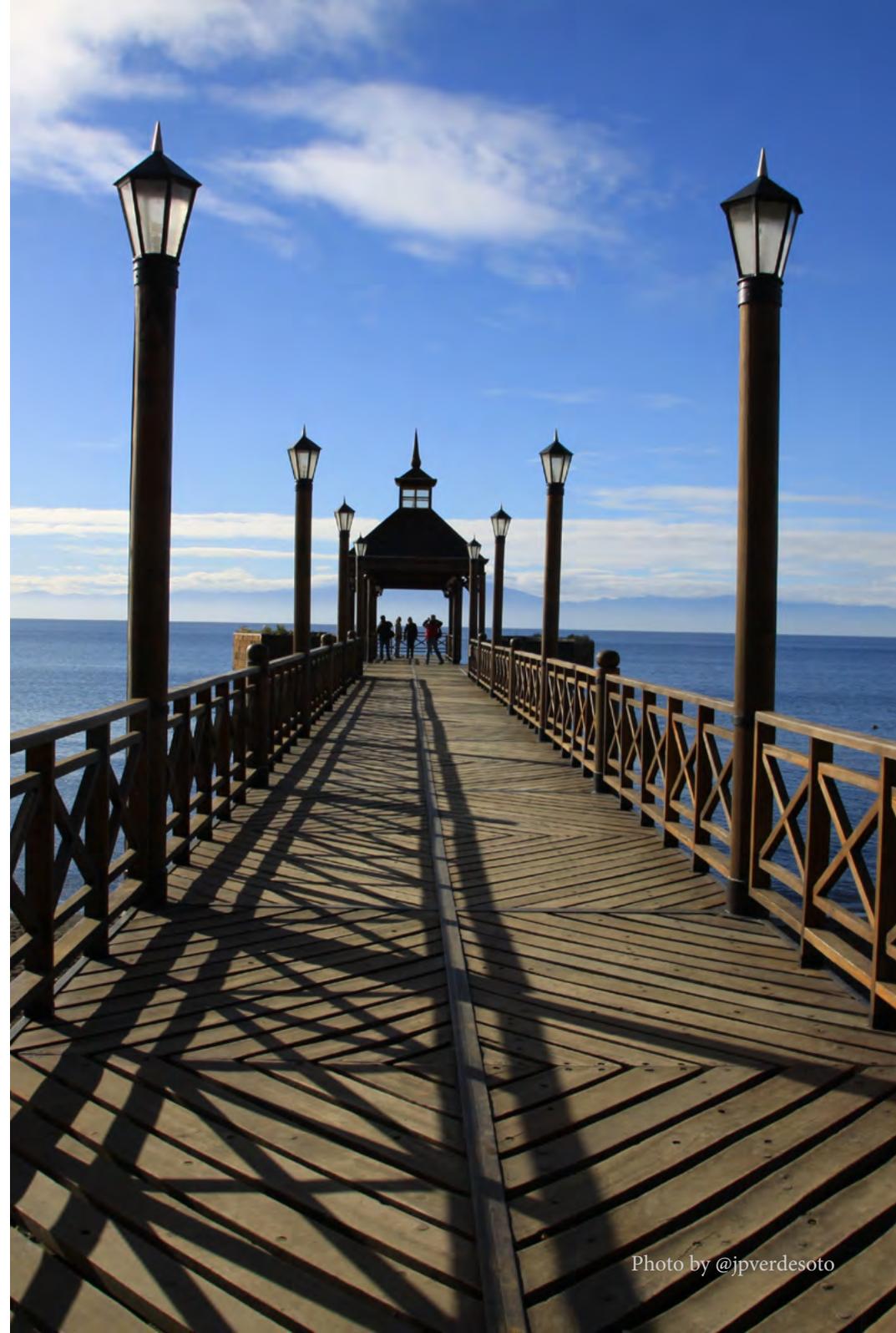


Photo by @jpverdesoto

## F.A.Q's

**Horses & Tack:** During this tour, riders usually stay with the same horse (as long as the rider is happy!). Our intention is for riders to actually build a bond with their horse and enjoy not only the landscape and ride but also the company of their horse! One or more spare horses will accompany us in case a change is needed. The Chilean horse is descended from horses brought by Spanish to South America during the colonisation. In every South American country horses have been developed depending on the topography and uses. The Chilean animal has roots in Arabian and British horses. Like many other Creole breeds across Latin America, the Chilean Creole is medium size but extremely strong. The horses are born and bred in the region so that they are perfectly familiar with the terrain. The saddle is a light South American structure, with no high pommel and thick sheepskins to sit on – ideal for this type of ride.

**Accommodation: Nights 1 to 5:** We will be warmly welcomed into the locals' homes, giving guests an excellent opportunity to share in their lifestyle. The houses are very cosy and rustic, with shared bathroom facilities. These extremely charming abodes offer mostly 2-3 bedded rooms.

**Nights 4 & 5** sometimes mattresses on the floor. **Nights 6 & 7:** You will stay on a private island which has a main house with 2 bedrooms and a wood-built cottage (cabaña) with 3 sleeping area and 2 bathrooms.

The main house has a warm living-dining room on the first floor. Exact bedroom options confirmed at the time of inquiry.

**Meals:** During the trip, Chilean Creole cuisine is the typical fare. Delicious meals with organically grown, locally sourced produce are prepared on wood-burning stoves as well as the Chilean Asado (BBQ). Depending on the season, you will be able to taste delicious rainbow trout or brown trout. We can cater for vegetarians and other dietary requirements as long as we are warned in advance. The water is safe to drink and has a crisp, clean taste.

**For further information please contact:**  
[rideandes@rideandes.com](mailto:rideandes@rideandes.com)  
[www.rideandes.com](http://www.rideandes.com)

**Climate:** Please keep in mind that temperatures in the mountains are highly variable. It might be cold (down to freezing) zero degrees or below early in the morning and in the evening, but up to 28 / 32° C at midday. It can also rain at any time!

**Clothes and Equipment:** Travel notes will be sent with useful information including a suggested packing list and guide contact details etc. To cope with changing temperatures, as a good idea 'layering' is advised. Space for luggage during the ride will be strictly limited.

**Emergencies:** In case of an accident, for most of the route communication is via VHF radio at the places we stay at.

**Health Services:** No special vaccine is currently required for this part of South America, but each guest must check the vaccine situation with an appropriate travel clinic. Also depending on where you live/have travelled to recently there may be special entry requirements (yellow fever, etc). Clients with special medication should bring enough for the whole trip since you will not be able to buy medicine during our journey. It is very important that you state on the information sheet if you have suffered from heart disease; if you take diabetes medicine, if you have some kind of blood illness, etc. In certain seasons a wasp species called "chaquetas amarillas" (yellow jackets) appears. If you are allergic to wasp stings, we suggest you take the treatment required with you and warn us so that we can help in the case of an emergency. We do not recommend people who are highly allergic to wasp/bee stings – rather than just a mild allergy, to come on this ride as it is impossible to evacuate people quickly. Each person must evaluate the wasp/'yellow jacket'/bee situation very carefully, please contact us to discuss

**Safety:** We work with qualified staff with safety equipment. On boat crossings, life jackets are provided. The outfitter has an international adventure tourism insurance. However, clients must have their own travel insurance that covers them for the activities on the tour. We will always bring a first aid kit and guides with the necessary safety skills.

## Important Notes

- Booking will be confirmed upon receipt of the corresponding deposit (a 30% prepayment will be required upon confirmation and the balance will be required no later than 45 days before the 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.
- Rider weight limits are in place, please refer to each itinerary for details.
- 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.
- 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.

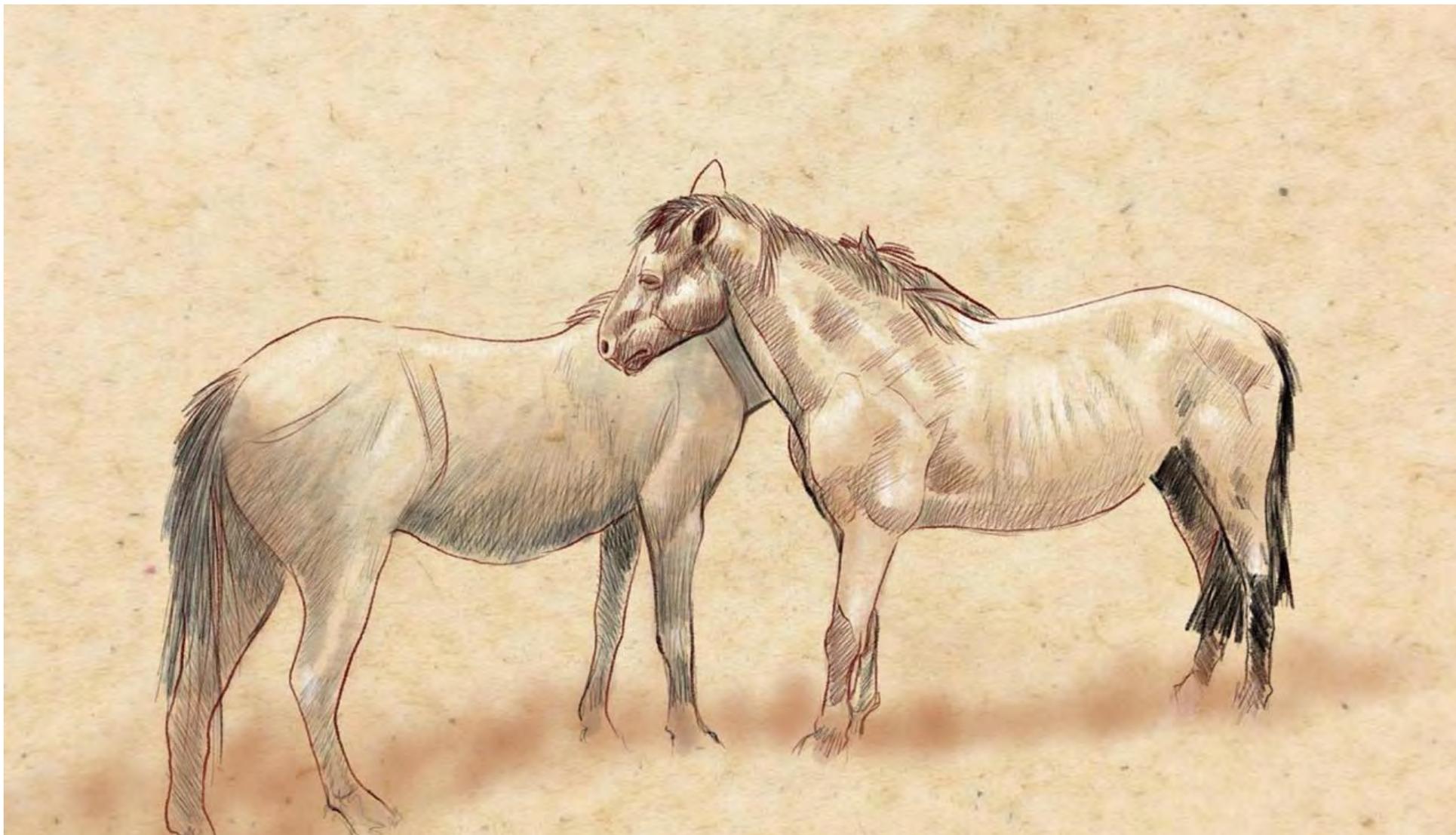
## About Ride Andes:

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:  
[rideandes@rideandes.com](mailto:rideandes@rideandes.com)  
[www.rideandes.com](http://www.rideandes.com)



RIDE ANDES

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