



creative adventures  
*Adventure: Argentina 2010*



*Communication: Gaucho Jose finally finds reception and is able to send that all important SMS.*



## ADVENTURE: ARGENTINA

It's time to dust off your camera and hit the proverbial road. Think wide-open spaces and whinnying horses, galloping gauchos and picture-perfect sunsets. Creative Adventures is ready to take you on a journey of a lifetime into undiscovered Argentina, with a twist. With even an ounce of creative zeal you wish to expand, release or explore, this could be the trip for you.

### **Would you like to...**

- gallop with gauchos?
- experience the Argentine outback on horseback?
- learn how to play polo?
- taste the distinctive flavours of Argentine Malbec & Torrontes wine?
- have time to relax and enjoy another way of life?
- have time to be totally active or do absolutely nothing?
- have time to get to know your camera better?
- take better photographs?

With a maximum of 8 participants and 2 tour leaders, this exclusive adventure has been designed to cater for all levels of photographic and riding abilities. Photographers, riders and nature-lovers alike will be well-suited to join us on this one-off adventure into the Argentine hills. Recently described by Tatler's Travel Editor as a "magical place, caught in time and between continents"\* , Los Potreros is the ultimate escape.

Situated high in the Sierras Chicas in North West Argentina, this secluded estancia is an idyllic retreat for those wishing to forget the pressures of everyday life and indulge in an Argentine adventure. An idyllic retreat where luxury stands for a good feast at the end of a long day of exposure to the elements, it stands for condors soaring above, grasshoppers whirring below, wild mint smells rising as they are crushed underfoot and crystal-clear starlit skies enveloping the world by night.

The delights of Los Potreros are combined with the knowledge that you will be shown around and looked after by competent leaders who understand and know land, country and local custom. Prepare to be taken 'off-piste' with the certainty of experiencing something rare and raw, magical and truly unique.

Be ready to be inspired by the natural beauty and country lifestyle of Los Potreros and let your creative juices flow and adventurous spirit soar.

Walk, ride, photograph or simply relax and unwind: your Creative Adventure is all about you.

\* Stevens, M. Editor, *Tatler Travel: Tatler's 101 best hotels*, Condé Nast Publications.



*Fashionable: Paso Peruano Stallion wearing a traditional bridle.*

## ADVENTURE: DESTINATION

**Estancia Los Potreros, Sierras de Cordoba, Argentina:** Through scenic towns of rich colonial history, we travel high into the Sierras Chicas de Cordoba. This mountain range is older than the Andes and the smooth rolling hills are deceptively high. By the time we arrive at our destination - Estancia Los Potreros - we are at an altitude of 3,000 feet. Here you will be inspired by breath-taking vistas: grassy windswept pampa, condors soaring, grazing horses, pristine streams and waterfalls. The estancia is a protected sanctuary and both birds and animals roam free, safe from hunters. Condors, burrowing owls, monk parakeets, southern lapwings, turkey vultures, cuis (guinea pigs) and the occasional puma are just some of the wildlife who make Los Potreros their home; their presence enriching the landscape and your own experience of this unique destination.

Estancia Los Potreros is an organic 6,000-acre working cattle and horse breeding farm and one of Argentina's leading environmental establishments. The estancia's long commitment to sustainability was recently recognised with a nomination as Argentina's top eco friendly destination by Sarah Siese in her book "*Heaven On Earth: Green*"\*. When staying at Los Potreros you can rest assured that the produce you eat is fresh from the garden; your lamps are lit from alternative energy systems; local people are employed and your money is helping to support the local school.

Estancia Los Potreros has remained in the same Anglo-Argentine family for four generations. The Begg family invite Creative Adventure guests to share their home and their lifestyle. Staying at Los Potreros is an unforgettable vacation where you will receive first hand contact with Argentina's rural traditions. Estancia Los Potreros also has a reputation for excellent horses. You will enjoy responsive and sure-footed mounts suited to your riding ability.

\*ref: Siese, S. *Heaven on Earth: Green*. St Christopher's Publishing Ltd, 2009.



**Rope:** Lasso and saddle of a gauchito's trusty steed.



**Horse soup:** Horses hanging out in the corral with a storm brewing behind.



**Smart:** Gauchito Jose in his everyday working gear.



**Homeward Bound:** this daily ritual of bringing home the mares and their foals is a protection against the wild pumas that roam the Sierras.

## ADVENTURE: ITINERARY

**Day 1 - Arrival:** You are picked up by private transport from Cordoba airport and whisked up into the rugged sierras. After arrival at the estancia and welcome drinks you will receive your Adventure: Argentina information pack and plenty of time to settle and acclimatise. Dinner, relaxation and an informal preparation session for Day 2 will follow.

**Day 2 - A morning ride, a little local history and a taste of gaucho life:** Today we enjoy country life, Los Potreros' style. After breakfast we set off for a ride through the hills to Potrero de Niz, the estancia's original homestead. Here we stop for a mid-morning coffee and learn a little about the history and the people who made this beautiful estancia. De Niz has a lovely high aspect and from here you can enjoy wonderful vistas across the hills. This is a very relaxing and scenic ride and a perfect introduction to estancia life. Lunch is served back at our homestead. The afternoon is kept aside for our first creative session, photographing gauchos either at work or in full traditional attire as they demonstrate the different horse breeds of the estancia.

**Day 3 - Sunrise photo shoot, nature walk, meeting the mares and foals, wine tasting:** An early morning adventure awaits. This morning we watch the sunrise from 'Top of the World' - the estancia's highest vantage point, which offers perfect dawn-shooting opportunity. Fresh coffee and *media lunas* (croissants) are breakfast essentials. Gentle morning light offers wonderful photo opportunities of landscape, horses in pastures, birds and wildflowers. We wrap up the morning shoot with a creative session at the estancia. Free time after lunch provides time to unwind by the pool, read or catch up on sleep. This afternoon's photo shoot is pure delight as we meet the estancia's equine family. Every evening the mares, foals and yearlings are brought into secured yards to keep them safe from pumas. This provides ideal opportunity to watch gauchos at work and snap resting horses in the corrals. At soft afternoon light and at close quarters, we will be perfectly located to capture the gentle essence of these beautiful animals. At dinner we relax in the company of Kevin and Louisa Begg (owners of Los Potreros) and enjoy a tasting of Los Potreros' wines. We will sample a variety of local wines including the world famous Argentine Malbec and Torrontes.

**Day 4 - Galloping gauchos and polo:** Our adrenaline day. Today, we first try our hand at the Sport of Kings – polo! After a short lesson and practice, we play a few chukkas. Tailored for beginners, everyone is encouraged to play, but for those who do not wish to ride, this makes a superb 'action' photographic session! Later, we will be chasing running horses for our afternoon photo session. With flying manes and pounding hooves, our hosts will put on quite a spectacle to ensure we capture unique and exciting shots of galloping gauchos! This will be highly enjoyable whether or not you take photographs. Before dinner we have time to download and review the days' photos.

**Day 5 - Early morning shoot, a hike, picnic, asado and fiesta:** A veritable feast. After a quick wake up coffee, we are at the corrals early to capture dusty morning action as gauchos ready the horses. Amid calling and hollering, we capture the gauchos moving the horses around with skill and speed. Breakfast back at the estancia precedes a download and post-production session. Picnic lunches are packed and we head off to experience the beauty and vastness of the Sierras Chicas on foot. Those who do not wish to hike may stay at the estancia to relax, swim, read or work on their photos. We are back at the estancia in the afternoon with time to prepare pictures for the evening's slideshow and festivities. A traditional asado awaits our final night as we celebrate in true Argentine style.

**Day 6 -** After our final home-cooked breakfast, we bid farewell and depart by private transport for Cordoba airport (or bus station).



**Hidden gem:** The cascadas - a secret watering hole.



**Chill:** Horses standing in the evening sun.



**Off Exploring:** Kevin Begg (centre) with Gauchos Chiche and Jose on a bush-whacking adventure.



**Local fare:** Freshly cooked empanadas.



**Down Time:** Guests chill out under the veranda.



**Vino blanco:** Estancia Los Potres' own Torrontes wine.

## ADVENTURE: ACTIVITIES

Activities will vary according to the weather, light and availability of photo-shooting opportunities, so a flexible and easy-going approach is a must. All rides are optional. We ride together as a group regardless of riding ability. Experienced riders need not worry as there will be a chance for canters ahead of the main group! In our experience, Los Potreros is excellent at accommodating all levels of rider, so we do encourage everyone to enjoy the rides.

### **Some of the highlights include...**

- Horse-riding, includes a morning and/or afternoon ride
- An option for a full day photographic shoot and ride
- Polo session as a riding or photographic session
- Photo shoots at a variety of locations on the estancia including a sunrise or sunset shoot, mares and foals, galloping horses and gauchos at work, horse breed demonstration, landscapes, wildlife
- Wine-tasting
- Nature walks
- Birdwatching
- Photo competition
- Opportunity to watch some of the world's top polo players at the Argentine Polo Open in Buenos Aires (optional add-on activity - please enquire for further information)

## ADVENTURE: COMFORTS

**Accommodation:** Los Potreros is a typical Argentine estancia comprised of several homesteads built in the Jesuit style of architecture. Creative Adventure guests will be staying in beautifully restored accommodation; each lodging with its own picturesque outlook. Delightful rooms of white-washed charm and simple elegance offer you a haven of comfort and serenity at day's end. Meals and photo sessions are held in the main house where there is also a full bar for your convenience. A short walk from the house is the pool where you can relax and contemplate the quiet of the Sierras Chicas. Secluded and providing for all your creature comforts, you can be assured of a relaxing stay and a true taste of estancia-living at Los Potreros.

**Meals:** All meals and drinks (non-alcoholic and alcoholic) are included. Breakfast will be self-service. Lunches will revolve around activities - you could be dining al fresco at the estancia or munching on a sandwich tucked away at some waterfalls in the hills, having reached the picnic-spot by 'horseback or hike'. There will be the opportunity to sample some local cuisine, such as home-made 'empanadas'. Pre-supper canapés will whet appetites for sumptuous dinners, cooked and served by the Los Potreros' team. Vegetarian options are available throughout. Eating times will vary according to the activities, the light and the photo shoots.



**Rustic welcome:** The only sign you'll see en route to the estancia that indicates its position: 3km up the driveway!



*Stormy skies: An afternoon storm in the making.*

## ADVENTURE: ESSENTIALS

**Climate:** the Cordoba region of Argentina is known for its good weather and healthy climate; “*siempre de temporada*” always in season, is the old slogan. The weather can vary but is generally sunny and dry. The rainy season is in the summer months, whilst the winter is short and dry with crisp nights, made cosy by log burning fires. By November, the rains will usually have arrived at Los Potreros, transforming monochromatic winter Sierras into colourful spring’s glorious palette. This is a wonderful season to visit, ride and photograph Los Potreros. The light is amazing, shadows still long and refreshing mountain breezes help cool down warm days. Expect temperatures to range from 13 degrees centigrade at night to a high of around 27.5 degrees during the day.

The estancia is situated at 1100 metres and therefore the weather can sometimes be unpredictable. With constant possibility of wet, windy or cold days, you should pack accordingly. Hats and good sun protection are recommended all year round.

***To make your adventure in Argentina more comfortable and enjoyable, we suggest you include these items in your suitcase:***

- Comfortable trousers or jodhpurs
- Hard hat for riding if you own one. Hard hats are obligatory for all polo and riding activities. There are a limited number available to borrow, but these may not be accredited to the safety standard in your country. Los Potreros does suggest you bring your own hard hat to ensure availability, safety, fit and comfort
- Layers on top, including a warm fleece
- A good windproof/waterproof
- Casual clothes for the evening
- Swimsuit
- High factor sun cream and sun hat
- Insect repellent
- Small torch
- Personal medication and toiletries
- Closed-toe walking boots/shoes if you wish to explore the estancia on foot
- Personal insurance details
- Cameras/batteries

Towels for the room and swimming pool are provided. The estancia generates its own electricity and supports responsible tourism. Electrical appliances such as hairdryers are not recommended and not provided by the estancia.

There is hi-speed wifi at the main estancia, although mobile phone signals are harder to find (they can be obtained at various locations on the property). The main estancia phone number can be used as an emergency contact number.

You will need a current passport. Visa requirements depends on your nationality. Visitors from countries including the UK, USA, Ireland, Australia, South Africa, Netherlands and France will be issued a 90-day tourist visa on arrival into Argentina. This information may have changed and is given to you in good faith. Please check at your local embassy/consulate for visa requirements relevant to your country.



*Fine art: ornate bit and soft muzzle of a gaucho's pony*

## ADVENTURE: BOOKING

**Your Creative Adventure is priced at GBP £1,650 and includes the following:**

- 5 nights full board accommodation at Los Potreros
- Private transfers to/from Cordoba airport/estancia
- Adventure Information Pack
- All meals and drinks as indicated (inclusive of alcoholic beverages)
- All activities on the estancia including photo shoots, horse-riding, polo lesson and game, bushwalking, wine-tasting
- All photographic advice and tuition as requested
- Access to computers and photoshop programs for use during creative sessions is dependant upon you having your own kit/software
- The estancia has a flat screen through which we can show slideshows of our work
- Donation to davidmatherfoundation.org , an Argentine (Salta-based) charity (ref: page 15)

**Not included:**

- International or domestic airfares
- Transfers organised outside our recommended travel itinerary
- Discretionary gratuities
- Personal travel and equipment insurance
- Personal insurance if you wish to ride or play polo

**Arrival in Buenos Aires:** Kirsty will be in Buenos Aires to meet you the night before your Adventure starts and will escort you to Cordoba. She can assist you with booking hotels, airport transfers and things to do in Buenos Aires. Once you make your booking, we will give you details of the Buenos Aires/Cordoba flights. If you choose to arrive outside our recommended times or from a different location, there may be an additional transfer charge. There is the option to travel by sleeper bus to Cordoba.

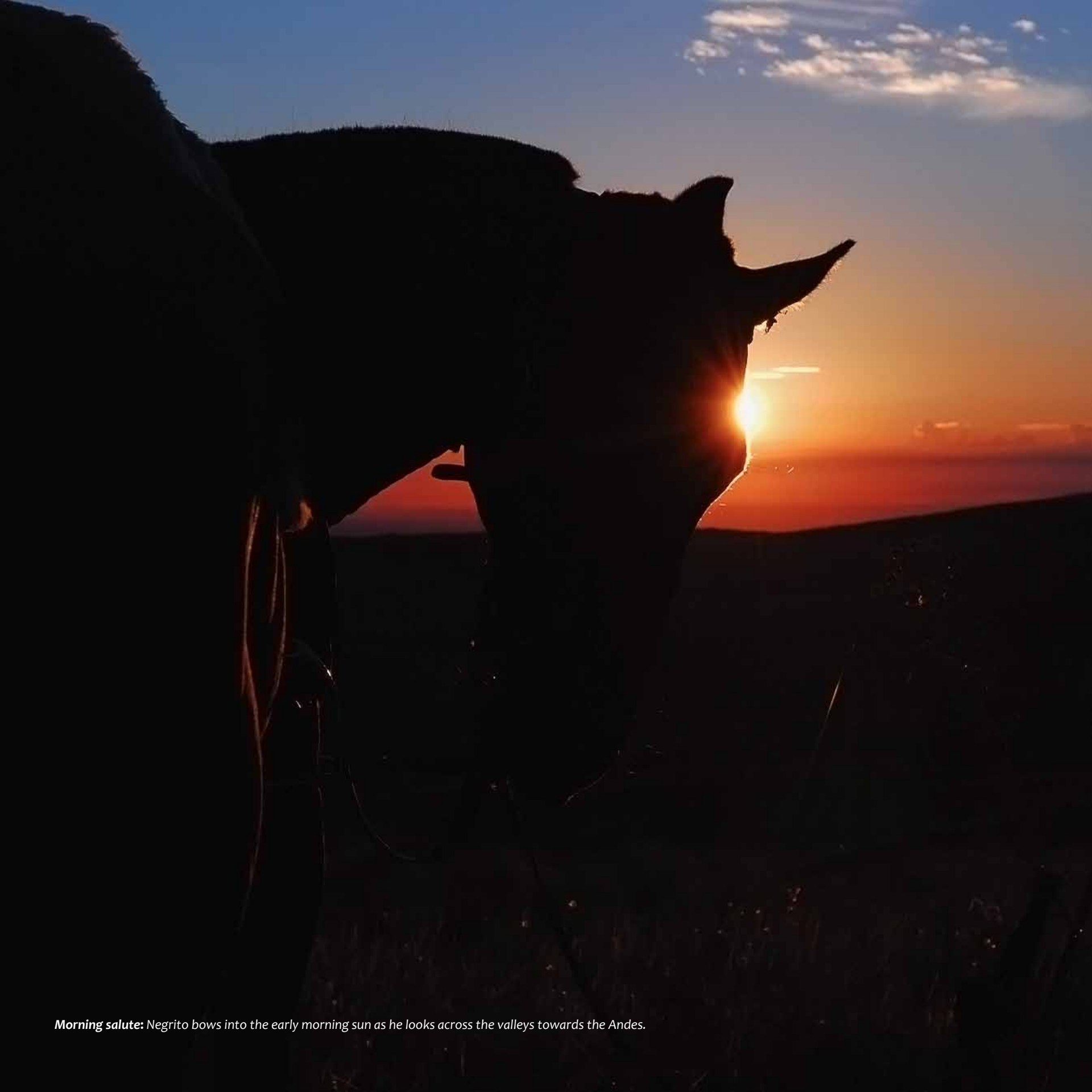
**Payment options:** Payment can be made by cheque, online bank transfer or via PayPal. A deposit of £500 will secure your reservation. Full payment is required no later than 10 weeks prior to departure date.

**Cancellations:** Cancellations must be made in writing or email. Cancellations are subject to charges. Please see our Terms & Conditions for details.

**Terms & Conditions:** It is a condition of booking that you read and agree to our Terms & Conditions. If you cannot access this information on our website, please contact us for details.

**Insurance:** It is a condition of booking that you have current comprehensive personal/travel insurance. Your policy must cover trail-riding and non-professional polo specifically. We suggest your coverage is increased to cover camera or computer equipment. We are happy to recommend you an insurance agency. Copies of insurance cover should be available to the hosts upon request.

**Liability:** Astrid Harrison Photography and/or associates take all reasonable care and action to provide you with a safe and enjoyable holiday experience. We cannot however, accept responsibility for damage, accident or loss to person or property which may occur travelling to and from, or during a Creative Adventure. Nor do we accept responsibility for additional expenses which may result from delays or changes to airline schedules or if you miss your flight. All guests to Los Potreros are required to sign their disclaimer before riding. We suggest you peruse this prior to booking your Adventure. This disclaimer is available upon request. Please contact us for details.



*Morning salute: Negrito bows into the early morning sun as he looks across the valleys towards the Andes.*

## CREATIVE ADVENTURES: THE DAVID MATHER FOUNDATION

This Foundation has been established due to a very tragic and preventable death in December 2008. It lies close to the hearts of Astrid's family and for this reason is being supported by Creative Adventures. The David Mather Foundation is a memorial trust with its primary objective being to help young underprivileged people in Argentina to realise their full potential, most pointedly those who are severely disadvantaged by both background and circumstance.

A little help goes a very long way and it is the hope of Creative Adventures to be able to generate a project or projects through our work. One idea is to provide photographic equipment and training to underprivileged children in Salta, with plans for a photographic exhibition of works by the children at a later date, which most likely will be held in Buenos Aires. There are many avenues this could take but it is our intention to keep our clients fully up-to-date with information as to how their money has helped one or more lives.

The Foundations' main aims in its first year (2009/10) are:

To help young people who would usually be severely disadvantaged by their background and circumstances and to realise their full potential through education and development in the following areas:

- 1. supplying support to develop their skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals;*
- 2. facilitating their study at any university, college or institution of higher or further education;*
- 3. supporting them to prepare for entry to any occupation, trade or profession on leaving any educational establishment.*

For more information, please visit: [davidmatherfoundation.org](http://davidmatherfoundation.org).



*Home, sweet, home: view of the main estancia from the corrals behind.*

## ADVENTURE: YOUR PARTNERS

**Astrid Harrisson:** Astrid is an equine artist and photographer with a background in marketing and graphic design. Her passion took her to Argentina in 2008 where she worked on Estancia Los Potreros as both guide and photographer. The same passion brought her back to South America where she wants now to be able to share just a little of its magic with others. Astrid divides her time between working in Argentina, the UK and Spain, where she works on private commissions of horses and produces fine art equine prints for exhibit. Astrid is an Associate member of the British Institute of Professional Photographers.



**Kirsty Noble:** Kirsty started BA Boutique Tours after moving to Argentina from Sydney, Australia, where she ran her own design and maintenance company. Kirsty's career as a qualified horticulturalist and garden designer was rounded off by being a successful writer and photographer in her own right. Kirsty's move to Buenos Aires allowed her to explore tourism opportunities and the South American garden scene. Boutique Tours offers a unique way to experience Buenos Aires, explore beautiful gardens, meet fashion designers, visit studios, discover. Kirsty's knowledge of flora and fauna combine with her experiences in Argentina to make her an irreplaceable Adventure Partner if ever there was one. A major asset to any off-the-beaten-track experience. Kirsty has recently made a leap to New York where she is re-establishing her business and selling specialized tours to Argentina and within New York and New Jersey states.



*"If you're not into aimless wandering, Australian ex-pat Kirsty Noble is your ticket to retail heaven. With a blossoming business in shopping tours, Noble quizzes visitors on what they're hoping to buy, then leads them on a tailor-made traipse to Palermo's quirkiest design stores. Handmade stilettos, cow-horn belts, hide handbags, one-off silver jewellery – she's your passport to places you'd never find yourself."*

**Erin Tyer, Grazia Magazine (Australia), May 2009.**



**Traditional:** Gauchos sporting both functional and fashionable wear.



**Demo:** 'Horse whispering'.



**Polo:** Going for goal.



**Fancy Dress:** One of Astrid's photographs of the estancia's 'Paso Peruano' (pacing breed) stallion.

*"Rarely do I see a photographer develop such a strong sense of individual style in a relatively short span of time. The work of a true artist is unique and stands apart from the crowd, because a true artist listens from within rather than from without. As I watch Astrid's work evolve, I see the evolution of a body of work that is contemporary, yet also evocative, captivating and emotionally moving...a rare combination. In the art and photography world, this is someone to pay attention to."*

**Tony Stromberg, Photographer, U.S.A. 2008.**

*"Astrid is a very rare combination of an extraordinary sense of wildness with a quick eye for framing beauty."*

**Romulo Sans, Art Director & Photographer (H Magazine), Cuba, 2008.**

**CONTACT DETAILS:**

***Astrid at Astrid Harrison Photography (UK contact)***

+44 (0) 79000 83436

astrid@astridharrison.com

www.astridharrison.com

Skype: astridharrison

***Kirsty at Buenos Aires Boutique Tours (US contact)***

+1 - 732 - 291 - 3610

kirsty@baboutiquetours.com.ar

www.baboutiquetours.com.ar

Skype: kirsty.noble