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TROLLBÄLTET - SWEDEN

THE CHARM OF THE NORTH
WITH FANTASTIC HORSES



ARE YOU READY FOR YOUR SWEDISH ADVENTURE?

A misty haze in the woods, a moose watches from behind a tree in the distance. The large horses feel eager to go, with soft, mossy ground under their feet. A smell of autumn and mushrooms in the air, and the sensation that the forest is slowly going to sleep. The deep, Scandinavian winter sleep. But still there is life, and animals hurry. Not much time left now.



Come along with me to one of the most fantastic of the European forests, just south of Stockholm. Easily reachable by plane and train, but mindspinningly far from the busy everyday life, this place really gets to you. Is it the forest? Or is it the lynx watching over us? Or maybe the moose following us? Or maybe it is the blend of all those things, mixed together with Olle's fantastic capacity of making us believe in the little folk and trolls...

This adventure is full-immersion into the philosophy of Natural Horsemanship, all that is hot, warm and fun with horses. The added bonus to this trip is the horse, the North Swedish cold blood, that we ride everyday. It is truly a horse for all seasons!

Learn to ride with only a rope halter, on horses that have lots of space for expressing their own personality. The North Swedish horse is one of the best companions you can imagine in a forest!

SMALL GROUPS, CARING GUIDES

My groups are hardly ever bigger than eight people, making it possible for each guest to feel not just like any other guest. Here in Trollbältet we are cared for by and guided by Olle, a local, very colourful person. He is an expert in survival in the forest, and will show us some of his tricks. I am personally with you on the escorted rides, to help you translate and interpret both nature and culture.

A SPECIAL TRAIL RIDE

As this is rapidly becoming a superhit, these rides have expanded to several times a year, spring, summer and fall. I will personally escort at least the one at the end of June (but probably also one in September) to celebrate the Scandinavian Midsummer, with all that it entails in the form of food, dancing and legends. Storytelling is very intense here, and especially around Midsummer. We stay in a small farmhouse out in the forest. This is where we get our meals and where we rest. Here they cook fantastically also for vegetarians, so there is no need to think you might starve in case you do not like fish or meat. The wine is from the whole world, from Chile to Australia, with some exceptional Italian, French and Spanish bottles thrown in for good measure.



Trollbältet – Belt of Trolls, Fairy Land. We are far from the beaten tracks, and manage to get really close to nature and local culture, thanks to Olle, our guide.

RIDES OFFERED IN 2006

12 - 18 May
26 May - 1 June
9 - 15 June
*** 23 – 29 June**
7 - 13 July
21 - 27 July
Escorted ride *

4 - 10 August
25 - 31 August
*** 8 – 14 September**
22 - 28 September
Other dates possible if you are a group of 4 or more.



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PRELIMINARY PROGRAM:

Day 1 Friday - Arrival at the airport of Stockholm-Skavsta (south of Stockholm), bus to Linköping where the general meeting point is, pick-up service with a minibus and drive to our base, the small forest manor Kalvefall. Accomodation in double or triple rooms with en-suite bathrooms. Huge welcome-dinner in the diningroom, where Anette will serve what the forest has to offer.

Day 2 - Introduction to the style of riding, Natural Horsemanship, and show of how to make a horse secure. Introduction to the equipment and after lunch we practise what we have learned in the morning in the arena. Then we take a long tour in the forests around Kalvefall. Dinner and overnight at the farm – we will stay up late and talk about trolls and goblins...

Day 3 - Off along forest trails in our wonderful woods with lonely lakes and creeks. We are in the country of the moose, the lynx and the golden eagle, and our hardy horses are a part of the environment here. We stop for lunch at an old farm house. We'll ride over the mountains and into the forest, on green, soft moss. Dinner is waiting for us at home, and we'll sit and chat until we fall asleep.

Day 4 - After breakfast, we go to a local artisan shop to see the local craft - and perhaps buy something? Lunch at home at the farm, and then we'll go for a long ride that ends up down by a lake. You can go swimming here, or perhaps you prefer to sit with the rest of us in the huge wooden hot tub? (We all fit in!!). After the bath, we'll all help out in cooking a wilderness-meal, with fish cooked in a hole in the ground, like in the Stone Age, we bake bread over the fire, and perhaps flambé a mighty dessert... If the weather isn't great, we have a Sami tento to cook and eat in, otherwise we are of course out in the light, Scandinavian night. When we are done eating and feasting, we get back on our horses to ride home again. Horses have better eye sight than cats, and it is a wild experience to ride in the soft Swedish summer night.

Day 5 - We're off on deer-paths through the forest, on lumber tracks and in part making our own trail. We see old ruins from the stone age and from the populations that came before us. This region lost 60 percent of its population in the late 1800s, due to emigration to America. Most of these emigrants settled in Minnesota, and many Americans have come back here to find their roots. For lunch, we arrive on a fantastic mountaintop, with views over lakes and valleys. Up and down soft hills and forests, this is a truly philosophical day. Dinner from the forest, perhaps some mushrooms we found while out riding the trail?

Day 6 - Now we all knos our horses well, so this day is a day of pace and canters through the woods. We bring our lunch with us, and have it by the ruins of an old forest thorpe, a place where the trolls might be looking at you from behind a rock. This is a really deep forest.

Day 7 - Departure in the morning, but for those who leave later in the day, lunch will of course be served.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Meeting Place: Fly to the airport of Stockholm-Skavsta (south of Stockholm, serviced by Ryan Air), bus to Linköping where the general meeting point is, pick-up service with a minibus. You can also arrive at the farm in your own car, in which case we will give you a discount. It is also easy to land in Stockholm Arlanda, or Copenhagen airport and get on the train to Linköping from there. We can help with all the arrangements.

Arrival Time: Guests usually arrive during the early afternoon and then are transferred to the small family farm.

Typical riding day: You will be riding the North Swedish cold blood horses in the forests, 4 to 6 hours daily with a lengthy break for lunch. We will be riding the tough *Nordsvensk* that was once used for forest work, both over state land as well as through private farm lands by special and/or private arrangements. The riding style is Natural Horsemanship, with a side-pull and long reins. You will get a half-day course in this style of riding as an introduction to the week.

Meals: all the food served comes from the surrounding region, like game, fish and vegetables.

Sleeping arrangements: in double or triple en-suite rooms in the little farmhouse in the forest. If you want to prolong your holiday, we can also stay a couple of nights in a Sami tent on reindeer skins.

Non-riding activities: Swimming or canoeing in the small forest lakes.

Medical requirements: You need insurance for accidents, no special shots required. Please advise about special diets or physical conditions.

Weather Conditions: The weather is mostly sunny, but can also become rainy – good rainclothes for riding recommended. Temperatures vary from 15-30 degrees C. Bring warm clothes for the evening gatherings, as nights tend to be cool.

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22 - 28 September

*** Escorted ride**

Other dates possible if you are a group of 4 or more.

Riding ability: Good, general physical condition, master the three basic gaits: walk, trot and canter

Weight limit: 100 kg/220 lbs

Age limit: 18 years (12 years if already a confirmed rider and accompanied by tutor)

Group size: Average 4-8 riders

Price: 1350 Euro per person, based on a double occupancy

Single supplement: 190 Euro

Included in the price: 7 days and 6 nights in full pension. Accommodation in double or triple rooms with bathroom in the little farmhouse in the forest. All activities. Assistance by car and luggage transports. Pick-up service from Linköping trainstation, (easily reachable by bus from the airport of Stockholm-Skavsta, south of Stockholm, or by train from Stockholm Arlanda, or Copenhagen Airport in Denmark). English speaking guide to translate and interpret the legends and myths of the deep, Swedish forests. Multilingual guide on **escorted rides**.

Not included: Drinks with the meals, after ride-drinks, airfare and travel to Linköping

Available equipment on-site: Helmets, Short chaps, Saddlebags, Rain-ponchos, Rain jackets.

Equipment you should bring yourself: camera, good riding clothes – several layers to take off or put back on, depending on the weather, rainclothes, hat (in case you don't use a helmet), swimming suit, sun protection cream, good riding boots that can take a lot of water, helmet recommended by most insurance companies.

