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## COLORADO HORSEBACK RIDING AND HIKING

### Trip Summary

#### HIGHLIGHTS

- Horseback riding across 3,200 acres of gorgeous private ranch property
- Having experienced wranglers match you with the best horse to suit your needs and abilities
- Hiking on private trails around the ranch
- Splashing the day away in the outdoor heated pool
- Soaking your hardworking feet in the crystal clear river that runs through the ranch

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## TRIP AT A GLANCE

Location:	Loveland, Colorado
Activities:	Horseback riding, hiking, swimming, sports
Arrive:	Fly into the Denver International Airport by 12PM for a group shuttle at 1PM
Depart:	Fly out of the Denver International Airport any time after 2PM today

### Trip Overview

Calling all cowgirls! The family owned and operated Sylvan Dale Ranch in Loveland, Colorado is the perfect landing spot for your next mountain adventure. Spend each day as you please, whether horseback riding, tacking, and grooming your horse, or hiking on ranch property. This trip caters to riders of all abilities; the experienced wranglers at Sylvan Dale will match you with the perfect horse to fit your needs and goals. Ranch amenities include a heated outdoor pool, tennis, pickleball, shuffleboard, volleyball, horseshoes, and line dancing. This is the 'big kid' summer camp you've been waiting for! Maximum group size: 20.

### Rating

Maximum horseback rider weight: 240 pounds. We have rated this trip as 1, 2, or 3 because of the wide variety of options available every day. You might choose half-day horseback rides with afternoons spent reading a book by the river or getting a massage from the onsite massage therapist. You might ride a full day and then hike the entire next day. The level of activity is up to you. For trips that are rated 2, participants should be walking regularly at a **brisk** pace 3 to 4 days a week for 35 - 45 minutes prior to trip beginning. **Rating:** 1 **[2]** 3 4 5.

### What's Included

- 1-2 AGC guides depending on group size
- 5 nights lodging at Sylvan Dale Ranch
- All meals as outlined on the itinerary
- Round trip airport - ranch transportation at the designated pick up and drop off times and dates
- All activities as listed on the itinerary (Massage is extra)
- Customary gratuities for ranch staff and wranglers

**Not included:** Travel to and from Denver International Airport from your place of origin, alcoholic beverages (can be purchased at the ranch), AGC guide gratuities, horseback riding helmets (you're welcome to bring your own approved helmet) and travel insurance

## OUR ITINERARY

Below is the itinerary we have planned for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

### DAY 1

Welcome to Colorado! Fly into the Denver International Airport by 12PM to make it in time for the group's 1PM meeting and group shuttle to Sylvan Dale Ranch. If you are driving, you can meet us at the ranch at 4PM.

Kick back and settle in! Sylvan Dale Ranch has been an authentic working dude ranch since 1946. If these walls could talk, they'd spin yarn about a young college student named Maurice Jessup, who hitchhiked from Oklahoma to Colorado to work at a youth camp. Jessup arrived at the camp with a dream in his head and love in his heart, and he told the Camp Director that summer of 1934 that he would someday own Sylvan Dale. While some cowboy dreams fade into the sunset, this one was buoyed by determination and patience when 12 years later Jessup got special permission to take a break from his busy work at the Army Air Corps to bid on the property. Maurice and his wife Tillie purchased the 125-acre run-down property and slowly and tirelessly turned it into the incredible 3,200-acre guest ranch it is today.

We'll mosey on over to the ranch watering hole for our first daily happy hour on the porch and have an orientation before sharing our first of many delicious meals together! After dinner we'll load up for a wagon tour of the ranch property. (D)

### DAY 2

After a long day of travel, you might choose to wake up this morning with a gentle yoga class in Sylvan Dale's outdoor pavilion. After a hearty breakfast we'll meet at the barn for a demonstration on connecting with horses before you are paired with your trusty equine partner for the week and head out on your first ride. Remember - this is your vacation, and you can spend it how you choose! If you'd like to horseback ride every day, you can! If you'd like to alternate horseback riding with other activities (examples: roping lessons, trap shooting, pickleball, reading by the river, guided stretching, hiking), you can! Your AGC guides are here to make sure you have a wonderful time, no matter what you choose to do today and every day. After lunch today we'll have our first round of optional activities.

Sylvan Dale translates to "wooded valley" and has acre upon acre of pristine wildlife habitat areas, interspersed with Roosevelt National Forest lands. The main grounds, where the cabins and central lodge are located, are considered an 'ecological transition zone' that includes the Big Thompson River, native prairie grasslands and wetlands, foothills shrubland, and ponderosa pine forest. 70% of the ranch is under 'conservation easement' providing a legacy of preservation for creatures great and small. Animals that have been spotted with Sylvan Dale Ranch's wildlife camera up Sulzer Gulch include bighorn sheep, mule deer, black bears, foxes, bobcats, mountain lions and coyotes. After a beautiful day exploring and riding, we'll end our evening with lots of laughter at a group line dancing class. (B, L, D)

### DAY 3

This morning one of the options on tap is a breakfast ride! Saddle up your horse and follow your wranglers to an adventurous outdoor breakfast overlooking the ranch. After breakfast Colorado's gorgeous foothills and another day to choose how you spend your vacation await. Whether you're more into long trail rides, building your riding skills such as trotting, or simply interacting with your horse while tacking and grooming, there is a place for you. Depending on weather, options throughout the day may include visiting the colts, team sorting adventures, and trap shooting. While you're enjoying the scenery from astride your horse, don't forget to look up to see the incredible bird life on the ranch. 25 diverse duck species could entertain you for hours while lounging by the river! Or you could bring along some binoculars to help you spot along your hike: Ring-necked Pheasant, Blue Grouse, Wild Turkeys, Bobwhite Quails, Common Loons, American White Pelican, Snowy Egret, White-faced Ibis, 9 kinds of hawks, Golden Eagle, and Osprey (to name a few...). Tonight, we'll be treated to an overview of the ranch's history with Susan, the ranch owner and an honorary AGC group member in our hearts! (B, L, D)

### DAY 4

Day four will once again open with an optional yoga session before breakfast. Following breakfast there will be more time offered in both the arena and on trail, working with barrels and poles and practicing for tomorrow's gymkhana (games on horseback)! Following lunch, our riders who choose to will depart to Cow Camp on an overnight pack trip – a true Colorado ranch adventure that requires stamina on a long day of riding and the desire to sleep out on a sleeping pad on the ground! Back at the ranch the options will be plentiful.

We just told you to look up, now it's time to look down (or all around, really) to see the incredible geology! The ranch sits at the convergence of the Rocky Mountains and the plains where a host of fascinating geological formations will keep you entertained and pondering nature. Gravel here dates to the last Ice Age and granite found nearby on Alexander Mountain dates back 1.8 billion years! Doesn't that make you feel young again? While exploring the ranch, you will see what are known as igneous intrusions, or rocky outcroppings that have been formed by the crystallization of magma slowly cooling below the earth's surface. Rock hunters should be on the lookout for quartz and feldspar among other fascinating specimens. Today and every day, you'll get a chance to stretch your legs, explore and enjoy!

After another wonderful dinner we'll sit out under the stars and enjoy a crackling campfire – and maybe even some s'mores! (B, L, D)

## DAY 5

On our last full day at Sylvan Dale, we'll get to spend more time doing all the fun things that have occupied the week so far. If you haven't yet, now's your time for a pickleball game, a dip in the pool, some yoga by the river or more horseback riding!

Throughout the week a variety of hikes will be offered by your AGC guides depending on interest, and today may be the day that we venture up to Rocky Mountain National Park for a morning hike.

In the afternoon our various groups will reconvene for a celebratory Gymkhana. All levels are welcome, but we welcome cheerleaders as well for our less competitive cowgirls. We'll end our final fabulous day with a ranch party including awards, photo opportunities with your horses, and even a chance to brand your cowgirl boots. Yeehaw! (B, L, D)

## DAY 6

In the blink of an eye our week has come to a close. After a full week of wonderful fun with new friends (both 2 legged and 4 legged), we will pack up and head home. If you are flying today, you can plan your flight home from the Denver International Airport for any time after 2PM. If you are driving, you can plan to leave the ranch at 10AM. Happy trails to all you Colorado cowgirls! (B)

## ADDITIONAL TRIP INFORMATION

### Getting There

If you plan to drive, you can meet us directly at Sylvan Dale Ranch in Loveland, Colorado at 4PM. Please Note: GPS units and mapping sites / applications (e.g., Google Maps, Apple Maps, Mapquest, etc.) can lead you astray if you use our mailing address to navigate to Sylvan Dale. Please see detailed directions and location map below.

Sylvan Dale is between mile markers 84 and 83 on US 34. As you near the Ranch from the east (Loveland), watch for the covered wagons on the right (north) side of the road. The wagons will signal that you are approaching the Ranch Entrance. Turn right (north) through Ranch Entryway and down the hill past the Sylvan Dale Horsebarn and Arena, and across the Big Thompson River. Turn right at the old silo and follow the signs to the Office, in The Heritage.

If you miss the first entrance, not to worry. Just turn right just before the Dam Store, on County Road 22H. Signs will lead you past the Sylvan Dale Horse Barn on County Road 31D and north across the beautiful Big Thompson River. Take the first right after the bridge and follow signs to the Sylvan Dale Ranch Office in The Heritage.

If you are coming to Sylvan Dale from the west, immediately east of the mouth of the Big Thompson Canyon, the historic Dam Store is on your left. The entrance to Sylvan Dale is immediately east of the Dam Store, left on County Road 22H. Take a second left at the Sylvan Dale Horse Barn and follow the signs across the Big Thompson River, turn right at the silo, and follow signs to the Ranch Office in The Heritage.

If you would like assistance with airfare, we recommend contacting our AirDesk Partner, [Exito Travel](#). Start by submitting this [form](#). Just fill in your dates and destinations, including any additional notes about preferred carriers, class of service, possible stopovers, etc., and an agent will typically respond via email within a few hours. If you prefer to call, the number is 800-655-4053; be sure to tell them you are traveling with Adventures in Good Company.

Please note: Exito charges a one-time, non-refundable processing fees of \$50 per passenger.

### Accommodations

Lodging at the ranch consists of charming western cabins and historic guest houses, with a mix of private and shared bedrooms and bathrooms. You can see photos and details [described here](#). There are two tiers of single supplements available. 8 spots in side by side cabins for \$495 each. Side by side cabins consist of two distinct dwellings, each with a queen bed, full bath with clawfoot tub, and a cozy front sitting room. Side by side cabins share a porch. (Cowgirls coming together can request their porch-mates) 3 spots in fireside cabins for \$695 each. Fireside cabins each consist of a large bedroom with a queen size bed and full bathroom and a spacious front sitting room with a fireplace, foldout sofa and private porch.

7 standard spots in the guest houses which offer private rooms, each with a queen bed, and a shared bathroom (3 - 4 people to a bathroom).

## Travel Insurance

We recommend that you purchase a travel protection plan to help protect you and your travel investment against the unexpected. For your convenience, we offer travel protection through Travelex Insurance Services. For more information on the available plans or to enroll, visit [www.travelexinsurance.com](http://www.travelexinsurance.com) or call 1-800-228-9792 and reference location number 06-0331.

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## CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellation charges reflect the many expenses Adventures in Good Company cannot recover if you cancel, even if you must do so due to illness, injury, or personal emergencies. These fees are not meant to be punitive. The charges made reflect the expenses Adventures in Good Company has incurred in administering your reservation and planning for your participation. We recognize that the majority of those who cancel their reservations do so out of necessity. Please note that we do not make any refunds for any unused portion of your trip, not arriving, arriving late, or leaving the trip early.

[Click here for our Cancellation & Payment Policies and Booking Terms & Conditions.](#)