

## **Rancho la Paz**

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## **Other countries - other ways of riding**

*The typical riding style in Spain is the "Doma Vaquera" - the work with the horse on the cow herds. Parallel to it, in America, the rodeo riding has been developed, which origin lies in the "Doma Vaquera". For the "Vaqueros", the cowboys, it is important to be able to rely fully on their horses and lead them with the slightest assistance. The horses work often up to 12 hours and it is plausible that they do not have to show any dressage ambitions. With the work on the herd of cows, the horse is ridden either calmly behind the herd to move it from farm to farm or fast and agilely to separate individual animals. Therefore only the two paces - walk and canter – are used in the country riding, which does not mean that the Andalusian cannot trot...*

*The riding with one hand is needed as the "Vaquero" has to open gates, has to work with the "Carocha" (the long driving stick) and naturally, in order to have one hand free at the Feria for the glass of Sherry. The typical workhorses are trained in each case by the vaquero himself, who teaches his horse, what is important for him and his work and all of this simplified - one may not forget that these horses work usually their whole life under the same rider.*

*Nowadays you find "Doma Vaquera" presentations, in which there are firm guidelines, after which the horses are judged. Usually crossed horses (Anglo Hispano Arabs) are taken as they are fast, ambitious and agile.*

*Here on La Paz we ride a simplified "Doma Vaquera" style: the horses go with Spanish saddles, which are ridden with relatively long stirrups. These saddles are a bit heavier than the English saddles but they have a very big contact area on the horse back which guarantees, with the right position in the saddle, a good dispensation of the weight. They are very comfortable for riders and horses on long distances. On the trails all horses go with Hackemores, a bridle which affects the nose. On one side it is much easier for the horses to find their balance on the difficult climbing passages than with a hard kerb and on the other side it gives them the possibility to drink which is very important on long distances. The one-handed riding style is, at the beginning, unusual but very easy to learn.*

*We even do not trot here - on the one hand due to the area, on the other hand because of superstructures at the saddle, which makes it difficult.*

*During the canters and the climbing we stand up in the saddle, standing in the stirrups to help the horses.*

*The Andalusians are in their homeland and used to the area and the climbing - one can have the fullest confidence in them.*