

## Bus Tours

Both Greyhound and Continental Trailways offer "See-America" Tours that provide a 30-day low cost trip on which you can stop over locally as you like for a stay at many desirable spots.

A car can be rented, if you wish to take a side trip. Meals and other costs are your own.

Chartered package tours for special attractions such as Fall colors are quite popular. Many of the bus routes go through National Forests or National Parks.

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## *From the Horse's Mouth—How Not To Ride for a Fall*

WITH THE INCREASE in leisure and recreational time, more and more people are turning to activities involving the use of horses. The energy situation has placed emphasis on local recreational activities, which most likely will spur the demand for renting or buying horses. Today, over six million horses occupy pastures or stables in the United States, mostly in suburban areas.

Horses benefit the community in that they can develop in children a strong sense of responsibility, and thus prepare them to become better citizens. Riding fulfills the psychological needs of many people to escape the tensions of today's fast pace, in addition to providing physical exercise for a people who so desperately need it. It's a sport in which the entire family can take part.

A novice rider will experience ups and downs, thrills and spills, aches and pains, as he takes to the bridle trails, fields and parks in the spring. Horseback riding is seldom boring, some-

times painful, and different each day you ride.

Horses are widely used in sports just about everywhere. Horse racing is a valuable source of tax revenue in many States. Horse shows and rodeos have become competitive sport attractions.

Polo is an increasing sports draw in the East as its popularity grows and the competition becomes keener. Jousting events are held annually near the Washington Monument in the Nation's capital. Steeplechases, barrel races, endurance rides, hunt meets, roundups, and organized trail rides continue to give riders a variety of activities.

Already many cities and municipalities have had an increase in requests for established bridle trails and use of horse-drawn vehicles. The natural affinity of people for horses has propelled the horse into a significant role, particularly in youth development programs.

Programs designed to rehabilitate physically handicapped and emotionally disturbed youths have become widespread throughout the United States. The youths are learning respect, discipline and a feeling of security by riding horses and finding that they can accomplish control and authority over these large animals. The psychological therapy in horsemanship is encouraging them to keep trying and fighting to overcome their handicaps.

As more and more people take to horseback riding, many ask, "Should I rent or buy?" To help you decide which method is best for you, let's look at the options.

*If you rent*, you do not have to be concerned with the care and upkeep involved in owning a horse. The tack (riding equipment) is usually furnished with the rented horse. Most commercial stables have the horse cleaned and tacked when you arrive and all you do is get on and ride.

You may be limited to the estab-

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AUTHOR *Larry L. Finks* is a Lieutenant with the U.S. Park Police, stationed in Washington, D.C.

lished trails that connect with the stable. This means that you usually ride the same trails each time you rent.

A well run stable will have dependable horses which are accustomed to even the most inexperienced riders. This does not mean that some horses may not have become trail sour. That is to say, they respond slowly to commands of the rider and often will respond only with a slow walk.

Some stables require that you have previous riding experience or riding lessons before you will be allowed to rent a horse for trail rides.

Rates for renting will vary with each locale, but an average rate in several cities surveyed ranged from about \$4 to \$5 per hour on weekdays and \$4.50 to \$5.50 on weekends. Lessons for the beginner ranged from \$6.00 per half hour and up for private lessons, and \$5 and up per hour for group lessons.

Call the local public stable nearest you for its rates. Rates vary according to the upkeep and conditions of the stables and horses.

*If you buy*, you must have facilities to stable and ride the horse.

Are there ordinances or regulations prohibiting stabling or riding in your community? Many municipalities prohibit riding horses except on established trails. Check with your local authorities before purchasing a horse.

You must consider such expenses as feed bills, veterinarian fees, tack and equipment, blacksmith fees, and methods of disposing of manure. Someone has to be available to clean the stalls and feed and water the horse twice daily.

If you are thinking of owning a horse, you should be willing to spend at least an hour a day riding him.

Owning your own horse offers many advantages. You can ride at your convenience. You always ride the same horse. You will have greater satisfaction because eventually you become attached to your horse and take pride in your riding.

Horses come in different shapes, sizes, colors and breeds. Which particular horse you select depends on

your personal preference. In picking a horse, emphasize the quality and disposition of the horse and not the particular breed or color. Soundness or good health is essential.

Absence of vicious habits such as biting, kicking or striking with the forefeet is important. The horse should not object to being saddled or groomed, nor should he balk, rear, shy, or be hard to catch when turned out. You should be aware of stable vices such as cribbing, halter pulling, tail rubbing, weaving, and bolting. Many of these habits may lead to more serious problems.

Analyze your own needs to determine the type of horse you buy. Most horses are bred for different kinds of work and pleasure. To help you decide which breed is best for you, contact your local veterinarian or perhaps your county agent.

The horse should never be too spirited or unmanageable for the rider's skill. Your horsemanship will be reflected in the control you exhibit and not on how spirited the horse is.

The horse's size should match the size and weight of the rider (A small horse or pony for children; a larger horse for an adult).

A small person may fit a large horse, but a large person shouldn't be paired with a small horse. This applies either to a person's weight or height.

A suitable horse usually can be purchased for several hundred dollars and maintained for \$30 to \$50 a month at home. Boarding will usually cost \$40 and up depending on type of stall, facility, and locality.

When selecting a horse, look him over carefully for any deformities, sores, scars or injuries.

Examine the horse from a distance. Are his legs straight? Does he move freely and smoothly? Does he carry himself proudly? Is he like a picture? Then inspect him close up.

If you decide this is the horse you like, insist that he be examined by a veterinarian of your own choosing before you buy.

Unless you are a professional horse



*Horses can be rented by the hour or day.*



buyer, avoid purchasing your horse at a public auction.

### *Equipment Needed*

To care for the horse, you will need such items as a body brush, a hair brush, a mane and tail comb, a hoof pick, sweat scraper, water bucket, feed bins, straw fork, broom and shovel.

For the horse, you will need a halter, a bridle, saddle, saddle pad, and a blanket if the weather gets cold in your area. These are the minimum needs, but many other accessories are available for stable management and riding activities.

Saddles can be purchased for as little as \$100. The price depends on the quality of the leather and the added accessories, which may amount to hundreds of dollars if you so desire and can afford it.

Used saddles generally can be purchased at most horse auctions, or you may find tack shops that carry used riding equipment.

If you live in an area without con-

venient trails, you may need a horse trailer. The most popular are the two-horse trailers which can be purchased for \$1,200 and up. Many people prefer a two-horse type because it can be towed by most medium size cars if properly equipped. With this type trailer, you can always take along a friend and his horse.

A trailer with an escape door, a three section tail gate, and electric brakes is recommended for safety reasons. The size, shape, color, and price range depend on your individual preference.

Clothing will vary with the individual, the type of riding he is doing, and the locality. Boots are recommended for all riders. Whether they be English style or Western depends upon the riding apparel you wear.

Riding breeches are designed for those wearing English boots. However, when breeches are not available, a pair of heavy jeans should be worn to protect the legs, especially if you ride cross country on brushy trails. Optional riding apparel such as gloves, hard hats, spurs, and coats may also be worn to fit the occasion.

Wearing loose or bulky clothing should be avoided because it is apt to inhibit the rider's freedom or become entangled in brush, tree limbs, or other obstacles which could lead to serious injury.

An old cowboy once said, "There is something about the outside of a horse that is good for the inside of a man."