HORSEBACK RIDING

Blackberry Farm has acquired an adjoining 150 acre property as the setting for our new equestrian facility! Only a mile from the main entrance. The new equestrian facility includes a new arena, creek side riding and lovely vistas. Blackberry Farm Stables now offers direct access to the beautiful foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains. Transportation is provided from the Oak Cottage.

We have attractive well-trained horses and friendly professional instructor/guides! Our trail rides are designed to be safe, informative, pleasurable adventures into our beautiful Smoky Mountain foothills. Our instruction is planned with recreational riding and driving in mind.

All rides are private and by reservation. If you are traveling with a group, and wish to ride together, expect one instructor/guide for every two riders. All group trail rides will be conducted at the level of the least experienced rider.

The mental and physical well-being of our horses is a primary focus at Blackberry Farm. Natural Horsemanship techniques are incorporated in every ride. Those wishing to learn more about Natural Horsemanship are encouraged to sign up for our Natural Horsemanship instruction.

To assist us in making a good equine match, and to provide an exemplary experience, please provide height, weight, experience, discipline (i.e. foxhunting, showing, eventing, reining, polo, roping, cutting, trail riding, endurance, etc.), tack preference (English or Western) for each rider and ages of children. All minors must be accompanied by a parent, unless approved by Equestrian Management in advance.

HUNTER PACE

Tally ho, the fox! The Hunter Pace Trail Ride simulates the pace of an actual mounted foxhunt which includes walk, trot, canter, and standing at check. This ride is designed for accomplished English riders, currently riding on a weekly basis, capable of posting the trot and cantering over challenging terrain. Jumping is optional.

The Hunter Pace Trail ride provides opportunity to enjoy an exciting exploration of our foothills property on a well-trained horse and serves as an introduction to the sport of foxhunting. For ages 18 and up.

Allow up to two hours.

All rates subject to an additional 19% service charge and taxes and rates are subject to change without notice. Please contact our concierge team for more details. As a courtesy to other guests, we kindly ask that cancellations and appointment changes be made by 7:00pm the day prior to your scheduled service to avoid penalties. Any appointments made or cancelled after 7:00pm the day prior will incur a 50% cancellation fee. In cases of severe weather penalties for canceling or changing outdoor activities will not be imposed.
EQUESTRIAN

FOOTHILLS TRAIL RIDE
Discover the beauty of our mountain valley from the best possible vantage point—the back of a good horse! The Foothills Trail Ride is a walking ride across varied terrain in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains. For riders of every ability, age 8 and up.
*
*Allow up to one hour.

FIELD AND STREAM RIDE
The Field and Stream Trail Ride is a walking ride across level to steep terrain. Includes water crossings and ventures onto the mountain that establishes the border to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. For riders of every ability, age 8 and up.
*
*Allow up to two hours.

PONY TIME
Blackberry Pony Time is designed for children of all ages and their families. This confidence building experience includes an introduction to grooming and leading a mini horse. Each child will have leadline time on horseback.
*
*Allow one hour.

RECREATIONAL RIDING INSTRUCTION
Recreational riding instruction begins in the barn, learning to groom and tack the horse in your choice of English or western tack. Riders progress to the arena, with the goal to build confidence and develop skills necessary to ride safely on our trails. This instruction is private, one-on-one time with an accomplished instructor. Emphasis is on balance and control. Ages 6 and up.
*
*Allow up to two hours.

NATURAL HORSEMANSHIP EXPERIENCE
Experience an introduction to the philosophy and practice of Natural Horsemanship (learn to speak the language of the horse and establish an appropriate relationship). Whether or not you choose to put your foot in the stirrup, savor the opportunity to “join up” with a horse in the round pen, explore the essence of the human/horse relationship through non-verbal communication, action and perception. Arrive seeking an understanding of the horse and leave with a powerful connection. Ages 8 and up. Excellent when paired with Recreational Riding Instruction, Foothills or Field and Stream Trail ride.
*
*Allow one hour.

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SMOKY MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS RIDE
Discover our mountains from horseback! For accomplished riders, English or western, currently riding fit, capable of posting the trot and cantering, confident over steep terrain and water crossings. If you are an active rider and seek a challenge, this ride is for you. Be prepared for some extreme terrain changes and possible wildlife sightings. Your guide will choose a suitable picnic spot to enjoy your meal. For ages 18 and up. When available, you may elect to enjoy a Creekside Picnic at an additional charge.
Allow 3–5 hours.

RIDE AND DINE
Over the river and through the woods! Trail ride from the Stables, crossing Hesse Creek and over Walker Mountain, to a special spot on Blackberry Farm for a box lunch picnic. This ride includes some steep terrain and is best suited for experienced riders. For ages 8 and up.
Allow 4 hours.

FULL DAY HORSE CLINIC
Our Full Day Horse Clinic is a great way to learn about equines! Designed for those new to horses or those wishing to revive a previous interest. The day begins with grooming and instruction in Natural Horsemanship in the round pen. Topics include: grooming techniques, husbandry, conformation, psychology of the horse, suitability of horse to rider, instruction in English or western disciplines. End the day with a trail ride. Ages 8 and up.
Allow up to six hours.

HORSEBACK RIDING SAFETY
For the safety of riders and to promote humane treatment of our horses, our trail rides, by default, are walking trail rides. Each horse is in continuous training to ensure safe experiences for current and future riders. An unskilled rider attempting to ride at speed, will, without malice, inadvertently damage this careful training. Only schooled and seasoned riders will participate in rides faster than a walk. This is responsible practice and industry standard at all credible equestrian facilities.

Accomplished riders requesting to trot or canter on trail rides will first be asked to perform a skills test in the arena, to the satisfaction of the instructor/guide. Those riders will be asked to:
- Execute a posting trot in each direction
- Execute a controlled canter away from the barn
- Transition from a canter to a walk in the direction of the barn
- Demonstrate the ability to maintain balance and control at speed
- Navigate obstacles at speed

If you are uncertain as to your ability, or if it has been many years since you have ridden, please sign up for Recreational Riding Instruction prior to your trail ride, for a professional assessment.

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