

WILDER WAYS

Straight from the horses mouth



IT IS THE CALL OF THE WILD, THE WILL OF THE HERD,
THE THUNDER OF HOOVES, THE POUND OF YOUR HEART.
IT IS RIDING ... WILDER WAYS.

hello
Summer



NEW FOR 2018
GALLOP STRAIGHT TO PAGE 6
FOR OUR BRAND NEW
LINDORES EXPERIENCE

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www.wilderways.scot



Hello and welcome

Spring has sprung...and we have seen the last of the snow (we hope)!

While much of the country ground to a halt with the arrival of the `Beast from the east`, when it comes to tending livestock you just have to put your best foot forward and carry on whatever the weather. Suffice to say we are happy to have ditched the winter warmers and are now topping up our Scottish tans during the first of our Wilder Ways adventures for 2018.

NEW RECRUITS

Over the winter we have said hello to four stunning new recruits who are all eager to meet you all, but not before we say a goodbye to our beloved Amber.

Goodbye Amber

We're very sad to have had to say good-bye to Amber. Amber was our go-to horse for anyone with a confidence issue but also a fun, light and responsive horse for any rider. Due to a weakness in her suspensory ligaments, we felt the Wilder Ways workload was too much for her, so she's gone to have fun with the Fletcher girls of the Isle of Jura, where we are told she is already winning all their Gymkhanas - well done girls!

Good luck in your new life Amber - we are really going to miss you xx



lorek our gentle giant in spotty pyjamas



lorek

Standing at 16.2hh he'll even over-top Denver, but he's a great softie, always keen for a rub. lorek is an Appaloosa from a show-jumping home, with a gleaming white coat that he likes to keep scrupulously clean at all times. No lorek - don't roll again!!

Pearl, our mischievous 14.2 mare from Blackburn



Pearl

Pearl is a bay appaloosa x hanoverian, with no spots but with that classic Appy tail and attitude. She's light and responsive to ride, calm and well schooled, but with a glint of fun in her eye and a great fondness for hay! !

Puzzle, our new `big baby` from Tomintoul



Puzzle

Although 10 years old, he is a bit green but is eagerly learning the ropes within his new and experienced herd who are giving him the confidence he needs. He is a 15.2hh piebald cob with magnificent hairy legs. He wants to be everyone's friend has a calm and willing nature and he does loves a good old scratch.



HORSE TRADING: Finding your new forever friend

Whilst many of us dream of owning our own forever horse companion – finding your perfect match is fraught with pitfalls. In this article our very own Nikki takes us through buying your own horse step by step with sound advice and a good dose of reality.

My first love was Palominos and at 14 years old I saved up just enough for my first pony, a newly broken, Welshie palomino. We had lots of fun but at that time I really didn't have the experience then to bring on a young horse. I made mistakes and I didn't do him justice. **So my golden rule:** Keep your dream pony/horse in the back of your mind by all means - but with a large pinch of salt. When it comes to buying your own horse you are about to open a whole can of worms and you need to be prepared to have an open mind!

There are many articles about 'things to consider when buying a horse' such as conformation, health and behaviour etc. but when

setting up Wilder Ways we had some interesting experiences buying our horses to say the least, so here are some of our 'on the ground' tips.

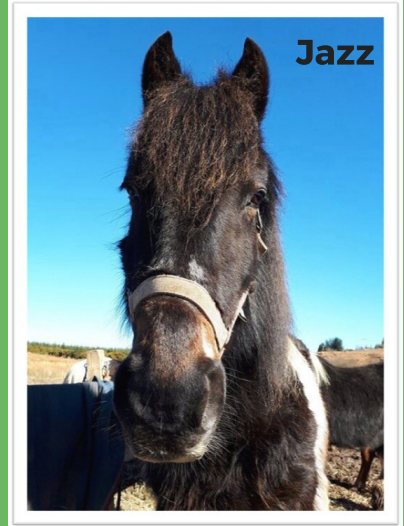
NOTE: The conformation of your horse refers to the correctness of its bone structure, musculature and its body proportions in relation to each other.

What you need **Versus** what you want?

The most important question is - what do you need, for what you want to do? Remember to take into consideration how experienced you are now - not just in riding skills but also in horse care and training. One of the most common issues we see is people who 'out-horse' themselves. They buy something they think they will 'grow into' either physically or technically but unless you will be receiving regular tuition or support, it is difficult to improve if your horse is beyond your abilities at the start and it is very easy to lose confidence.

NEW recruits continued...

Jazz is our gentleman of the herd



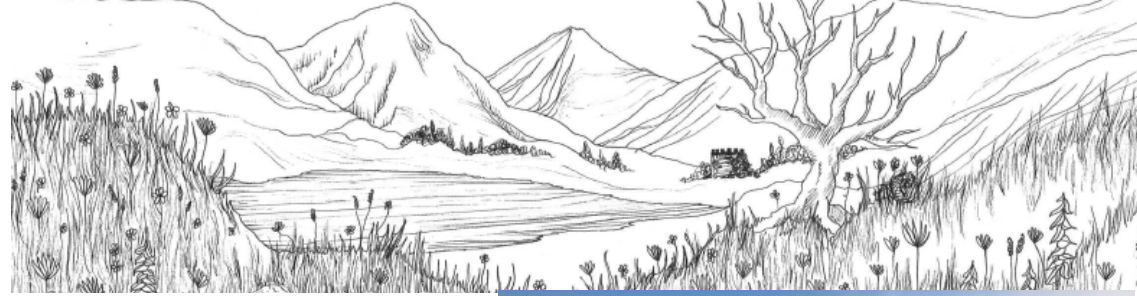
Jazz comes to us from a previous trail-riding home. Jazz is a total professional and knows his job. He's a beautiful skewbald TB cross with lovely paces and touch button control, and at 15.2hh we think he'll soon become a favourite. We're hoping he'll enjoy his new life here in the West.

HORSE TRADING: THE CLASSIFIEDS

Knowing where to start your search can be daunting, but don't be tempted to just reach for your local classified ads (although your perfect pony can be found there). Here are some great places to start; it's worth the leg work.

- **Horse facebook groups - check local/regional groups**
- **Horsemart - for a good range of private and dealer sales**
- **Known & reputable dealers**
- **Ask round - word of mouth can be very helpful**

Gumtree and Preloved tend to have young, elderly or project horses so **be careful and try before you buy!**



Second time around...I bought my cob Indi when I came back into riding after having my children - a wee schoolmaster who helped me progress onto the more challenging horses of today.

Choosing the right age of horse is critical. A young horse needs ongoing schooling and training to progress and not develop bad habits. **The idea of a child and pony 'growing up together', is lovely - but can quickly end up with a nervous child and a difficult horse.** On the other hand, for frequent and high intensity work, like we expect of our Wilder Ways herd, an older horse may not be up to the job.

Size is another serious consideration. How big do you need your horse to be? At Wilder Ways we use 15% of a horse's bodyweight as the maximum weight for the rider (guidelines suggest 20%). A 15hh horse of about 500kg would then carry no more than 11 stone 8lb. However also consider height, a small horse can be a bit ridiculous for a tall rider and, as a small rider, I struggle with remounting a very tall horse from the ground.

What facilities do you have?

What facilities do you have available?

Stabling, livery and arenas can be expensive but finer horses can struggle with winter conditions if you only have turnout, and end up costing the earth in feed and vet's bills. Some cobs and native breeds seem to live on air and our horses get frustrated if kept in a stable

Know your budget

Consider what you can afford to buy and keep! Then do your research. Check the market so that you know what the type of horse you want is worth, the advertised price doesn't always reflect value. Then when you are offered a skinny cob for double its value you can just raise an eyebrow. Knowing the markets-value and fit of tack is also essential - an expensive saddle is no use if it doesn't fit!! We can't emphasise enough how important this type of due diligence is and although, it can seem a bit boring and time consuming it will pay dividends when you come to making your purchase.

The seller

A horse may be for sale for many reasons and a seller be more or less honest. Whilst searching ourselves we have met some great horse-people but have also come to appreciate the term 'horse-trading'. There are few safeguards in this market - it is definitely **'Buyer Beware!'**.



Buying from a DEALER

Buying from a buyer can feel like a safer option. A dealer may have a choice of horses for sale and it should be possible to check their reputation by doing some background validation with other buyers or via social media. You get the added advantage of buying from someone who is knowledgeable but, beware, this is not like buying from your favourite, high street store, this knowledge can help some unscrupulous dealers cover up conformation or behavioural issues. Always be vigilant and if in doubt take someone in the know with you.

Buying from a PRIVATE SELLER

While buying from a seller may not offer the same choice, it should mean that they know their horse extremely well. An honest seller will want a good match and be open and honest about the horse in question. However, they may themselves lack knowledge or experience and not know faults when they see them. It is common to find horses for sale privately that have unnerved their owner and are under-exercised and fresh, so always ask them to ride the horse first and take time to ascertain the reason for sale if possible.



Wilder Ways Pre-viewing CHECKLIST

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Basic height, breed & sex | <input type="checkbox"/> | Do they box easily and transport well and on their own? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Why is the horse for sale? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Are they good to clip and hose? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | What is their current environment & work? | <input type="checkbox"/> | How do they behave with other horses, in the field and on a ride? |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | What is their ownership history? | <input type="checkbox"/> | Get videos at all paces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | What is their medical history? | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Are they shod & how do they behave with the farrier? | | |

As a minimum we recommend asking these questions before committing to view, plus questions specific to your own rider ability and facilities

Pre-viewing

Do as much ground work as you can before you view, it can waste hours to visit horses that could have been easily established as unsuitable from afar. **Ask for videos of the horse in action at all paces and go through our checklist of questions with the owner on the phone in as much detail as you can.**

Viewing

Once you've taken the plunge to go and view, check conformation, condition and behaviour on the ground, before tacking up.

Be careful handling a horse you don't know. You need to rub your hands over every inch of that horse. You can't look too closely...even after pre-view checks, we've viewed horses that have been doped, starving and even crawling with lice.

Be observant. Watch how it moves in the box. Are there 'ears back' warnings when touching that may indicate past injury or sickness? Problems with feet can quickly render a horse completely unusable. Good conformation is important to performance and how comfortable the horse will be to ride but can also show up areas of likely weakness and strain.

There are some good articles about horse conformation, e.g. BHS Manual of Horsemanship (Batty-Smith). If you do not know about horse conformation – take someone with you who does.

Check that the horse is a good weight. Is the coat glossy, are the eyes bright and the nostrils clean? How does the horse smell? This might sound strange but if a horse smells strong, this could indicate health issues.

Ignore the old adage "Never look a gift horse in the mouth". You're buying it, it's not a gift! If you do not know how to age a horse by its teeth, ask someone to join you who does or take photos of the face and grinding surface of the front teeth and send them to an equine dentist for advice. Many horse passports contain false ages and we have seen horse's teeth that have been 'doctored' to make them look younger. Does the horse fling its head up during bridling or make faces whilst being girthed? White hair or lack of muscle above the shoulders can be due to ill-fitting tack - see Issue 1 of 'Straight from the Horse's Mouth' about saddle fitting.

Ask the owner to ride the horse first. This is, hopefully, for them to showcase what their horse can do and, if it is unruly, for them to be the one getting bucked off!



When you ride yourself, think not only about what the horse can do, but also what you want it to try. Is it willing to learn or stubborn when presented with a new task? Get someone to video you riding and look back at it. Now riffle through the back of your mind - where is that dream horse? Has he been supplanted by the real, future friend that you've just ridden? If so, start talking money.

Buying your new friend!

The final price you pay should reflect the horse as it is at the time of sale. A horse with potential is great but you will have to invest time (and/or money) to realise it. Conformational faults may cause future problems and the price should reflect this. See our further questions to consider before agreeing a price.

Once agreed, ideally have a brief contract between you and sign it.

Payment needs to be secure and fair for both parties. A deposit just secures the sale. At Wilder Ways we fix the point of transfer of ownership and liability as the point of pick-up (assuming we arrange the transport) and transfer the balance by

Contractual Considerations

- Ask to see their vetting and vaccination history, dentistry and physio records
- Have they been strangles tested?
- What tack and rugs etc does the horse come with?
- Has any saddle been properly fitted?
- When does ownership and liability transfer and how will the horse be cared for until the point of sale

BACS when the trailer is at the yard. Insurance should start the day of pick up.

Then take your new friend home... and open another chapter in your lives



FINAL THOUGHTS

The definition of horse trading is found as ***“bargaining that involves unofficial or secret compromises”*** – doesn’t sound good does it? Let’s improve the face of trading horses, lobby to raise standards and make it a more professional and transparent business – and remember it is buyer power that affects supply, so this starts with all of us.



ALL NEW ADVENTURES FOR 2018

SEPT 24TH – OCT 1ST – UNIQUE TRAIL BLAZING,
CROSS-COUNTRY JUMPING & HORSEMANSHIP WEEK

For the first time ever, Wilder Ways are joining forces with Lindores Equestrian for a totally immersive week of horse play and luxury. This is your chance to try a blend of trail-riding Wilder Ways style with riding the Lindores fabulous and very accessible cross-country course and show-jumping arena. Enjoy treating one of our herd as your very own all week and bond over a range of activities and natural horsemanship games.

Lindores is set in the hills near the beautiful Tay valley and during six days of riding we'll explore along the River and surrounding hills. This is a beautiful open landscape with sweeping views, tracks and open fields. As well as being steeped in

all things horse for the week, we'd also like to spoil you in one of Lindores fabulous new Lodges complete with private hot-tub and stunning views. The week includes 7 nights' accommodation and full board, plus an afternoon visit to Lindores Abbey of 'Outlander fame including a distillery tour and cocktails. This experience is for riders who want to immerse themselves in the Wilder Ways way of life for a whole week. Utilising the fantastic equestrian facilities on offer at Lindores, exploring this wonderful landscape and its cultural delights and enjoying the company of a new equine companion, whilst indulging in a little luxury in the evenings with like-minded folk.

FOR A FUSION OF FANTASTIC FACILITIES AND EXPERIENCED STEEDS....~ WILDER WAYS JOIN FORCES WITH LINDORES EQUESTRIAN

The week runs
Sept 24th – Oct 1st

If this sounds like you, please contact us now at adventures@wilderways.scot or 07826 273 291 to book your spot.

This week is limited to six places so book now to avoid disappointment.

Package: £1,950 pp including 7 nights at Lindores Luxury Lodge, full board, horse hire for the week, the use of all facilities plus a tour of Lindores Abbey Distillery.

This adventure is also available for riders wanting to bring their own horse.



IF THIS SOUNDS LIKE YOU KIND OF ADVENTURE,
GET IN TOUCH TO PLAN YOUR TRIP NOW!



Lindores Online

www.lindores.co.uk
www.lindoresxc.co.uk

www.thescottishfarmer.co.uk/lifestyle/15773059.Ride_or_relax_at_Lindores_rural_retreat/



LINDORES EXPERIENCE DAYS – OCT 2ND – 7TH

The following week we will be staying on at Lindores with the horses from Oct 2nd – 7th and offering Trail Riding and Cross-Country/Show Jumping Day or Half-Day Experiences.

During these dates Wilder Ways exclusive offer will enable you to enjoy the facilities at Lindores with one of our Wilder Ways herd, just as though you had your own horse for the day. Tuition will be on hand during all sessions as required. Different experiences are available from half to full-days,

Dates

Tues 2nd October: AM Half day trail ride PM Half day Cross Country (full day available)

Wed 3rd October: AM Half day show jumping PM Half day trail ride (full day available)

Thurs 4th October: Full day trail ride

Fri 5th October: AM Half day show jumping PM Half day trail ride (full day available)

Sat 6th October: AM Half day trail ride PM Half day Cross Country (full day available)

Sun 7th October: Full day trail ride

If this sounds like you, please contact us now at adventures@wilderways.scot or **07826 273 291** to book your spot.

Each session is limited to six places. Book now to avoid disappointment.

Packages:

£90pp half-day experience
£180.00pp full-day experience

Costs include instruction and horse hire. Full day experiences also include lunch.

YOUR ADVENTURE AWAITS ... WWW.WILDERWAYS.SCOT HORSE RIDING ADVENTURES



IT IS THE CALL OF THE WILD, THE WILL OF THE HERD, THE THUNDER OF HOOVES, THE POUND OF YOUR HEART. IT IS RIDING ... WILDER WAYS.

Contact us, Nikki & Cara, at adventures@wilderways.scot or call on 07826 273291



friends OF WILDER WAYS

As we are now entering our third season of Wilder Ways we have been looking back over the previous seasons not only to plan for 2018, but to take stock. During these first few years we have spent a lot of time developing our products, finding all the routes for our adventures, figuring out the logistics and trying to determine what you guys (our adventurers) actually want. This phase required some huge leaps of faith from us, but also from you guys and a lot of other people along the way, without whom none of this would have been possible. We would therefore like to take an opportunity in this, our 3rd newsletter, to thank all our *Friends of Wilder Ways*.

A big thank you to **Roland Holmes** who has literally gone to the ends of the earth for us! Whether it's been to pick up a new horse, or to transport the whole herd out to far flung corners and islands, Roland has always managed to come up with a plan to get us and our herd safely to where we need to be.

www.perthequinetransport.com

Laura at **Amazing Saddlery** has been our saddle fitter from the start and has never stinted in her stock of pithy comments to keep us on our toes regarding our horses' back welfare. She always manages to find a solution for all our saddlery needs however obscure and even brings us biscuits – she knows us well!

www.amazingsaddlery.co.uk

Despite shortages in hay this year, our hay man **John Walker** has kept our fortnightly supply of 100 bales coming in all weathers. Along miles of winding coastal roads, tracks and mud John delivers to where ever we need him and gamely stacks bales through windows, doors and under tarps, although we usually make him buns and tea to sweeten the deal!

Our horses work hard and cover many miles throughout the season and our farrier, **Fraser Spittal**, has also gone above and beyond to keep them well shod. Fraser will turn out as fast as possible to fix a lost shoe, even well out of his way. He even turned up early for an emergency the morning after his 30th birthday!

Possibly our greatest logistical challenge has been taking our herd out to the most remote location on the Scottish Mainland, Knoydart. A big cheers to the whole Knoydart community who have supported this crazy venture in every possible way. In particular we'd like to mention Jon Sellars, Jim Sharp and the crew of the Merry, and Greg Milligan of the Spanish John, who both braved the seas with our herd aboard – and had to pick up all the poop afterwards!

www.visitknoydart.co.uk

We'd also like to thank all the farmers and landowners who have given us permission to ride over their land and even over-night the herd in their fields from time to time. **You are perhaps our greatest unsung heroes.**

To all the accommodation providers and people who feed us along the way - you are too many to mention individually but you know who you are - also thank-you.

Finally, our gratitude goes to the S. J Noble Trust & Kilfinan Trust who jointly showed their confidence in our venture by loaning us the money we needed to expand the herd. We are heading into our busiest year yet, with most of our holidays already pre-booked, and their continued support and mentoring has been invaluable.

www.sjnobletrust.com

Orchestrating the Wilder Ways beast to deliver our unique set of products is a logistical challenge to say the least. It would be impossible if it were not for the 'let's do it' attitude and enthusiasm with which other businesses have approached some of our crazy requests for collaboration. So thank-you. We couldn't do it without you all.

Best wishes,
Cara, Nikki & The Herd

X X X



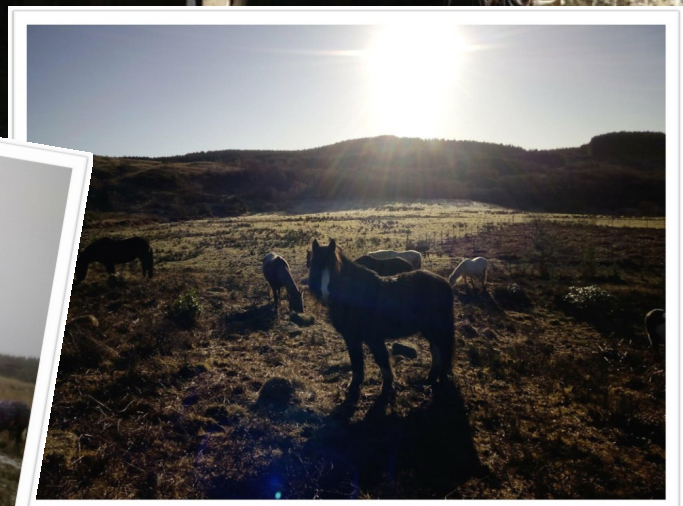
AMAZING SADDLERY LTD





LAST YEAR IN PICTURES







Wilder Ways Riding Adventures

2018 Programme!

FINAL DATES FOR 2018 - NOW BOOKING!

www.wilderways.scot



adventures@wilderways.scot