

## CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

We highly favor natural fabrics because the highly synth options get slimy and sticky from sweat and/or water and end up quite odiferous after only a day or so. Clothing for horse trips should be practical, adaptable for layering and ideally something that you're planning to wear for more than just this trip.

You are of course welcome to pack and wear whatever you choose but we reserve the right to mock you when you opt not to follow our recommendations.

The following are some of our recommendations:

### **Top-to-bottom**

#### Cowboy or sun hat

You will be at higher altitude than you are accustomed to and because that combined with aridity will not make you feel particularly hot it is easy to get excessive sun exposure. Cowboy hats are, of course, the traditional headgear and you can find perfectly acceptable ones in a large range of styles and colors from as little as \$20 to several thousand dollars. Straw hats do not add additional warmth for the cooler evenings and mornings and we do have one horse with a taste for straw hats. We rather like "crushers" which are felt hats that you can roll and pack in your bag. We have found the lowest prices at [shoebuy.com](http://shoebuy.com). Sunhat options are really up to you but should avoid dangly or shiny things for the sake of our horse partners. A tie string for your headgear is recommended because it's quite windy. We have been known to assist with "field repairs" to add tie strings to hats and travel with leather repair supplies. Having grommets and ties professionally added is undoubtedly better for the longevity of your hat.

#### Beanie, skullcap, watchcap

Whether you sleep in a hat at home or not, you will find that having a warm hat adds significantly to your comfort in the mountains particularly when the sun is down. We wear them under (or over) our cowboy hats on inclement days. We favor wool or a predominantly wool blend but it is more important to have a hat that you will actually wear. We have Woolpower and Bemidji Woolen Mills stocking caps available for sale at \$25-30. Or you can find them through just about any outdoor supply store

#### "Silkie" or silk scarf

A silk neck scarf or "neckerchief" can increase your warmth and protect you from wind, rain or snow. When not in use they fold well enough to tuck into almost any pocket. We carry a line of silkies from Wyoming trading company which retail at \$10 to \$30 depending on weight and colors. Cotton just doesn't serve any real trail purpose unless you have a sudden handkerchief emergency.

## Base layer shirt

Most of our crew wears Stanfield's either separates or a union suit. We carry Stanfield's union suits and separates but not generally for smaller sizes. Prices range from \$30 to \$110 for these 100% wool pieces.

Wool or wool blends are incomparable for base layer warmth and comfort with changing weather conditions. Wool is also great for wearing several days in a row without feeling like your B.O. is an unwelcome uninvited guest. Sierratradingpost.com has many options for men, women and children's sizes (we suggest Smartwool or Icebreaker). Specifically for women: <http://stores.ebay.com/ditkasshop> Ditka has an eBay store and specializes in great looking wool bodysuits for base layers. Ditka responds very quickly to emails and ships rapidly. The location of the crotch snaps is well placed for riding comfort although she generally has a shirt option as well.

## Long-sleeved natural fiber shirt

For this layer cotton is perfect. This is where that western cowboy shirt you've always wanted is the perfect choice. Several of the links below have extensive listings of western shirts in many different styles and colors. Oxford button-down shirts are perfectly fine for this as well. The main thing you're looking for is a shirt that will fit comfortably either over your base layer or alone and one that won't irritate your skin if you have gotten sun or wind burn and a comfortable protection from the sun and brush on the trails.

## Mid-weight shirt

For the overzealous layer-er or people who run really cold, an additional shirt which will fit either between your base layer and your long-sleeved natural fiber or over your long-sleeved natural fiber but under your outer layer is good to have. Some people opt for a light sweater kind of layer. Traditional mountaineering guides recommend 100-weight fleece for this layer. This layer isn't mandatory but adds to the overall versatility of your clothing options with rapidly changing weather conditions.

## Down vest

Down vests fold into very small packages that can be carried in packs, saddlebags, pockets or rolled up inside your over-layer. The color of your vest will probably not affect its warmth and these vests are available in a wide variety of colors. Make sure it's not too tight to fit comfortably over the layers you have so far.

## Over-layer

Remember we're still on shirts here. This is important for sizing as you can ideally put all of these layering options on at the same time and still move your arms and legs. For instance, if you are traditionally a size small for base layer you may pair it with a small mid-weight layer, a

small vest and a medium long-sleeved natural fiber shirt. This outer layer doubles as a jacket and is carried rolled-up behind your saddle in case of sudden weather shifts when we're on the trail. Woolrich Alaskan guide shirts are great. Icebreaker has a great (but pricey) hoodie sweatshirt of merino wool. Pendleton also makes several styles of heavy shirts (wool) which are great for this layer. Also great is the M-1951 military shirt.

### Underwear

We don't really want to know about your underwear or whether you wear it. Be comfortable. If wearing the same bra for three days is going to bother you, bring more than one. My partner strongly recommends Victoria's Secret sports bras. For those who don't wear bras, make comfort decisions over looks.

### Base layer – bottoms

If you have a union suit this is already covered. Smartwool has several different options which range from \$50 on sale to well over \$100. Icebreaker runs about the same. For most of us, this layer will be serving double or triple duty as base layer, pajamas and our favored outfit for "cowboy yoga" so get good stuff. There are less expensive options made of cotton or synth but veteran pack-trippers always end up in wool no matter where they start from. Sierratradingpost.com has sales that lower the prices for Smartwool and Icebreaker considerably. There seems to be a new emerging brand "Haysun" that we don't know much about yet, also using wool.

### Jeans or riding pants

The vast majority of cowboys ride in jeans – Wranglers. Cowboy cut. (around \$25/pair). For anyone not in that category there are other options, just remember that function is more important than fashion. That said, the new spandex blends for women seem to work just as well and be just as durable as custom-made breeches from Germany for four digit prices. There are several brands specifically positioned for cowgirls: Cruel Girl, Q-Baby, Ariat. My partner prefers the all-day riding fit of jeans with 3-10% stretch. Riding breeches are an option that some of our serious riding guests use happily (and stylishly) but the added expense of getting "English" riding clothes which provide adequate warmth for the mountains seems to be very high. If your jeans store doesn't have a horse for you to mount while trying out jeans, turn a chair around backwards and straddle it. Fit issues will become readily apparent. You will want to wear a belt in order to carry your bear mace and any trail knife/multitool you want to carry.

### Socks

You probably want at least three pairs of socks. It is easy to wash socks out and dry them by the next day but comfortably luxurious to have a warm dry pair to change into for just-in-cases or water crossings. Don't get carried away and use all of your space on socks. Layering of socks doesn't gain you anything and well-fitting boots shouldn't fit over more than one pair. This is

another category where we highly prefer wool. Wool socks come in a wide variety of weights, colors and styles and will keep you cool on hot days and warm on cold ones.

## Boots

Comfortably fitting, broken-in but not broken heeled boots (cowboy boots) are by far the most highly recommended for footwear. You should be able to walk comfortably in them for periods of time in differing conditions of weather and terrain. Your boots should not disintegrate if you walk through water, nor should they be so fashionable and trendy that a rainstorm makes you panic. That being said, we LIKE stylish boots. Your boots should come up at least to your ankle for going through brush. We don't really see much use for boots made of synthetics: they get slippery when your feet get hot which isn't much use. Leather boots with heels work great and the heel height is a matter of taste. As long as there is heel definition at all it serves the purpose of proper positioning in your stirrup. You can find great boots used at a consignment store or eBay for \$20 or less, or you can spend thousands of dollars on the highest-end shark-lizard-dinosaur skin cowboy/girl deluxe. We ride horses all year round and favor Lucchese, but that's a personal choice (although it's said The Duke owned more than 350 pairs).

## Camp shoes

When we get to camp you'll want to slip off your boots (and socks?) and get comfortable. We've seen everything from flip-flops to moccasins, sneakers, boat shoes, ballet slippers, bedroom slippers. Something with a sole that can withstand moisture is good for wet days but other than that, pretty much anything goes.

## Rain gear

It is imperative that your rain gear fits over all of your layers. We are traveling upwards of 8000 feet of elevation and as high as 12000 or more. What starts as rain can easily turn to sleet or hail or snow – even in August so you need to be able to get and stay dry without sacrificing warmth. Ponchos are not great. A long, split rain jacket fits well over your saddle (think trenchcoat). We have specialized riding slickers available in adult (and some children) sizes retailing around \$70. You can also go with rain separates (top and bottom) sometimes positioned for bicyclists or motorcycle enthusiasts. Some guests bring mountaineering rainsuits. We've had guests change into their rain suits without dismounting although we recommend the more conservative dismount-first approach. So far, no guests have melted so we're pretty sure you have time to get your rain gear off your horse and on you with no ill effects.

## Bear mace

We cannot legally lend or give you bear mace. The Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee recommends that everyone should carry bear mace. We do have bear mace available for purchase and will ship it back home for you if you are returning home by plane. Our recommended brand runs around \$60/can and comes with a carrying scabbard. Some guests

opt to buy this and other gear and have it shipped directly here. Simply try to remember to give us a heads up about that.

#### Other personal protection

Please talk to us about any special needs or concerns in this area.

#### Alcohol and Tobacco

We do not dictate your personal choices. We do not have a liquor or tobacco license so we cannot provide either for you. Many guests find that their trip is enhanced by their beverage(s) of choice and tobacco according to their desires. We are environmentally conscious and do not litter which includes tailor-made cigarette butts. We recommend pipes, cigars or roll-your-own tobacco. For liquor there are several points of purchase but make sure that you don't leave it until the seconds before we leave. There are some lovely box or foil-pack wines available. It's also nice for us to know what kind of volume you're bringing and if it's going to include glass bottles. (FYI: cases pack better than single bottles). We have had trips of wine enthusiasts that required three pack horses for their libations and then a laborious horseback resupply during the trip. We can offer menu for wine-matching if you'd like.

#### Flashlights

There are no lights in the wilderness. You may not realize until you're out in the wilderness that you have never before experienced 0% light pollution. You will need a flashlight or headlamp if you require artificial light for getting around (potty breaks) at night or finding something in your tent after dark. If you have difficulty locating affordable headlamps we do have a limited number available each season. We recommend Princeton Tech.

#### Water bottle

This is not the Dasani bottle you just got this morning. There is no bottled water on the trail. When possible we will drink from pristine mountain springs and when necessary we carry water purification equipment. Hydration is something to take very seriously in the wilderness and the combination of high altitude and aridity can fool you into thinking you're "not thirsty" even though your body needs more water than usual to acclimate to the higher altitude and less oxygen. We have very experienced guests who prefer to carry two half-quart water bottles, one on either side of their horse. Your water bottle should have one quart capacity and be durable. Nalgene makes excellent products. Many of the military canteens are also very good.

#### Toiletries and personal hygiene supplies

Unbreakable is better. If you are packing, for instance, a makeup mirror, a durable non-glass option is better or at least one with a durable self-contained case so that any breakage is contained. Bear safety is another consideration because although you may never consider your apricot-cucumber-oatmeal exfoliant (or your toothpaste) as a luxury food, a bear may have

differing opinions. This does not mean you can't bring it, but it will have to be stored with other edible supplies overnight and while we're out on day rides. Generally it's better if we know what you have in your bags. We promise not to hoard your gummy bears.

Weird stuff I want to bring

We've worked with Preppers, survivalists, re-enactors, politicians and tin-foil-hat aficionados. Try us. Chances are we have just the horse to pack your...whatever...advanced notice is greatly appreciated for the extraordinary.

**Some Shopping links to get you started:**

Online, gently used western wear, free shipping:

<http://www.stageswest.com>

a little pricey "gently used" kids/women/men:

<http://shopcirclee.com/>

Their claim to fame is "special sizes"

<http://www.drysdale.com/?gclid=CMSU6a2W4bcCFWJIMgodsVwAVA>

Excellent clearance sales and all weather gear:

[www.sierratradingpost.com/](http://www.sierratradingpost.com/)

Also at Sierra are a variety of base layer options (longjohns). For smaller women and children we suggest Smartwool (my partner wears them). For larger adults we suggest Stanfield's one-piece union suits and separates.

We highly favor wool for warmth and because the wool wicking effect is ideal for layering as you warm up. For men's sizes and the best deal for the heaviest wool option [armysurpluswarehouse.com](http://armysurpluswarehouse.com) has Korean war issue surplus.