

Hello all you first time Cavalcaders!

Hopefully you've talked to a few people who've been on previous trails and have some idea of just what exactly you are getting yourself in for.

I am supremely confident you will have a great experience but just so your expectations are somewhere in line with reality I thought I'd flick you all an 'extra' letter.

This is the 23rd Cavalcade and some of the folks on your trail have been on every one! The vast majority have done many Cavalcades and it has become the highlight of their year. There is likely to be more women than men on your trail and the average age is in the 50-60's with a few quite a bit older than that. About half are farmers or 'rural folk' with the remainder being keen 'horsey' folk based in towns and cities.

While they will expect you to be capable around your horse they are happy to help so don't be shy! Look out for the guys wearing the red cow tags around their necks, they are the 'Wranglers' and it's their job to help you out. Correspondingly, if someone asks you for help or to shut a gate or 'get out of the bloody way...' it's expected you'll be happy to do so.

Things have changed over the years and some folk are sneaking in a few luxuries from home but basically you should expect to be sleeping in woolsheds and going without a shower for the whole week. There will be rivers and some lakes to 'bath' in. Brushing teeth (optional) will be done outside with a hose/tap. Toileting will be in long drops or port-a-loos at the camp – out on the mountain it'll be wherever you have to go – please make sure you put a rock on top of number two's.

PLEASE wave and say hi/be friendly to everyone you meet along the trail – often seemingly 'random' people will in fact be the land owners who have generously given their permission to cross their land, eat their grass, drink their water, sleep in their woolshed... they actually put themselves at some risk by allowing the cavalcade to cross their land so make bloody sure you seem appreciative or other trails may not be allowed back!

I think that's about it – I don't want to take all the mystery out of it for ya!

All the best

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