

Be Darcy for a day or two

JUST AS MR DARCY cantered across his Pemberley estate and Catherine rode across the Yorkshire moors to Wuthering Heights, 21st-century riders can enjoy the romance of visiting historic houses, thanks to Charlotte Sainsbury-Plaice, Zara Colchester and their new company, Stately Rides. Echoing the writer, professor and adventurer A. F. Tschiffely—'to see England properly, I recommend viewing it from the saddle, for the smell and creaking of leather and the company of a horse give it an atmosphere imaginative people can today only find in old novels'—the idea is to admire the beauty of the English countryside and that of its enviable historic houses from the back of a horse. Rides, mainly two days long, go from one rural estate to the next in the Cotswolds, such as Notgrove near Cheltenham and Banksc Fee Farm, near Stow-on-the-Wold, staying in houses not usually available to the public, 'with lunches, candlelit dinners and Champagne along the way'.



See England's houses as they should be seen—from horseback

Mrs Sainsbury-Plaice, whose husband, Charles, is a regular *COUNTRY LIFE* photographer, says: 'England has some of the most unspoilt countryside in the world, with magnificent houses steeped in history and romance. It's not necessary to fly all over the world to have an exceptional riding holiday.' Prices start from £680. Visit www.statelyrides.co.uk **AC**