

An OC Girl's guide to dude ranching



I just returned last night from a trip to Kay el Bar Ranch in Arizona. It's one of those Dude Ranches where you can go for a few days and live like a real cowboy-girl. That is if cowgirls can soak in the jacuzzi every night, get a fresh lemonade on the trail and have room service make their beds.

It was spectacular. It has been pretty well covered here in this blog that I'm not a "roughing-it" type of person. But, I can do this kind of "great outdoors."

If you're a girl from Orange County—like me—who doesn't have a lot of experience with horses or nature I've put together these tips to help you conquer this new frontier:

An Orange County girl's guide to Dude Ranching

- Freshly applied lip gloss + dusty trail ride = mistake.
- Your horse is NOT giving you "the stink eye" or "evil eye," and does not think you are an idiot. They look at everyone that way.
- You can't possibly say "look at that cactus!" too many times to your trail guide. He truly appreciates you pointing them out to him. That's why he says, "Yeah, would you look at that!" with heartfelt enthusiasm.
- That's the dinner bell, not the fire bell. No need to panic or call ranch manager.
- A can of Diet Coke does not travel well in a saddle bag. If you simple MUST take it with you, I suggest you take many, many giant steps away from your horse before opening it. Horses don't like surprises.
- The "cowboy" at Boot Barn in Orange who sold you your boots was 95% right, it really doesn't matter how cute your boots are, they just need to be comfortable and keep you on the

horse.

- If you get the Dixie Chicks song “Wide Open Spaces” stuck in your head during your stay, immediately start listening to Jason Mraz repeatedly on your iPod until it is gone.
- Make sure to appreciate the quiet, slow pace of your horse, the easy, casual way of the ranch, and the awesomeness of the blooming desert. You are a lucky girl to be able to experience such beauty and spend this time with your family.

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Other outdoor adventures I’ve had...

“Say it isn’t snow”

“The Broughton family experiences nature in the Anza Borrego Desert.”

To see more of my photography from our trip you can go to my Flickr page: [here](#).