



HACKING HOLIDAYS

Help the horses



Emma Greenfield's family must have had an idea what this young woman would do with her life – she rescued her first frog aged two and hasn't stopped rescuing animals since. Bitten by the equine bug, she started riding in her early teens and by 22 had her first horse after studying British Horse Society horsemanship. She added to that knowledge with courses on small animal care and first aid, dog training, horse first aid and later retrained in natural horsemanship, becoming an enthusiast of positive reinforcement training and bitless and barefoot horsemanship.

She moved to the Canaries four and a half years ago, but still has a horse sanctuary charity shop in the UK where she ran a pet services business. Her first stop was Fuerteventura where she expanded her knowledge of horses in different environments and quickly began to see the sad need to set up a rescue centre in the Islands. Her partner, Italian Edoardo Pensato, shares her passion for animals. They met in Fuerteventura and he wanted to help her with her project – he provides the brawn and the language skills! They moved to Tenerife 18 months ago, starting in a rented



dle any more. Then they get drugged and passed on from person to person, often living in terrible conditions - stables that don't get regularly mucked-out, a bad diet etc. Being unable to move causes the horses more health problems and results in unimaginable stress for these incredible animals. This is not everywhere of course but sadly far too common and the sanctuary aims to help these animals and raise awareness that there is another

floods, animals constantly turning up when there is no space (or money) for them, licence problems and a long etcetera, but remain undaunted.

Raising money

As they have been a legal charity for three months, some fundraisers have already been organised and more are always welcome, however, long term, they are building a cave house and a luxury Mongolian yurt to

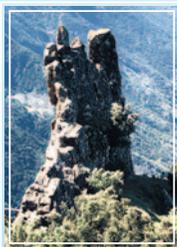
rent out to tourists to cover animal care costs. They are open as a mini petting farm, asking for donations of money or food to view the animals and you can ride horses to help raise the money to rescue more.

Some horses are retired and will live peacefully there for the remainder of their lives, the healthier horses are being slowly rehabilitated and



Experience a magical day

Wonderful El Hierro



The first reader's trip with **Diga Sports**, in February, led them to this small Canary Island. It was such a great success that it will be offered on a regular basis with immediate effect. **Every Wednesday**, we will meet at 7.15am at the Los Cristianos port.

The cost per person for this interesting day trip is **€99**.

For more information and bookings, visit the Diga Sports office at Hotel Park Club Europe in Playa de Las Américas, telephone **677 489 946** or send an email to info.digasports@gmail.com



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yard and they bought their no-water, no-electricity, no-buildings, bare land finca in Jaca, Arico, a year back, with an option to expand once their financial situation improves. No animal is turned away and they rescue all species, but specialise in horses and small animals. The current inhabitants are 10 horses, 45 guinea pigs, countless chickens, seven rabbits, four pigs, two goats, 21 cats, 12 dogs, four tortoises and two hedgehogs. Everything at the moment is still in the process of being built, but the final aim is to create a self-sufficient rescue centre as horses are so expensive to feed and relying just on donations is not viable. It costs €85 a month just in horse feed as it has to be imported from the Spanish Peninsula. Add to that vets' bills, foot care, insurance, the small animal care and the water and you're looking at a hefty monthly bill.

The staff consists of Emma, Edoardo, a paid builder and a team of work-away volunteers. Everything is 100 per cent non profit and goes to animal care and rescue. No matter what condition the horses are in, they have to be bought, as even when they are incapable of standing they are sold as a 'riding horse', "and if I don't buy them, they'll sell them to someone else until they are literally ridden to death". Some horses are so undernourished their skin splits open from breathing. Some have been kept in small 'stables' with no windows, water or food, some are too scared to be touched and can take up to three months before they can even get a head collar on them. It's common here for horses to be ridden at the age of two before they are fully grown which often causes issues in later life, resulting in horses being forced by fear and heavy use of whips to ride through the pain until they can't han-

way to keep horses. All of their horses live outside in an environment as natural as possible for a domesticated animal.

They've come a long way in a short time

They now have three horse paddocks, a riding space, plenty of small animal paddocks, water and a barbecue area. The solar panels have been problematic - difficulties with post, delivery drivers and builders. They have had a robbery, water bills before even being connected, van breakdowns,

retrained with positive horsemanship. For these horses they are looking for riders, asking for small financial donations in exchange for riding. This helps to keep the horses fit, healthy and fed. Each horse is treated according to its needs, some need light riding to keep active and some are now perfectly healthy after up to nine months rehabilitation and are looking for experienced riders to enjoy the beautiful countryside and a relaxed riding environment. All ages and experience are welcome, they have horses for everyone.