

San Diego boarding and training facility is family and horse friendly.



Sunset Horse Ranch prides itself on being a first-rate facility for horses and people. Owner Paul Seitz is a horseman himself, a reined cow horse competitor, so he takes the importance of good footing, stabling, feed, etc., to heart. He's also a father, so he places a premium on a safe, family friendly atmosphere for all.

Paul bought the 10-acre property four years ago, when it was known as Pomegranate Hill. He first envisioned using it as a private facility for his own training, but when boarders, especially the youngsters, asked him whether they'd have to move out, he quickly changed his mind. "My wife and I just couldn't do that," he laughs kindly. Instead, they invested into refurbishing the facility's many stabling options, its five riding arenas and all other amenities.

Another key was attracting the type of trainers who attract the type of horse owners that make a boarding and training facility a home away from home for all.

Sunset Horse Ranch offers training in all riding styles. American Quarter Horse Association World and Reserve World Champion Liz Place offers western training. Liz's associate Lindsay LaPlante is head instructor of the Silver Spur Riding School, which caters to beginners and starts six weeks of summer camps on June 22. In expanding her Del Mar Dressage business to include a base at Sunset Horse Ranch, well-known rider and trainer Bettina Loy offers beginner through FEI level coaching and training, with the help of assistant Lisa Boheim. Bettina also continues her own upper level dressage ambitions. Hunter/jumper enthusiasts are well served by training programs run by Mary Ann Doddridge and Nicole Blackwell.

The Ranch offers several affordable boarding options. Barn stabling is 12' by 12' box stalls with front and rear windows for airflow and a view of activities, and some stalls have attached runs in various sizes. Wood fenced paddocks and pipe corrals, both with shelter/shade sections, are additional options.



Paul is a stickler for high quality feed and he's not a fan of skinny horses. "I would much rather have somebody ask me to cut down on their horse's feed a little," he says. Twice daily, high quality grass and alfalfa hay are standard, and extra feed and services are available for a small fee. That can include grain, lunch, blanketing and turn-out. Staff members live on the property to keep an eye on things and provide quick help in an emergency.

Sunset's location in the Rancho Santa Fe area's Carmel Valley is one of its greatest amenities. There's easy access to the area's extensive trail network. And it's easy for people to get to, located close to the I 5 and 56 freeways.

In his transition from horse owner to boarding stable owner, Paul has learned a lot. "You've got to know what's good for a horse and what a happy horse looks like," he says. "You also have to be open minded to some other ways of doing things." He picked up a lot from the people who owned the facility before him and welcomes the input of the talented professionals at the Ranch. "No one knows it all, and if you think you do, it's probably time to quit," he says.

Paul shares that philosophy with those who train at Sunset and supports their efforts to continue their own education and that of their clients. Bettina Loy, for example, is hosting dressage expert Conrad Schumacher in for a clinic Oct 15-22.

For more information on boarding and training at Sunset Horse Ranch, visit www.sunsethorseranch.com or call

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