

Praise for Riding Horseback in Purple

From the book, a competition judge, and from online sites in three countries

A Good Read

Voice and Writing Style: Outstanding ★★★★★

Structure, Organization and Pacing: Outstanding ★★★★★

Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar: Outstanding ★★★★★

~ Competition Judge

Beautifully Written & Informative

★★★★★

While I've never dreamed of owning a horse, I found Alice's writing a welcome blend of humor, honesty, and courage. Much more than an instruction manual for new or future horse owners, it's a personal story of one woman's journey to re-awaken her own dream of horse ownership. Not surprisingly, like most goals, her quest had a few forks in the road and incredible learning along the way. This is a must read for anyone considering horse ownership. And if you simply love horses or stories about the relationship between horses and their human owners, I recommend it highly!

~ Marilyn Price-Mitchell, PhD (Bainbridge Island, WA)

The author's journey from total newbie to full-fledged equestrian and horse owner is chronicled with wisdom, insight, and humour. This engaging book lights the way for other mature women who are hoping to realize their own equestrian dream, while avoiding the pitfalls. A useful and practical guide, with a touch of the mystical that horses bring into our lives.

~ Lori Albrough,
Bluebird Lane Fjords

Great content!

★★★★★

I rode and looked after horses every summer as I grew up, and thought I knew a bit about it. But Alice MacGillivray has an understanding of horses that goes far below the surface of what I thought I knew and experienced. She describes how to find a horse to buy, how to make choices about food and location, how to communicate with your horse, and most of all, she illustrates the enormous respect and modesty required to be a good owner. This is a great read, and a must-read for anyone considering horse ownership.

~ Lara

Amazingly well thought out and researched. Alice speaks directly from experience and with a sense of humour, which I feel is essential in this horse world. This book is perfect for the beginner equestrian starting down the path of horse ownership.

~ Deborah M. Fox,
Equine Canada dressage coach and dressage judge

Live Your Passion

Alice MacGillivray has done us all a great favor by writing *Riding Horseback in Purple*: She has given us the exhortation to follow our passion for horses but tempered it with some of the soundest and most sage advice about how to do it. This book should become the bible for those wonderfully enthusiastic middle-aged souls who are pondering whether to return to their life-long passion for horses and finally making the jump to owning a horse of their own!

~ Allan J. Hamilton, MD,
Professor of Neurosurgery and author of *Zen Mind, Zen Horse*

For Mature Novices

Most excited I've ever been about a book



When I heard about the book, I was very excited. After reading the book I was even more excited. I loved it so much I swore she wrote it for me. I finally had confirmation that owning a horse is not for little girls or teens only. In the book, Alice beautifully outlines what is needed to own and care for a horse. If everyone who is contemplating the purchase of a horse would read this book, there would probably be less frustration from lack of understanding once the horse was home and in the barn. She gives the information in a logical and easy to read manner. She also gives other book recommendations that will be helpful in horse ownership, care and horse language. This book is long overdue and I'm glad that Alice MacGillivray shared her knowledge and experiences that give those of us in the 'mature' category the confidence to follow our dream of horse ownership if we are so inclined. A must read for anyone considering horse ownership.

~Juanita B.

This book is super! Thank you.



I am 67 and working with my first Fjord, Klara. For general horsemanship and for Fjords in particular, this book is super! Thank you, Alice. I hope I can meet you someday and give you a big hug!

~ Bennie Frost

Must-Read for anyone thinking about buying their first horse,



This is a very readable book filled with things to consider in the decision of buying a horse. It is specifically geared to speak to more mature women, but could really apply to anyone buying their first horse or deciding to buy a horse after not riding for many years. MacGillivray gently makes the point that real horse ownership is likely to be different than the fantasy and the horse you buy may not be the dream horse in your head or from your childhood. She correctly brings out the fact that owning a horse is the start of a relationship and partnership that takes time, knowledge and support to build. She gives much practical information about how to access resources and support. She also reminds the reader that no matter how we perceive their beauty and grace, horses are strong, powerful flight animals and, that the magnitude of that strength needs to be kept in mind and respected at all times when working with them.

~ Robin Churchill

Alice MacGillivray writes the book ostensibly about the quest to find a suitable horse to purchase...



Initially I missed the connection between Jenny Joseph's poem that begins "When I am an old woman I shall wear purple" and the title "Riding Horseback in Purple". It was only when I read the online reviews that I realised this book could be for me...an older woman who had taken up riding in later life. Little did I know it was going to be quite so relevant. Alice MacGillivray writes the book ostensibly about the quest to find a suitable horse to purchase for herself but in doing so she provides a useful and practical guide for anyone thinking of buying a horse. But not only that, with humour and honesty she gives us insight into the problems and 'mistakes' that every novice equestrian can make along the way. Recommended.

~ dsstj

Women and horses.



Many of us maintain, and finally satisfy, our prepubescent desire for horses in late middle age. It is enjoyable and instructive to follow MacGillivray along on this journey.

~Stephanie Ross

Not Only for Beginners

A MUST read for ANYONE considering purchasing a horse. With its logical, practical and useful tidbits it will truly set you up for success! It also proves that dreams do come true!

~ Patti Jo Walter,
Owner/operator of Francis Creek Fjords

Excellent read about horses, and their people



Although I've owned horses for over 40 years, it was recommended that I read this book. For me some of the information was a repeat, but there was so much good and useful I'm really glad I read it. Alice puts things in right perspective and is quite insightful. It would be an excellent book for one contemplating new horse ownership, as well as a good read for someone more seasoned. Definitely a good and informative read!

~ Bonnie Kay Eddy

It's a wonderful book for ANYONE to read if they love horses



"Riding Horseback in Purple" is a MUST READ for any new horse owner, or anyone considering buying their first horse, if they are in their 40's or older. It's a wonderful book for ANYONE to read if they love and appreciate horses, and I think it would be an excellent tool for trainers, riding instructors and equine clinicians. By sharing her insight, knowledge, humor and story Alice MacGillivray will inspire any lover of horses to take the leap into actual horse ownership, and finally let their dream be realized. "Riding Horseback in Purple" is an important tool in such a journey and I think everyone should read it!

~ Bobbie J Sale

Not Only About Horses: Larger Contexts

This is not just a story about one woman's transformational ascent to horse ownership, rather this is a story of great significance to us all in a human-built world. It's an honest conversation about the realities of owning a horse, how to lean into that experience, and the deep and committed tending of the soul we need in the world. This book is a story of 're-membling' our compartmentalized bodies into whole and ancient selves through a cultivated bond between humans and horses.

~ Jeff Leinaweaver, PhD, Graduate Faculty in Sustainability,
Bainbridge Graduate Institute

On Design

Production Quality and Cover Design Outstanding ★★★★★

The packaging and cover design are extremely polished and professional. The front cover in particular does a great job of identifying the book's subject matter and intended audience. The formatting of the interior of the book is clean and effective. [*Thank you photographer Bob Langrish and designer Jessica Sullivan*]

~ Competition Judge

On Learning

Engaging and Educational



In this book my Mum acknowledges that she doesn't live in a "horsey" family. It's true, and I don't have any interest in horses. Despite that I found this book utterly engaging. Her passion for the topic makes her writing lively and dynamic, and her knowledge and diligent research make the book practical and educational without overwhelming her reader - even one as ignorant of horse-ownership as myself.

In a clear and organized fashion she introduces the reader to the important aspects of responsible horse-ownership (perhaps better stated as stewardship, or care-taking). Starting with the nuts and bolts such as horse selection and tack, she moves into the less tangible yet critical and rewarding elements such as communication and communion that inspire so many women to bring horses into their lives.

While this book may be eye-opening for readers who didn't anticipate the many issues and responsibilities that come with an equine companion, it will no doubt also inspire with its exploration of the life-changing impact human-horse relationships have had on the people featured in its pages.

~ C. MacGillivray (*Honestly; I had no idea she was going to do a review!*)

People used to have direct experience with large animals by growing up on farms; now they start from scratch. This book offers a big step towards better understanding the modern world of horses through knowledge and mindful awareness, leading to healthy and comfortable daily interactions with our beloved equines.

~ Phillip Odden,
Owner, Fjord Farm and Norsk Wood Works Ltd.