

The Dude Ranchers' Association



Invitation for Membership

Greetings from the Dude Ranchers' Association!

At the Dude Ranchers' Association we are continually researching dude and guest ranches that have a history of offering a quality experience for their guests. In doing so, we would like to extend a formal invitation to your ranch to apply for membership into the DRA.

Within this packet of information, you will see our main focus is marketing the Western dude ranch experience across the globe. We also offer our members other benefits such as possible financial savings through the Dude Ranch Foundation's Horse Safety Insurance Program, the opportunity to network with other dude ranches in the Western U.S. and Canada (a valuable benefit for dude ranchers during the COVID pandemic), and personalized, vetted leads. You will find a list of all the benefits, as well as the requirements of full membership, later in this packet.

This prestigious membership in the Dude Ranchers' Association identifies a ranch as meeting the highest standards of the dude ranch industry. Join the association that the public, media, and travel agents have come to know and respect as the leading authority of dude ranch vacations.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at 307-587-2339 if you have any questions!

All the Best,

Bryce Albright

Bryce Albright

Executive Director

bryce@duderranch.org



Inside this Document:

Membership Advantages	2
What Ranchers Are Saying	3
Application Process	4
6 H's of Dude Ranching	4
Membership Requirements	5
Membership Application	6
Written Horse Program	8
Horse Safety Program	9
Thank you!	10

[View All DRA
Member Ranches](#)

Mission Statement

The Dude Ranchers' Association is the governing body of the West's Dude Ranching industry. The association was created to provide an organized structure for its members, in which they are able to exchange ideas and experiences in an effort to uphold the highest quality of services within the industry. The association promotes the western ranch vacation, while continuing to build a stronger working relationship with Federal and State land agencies in order to preserve and protect parks, forests, and wildlife. The association makes every effort to assure the successful continuation of the traditional western dude ranch experience.

Benefits of Being a DRA Member Ranch:

1. Have a ranch profile on number one ranking dude ranch website www.duderanch.org.
2. Ability to list employment openings at your ranch on the DRA's [careers page](#).
3. Opportunity to network with other ranches across the Western U.S. and Canada to discover new perspectives and ideas.
4. Invitation to the annual DRA [convention](#).
5. Access to all [DRA Alliance Partners'](#) discounts and programs.
6. Access to DRA [resources and vendors](#).
7. Potential savings on your insurance premiums by participating in the Dude Ranch Foundation Horse Safety Program.
8. Opportunity to participate in digital, print and press co-op marketing opportunities.
9. Social media and email marketing features to over 45,000 individuals.
10. Be listed on DRA printed marketing material which is sent via regular mail to approximately 40,000+ potential guests annually.
11. Full access to the DRA office resources and staff.
12. Access to educational webinars and speakers throughout the year.

What are member ranches saying about the Dude Ranchers' Association?

"As a new general manager back in 2004, it did not take long to see the many benefits of the DRA after we joined. They were a giant help with marketing and filling up the ranch with new guests. On top of that, the conferences quickly became a wealth of knowledge for me and each conference continues to help make us better. I am grateful I made the decision to be a part of this association and I am blessed to have gained so many life-long friends."

Don McIntyre

Wind River Ranch, Colorado

"We rely on the Dude Ranchers' Association for access to cutting edge insight on key topics ~ marketing, risk management and insurance, public lands policy, and more. By working together as an industry, we can accomplish more than any one ranch can accomplish alone. Your ranch business likely thrives on being rural and remote, but as business people we need to stay connected. The DRA helps us do just that."

Mary Miller

Elkhorn Ranch, Arizona

"At Crossed Sabres Ranch, we appreciate the DRA so much! As new owners in 2013 and since, the DRA staff has done nothing but make us feel welcome and provide assistance. If they don't have the answer, they find resources to help you out. The website has been invaluable by providing a user friendly experience for guests to connect with ranches--our top lead generator by far."

Kenny Long

Crossed Sabres Ranch, Wyoming

"A benefit of membership is using our DRA Alliance partners. During our 2020 season we used SB Value for the majority of our food needs. In their initial comparison of costs to our current purveyor we thought we might save 10-15%. The final year end result was a 23% savings. This is dollars saved that can be spent on new horses and many more years of DRA member dues."

Jerry Helmicki

Bar Lazy J Ranch, Colorado



New Member Application Process:

Applications from new ranches shall be accepted throughout the year. New and complete applications will be reviewed at the next scheduled board meeting or via email after applying. The applications must be accompanied by \$500. Following the Board's review and acceptance of the application, the Executive Director or a Board Member will do the ranch inspection at the earliest time possible. The remaining \$500 is due prior to the inspection. If the ranch is not accepted into the membership, \$500 will be refunded. It is also strongly encouraged to attend a Horse Safety Program class.

Applicant ranches accepted for probationary membership will receive all benefits of full membership including listing in the DRA directory and website. During the next season (second season) of operation after application, the inspection process will be repeated, should the board feel it is appropriate. A visit during the second season is typical.

At the board meeting following the second season of operation, the applicant ranch will be accepted to full membership, continued on probation for an additional year or completely rejected for membership.

If a ranch is continued on probation for a second year, it will receive a third visit.

6 H's of Dude Ranching

The Dude Ranchers' Association was founded to preserve, protect and promote their unique vacation experience and its identity. Though guest expectations have changed and ranchers have to change with them, the core principles of dude ranching remain the same. The following six words represent those ideas and principles.

Horses

- Horses are central to any dude ranch experience.
- There must be adequate stock, tack, facilities and trails for the riding program. All will be well cared for.
- Attention will be paid to horse and rider safety.

Hats

- Hats symbolize the special emphasis on Western atmosphere and appearance.

Hospitality

- A genuine Western welcome with staff, food, accommodations, facilities and activities to authenticate it.

Heritage

- Dude ranch vacations began as week long stays in which relationships developed and guests had an exclusive and complete ranch experience.
- Dude ranch guests will primarily be on an American plan.
- Amidst today's pressures for short vacations, ranches should encourage week long stays (6 or 7 nights).
- Regular multi-day dude ranch guests should not be significantly or adversely affected by any non-dude ranch business.

Honesty

- You are at least as good as you advertise, if not better.
- You operate your business with integrity.

Heart

- You have a heart for developing friendships with your guests and demonstrate it in your actions.

Requirements for Becoming a DRA Member:

1. A permanent location physically located in a state West of the Mississippi River or in the Canadian provinces of Alberta or British Columbia.
2. A dude ranch shall exemplify the Western ranch ideal of personal, homelike hospitality and atmosphere.
3. A dude ranch shall operate primarily on the American Plan.
4. A dude ranch should be horse oriented:
 - Horses must be available to accommodate wranglers and guests who choose to ride.
 - Western riding instruction must be available.
 - Stock must be well cared for and equipment in good repair.
 - Available deeded and/or leased acreage must be of adequate size to accommodate a horse program.
5. A dude ranch facility must be adequate to accommodate guests in a comfortable manner:
 - Accommodations must be clean and in good repair.
6. A dude ranch's promotional material should represent the facilities and activities accurately and honestly.
7. A dude ranch must keep on record with the Association a statement of current ownership, management and capacity. Any changes must be reported immediately.
8. A new ranch should have two years previous operating history as a dude ranch immediately prior to application in the DRA. However, a letter of exemption can be submitted to the Board of Directors for a ranch who has less than two years previous operating history and believes they fit every other facet of membership. An applicant ranch will operate the first guest season following application under the suggested guidelines of the DRA.
9. During the primary dude ranch season a DRA ranch will:
 - Operate primarily on the American plan.
 - Offer a quality guest experience.
 - During the primary dude ranch season transient trade should not disrupt or detract from the dude ranch guest experience.
 - Emphasis should be on a week stay.

Statement of Explanation:

One continuing goal of our Association is to foster sound, ethical business practices and a quality guest ranch experience. The membership of the Association recognizes that our ranches are diverse and that the business operations are varied.

Financial Requirements:

Application fee of \$1,000 is payable in two parts. \$500 due at time of application, \$500 due prior to visitation.

Annual Dues:

Fiscal year begins September 1 each year; dues are calculated based on capacity.





APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Dude Ranchers' Association

307.587.2339 ~ bryce@duderranch.org ~ PO Box 2307 ~ Cody, WY 82414

Ranch Information

Date of Application: _____

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

State your ranch is located (if different from mailing address): _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Website: _____

Email For Inquiries/Public: _____

Email(s) for Newsletter and Office Information: _____

Owner's Information

Manager's Information

Name: _____

Name: _____

Address (if different from the ranch): _____

Address (if different from the ranch): _____

Phone: _____

Phone: _____

Cell: _____

Cell: _____

What is the background of owner/manager in the Dude Ranch business? _____

In your opinion, what is it that makes a Dude Ranch? _____

Why do you want to be a member of the DRA? _____

How long has the ranch been a dude ranch? _____

Is there a DRA member with whom you are acquainted? _____ Yes _____ No

If so, who? _____

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP CONTINUED

Nearest Airport: _____ Miles from ranch: _____ Elevation at lodge: _____

Capacity of Ranch(# of guests you are comfortable hosting): _____ Brands: _____

What are the dates for your primary dude ranch season? _____

Other dates you are open: _____

What is the length of your traditional stay during the prime dude ranch season? _____

What is your peak season all-inclusive weekly base rate (per person, double occupancy)? _____

Do you offer a three night package? ____ Yes ____ No Rate: _____

Are your rates all-inclusive? (Lodging, food, most activities and horseback riding) ____ Yes ____ No

If not, list any extra charges: _____

What is the minimum age for riding on the trail? _____

Does your ranch offer meals, drinks, or rides to non-guests during your prime season? ____ Yes ____ No

Do you advertise for day rides or a restaurant to the public? ____ Yes ____ No

Number of acres accessible by horseback: _____

Leased acres: _____ Approximate # of acres permit covers: _____ Owned acres: _____

How many horses are available for guest use? _____

When the ranch is full, is a horse be available for each guest to ride on any given ride? ____ Yes ____ No

Have you had any serious horse related incidents in the last 2 years? ____ Yes ____ No

If yes, please explain: _____

Application Inclusions:

Please enclose the following:

In-room information sheets

Proof of insurance

Copy of land permits if applicable

Horse program information - explanation/definition on page 8.

\$500 application fee at the time this document is submitted. Additional \$500 to be collected if approved.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name & Title (Owner / Manager): _____

What to Include in Your Written Horse Program:

1. **Philosophy** - The philosophy of how you manage your horses, wranglers, and those who will be riding the horses.
2. **Horse Care** - What, when and where do you feed them? How are they groomed? Who handles their minor vet needs? Where do they spend the night?
3. **Barn Management** - Guest policies. Staff policies. Who may enter saddling area, may guests saddle/unsaddle their own horse, etc.
4. **Training Program** - Describe the training program you have for your wranglers and how it is implemented? What type of first aid training is required and what type of first aid equipment is carried on all rides?
5. **Orientation** - How do you or your wranglers prepare your guests for their first ride on your ranch? What do you tell your guests about your horses? How do you want them treated and what do you expect from the guests?
6. **Riding Instruction** - Describe what riding instruction you give to your guests and what, if any, additional instruction is available on request.
7. **Age Requirements** - Indicate the minimum age for children to ride a horse on the trail, if you have one. Indicate any other rules about riding— i.e. may parents lead small children around the ranch yard or arena? Do you allow children to ride on the same horse as their parents?
8. **Types of Rides** - Slow - medium - fast - beginner - intermediate - advanced. Do you offer all day rides? What is the duration of an all day ride and are there restrictions as to who can participate in the all day ride? What provisions do you make for lunches? Are there lunch rides, breakfast rides, evening rides, or any other type of rides offered? Is there an overnight pack trip? If so, describe it.
9. **Types of Terrain** - Describe the type of terrain your trail rides cover -- i.e. steep, rocky, hilly, forested and/or open valley. What type of trail system do you utilize -- unlimited forest service trails, national park trails, BLM trails, private land trails?
10. **Additional Horse Games** - Do you offer gymkhanas or rodeos? Are those for kids and adults alike? Any other special horse programs such as hay rides?

The above are suggestions for items that may be included in a written horse program. The heart of DRA member ranches are their horseback riding programs. The association wants to know what you do with your horses and the process in which you do it.

Please be sure to explain what types of experiences the guests will have.

What is the Dude Ranch Foundation's Horse Safety Program?

The Horse Safety Program has been established to educate ranches in Horse Safety and Adaptive First Aid for the Trail. It is a reflection of a proactive approach to promote responsible and safety conscious horse programs that assist in preparing staff to handle emergencies that may occur on the trail.

The program will provide an educational opportunity through the seminars required for ongoing evaluation of risk management practices and associated skills, in order to improve the quality of ranch horse programs. One of our goals is to give guest riders an enjoyable and positive experience in the saddle. Horse Safety and Adaptive First Aid Seminars are offered at the annual Dude Ranchers' Association Convention.

The program relies upon the integrity of its members to review their program with consideration to the suggested Horse Safety and Risk Management Practices discussed in the program. In order to stay current with the program, each ranch must attend a course at least once every three years. The owner or General Manager of the ranch should be the person attending.



Key Elements for the Horse Safety Program

- Horse safety
- Accident management
 - Site safety
- Continuing education
- Equipment & tack safety
 - Guest orientation
- 3 year renewal

The Horse Safety Program is free for all DRA member ranches!

The Dude Ranch Foundation also offers "Wrangler Training Classes" at the beginning of each summer. This certification remains current for five years. Wrangler training classes can be held at any ranch and there are certain fees associated. This program has proved invaluable over the years with a guest injury rate of less than half of 1 percent!

How Can This Program Help Your Ranch?

The Dude Ranch Foundation has negotiated an endorsed insurance program through Philadelphia Insurance and its A.M. Best Excellent rated insurance company. The foundation of this program is the Dude Ranch Foundation Horse Safety Program. By being certified through the Horse Safety Program, your ranch qualifies for potential reduced insurance premiums if your policy is through Philadelphia Insurance! Save money and increase your safety rating all through one simple class every three years! This is a program that cannot be beat and has taken the horse safety world by storm!

"The Dude Ranch Foundation Horse Safety Program is the standard for anyone involved in Western Riding Programs. It's been developed by those with more experience and more guest hours in the saddle than any other organization in the world."

Summer camps, trail ride operators and Western riding instructors would all greatly benefit by becoming a part of the Dude Ranch Foundation.

Safe practices help provide a better experience for guests and provide more return riders and guests. Operating under policies endorsed by the recognized leader in the field provide insurance companies with a greater comfort level which can lead to lower rates."

Allen A. McBride
Camp Mac



Bryce Albright
Executive Director

Board of Directors

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Jerry Helmicki
Bar Lazy J Ranch
970.725.3437

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406.995.4276

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970.493.6522

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Thank you for taking the time to look through this packet of information. Please contact Bryce Albright at the DRA office (307)-587-2339 or Bryce@duderranch.org, if you have any questions about the application process or the DRA.

If you would like to hear more about the Dude Ranchers' Association or why membership into the DRA could improve your business, feel free to contact any of the current board members that are listed to the left.

Dude and guest ranches offer an all-inclusive vacation experience like no other destination. The Dude Ranchers' Association was formed in 1926 to preserve this special way of life and the wonderful environment in which dude ranching takes place. When you vacation at a Dude Ranchers' Association member ranch, you can be sure of a quality vacation. Member ranches endure a rigorous inspection and approval process that ensures guests are treated to genuine western hospitality combined with the lodging industry's highest standards.

[Explore DudeRanch.org!](http://DudeRanch.org)