

EDEN EQUINE TENERIFE



About us

How did it all start? We were a normal family of five living in England with our two dogs and a bearded dragon. Lee was a master builder with his own company and I ran a photography business. Life was good, we had a beautiful home near the sea, three amazing children and enjoyed being outside exploring the woodlands and local beaches. But something wasn't quite right. The weather inhibited our love for the outdoors and life started to become more work and less fun. We decided to make a change. We searched for the ideal place to live and after a 2 week holiday in Tenerife, decided that was the place for us. The unbelievable micro climates and amazing geology fascinated

us. So within a year, our house was sold and we were on our way. I came by plane with the children and Lee drove here with our dogs Vessa, Rigby and the bearded dragon Spike! The idea was that we would purchase a beautiful old ruin of a building, restore it, turn it into a holiday rental and start again. For six months we searched, and although we viewed some beautiful places, nothing quite fitted. We almost gave up, even thought of trying another island, and then we shown a vineyard. It was huge. It was also a blank canvas with nothing but grape vines and a few citrus trees. We fell in love. The location was a dream come true. Beautiful views of the mountains, on the edge of the national park. It was on top of the world. We purchased the land but had no idea what we were going to do. We had no idea how to take care of a vineyard but we would learn. But we missed the green, so we began to research ways of growing. It started with a small vegetable plot and quickly grew in the idea of a food forest. We had our plan!

It was around a year later, we found an abandoned dog wandering around. We called the local animal shelter and met Anne. It was an immediate friendship and Lee went to help with some building work they needed. We often spoke of my love for horses so when she heard of one that



needed a home she gave me a call. It was pitiful what we found. She was skin and bones with scars on her back and not even enough space to turn around in her stable. She came out kicking though!

She wasn't ready to give up and accept her fate. Despite being terrified of horses, Lee immediately said to bring her home..oh and bring that huge sad

looking grey one as well! We quickly built a fenced area and shelter for them to live. When they arrived we soon realised that a bit of love and food

would not fix everything, although it was a very good start. They were both emotional wrecks. I have to admit I was pretty terrified. I researched training techniques and the traditional methods

just weren't going to work. There had to be a better way of teaching them than through pressure, and besides, although they did have fear of lots of

things, they didn't fear me and they certainly didn't



avoid, in fact they came straight at me! I needed to earn their trust. In my search for another way I came across clicker training. I started immediately and I haven't looked back. They were both learning to trust me. But it wasn't enough. They were happy, well fed and loved, they had each other, but they were still confined to a small paddock, so I came across the idea of the track system.

It fitted quite well into our plans so it was perfect. And then we began to realise that we had the most amazing location for horses. Now I wasn't worried that we didn't have huge flat fields, and that what we did have was even better for them both physically and emotionally.

The Rescue Plan

Eden Equine Tenerife is a safe haven for abandoned and abused horses, ponies, donkeys and mules. Our first priority is always the animals welfare. As soon as they arrive, we assess their condition and make a plan for their long term care, recovery and rehabilitation both physically and emotionally.

The horses have often lived in very small caves, been tethered or just abandoned in squalid conditions, some without having had any experience with other horses and frightening experiences with humans. They have lived a life of fear, pain and suffering. It is our job to change that. Once they have had their initial assessment, we introduce them slowly to the existing herd. This could be over a few hours or a few months depending on their emotional state. Horses learn best

from the herd and take comfort in the safety of numbers so it is essential that they have good experiences and integrate well, especially if they have not been around other horses before. It doesn't usually take too long for bonds to be formed and friendships made. At that point we can introduce them to the track.

The Track



Our Paddock Paradise track system mimics the natural movement of wild horses. We spread hay around the track daily, hiding it in shrubs, on the ground, in walls and also in slow feeding nets at “hay stations” in wider spaces they all know. This encourages the herd to wander the winding tracks in search of food, but also ensures that they have access to forage 24 hours a day which is vital in not only ensuring they do not feel the need to fight for food, but also keeping them healthy. Wild horses forage for up to 17 hours a day eating a variety of grasses, herbs, shrubs and trees and often travel up to 20 miles in the search. If food is restricted to a few meals a day, they can develop ulcers and their mental welfare is compromised. With forage available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, most will regulate their intake to exactly what they need, and if you include natural, movement into the mix, you will rarely find fat unhealthy horses. Although our track is comparatively small, currently just under half a mile, the design creates far more movement than a traditional paddock. The terrain is winding and varied with rocky areas, soft loafing areas, natural obstacles, hills and valleys with lots of enrichment along the way.

Naturally Barefoot

All of the horses are barefoot. Horses are not born with shoes on their feet. When we apply iron, it restricts the natural flex of the hoof that is necessary for shock absorption and circulation. But it isn't just about pulling the shoes. It is about providing a foundation for strong healthy hooves. The trim is just a small part of this. Wild horses do not need regular trims. The amount of movement they do naturally wears down their hooves. Although our terrain provides the perfect environment to develop strong, healthy, rock crunching feet, we still can't provide the amount of natural movement for the horses to self trim sufficiently. Hopefully, when we can extend the track, it will be possible, but until then, we trim to replicate the natural wear the hooves would sustain in the wild. Diet is another key factor. Horses are meant to eat a lot of fibre. On top of that they need the correct balance of vitamins and minerals to maintain a healthy body from nose to hoof. With a wide

range of herbs, weeds and grasses to choose from, they will be able to self select what plant best fits their need at any particular time. Whilst large paddocks of beautifully maintained grass are pretty to look at (although in my opinion wild meadows are far more pleasing to the eye) they don't provide the diversity that both the horses and other wildlife require. By providing as many different safe species as we can, we are helping the horses to be able to self maintain and self medicate when needed, reducing the need veterinary care and finding the right balance of vitamins and minerals they require. Obviously, some of the horses don't have healthy rock crunching feet when they arrive. Most have feet in terrible condition from the neglect and inappropriate diets. Whilst some are not so bad that they can't navigate their way through the terrain and avoid the rougher areas until their feet toughen up, some require a little help. By providing boots and soft rubber pads, the hoof can still flex and the circulation is not restricted. The boots protect their tender soles until they get stronger and thicker, and that means that most of the time they can go straight out on the track without any discomfort.

The Training

Once the horses have settled into herd life on the track, we can begin to change their perceptions of humans. Most of the time, they start to learn from the other horses and become interested in engaging with us. We use reward based training methods which basically means force free. The horses are invited to interact with us for a reward. The reward is usually just a handful of their usual hay so they never feel pressured to do anything for the food, they can just simply wander off and get the same elsewhere. We begin by rewarding the smallest try, for example, a horse that is terrified of humans will be rewarded for just a small relaxed look in our direction. If we cannot get close enough to hand feed, the reward is gently thrown into a bucket and we retreat to allow them to eat.

Generally they learn very quickly that humans can be a positive experience.

This method allows them to have a voice. At no point are they punished or forced to stay and train. And when they figure out that when they say no, we listen and respect their choice...they generally say yes!

We use this technique to train everything from initial handling and husbandry to preparing them for any medical emergencies. I can trim their feet and even administer injections at liberty without the use of a halter and rope!



After Rehabilitation

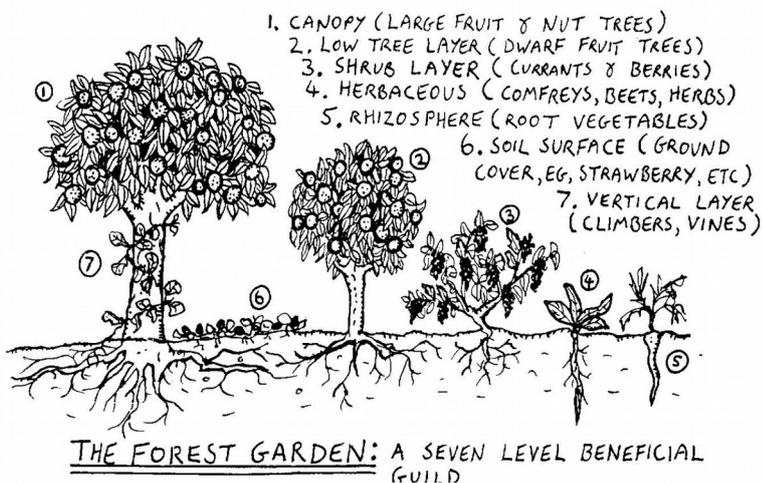
Some of the horses may be able to leave and find their forever homes. Anyone that adopts a horse will spend time with us and learn the training method. For an adoption to be approved, we will work together to ensure both horse and human will be happy and that the adopter is committed to the horse for the rest of its life. If for any unforeseen reason the adopter cannot take care of the horse any more, it will be returned to the centre. When a horse leaves for their new home, it will allow us a space for another rescued horse to be rehabilitated.

Some of the horses will never be re homed for a variety of reasons. They will live out the rest of their lives here on the track and as part of our family.

The Big Picture

The original plan was not to open a horse rescue. It was to live in harmony with nature and be as eco friendly as possible. We live here on the farm completely off grid. We have no mains electricity or water connection. We rely on solar power for our energy and our water comes from the mines in the north of the island every 15 days. We treat our sewerage with an innovative system that leaves it 99.9% clean. We planned to start a permaculture project and grow a food forest based on our

learnings from Geoff Lawton. We wanted to design and grow an agriculturally productive ecosystem which had the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems. When we realised the urgent need of help for the horses, we looked for ways we could make it work. The track system is perfect, it makes sense. The horses can live a more natural and fulfilling life wandering through the tracks of the forest. The plan is to plant the edges of the track with safe herbs, grasses, shrubs and trees for the horses to browse and select what they need, and fill the spaces between the tracks with a wide variety of canopy, fruit and nut trees, berries, herbs and vegetables accessible by pathways running throughout. An intentional combination of agriculture and forestry to create an



integrated and sustainable land use system, without the use of pesticides and fertilisers and effectively looking after itself. In the process curbing problems like erosion. Unlike modern farming practises, the idea isn't to focus on monoculture, maximising the output of a single crop, but to focus on the yield of the overall system and provide a rich and diverse, year round food supply. As the ecosystem matures it will become more and more self sustaining providing enough food for not only our family and the horses, but

also the birds, pheasants, rabbits and other wildlife that live here. We have noticed already that without the use of pesticides and allowing the land to become a little wild, we have far more wildlife than ever before. The fact that we do not allow the hunters on the land during hunting season has obviously helped and with the increase of ground cover, we have inadvertently become a safe haven for the pheasants and rabbits. The abundance of small prey has also attracted the hawks and we even have a pair of long eared owls living here. As the forest grows and the food increases we can only expect more.

Perfect for the horses, perfect for the land, perfect for wildlife...and sustainable farming.

How can you help

The animals always come first. Any donations we receive go towards food and general care including veterinary and hoof care professionals, medicines or specific supplements. With all of their needs covered we can work on the project as a whole. We will be improving the track, installing permanent fencing, add in some extra elements like a small pond for the horses to play in, more natural obstacles and different surfaces. We also plan to extend the current track and possibly create another separate track for any horses that arrive with specific dietary or foot care requirements during the initial stage of their rehabilitation. We would also love to improve the shelters. Whilst we don't have any need for stables as such, because the horses will not be confined, they do sometimes like a nice place to retreat from the sun, wind and rain. We plan to create a long open barn so that the horses can all shelter together if they wish, with soft dry bedding always available. The planting of lots of big natural tree shade is also on the wish list. Further down the line, we will be creating a training arena. Although we are able to train on the track, because our training is reward based, we often have a queue of eager horses waiting to start and that can sometimes be a little unnerving for new additions!

Then there is the food forest. The total amount of land is 26 acres, so that is going to be a lot of tracks, plants and trees! We hope to grow as much as we can from seeds and cuttings to keep the costs down but would also appreciate any help including advice, collecting seeds from local trees, cuttings or unwanted plants. Compost isn't a problem, we have lots of that!

So...in conclusion, the track system, re wilding the horses, is in our opinion, the best management system to promote healthy minds, bodies and hooves. As an added bonus, the tracks are less damaging to the land, and the diverse range of plants we intend to grow will be beneficial to all. It is a huge undertaking and we can't do it alone. If you would like to be a part of it, there are a number of ways that you can help. Each and every one is appreciated.

Our [gofundme](#) account for single donations
Our [Teaming](#) group for monthly donations of 1€
Our [Patreon](#) site to sponsor a horse.

If you prefer to donate something specific, we have an [Amazon wish list](#)

We also welcome workaway volunteers and any advice or ideas for the future.

Help us to build a dream and create the first ever eco friendly rescue horse inhabited food forest!

Thank you so much.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emme', with a horizontal line underneath and a small 'x' at the end of the line.