



DEPANNE.BE



## DE PANNE AT THE GALOP

TRAILS WAITING TO BE  
DISCOVERED ON HORSEBACK

# 2

### CALMEYNRUITERPAD (CALMEYN BRIDLE PATH) (4 KM)

Calmeyn bridle path is a small loop in the dune forest that skirts De Westhoek nature reserve. At high tide, the Calmeyn bridle path offers a worthy alternative to the Panne bridle path. Signposted in two directions, the equestrian circuit connects with the Panne bridle path and the Westkust (West Coast) bridle path.

#### Calmeyn?

Calmeynbos (Calmeyn woods) owes its name to large landowner and agricultural engineer Maurice Calmeyn, who had the wood planted back in 1902. Conducting this experiment, he sought to prove that it was perfectly possible for trees to grow close to the sea with a view to counteracting sand drifts in the dunes.

In spite of objections from renowned foresters, who had their misgivings over the success of the experiment, Calmeyn planted no fewer than 27 tree types in a 55-hectare area. A quarter of a century later, his efforts produced a mixed woodland that is home to some 30 tree species (including elm, sycamore, poplar, ash, hazel, etc.).

# 3

### ARTIESTENPAD (ARTISTS' TRAIL) (1.5 KM) - SHORT CUT TO KOKSIJDE

The Artiestedenpad is the natural dividing line between the dunes and the polders. This sudden dune to polder transition area is home to a rare and precious biotope formed by rows of pollard willows, hedgerows and cattle watering puddles and sits south of the Oosthoekduinen (Oosthoek dunes) natural area that is managed by the local council. Following this trail takes you to the beach on the border with St.-Idesbald.

With any luck, you will be met by braying donkeys. The way in which this area is managed by the Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos (Nature and Woodlands Agency) is aimed at preserving a varied landscape, by having it grazed by the local wildlife (including donkeys) that has been around for 'donkey's years'.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Brace yourself in your saddle and prepare to be amazed! The beach, the woodlands and the hinterland have a lot to offer, horses and riders alike! Discover the 4 breathtaking bridle path trails across equally exciting landscapes.

### GOOD TO KNOW!

#### Useful phone numbers

We would not wish it on anyone, but when you go riding, things can go wrong. Storing these useful numbers in your own phone will get you the help you need at all times.

Ambulance: 112

Police: 058 53 30 00

Vets:

- De Lovaart, 0476 49 30 57, [delovaart.be](http://delovaart.be)
- Wouter Vanlouwe, 0475 44 35 42

#### A rest from the saddle?

Here is where you and your horse can enjoy a break at various trail-side inns.

- **Maison de la Dune** (camping du Perroquet, entrance via the beach). A great place for food and drink in a friendly vibe, open on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays (every day of the week in July and August).
- **Groene Biezenlaan** by the viewing platform. You can tie up your horses at this picnic spot and allow them to graze a fenced plot of land.

Anyone for another helping of hay?



## 4

### MOERENRUITERROUTE (MOEREN BRIDLE PATH TRAIL) (22 KM)

This delightful trail starts out at the age-old 't Groot Moerhof farmstead and takes you across the characterful coastal and polder landscape of De Westhoek along the Franco-Belgian border. Somewhere mid-trail are De Moeren (The Moors), which straddle two countries, with one third located in Belgium and two thirds in France.

#### De Moeren

The flat polder landscape of De Moeren is the lowest area anywhere in Belgium. This 3,200-hectare farmland area used to be an extensive freshwater lake and marshland. During the 17th century, De Moeren were drained by means of 20 windmills that pumped up the water from the lowland polder to discharge it into the Ringslot (Ring Ditch). To this very day, the landscape is marked by large rectangular plots of land and a rectilinear pattern of ditches and roads. Along the trail, you will also encounter two old mills. De Moeren bridle path trail was designed by the Vlaamse Landmaatschappij (Flemish Land Agency) as part of the De Moeren land development project. The trail is also signposted with hexagon signs.

## 7 TIPS FOR RIDING THE BEACHES

Galloping across the sand, the wind in your hair... sheer bliss! Still, it is a good idea to read these tips before taking your horse out onto the beach.

1. Be careful when galloping in the water: this is dangerous because of dips you cannot see.
2. Horses may get spooked by waves, sand sailers or dogs running free, so please do bear this in mind.
3. The wires of kites and such like are often difficult to see/invisible. Please be alert to this.
4. Check the tide times at [www.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/getijtafels](http://www.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/getijtafels) to rule out any unpleasant surprises.
5. When the tide is high, you are not allowed on the beach. We recommend starting your trail at Calmeynbos. If you do get caught up by high tide, take your horse onto the concrete dune base reinforcement using the slopes, but leave the beach as soon as possible to prevent any accidents with walkers. Keep your horse at walking gait at all times.
6. Horseback riders must cross or overtake one another at walking gait.
7. You need to be at least 14 years of age to be allowed to take a horse out onto the beach. If you are escorted by someone over 21 years of age, you can ride your horse on the beach from age 12.

# 1

## PANNERUITERPAD (PANNE BRIDLE PATH) (12 KM)

This path will see you enjoy the unique beauty of the local fauna and flora! In a loop of the Grenspad (Border path) and the wide beach, the Panne bridle path takes you around the largest dune range of the Flemish seaside to the De Westhoek nature reserve. The trail is signposted in two directions. And you also get to start your trek from a stables located along the trail. The perfect place to saddle up your horse!

**Please note: horseback riders are required to comply with certain rules of conduct on the beach (see the 10 commandments and the 7 tips). Please carefully read these rules and the associated tips. As just one example, you are not allowed to take your horse onto the beach at high tide.**

### Unique nature

De Westhoek nature reserve is one of the largest remaining sea dune landscapes (covering some 340 hectares). Here, you can discover all dune formation stages: from primal beach dunes across shifting dune complexes to leached interior dunes. The central wandering dune, which is an expansive sand plane, dominates the area, also known locally as 'The Sahara'.

Different soil conditions translate into luxuriant vegetation. Bare dune ridges alternate with impenetrable scrubs, grasslands and woods, each with their own characteristic, sometimes rare and precious plant species.

### Did you know that...

Our coast was once a concatenation of dune ranges, shaped by wind and water? The dune valleys were home to concealed low fishermen's cottages with small belvedere windows, low doors and pantile roofs. One of these hamlets was locally referred to as 'De Panne'.

The emergence of seaside tourism in the 1900s brought major changes. The first villas were built and large-scale development projects were launched. All of which transformed the picturesque village into a seaside tourist resort.

## THE 10 COMMANDMENTS FOR HORSEBACK RIDERS

Enjoy your ride to the full and please bear these traffic regulations and code of conduct in mind.

1. As a horseback rider, please make sure you wear a protective hat at all times to prevent brain injuries in case of an accident.
2. Always abide by the traffic regulations. Focus when you are out riding and be mindful of the road, other traffic and your horse or pony's behaviour. Do not take any risks.
3. The traffic regulations allow two horseback riders to ride side by side on the right-hand side of a traffic lane. If traffic gets busy, you are expected to ride behind each other out of courtesy to other road users.
4. Never ride your horse on footpaths (this is allowed if you are guiding your horse by hand, and you have not mounted the animal) or motorways. Avoid busy roads as much as possible.
5. Indicate you are planning to change direction in timely fashion and always look over your shoulder.
6. Make sure you can be seen when you are out riding in the dark.
7. The attendant (must be at least 21 years of age) escorting a group of horseback riders is permitted to halt traffic, provided they are wearing a bracelet that says 'attendant'.
8. If you encounter other recreational visitors along the trail, be courteous! Some people are frightened by horses. Which is why you should walk your horse and keep a safe distance.
9. Comply with the signposts and stick to the bridle paths.
10. When you get to a rest point, securely tie your horse and have someone keep an eye out. When you leave, do not leave any mess.

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visit.depanne.be

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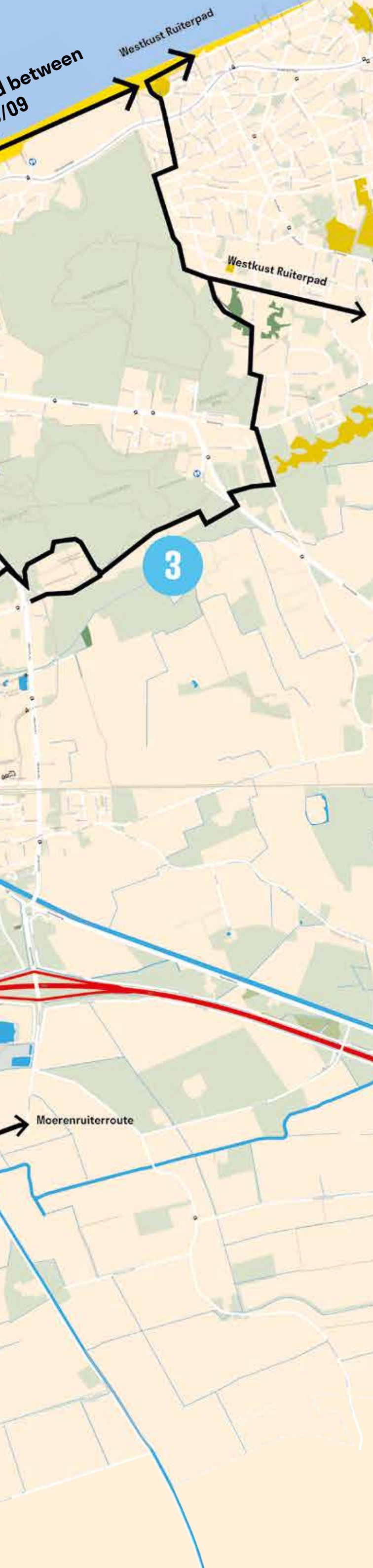
Moerenruiteroute



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From H.Consiencelaan: prohibited  
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