



FAZENDA FLORESTA

Celebrating The Brazilian Nationals

by Lori Ricigliano



FAZENDA FLORESTA

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Fazenda Floresta can be summed up with a simple word: hospitality. At the beautiful Fazenda Floresta, Luciana Fasano prides herself on her determination to offer the most comfortable stay possible for her guests. The name Fazenda Floresta translates into English as “forest farm,” for the many pine tree forests that surround its tropical beauty.

Located in Itu, a country retreat outside the city of São Paulo, the historic 150-year-old estate proves that the art of fine dining and entertaining is alive and well. For this year’s Brazilian Nationals, held in the city of Indaiatuba, Luciana invited 12 guests from around the world to stay at Fazenda Floresta and enjoy its beautiful ambiance—and for many of them, the trip became an incredible memory.

Luciana’s attention to the smallest detail was apparent from the beginning. As the guests arrived, they were greeted with colorful flower bouquets in their individually-decorated rooms. Note cards were on each room’s bedside table. The bed linens were handmade, and would be turned down each evening, with custom chocolates left on each pillow.

The first day finished off with the evening meal—a culinary delight and an extravaganza of vibrant color. Fazenda Floresta employs an attentive staff and wonderful chefs from the local area. Each course was elegantly presented with hand-crafted napkin rings and porcelain plates designed by Luciana and hand-produced by local artisans. Delightful fresh salads, flavorful entrees and the most decadent of desserts were offered. This was just a taste of what would come at each meal, including daily afternoon teas when the entire farm stopped to enjoy coffee, tea and sweet banana or tangerine cakes. Evening meals consisted of homemade delights and traditional Brazilian fare such as the delicious meats of a churrascaria. There were always desserts such as a creamy coconut flan or a passion fruit and raspberry mousse, so flavorful that they were irresistible. All of these meals were based on the local economy: Luciana believes in purchasing food from neighboring farmers and artwork and crafts from the local artists. She is also reestablishing coffee fields to support the industry that her farm pioneered years ago, and offering these jobs to the local population.



Luciana Fasano







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When the horse show began, a van transported guests to the Brazilian Nationals (some attended every class, while others enjoyed the poolside sun). Special lunch and dinner “Get-Together Parties” at the farm highlighted each day of the show, and more invited guests arrived for farm tours, lively conversation and delicious meals. Arabian horse breeders from around the world were encouraged to enjoy the retreat and discuss their ideas and breeding programs with Luciana. One of their evening guests was Joaquin de Santibañes, son of Fernando de Santibañes, owner of Magnum Psyche. On that night especially, stories flowed deep into the evening. Soon, the day arrived when Fazenda Floresta’s young stallion Vortex, shown by trainer Rodolfo Guzzo, was to compete at the show. To prepare everyone to cheer loudly, Luciana offered a special luncheon at the farm. She created little Arabian horse pound cakes in Vortex’s honor, and she undertook their “final grooming,” adding big eyes before she “showed” them to the appreciative guests. Before anyone could take a bite, Luciana asked her guest, 2011 U.S. Nationals judge Dick Adams, to “judge” the entries—and it was the first time

he ever tied a class all champions!

For the Nationals class, the group donned matching yellow Vortex polo shirts and left to cheer on Fazenda Floresta’s stallion. Soon after Luciana arrived at the show, she was invited by the Brazilian magazine *Veja* to a photo shoot at the stables, as she was being featured as one of the special Arabian breeders of Brazil. *Veja* magazine, similar to *Time* magazine in the United States, had just featured Fazenda Floresta and were continuing the story with the journey of Vortex in the show ring.

As everyone waited anxiously for Vortex’s class, Fazenda Floresta’s sponsored youth soccer team arrived to cheer for the young stallion. To be eligible for the team, which is charged with encouraging sportsmanship and personal improvement, local boys must maintain a minimum “B” average in school and attend weekly practices at the farm’s soccer field.

Finally, it was time for Vortex, an elegant colt by El Shawan and out of a Don El Chall daughter, to show. The crowd cheered loudly and the Fazenda Floresta soccer team led the chant with “Vortex! Vortex!” And after a beautiful standup,



Vortex was awarded the title of Brazilian National Reserve Champion Colt.

As the Brazilian Nationals drew to a close, it was time for the final party at Fazenda Floresta. As a tribute to the American Thanksgiving holiday, Luciana planned a traditional turkey dinner with a Brazilian gourmet twist, and invited were all of the Fazenda Floresta guests and many others who had attended the Brazilian Nationals. Arriving visitors were treated to a tour of the farm that included the beautiful stable being completed, featuring Luciana's office and its huge Giclée photos of her beloved stallions.

On the tables, flowers and linens were in national colors—red, white and blue for American-themed tables and yellow and green for Brazilian. Tying everything together were the sterling silver Fazenda Floresta Arabian horse logo napkin holders designed by Luciana and sculpted by noted Brazilian artist Auri Borsatto.

Many people from the Arabian horse community, as well as Herculando Passos, mayor of Itu, and his wife, Rita, attended Fazenda Floresta's Celebration of the Arabian Horse Brazilian Nationals party. Luciana said that it was her greatest joy to have the pleasure of entertaining so many guests.

As a special surprise, after the main meal had been enjoyed, Luciana led the many guests into the dining room of the main house, where an amazing presentation of custom decorated sweets and desserts awaited. Little chocolates with horses on them, Brazilian flag sweets and American flag cookies were popular choices, along with jars of sweet sauces which featured photos of Luciana's stallions AAS-Elishabb, Eccentric Valentino and Al Hadiyaa AA on the lids. Small boxes tied with elegant red ribbons and containing special Fazenda Floresta chocolates were valued mementos of the occasion.

The next day, the guests of Fazenda Floresta gathered by the pool, to enjoy the sunshine and contemplate the visit that was drawing to a close. As some enjoyed the water, others walked in the many gardens and a lucky few took a spirited horseback ride through the countryside on Luciana's horses.

Luciana's hospitality made the Brazilian Nationals especially sweet this year because of the many friendships it created. Fazenda Floresta is becoming well known worldwide as a respite from the outside world, where beautiful Arabian horses can be enjoyed with style and comfort. Next year's party is already being planned! □



Luciana Fasano
& Joaquin De Sanilbanes