NIHI SUMBA

Equine Intuitive Awareness Retreats

Edge of Wildness™

Healing Journeys with NIHI's Horse Whisperers

For generations, horses have been at the heart of life in Sumba.

At NIHI, our relationship with the island's iconic Sandalwood horses has evolved over more than a decade, shaped by deep respect for their spirit, the wisdom of local traditions, and the extraordinary connection they create between people and nature.

Alongside our signature collaborations, including the Candice Webster Equine Retreat, which will return in 2027 with dates to be announced shortly, NIHI's equine wellness experiences invite guests to reconnect through the intuitive guidance of our horse whisperers.

Rooted in presence rather than performance, each journey blends equine connection, holistic wellness and the spirit of Sumba in one of the world's most extraordinary landscapes.

Guests can experience these retreats in two distinct formats: our October Group Retreat (18–22 October, 2026) or Private Equine Retreats, available year-round with complete flexibility around travel dates and personal intention.

Every journey is unique. Through equine-guided experiences, time in nature, holistic wellness and meaningful cultural connection, each retreat unfolds naturally, allowing space for healing, reflection and transformation.

"I feel happier than I've felt in months. Everything feels sorted. The world is just so."

JANE KNIGHT, THE DAILY MAIL, FEBRUARY 2023

NIHI's Equine Journey

The Sandalwood horse is one of Sumba's greatest cultural treasures, revered for centuries as a symbol of strength, freedom and spiritual connection.

For more than a decade, NIHI has nurtured a unique relationship with these remarkable horses through ethical horsemanship, conservation and a philosophy built on trust rather than control.

Working alongside experienced horse whisperers and the local community, we have witnessed the profound ability of horses to mirror emotion, cultivate presence and guide meaningful personal growth.

Today, our equine wellness experiences honour this enduring connection, offering guests the opportunity to slow down, reconnect with themselves and discover the quiet wisdom found through the horse-human bond.

The Spirit of Sumba

Every equine retreat is inspired by the island's living traditions and the philosophy of Marapu, where harmony exists between humanity, nature and the unseen world.

Each journey is thoughtfully curated around the individual, combining equine connection with holistic wellness, cultural discovery and time immersed in Sumba's extraordinary landscapes.

Rather than following a fixed itinerary, every retreat unfolds in its own way, guided by intention, intuition and the rhythm of the island.

Retreat Highlights

While every retreat is unique, experiences may include:

- Guided equine healing sessions with NIHI's horse whisperers and the Sandalwood horses.
- Sunrise rituals, yoga, breathwork and meditation immersed in nature.
- NIHI's signature Spa Safari and holistic wellness experiences.
- Cultural encounters, village visits and meaningful connections with the local community.
- Island experiences, including riding and swimming with horses, subject to conditions.
- Curated dining experiences, evenings beneath the stars and time to embrace the rhythm of Sumba.

No two retreats are ever the same. Each journey is shaped by your intentions, the wisdom of the horses and the spirit of Sumba.

"I was looking to connect with animals, and specifically horses, as they had always held intrigue for me. When I discovered NIHI's equine therapy retreat I was both curious and a little apprehensive as I've always been slightly scared of horses, but Carol made me feel instantly safe. We were invited to simply be with the herd, to observe, to listen, and to understand. I learned how horses mirror us, how they honour boundaries, and how powerful it is to build a connection before asking anything of them. It was deeply moving.

What made this even more special was working with Carol, who knows each horse by name, by story, by spirit – many from birth. You don't return from NIHI the same. You return with a deeper understanding of yourself, of nature, and of the quiet strength in just being. This is not something I have found in any other place in the world."

BARONESS REBECCA WEDELLSBORG, MAY 2025

Private Equine Retreats

Designed entirely around your own intentions, our private retreats offer complete flexibility in both travel dates and programme design.

Suitable for guests of all ages and experience levels, each retreat is centred on healing, personal growth and meaningful connection with both horses and self.

$3,000 ++
PRICE PER PERSON
FOR THREE-NIGHTS

Additional retreat days available
at **USD 1,000++** per person, per day.

* RETREAT PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE ACCOMMODATION AT NIHI SUMBA.
** PRICES ARE IN USD AND SUBJECT TO A 21% TAX AND SERVICE CHARGE.

Carol, the Ibu Ndara Sumba

CAROL'S UNTAMED SUMBA JOURNEY

More than a decade ago, Carol arrived on the wild shores of Sumba and discovered a connection that would shape her life's work. Raised on a horse property in South Australia, she had always felt drawn to horses, but she never imagined that a visit to Nihiwatu would inspire the creation of Sandalwood Stables.

Guided by her passion for natural horsemanship, intuitive awareness, and personal growth, Carol embraced the challenges of working alongside Sumba's unique horses and local community. With limited access to modern veterinary care, she learned from traditional healing practices, deepening her understanding of holistic wellbeing.

Over the years, Sandalwood Stables has evolved into more than a riding program. It is a place of connection, healing, and transformation, where guests experience the extraordinary bond between humans and horses. Carol's journey reflects the enduring power of intuition, compassion, and the untamed spirit of Sumba.

Evelien, the Mama Kuda

THE SANDALWOOD JOURNEY CONTINUES

Five years ago, Evelien took the reins from Carol, carrying Sandalwood Stables forward with the same vision and deep respect for the horses of Sumba. Together, they nurtured a philosophy rooted in partnership rather than dominance, believing horses are not meant to be broken, but to remain wild in spirit: healers, teachers, and companions for those who open their hearts.

With a background in veterinary naturopathy, Evelien places animal wellbeing at the centre of her work. Leaving behind a competitive riding career, she embraced conscious equestrianism, honouring horses as they are meant to be: natural, free, and deeply intuitive.

Whether through a gentle walk, a canter along the beach, or a gallop through the surf, every ride is designed to foster trust, connection, and joy. Using bitless bridles, intuitive guidance, and thoughtful horse-rider pairings, each experience becomes a unique journey.

Alongside a team of skilled local horsemen, Evelien welcomes guests into the heart of Sandalwood Stables, where every horse is chosen not only for its ability, but for the connection it creates. Every ride becomes a story, and every encounter leaves a lasting impression.

Kuda Heritage Project

As part of your retreat, you'll contribute to NIHI's horse charity, which provides veterinary care and education to Sumbanese communities.

During your village visit, you'll witness the joy of children, the colors of ikat weaving, and the simplicity of life guided by ancestral wisdom while learning how the project delivers medical aid to horses, buffaloes, dogs, cats, and other animals across the island.

The initiative teaches young Sumbanese about animal welfare and modern veterinary practices while honoring traditional customs and medicine. It's both grounding and heart-opening, a tribute to Sumba's enduring spirit. Your visit helps fund this important work and ensures the preservation of Sumba's equine heritage for future generations.

NIHI

SUMBA

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT OUR TEAM

RESERVATIONS

reservations@nihi.com

+62 811 3821 2910

(ASIA TIME)