

## A Siamese Cat Makes a Purr-fect Pet

For hundreds of years the Siamese cat has been in existence, making it one of the oldest established cat breeds. Even though the precise origins of these cats are in dispute, it is generally suggested that they stem from the area of Southeast Asia. A plausible speculation is that they are distant descendents of the King of Siam's revered palace cats. In the late 1800's the first pair of Siamese cats were transported from Siam (now called Thailand) to Britain. Since then, their popularity has increased so much that they are one of today's most admired cat breeds.

There are two very distinct varieties of Siamese cats. The first one is the Traditional or Applehead type. These cats have a circular head with proportionate rounded ears. Their eyes are also more rounded. They are normal-sized cats with stockier athletic bodies. This type maintains the original characteristics of the early imports from Siam.

The second variety is the Modern or Wedgehead Siamese. In comparison, they have elongated wedge or triangular heads with obviously large pointed ears. Their eyes are almond shaped and somewhat slanted. Their agile bodies are long, slim and graceful with whip-like tails. This type was refined by breeders and is the kind you will see competing in cat shows.

In the past, Siamese cats had unusual traits, such as, kinked tails and crossed eyes. While these tendencies can still be found in the Siamese, they are considered flaws and through breeders using discriminating breeding practices, occur much less frequently. All Siamese cats are shorthaired and have brilliant blue eyes, except for albinos.

Siamese cats are recognized for their point colour pattern. Which means the body coat is lighter in colour, while the points are darker. The points are the cat's face, ears, lower legs, paws and tail. Siamese kittens are born entirely white. Slowly but surely, the colour points begin to appear and improve until one year of age when most colour points are totally developed. Siamese come in four basic colour points. The first is the well-known Seal Point. The body colour is fawn with dark brown points. Next is the Chocolate Point. As the name suggests, the points are a chocolate colour and the body is off-white. After that, comes the Blue Point, which has a white body colour with a bluish tint. Its points are a deep bluish-gray. Finally is the scarce Lilac Point that has a white body and pinky gray points. Besides these basic colours, there are many variations. They include an assortment of other colour points, tortoise, lynxes and albinos.

Along with a curious nature, Siamese are regarded as extremely intelligent being a social animal that is very loyal and loving to their people. They can form a strong bond with their owner. In fact, they require a fair amount of attention from their humans or they may become lonely if not given their proper affection. If that becomes the case, the owner may hear what these cats are famous for which is their ability to communicate vocally that at times can be considerably loud. In fact, it can sound as if the cat is hurt and in pain.

It is very easy to care for a Siamese cat, since they are able to groom themselves. However, it certainly will appreciate an occasional brushing. Generally, it is a healthy breed, although there are a few genetic diseases as with most purebreds. By keeping inoculations up-to-date, spaying or neutering and not allowing the cat outdoors, you can have an enduring friendship. This cat is tolerant of smaller children and its calm temperament is perfect for seniors making it a terrific all-around family pet.