

PASSION *for* PETS

Birman - Information Sheet



ORIGIN - According to Buddhist legend the Birman breed was created by a Burmese goddess. The legend tells of a colony of white cats living in a Burmese temple dedicated to a goddess. After a temple priest was murdered, one of the white cats faced an effigy of the goddess, who magically transformed the cat, and all of the other temple cats, to a golden colour. The story may be mythical but the Birman is considered to have originated in Burma, developed by Burmese priests. When the priests were forced to flee their native country they were assisted by the English and French military. In gratitude a pair of Birman cats were sent to France as a gift and the female of the pair was pregnant. Since the early 1900s, following the Birman's arrival, the breed has continued to be developed in Europe and has spread around the world. The Birman were introduced to Australia in 1967.

DESCRIPTION - The Birman is a most attractive cat, exceptional to look at and very photogenic. They are a semi-long haired cat breed that are broadly similar in colour to siamese cats except that the tips of their feet are pure white. The cats have markings i.e. darker colouration on the face, ears, legs and tail. These areas are known as points. Regardless of body or point colour, the cat should always have deep blue eyes and white feet. The white feet are known as gauntlets and, for showing, should be as symmetrical as possible. On the front feet the gauntlet should end in an even line and go no higher than the ankle. On the back feet the gauntlet should cover the entire foot and taper high up the back of the leg to the hock. The coat should be long but nowhere near as long as that of a Persian. There should be an obvious ruff or collar of hair around the neck, especially in the males. The tail is also bushy and the body is robust with shorter solid legs and a medium sized tail.

COLOUR - Birman colours include Seal, Blue, Lilac, Red, Cream, Chocolate, Seal Torti (female only breed), Seal Tortie Tabby, Blue Tabby, Seal Tabby.

COAT LENGTH – Long

AGE EXPECTANCY - The average life expectancy of the Birman is about fourteen years.

WEIGHT / HEIGHT RANGE – 4 - 7kgs

AILMENTS - Birmans are a robust breed with no real health problems although, like most long haired cats they are subject to hair balls.

PERSONALITY - Birmans are known for a cool but affectionate personality. They often appear docile and casual, and spend a lot of time lazing around the house. They form a bond with their owner and are reportedly good with other pets. They are not particularly vocal but will make their presence felt if they want attention. The Birman has proven to be suitable for anyone. They can be kept in apartments or houses, big or small. Birmans are not as active as some other breeds, which can may make them more suitable for a busy household or one with multiple pets.

ENERGY – Low

NOISE – Medium

CHILD SUITABILITY – Medium

COMPATIBILITY WITH CATS – Low

OTHER ANIMAL COMPATIBILITY - Low

FEEDING & GROOMING

FEEDING – The Birman is not a particularly active cat and will require approximately 70 Kcals of food per kg of bodyweight per day to maintain condition. They can be prone to obesity so strict attention needs to be paid to their diet.

UPKEEP - The coat needs quite a lot of care with two or three brushes a week. A bath at the end of every season is enough to rid the coat of old hair. It is also important to watch the type of kitty litter used. Some cheaper products will stain the light coloured body hair. Ungroomed cats can finish up with knotted coats that require veterinary attention.

SHEDDING - Moderate