

BURMESE

Upon occasion, breeders will have newly retired adults for whom they are seeking a 'forever home'. Adopting an adult can be preferable in some cases to the ebullient shenanigans of a kitten. Burmese are such incredibly loving people cats that they will easily bond with a new owner in a new home, given just a little time. Another option to consider is Burmese Rescue. This is supported by CFA's national Burmese breed club, the National Alliance of Burmese Breeders. NABB pulls cats from shelters and accepts cats whose owners can no longer keep them, rehoming them into carefully screened homes where they can live out the rest of their lives in a loving environment.



HOME AT LAST

Burmese kittens are lively and busy, very busy. They will explore every inch of your home to claim it as theirs in between mad dashes back to you for hugs and kisses. Kittens will not like to be away from you for long; their social development is not completed at twelve weeks; rather it is an ongoing process for most of their first year. If your home is empty during the work hours, consider a pair if you can. Your pleasure will double, and so will theirs.

The intelligence of this breed cannot be understated. Some, through dint of sheer perseverance, can open doors and dresser drawers, rearranging their contents into something more pleasing to the Burmese aesthetic. They will figure out your routine quickly so that they can intercept you for tummy rubs. They are delightful and endearing, and know precisely how well their soulful, pleading gaze will undo you. Master manipulators, they will seduce you with their wiles and brighten your life, for all they really want is to be your very best friend.

Quite simply, there's none better.

Photo Credits

Front Cover Top Left - GP, RW Mar-Chu Sombra De Cacao
Front Cover Top Right - GC, RW Catizen Made From Sugar of Acrocats
Front Cover Bottom Left - GC, GP, BW, RW Gray Mark's Amethyst
Front Cover Bottom Right - GC Purrctise White Iris of Laki
Inside Left Top - Wong Mau with Kittens
Inside Left Center - GC, GP, NW Maikiki Marine DeBauve of Acrocats
Inside Left Bottom - GC, RW De Bears Dian Fossey
Inside Right Top - GC, RW Caricature's Carlo Ponti
Inside Right Center - GC, RW Bon Marche' Bacci
Inside Right Bottom - GC, GP, RW Brenwood Sug Avery of Cameroncats
Back Cover Top - GC Anoka Bellagio
Back Cover Center - GP, NW Bear Country Emily of De Bears

This breed brochure was written by Michele C. Clark © 2009
Layout and design by Art Graafmans © 2009

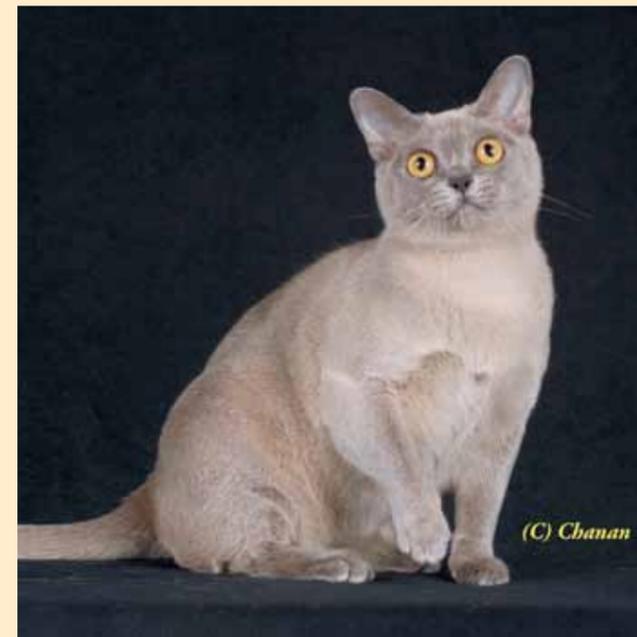
This breed brochure is provided courtesy of the CFA Burmese Breed Council, which is solely responsible for its content.

Resources

If you are looking to bring a Burmese into your life, you can find a listing of breeders and a Burmese rescue group at the National Alliance of Burmese Breeders.
burmesecat.org

Breeders can also be found at the Cat Fanciers' Assoc.
cfa.org

and at the Feline Breeders Referral List (FBRL).
breedlist.com



BURMESE

BURMESE ORIGINS-- ANCIENT AND MODERN

The legends surrounding the emergence of the Burmese as a breed come buried in myth, steeped in jungle intrigue and carried by steamer ship, all in the body of one small, slightly pointed walnut-brown female cat. Brought to America from the Orient in 1930 by a sailor, this unusual little girl found her way into the arms of Dr. Joseph Thompson of San Francisco. Some stories say that the sailor found her running loose in the forest and took pity on her, while others describe the cats as such revered temple cats that they could only be obtained by subterfuge. The Bangkok National Library possesses a rare 17th century manuscript that demonstrates the 'Seventeen Good Luck Cats' and their color patterns, and the Copper Cat is ranked as the third in the list of these prized ancient pedigreed cats, considered most desirable indeed for its magnificence and ability to bring joy and good fortune. It is believed that from this favored Copper Cat, the brown Burmese evolved in those long-ago days, and over time, moved through the orient and even into India as treasured pets of the wealthy elite.



Wong Mau with her kittens

Dr. Thompson named her 'Wong', and added his cattery name to make her the cat we know as Wong Mau, the mother of the Burmese breed. Intrigued by her unusual appearance, Dr. Thompson solicited the help of a geneticist and two interested breeders to devise a scientific test breeding program that would reveal her genetic makeup. Clearly, even with the slight darkening on her head, legs and tail, she was most definitely not a Siamese, as her body style was more compact and her head was broader, with more spacing between the eyes. After two generations of test breedings, two solid chocolate brown kittens emerged from a litter of eight, four of which resembled Wong Mau, and the remaining two were just like the Siamese used in the test breedings. A solid brown cat was something new and exciting to the cat world of the day, although it can be imagined that those ancient breeders of the Copper Cats just might have been chuckling a bit as they watched the phenomenon that was the Burmese developing on these shores.



Phenomenal they certainly were, gaining popularity at a staggering rate, spreading throughout the country as more and more breeders fell in love with the unique and endearing personality of these addictive brown cats. The solid chocolate color was named sable—a color which was indeed as deep the very richest of the sable furs so popular then: a shimmering sleek, close-lying coat whose glossiness highlighted the visible play of the heavy musculature beneath. After acceptance by The Cat Fanciers' Association in just a few years, Burmese were soon seen dominating the show rings when judges too began to fall under their spell. 'Bricks wrapped in silk' and 'people in fur' came to be fond descriptions for these surprisingly heavy, medium-sized cats with the gleaming sable coats, radiant gold eyes and engaging personalities.

Since Wong Mau had herself been proven to be a hybrid cat, it really was no surprise when the early breeders began turning up kittens with colors other than sable. In the 1930's, the focus was on developing a solid sable cat and so the three other colors were not of interest to most. But there were a few who were entranced enough to begin developing them, and today the Burmese comes in four colors: the original sable and the champagne, blue and platinum.

Champagne is a soft, even beige, almost the color of warm tourmaline mink. Slight darkening on the extremities in this color is permitted, but evenness of color is preferred. Blue is a warm, silvery blue with fawn undertones that in some light can cast a rosy hue. This color should never be cold or slate-like. Platinum is an elegant,



pale cream with pewter tipping on each hair, giving a distinctive silver overcast to the pure cream, sometimes almost apricot base color of the coat. Slight darkening of the extremities is also permitted but again the emphasis is placed on overall evenness of color.

WHY SHOULD YOU HAVE A BURMESE?

Do you long for a faithful companion? One who will curl up in your lap and serenade you with purrs whilst you read or doze? One who will follow you from room to room, engaging in conversation with you as you go? One who will sleep with you, under the covers and pressed closely against you? One who will meet your guests at the door and escort them back when they leave?

That's right—Burmese have never met a stranger and they adore exacting obeisance from as many humans as possible, making the rounds (several times!) at gatherings until all your guests want to know WHERE you got this AMAZING cat!

Burmese employ endless stratagems to get your attention—and they can be quite the clowns in doing so. In fact, they are that rare breed with a sense of humor. They will captivate and ensnare you, turning you into the willing 'victim' of their whims. A closed door is anathema to them, and they will press against it urgently, looking over their shoulders at you most beseechingly. When you open it for them, they will run in and then run right back out if you don't go in with them. The next time that you pass by that same door, they will repeat the performance. Many retrieve, and can spend hours bringing you their favorite toy to throw. If you hide it, they will know where another is, and trot off to get it. Relentlessly loving, they can also curl up in your lap and spend hours there in quiet contented bliss.

Sometimes they will just sit upon your lap and gaze earnestly into your eyes, as if to communicate their deepest thoughts and learn yours, and when you cannot help but smile, they will begin to purr in response. They will strike a pose that will make your breath catch at its beauty, and seconds later, commence a tumbling run across the room to rival that of an Olympic gymnast. Creatures of immense dignity, they seem to feel embarrassment when they have a little slip up and yet can shamelessly thrash about on their backs, pupils dilated and mouths foolishly gaping open, in order to grab a toy that you wiggle above them. There are so many facets to the Burmese, so much to love, and a lifetime in which to make that voyage of discovery. Is there any better reason to own a Burmese?



WHERE TO FIND A GREAT BURMESE AND WHAT TO EXPECT

You want to buy from a breeder. You want to visit their home and see how their cats are kept. You want to see happy, friendly cats whose eyes are clear and bright. A Burmese is a well-muscled cat and even a kitten should be surprisingly heavy for its size. Their coats should be shiny and sleek. The Burmese standard describes a cat that is rounded in all aspects: a short, cobby body with well-defined musculature; a head that is also pleasingly rounded with large, striking gold eyes. A kitten offered for sale as a pet may not meet this show standard, but should still possess the general appearance of the breed. The breeder should be actively showing in one of the associations; this becomes your confidence-builder that they are working to produce good, healthy animals that conform reasonably well to the breed standard.

