



TICA Burmese Breed Introduction

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General Description: The seal sepia, or sable, Burmese with its rich, short, glossy dark brown coat and deep gold eyes springs to mind when one thinks Burmese. But these compact bundles bring joy and love to your world as they give you complete and unconditional devotion. They are extremely people-oriented and tolerant cats that are an ideal pet for the whole family, including younger children. The Burmese will happily join in games and play the role of living doll. While the sable Burmese is the original color, the Burmese now comes in a variety of other colors from a warm blue to a pinky-grey lilac to a soft chocolate and even combines these colors with red and cream. Imagine a lilac tortoiseshell—a combination of soft pinks mingled with rich cream color of Devonshire clotted cream! These newer colors are rapidly becoming as popular as the original sable brown.

History: The Burmese, as we know it today, was developed in America from a single cat: Wong Mau. In 1930 a sailor brought Wong Mau from the Orient and gave her to Dr. Joseph G. Thompson of San Francisco. She was described as "a rather small cat, fine-boned, but with a more compact body than that of a Siamese, with a shorter tail, a rounded, short-muzzled head, with greater width between rounded eyes." She was walnut-brown in color, with darker brown points. Many breeders considered her a dark Siamese but Dr Thomson thought she was distinctly different. He established a program to isolate and reproduce her distinguishing traits. In 1932 Wong Mau was bred to Tai Mau, a Seal Point Siamese, and had kittens of two colors: some like Siamese kittens and others brown kittens with darker points like Wong Mau. Bred to her son, Yen Yen Mau, Wong Mau's kittens contained 3 colors: some like Siamese kittens, brown kittens like Wong Mau, and some dark brown kittens. The dark brown offspring founded the Burmese breed. It is now accepted that Wong Mau was actually a Siamese x Burmese hybrid.

On Mar 29 1955, the first blue Burmese kitten, Sealcoat Blue Surprise, was born in England. Cats other than sable had appeared earlier, but most Burmese breeders chose to breed only the sable cats. It is now believed that Wong Mau also carried the genes for dilution and chocolate that resulted in the appearance of chocolate, blue and lilac kittens. The red factor was added later in Europe. The Burmese was one of the original breeds TICA recognized in June 1979.



Personality: Burmese are extremely sweet-natured, people-oriented cats who love to curl up on any available lap. They are playful cats and their playful nature extends to joining the games of the youngest family members, easily tolerating being dressed up in doll's clothes and carried around like a living doll. They are very social cats that thrive on company and will be lonely if there is no-one home with them. They are an ideal family pet but if your busy household means they will be alone for long periods of time, you might want to consider two so they will be company for each other.

Traits: Burmese come in a range of solid and tortoiseshell colors: rich, dark sable brown; a medium, warm blue; a warm, honey beige chocolate with pink or fawn tints; a lovely lilac that ranges in tone from a bright pinkish grey to a silvery platinum with pink tints; reds of a light, golden apricot with melon-orange overtones; rich, warm deep creams with hints of apricot; and the soft mingling of red or cream with sable, chocolate, blue or lilac found in the tortoiseshells. All with seductive gold eyes glowing with their love for you. In young cats, the points will be darker but as the cat gets older and the coat matures the body color becomes deeper and richer until there is only a very slight difference between it and the color on the legs, head and tail.

The Burmese is a medium-sized, compact cat with a strong, well-muscled body making it surprisingly heavy for its size. It has a short, silky, single coat that hugs the muscular body and is a joy to stroke. The Burmese is a sturdy cat like a little bulldog with females being smaller than the males. The head is rounded and its large, innocent-looking gold eyes give it a sweet expression. Their satin-like coats require little maintenance. A weekly grooming with a rubber brush to remove loose hairs will polish the coat to a high gloss. The oils from your hand petting and stroking the coat help maintain its balance and a quick wipe with a chamois will give that final finishing touch.

The Burmese has a soft, soft sweet voice and will enjoy a conversation with you if encouraged. These charming cats with rich colors, big gold eyes, and velvet paws will win your heart while you wonder how you ever lived without one in your life.