



TICA Peterbald Breed Introduction

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General Description: The Peterbald is an elegant Russian breed with a unique coat. The cats may be totally hairless, or they may have a coat that looks and feels like a peach. Peterbalds with longer coats may feel like plush short velvet or like a man's bristly beard. They have been described having a dominant gene for hairlessness, or a dominant gene for hair loss, or a dominant gene for an altered and diminished coat. All of this is true and may be found in these beautiful cats. The Peterbald is a medium sized cat, with a body shape similar to the oriental shorthair, but more muscular. The lines are long and lovely. Peterbalds are as delightful to look at as they are to touch.

History: In approximately 1988, the first cat with an unusual coat was reported in Russia, found in a city called Rostov on Don. The new breed was celebrated and announced by the Russians as a dominant mutation for bald cats. It was first called the Don Sphynx. Cats were exported to breeders in Europe, and in a very short time, the first questions about the genetics were raised. Kittens were being born that were not bald but that did not have ordinary cat coats. Some of these kittens developed the bald coat, but many did not. The breeders decided that perhaps the gene was a dominant trait for hair loss. Many questions were raised (and not yet answered!) as to whether it was one gene, or many genes; which genes caused hairlessness or hair loss, or possibly the trait coded for an altered and diminished coat, with two copies causing total baldness from birth and one copy granting only a changed and unusual coat. These issues are still not decided; however, genetic studies are currently underway and there may be an answer soon. While all these developments were taking place, the new breed was taken to St. Petersburg, Russia. In 1993, a fine oriental shorthair, Radma Von Jagerhof, was bred to a Don Sphynx named Afianguen Myth. The kittens were registered as "experimental," and one of them, Nocturne Iz Murino, became the foundation stud of the Peterbald breed and is found in every Peterbald pedigree. The International Cat Association accepted the Peterbald into championship competition in 2005. Peterbalds remain a very rare and desired breed.



Personality: The highly intelligent, aggressively affectionate Peterbald will entertain you with its playful antics. They are active and athletic, friendly and curious. They will meet visitors at the door, exist in harmony with other cats and with dogs, and they will be the light of your life. The deeply affectionate Peterbald cat will be in your lap as many hours as you will allow it. They will sit by you as you drink your morning coffee, sit by your chair during meals, crawl under the covers when you go to bed – there won't be a minute in the day your cat won't want to spend with you. Many of them are highly vocal and will "talk back" to you. They will follow you to the door when you leave the house and meet you in the same place when you come home. Once you have lived with a Peterbald, life will never be the same.

Traits: The Peterbald cat may have any of the following coats: 1) it may be totally hairless or have only very fine short hair on the face and extremities, 2) it may have a coat like a peach or a piece of suede leather, 3) it may have a coat of varying lengths that is made entirely of downy soft hair without waves or curling or gloss, 4) it may have a coat of varying lengths that is made entirely of wiry, kinky guard hair, or 5) it may lack the Peterbald trait and have an ordinary cat coat. Cats without the altered coat are called "straight coats," and while they may be registered and bred as Peterbalds, they may not compete for championship titles. In Peterbalds born with hair, the coat may change over time. Rarely, in bicolored Peterbalds, the white part of the coat will be the soft downy hair and the darker part of the coat will be wiry guard hair with sharp demarcation between the two types. Whiskers are frequently altered, appearing as curled, crinkled or vestigial. The Peterbald is a medium sized cat, smaller than the domestic shorthair but heavier than an Oriental Shorthair. The body is long and tubular, with a tight, muscular abdomen. The head is a triangular wedge with very large, oversized ears that extend below the line of the jaw's angle. The muzzle is blunt. The chin is well developed. The eyes are almost almond-shaped, large and beautiful. The neck is long and slender. The legs are long and straight, dropping off the chest directly under the barrel, ending in small oval feet with long agile toes. The foot pad should be almost completely concealed in the standing cat. Hips and shoulders should be the same width. In the sparsely coated or hairless Peterbald, muscles are clearly defined, well developed, and supple. The tail is long and whippy. The overall impression is that of a breathtakingly lovely cat.