



EXOTIC SHORTHAIR

General Description

The gentle Exotic Shorthair is a Persian in its pajamas and is the ideal cat for those who love the look of the Persian but do not have the time or inclination to take care of all that hair. Sometimes called 'the lazy man's Persian', the Exotic Shorthair is bred to be just like the Persian—except with a short, dense coat instead of a long flowing one. Exotics have the same pansy-like sweet face and short nose with big eyes and the same short square body giving them a cuddly bear-like look. These affectionate cats have the quiet manners of the Persian but are livelier and more inquisitive thanks to their shorthaired ancestry.

History

The Exotic Shorthair grew from a different original desire. American Shorthair breeders bred to Persians to obtain their lovely silver color and green eyes. The kittens were pretty to look at but did not meet the true American Shorthair type. Jane Martinke noticed the effect the outcrosses had on the American type and coat as well as the attractiveness of the kittens. She proposed a new breed, called the Sterling because of their lovely silver color. These new cats were to look just like Persians but with a short, dense plush coat. Originally intended to be silver only, the new breed changed the name to Exotic Shorthair and accepted all colors. Only a few outcrosses were made to shorthaired but because the gene is dominant. In addition to the American Shorthair, some breeders chose to use the Burmese for its stocky body type, moderate head and short coat, while others went to the Russian Blue for the shorthaired gene because of its dense double coat. After the initial outcross to get the short coat, the offspring were bred back to Persians. At about the same time, Carolyn Bussey (New Dawn) crossed a Burmese and a red tabby Persian in an attempt to create a brown Persian. Brown is recessive so all the kittens were black and Carolyn also got the idea to develop a short-coated Persian.



Early progress was slow and difficult as Exotic Shorthair breeders tried to get Persian breeders to work with them. Gradually as the type on the new breed improved and it became more popular, an increasing number of Persian breeders were willing to help and some decided to work with the young breed as well. The goal was to produce a short-coated Persian so as Persian type changed so did Exotic Shorthair type. The early standard did not call for the Exotic to have a break like the Persian because of its shorthaired ancestry, however as the type came ever closer to the Persian this changed and the standards are now identical except for coat length. They have had championship recognition in TICA since June 1979.

Personality

The easy-going Exotic Shorthair is an affectionate, gentle cat with the quiet manners of the Persian. Quietly endearing, Exotics request your attention with an irresistible gaze and then hug you when you pick them up. They will follow you from room to room in order to be near you and then jump in your lap for a nap when you settle down to read a book. Their shorthaired ancestors have given them a love of play and they will jump to catch a toy or sit studying how to get the toy you put out of reach before they were finished playing. Simple things amuse them whether it is chasing paper balls around the house or watching water drip out of a tap. While seen but rarely heard, the Exotic has a soft voice and has a vocabulary of chirping sounds. Although sweet and peaceful, Exotics still have an intelligent curiosity that makes them a joy to be around and since they are so easy-going they get on well with children and other pets.

Traits

Exotic Shorthairs are heavily boned, massive cats with lines softened by the thick dense coat. They have broad round heads with low set ears and great big round eyes opening up the short face and giving it a sweet expression. Their round heads are set on robust, short, square bodies with little short thick legs balanced by a short thick tail. The plush coat adds an impression of soft roundness to these muscular cats making them look like plush toys you want to pick up and cuddle. They come in all the colors of the rainbow and a multitude of patterns including pointed for a shorthaired version of the Himalayan.

Grooming is easy with simple combing removing loose dead hair and a wipe of the eyes that can get irritated by dust because of their large surface. All the look of a Persian without the need to care for the long coat!