



TICA Russian Blue Breed Introduction

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General Description: The aristocratic Russian Blue is the gem of the feline world. Their short, dense silver-tipped blue fur glistens and shimmers in the light as they move providing an elegant setting for their glowing emerald green eyes. Is it any wonder they are rumored to have been the pets of the Russian Czars and a favorite of Queen Victoria? Their beautiful faces have an enigmatic smile as they survey their dominion with satisfaction. They are a medium sized cat with fine boning and large, flared ears in wonderful harmony. Sheer elegance joined with intelligence make this breed a winner in the show ring and in the home.

History: Russian Blues are also known as the Archangel cats. While their silver tipping and green eyes certainly makes them look like angels, the Archangel name was given to them after their point of origin--the Russian port of Arkhangelsk on the White Sea about 150 miles south of the Arctic Circle. The cats boarded the boats with the sailors and came to other parts of Europe. The first cat shows in England in the 1880s included Russian Blues. For a while, all blue shorthaired cats competed in the same class however in 1912 the distinctive cats from Arkhangelsk with their large eyes and ears were assigned their own class called the Foreign Blue. The war had an impact on cat breeding and on the Russian Blue cats. After the war, breeders sought to revive their lines and outcrossed to cats that resembled the Russian cats. Some English breeders chose to use the blue British Shorthair to ensure they kept the pale plush coat. Other breeders chose to use blue point Siamese to ensure they kept the elegant foreign body with its long fine legs and to preserve the distinctive head with its large ears and eyes. The Scandinavian breeders were also working with outcross cats using Siamese and a blue cat from Finland but their cats had short tight dark coats and magnificent emerald green eyes set like jewels in the triangular head. Russian Blues came to North America in the early 1900s however serious breeding programs began much later. The North American breeders imported cats from both England and Scandinavia and worked to combine the best features of each into today's modern Russian Blue. Today's Russian Blue has emerald eyes and a pale blue coat frosted with silver and the angelic smile that is a distinguishing feature of the breed.



Personality: The elegant, aristocratic Russian Blue has a keen intellect that makes it an engaging companion. The Russian Blue surveys a situation before diving in and so rarely gets itself into a difficult situation - it observes people to determine if they are worthy of its companionship. Sometimes people see this behavior as shy or aloof when it is really a reserve with strangers until it has fully assessed them. Once the Russian Blue decides you are worthy of its attention, it is extremely affectionate and expects your loving attention to all its needs. They will teach you how to play Fetch - bringing you their toy and demanding you throw it for them! Their quick intelligence has them learning all the time - and they will watch you until they figure out how to open that container containing their favorite treats! While they are generally quiet cats, they will talk to you if you talk to them and can develop a large vocabulary. They are playful, loving companions that get along well with children and other pets. They are a great choice for the modern family because they are content with their own company while you are out and about but delighted to spend time playing or curled in your lap when you get home.

Traits: Russian Blues come in one coat color - Blue. And one coat length - Short. It is their short, dense, bright blue coat tipped with silver that has been a hallmark of the breed for more than a century. The silvery tip to the hairs reflects the light and the coat shimmers like moire silk as the cat moves. Watching a Russian Blue moving in sunlight is like watching poetry in motion! The dense coat stands out from the body and you can draw patterns in the coat that will stay until you smooth them out again.

The elegant silver setting is one set to house priceless jewels - and those jewels are the glowing emeralds that serve as eyes in these magnificent cats. The deep, vivid green eyes engage your attention and draw you deep into their depths. The enigmatic smile hovers on the face as the cat watches you entranced with its regal bearing.

The Russian Blue is a graceful cat with a medium-sized foreign body that is lithe and muscular. The long legs are fine boned and the cat seems to know it as it often poses sitting high with feet crossed in a pose that accentuates the line of the cat. The head is a wedge with 7 angular planes that create a pleasing look. The characteristic smile is emphasized by the crossing of the muzzle and cheekbone planes. The wide, high cheekbones frame the large, almost round emerald eye. The large, flared ears frame the exquisite face providing a pleasing balance.

All together the straight lines and graceful presence of the Russian Blue give it an aristocratic appearance that is then regally cloaked in the blue coat shimmering with silver and the expressive emerald green eyes.