

# Horse Breeds of Europe



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## **Introduction**

Ever since I was little and I saw horses out in their fields near my house, I have loved horses. I have ridden horses since I was four years old. I had always wondered about their history. I wanted to know how horses became what they are today. I wanted to know where different breeds of horse came from.

Horses have had an impact on society in many ways. I wanted to know how significant different breeds of horses are to history. I learned that there were around 15 separate horses influential to the Thoroughbred horses we know today. I also learned that the entire Lipizzan breed is based on six stallions. I now know that ancestors of the Andalusian horses came from Africa. I also know breeding horses is how we have the breeds we know today.

## Chapter 1: Andalusians

Modern Andalusians compete in jumping, driving, dressage and Western events. They are the horses that appear in bullfights. Andalusians are often ridden by rejoneadores, bullfighters who fight on horseback. Horses and riders are very comfortable dealing with temperamental bulls. Spanish cowboys use Andalusian horses to wrangle their bulls. Though they mainly compete in bullfights, they are also ridden in English competitions.

Five percent of all Andalusians are black, dun (a tan colored horse) and palomino (a gold colored horse). 15% of them are bay, a brown horse with a black mane and tail. 80% of all Andalusians are grey. Some can be a striking mulberry color. Andalusians stand at 15.2 hands.

Andalusians are built for strength, but still elegant. They are very abiding and durable. Andalusians are determined and stout. They also have great endurance and liveliness. Though they have straight shoulders they are not very fast because of their short legs.

Andalusians have a finely sculpted head and a sub convex profile. Their heads resemble a hawk's energetic eyes and ears. Their tails are low set, long, luxuriant, and wavy just like their mane.



Andalusians have beautiful manes and tails. Their manes and tails are so beautiful and curly because of breeding.

Andalusians have a gentle and peaceful expression. Their temperament is laid-back. Andalusians have maintained a great temperament for millenia. They are smart and listen well which allows them to learn quickly and easily. They learn best when treated with dignity and effort. Andalusians received all of these traits because of breeding.

Andalusians are descendants of the Iberian horse from Spain. The Iberian Peninsula is the first area in Europe that had domestic horses, which was the Iberian breed. It is a mystery how the Iberian horses came from Africa to Spain. Some people think that the Iberian horses crossed the land bridge which is now Gibraltar. The horses from the East were crossbred with Iberian horses which produced the Barb, an ancestor of the Andalusians.

After the Berber blood was added to the Andalusians, they became the best war horses. Maximilian II , Emperor Ferdinand I 's son of Austria, had to resist arabizing Andalsians because he realized it would ruin their beauty and spirit. Andalusians used to be many different colors, but now due to breeding they are refined to mainly the color grey. Andalusians get their looks from the Barb horses, their ancestors. As a result of breeding the only Spanish blood left is at the Imperial de Lipizza stud, a breeding farm in Austria.

Andalusians are the ancestors of almost every breed in Europe and America. Americans owe the Spaniards because of the Andalusians influence on America's breeds. The Pottok or Basque pony is a possible relative of the Andalusians. When Andalusians were bred to other horses they gave the Lipizzan breed their strength. They also gave the Lipizzans high schooling ability. Andalusians are the horses that inspired the name of The Spanish Riding School, where Lipizzans perform.

One of the Andalusian's descendents are the Sorria ponies. Sorria ponies are also descendents of Asian wild horses and Tarpan. The ponies are less than attractive. They can be grey or yellow dun. They stand between 12 and 13 hands. Sorria ponies are descendants of the original Andalusians.

When Berber Blood was added to the Andalusian Blood, it resulted in the Andalusians known today. One of the few remaining breeders of the original Andalusians are Carthusian Monks. Some people think the pure Andalusians are extinct. They are possibly extinct because of being cross-bred so much. The Andalusians were the original breed improvers because they are ancestors of many breeds. Now people overlook the Spanish blood thinking it is not worth much because there are fancy new horses.

Some people believe that it is cruel to rely on the Spanish horse to improve modern breeds too much. In 1912 the Spanish Breeder's Association replaced the name Andalusian with Pura Raza Espanola. The Andalusians are called Lusitano and Alter Real in Portugal. The Quarter Horse is calm when they work with cows because of the Andalusians. They are known as the best stock-working horses of all time. All of these horses received all these amazing traits from the Andalusians because of breeding.

## Chapter 2: Lipizzans

Lipizzans, horses from Austria, were developed in the 1700's. The breed is named after Lipizza, a small town in Austria. Originally the horses were many colors. The stud books have only been kept since 1701 which means no one knows what the original type of horse is. Lipizzans are based on six "dynasties of stallions".

The six stallions were Favory, Neapolitano, Pluto, Siglavy, Maestoso and Conversano. They were all different colors from dun to black. They were all born from 1765 to 1819. All of their sires, fathers, were different. We only know the mother of Maestoso, who was Spanish. These stallions helped produce the Lipizzans known today.

The Lipizzan Stud was transferred to Czechoslovakia in 1942. It was transferred because of World War II. In Czechoslovakia the Stud was under the care of American forces. At that time, General George Patton was in charge of the forces. The Riding School was saved because of American forces. The Spanish Stud and The Spanish Riding school herds are still here because of American Troops.

Many countries in Europe have tried to keep the Spanish Blood at their stud. One of the only countries to succeed was Italy. Italy succeeded the Polesinian stud. Many other countries tried to succeed at their stud farms. Only a few other countries succeeded just like Italy.

Maximilian II introduced the Spanish blood to Austria. Maximilian II also founded the court at Kaldrub. The Kladrub Stud kept breeding Spanish horses.

Kladrub also continued to breed the riding and light carriage horses for Lipizza. They eventually started to breed heavy coach horses. Maximilian II's brother founded a similar stud.

His brother also caused an argument to start in 1580 at the village of Lipizza. There was also Halbturn stud who kept Spanish horses. In 1743 Halbturn Stud closed. It closed because they did not prove they could breed Spanish Horses well. There is still always a trading arrangement between the three studs.

All the foals are born at the Lipizzan Stud. Foals take their first name from one of the original stallions. Their last name comes from their mother's bloodline. The foals spend their first three summers at the stud then the best six colts are sent to the Spanish Riding School. Lipizzan's coats do not turn white until they are between the ages of five and eight. Soon after the foals start to grow independent.

Though Lipizzans are not built for speed, they are agile and athletic. Their body is compact, deep and muscular. Powerful and sloping shoulders make the Lipizzans stronger. They have flat and less than pronounced withers. Their chest is powerful, broad and clean along with their joints. Lipizzans are known for their proud appearance.

They are especially beautiful with their well pronounced jaw. Their flared, flexible nostrils are also beautiful. They stand between 15.1 and 16.2 hands. Lipizzans live longer than most horses. Their population status is rare.

Charles the VI built the Spanish Riding School, the oldest riding school in the world. The school has survived many wars and revolutions. The riding school has beautiful architecture. The Lipizzan Stallions do all the work at the Riding

School. At the Riding School “riding becomes an art”. The Spanish Riding School is the only place in the world that still does Classical Dressage.

Lipizzans have been training for 250 years in the Riding Hall. Only six of the colts get sent to the Spanish Riding School. Experienced riders teach young horses. When first riding a new colt a young apprentice is the first to mount. It takes six to eight years to fully train one of the horses. Young riders learn from experienced horses.

In performances there is one dark stallion. This is a tradition from when the stallions were many colors. Only the best trained stallion may perform without his rider. The morning session has taken place for centuries and is the key to their success. “Courbette in hand” and “airs above the ground”, dressage movements are hard on the horses hocks.

When riders enter the Riding Hall they salute the painting of Charles the VI. Correct posture is very important. Horses and riders are considered a moving work of art. It can take eight to ten years for an apprentice to become a rider. The Riders learn from each other. City traffic even stops when horses and riders go to performances.



### Chapter 3: Thoroughbreds

Thoroughbreds are phenomenal racehorses that were developed in the 18th century. Thoroughbreds have been raced since they were first bred. They got their speed from horses from Spain, Italy, Africa and Turkey. Thoroughbreds have Arab, Barb and Turk blood. When the Thoroughbred was developed, King Stephen of England raced them.

King Stephen had “royal horses” imported to his stables. He imported Jennet Horses, a type of Andalusian, from Spain. He also imported Barbs from North Africa, but he did not own any Arabian horses. At that time Arabian Horses were hard to own due to political problems. Writers often overlooked the fact that Arabs did not want to sell their horses. Arabs especially would not sell their good mares and stallions.

England became the best at breeding imported hotbloods, which consist of ancient breeds. When England became the best at breeding, many breeds evolved. Common people had access to Oriental blood at the royal stables. There was a time when American Thoroughbreds were not allowed in the *Great Stud Book*. Bulle Rock, a 21 year old stallion, was the first Thoroughbred to come to America.

There are so many important stallions in thoroughbred history. Byerly Turk, the Darley Arabian and the Godolphin Barb are just a few foundation sires. A few unfamiliar stallions that were influential to the modern Thoroughbred are Unknown Arabian, Darcy’s Chestnut Arabian, the Hemsly Turk and the Lister Turk. Herod, Eclipse and Matchem are three of the four fathers of the tail-male line. The fourth was Highflyer, a son of Herod. These four are traditionally known

as the foundation sires. They were all important in the 18th century because of how much they were bred.

The Byerley Turk, a stallion, was born in 1678 or 1679. The Byerley Turk was believed to be a Turkmene horse. Others thought he was an Akhal-Teke. In 1689 he was taken from the Turks by a Dutch Officer. The Dutch Officer then sold him to Byerley in England in 1689. The Byerley Turk stood stud in County Durham then in Yorkshire. He was bred to Jigg, a famous mare, and produced a male-line.

The Godolphin Barb was a Barb horse from Morocco. He is also known as the Godolphin Arabian. In 1730 he was brought to Lord Godolphin's stud. The Godolphin Barb was first used as a teaser, a stallion or gelding who makes sure a mare is ready to breed. He became a breeding stallion when he was accidentally bred to Roxana, a mare.

The Darley Arabian was born in about 1700. He was brought to England in 1704 as a four year old. The Darley Arabian was owned by Thomas Darley and then was sold to his brother. The Darley Arabian stood stud at Yorkshire. He was registered as the best Maneghi blood. Maneghi blood is a strain of racing blood.

The Godolphin Barb and Roxana produced Cade. Cade founded the Matchem line. Cade had a big influence on the Thoroughbred breed. Though he was not bred to many mares. Cade made his influence on the Thoroughbred breed through his grandson Matchem. Cade died at the age of 30.

Snap was a grandson of the Darley Arabian. Matchem is a grandson of the Godolphin Barb. Snap was once compared to Matchem. When they were compared someone said "Snap for speed and Matchem for truth and daylight" which meant

Matchem gave the horses a good speed. Matchem's blood heirs are even-tempered, yet fast.

Betty Leedes, a mare, was very significant to the modern Thoroughbred through her famous foal, Flying Childers. Flying Childers was the first amazing racehorse because he was one of the first undefeated racehorses. Flying Childers had a half brother named Bartlett's Childers. Bartlett's Childers could not race because of a tendency to burst blood vessels. Bartlett's Childers sired Squirt, a quite successful stallion. Squirt sired a foal named Marske who went on to become one of the most successful stallions. Marske was the sire of Eclipse, one of the greatest racehorses of all time.

Horse racing is America's oldest sport. The 1908 Belmont Stakes, the third race in the Triple Crown, winner Colin was one of the first undefeated racehorses in America. Affirmed and Alydar had the greatest horse racing rivalry of all time. Though Affirmed won the Triple Crown, Alydar was still a champion. Secretariat was the fastest race horse ever. The Annual Eclipse Awards, given to the best racehorses in North America, are named after Eclipse.

Horse racing has become a science. Thoroughbreds start racing at the age of two because they mature at an early age. No other breed of horse can run as fast and as far as a Thoroughbred. Some can run faster at shorter distances. Others can gallop for a longer amount of time. Still no other breed of horse can match them in speed and distance.

Thoroughbreds are one of the bravest breeds of horses. They also have a great spirit. Though they are still high strung, nervous, and sensitive animals. They

have outstanding endurance and agility. Thoroughbreds are known for their large hearts. Overall the body of a Thoroughbred indicates that they are bred for speed.

Thoroughbreds' strides are long and low. They can stretch out their hind legs very far. They can do this due to the joints from the hip to the hock.



Thoroughbreds have long legs with clean joints. Thoroughbreds are so spirited, they have been known to attempt to finish races with a fractured leg.

Thoroughbreds' shoulders are very muscular. Normally their necks are long and straight. Though their necks can be a little curved. Their withers are well-defined. Thoroughbreds' backs are almost always long and their chests are wide and high.

Thoroughbred's small, but elegant heads have a straight profile. Their heads are clean cut, lean, and very fine. They have mobile well-proportioned ears. Thoroughbred's jowls are not thick. Often their nostrils are flared. Thoroughbreds also have large, lively eyes.

Thoroughbred coats are thin and silky. They can be bay, dark bay, chestnut, black, grey or roan. White markings are often seen on their coats. They have very thin skin. Thoroughbreds have all these amazing traits due to breeding which all started with Andalusian breed.

## **Conclusion**

I have loved horses for all of my life. They mean so much to me and I hope after reading my paper they mean something to you. Horses have a major influence on the world in many ways. Different breeds have influenced the world in a variety of ways. They have influenced the economy all over the world as well. They helped with farming before there were machines.

This topic has affected my life in many ways. It has affected me through learning about how these different breeds have been developed. If I could research something different about my topic I would research other breeds. I would probably want to research the Knabstrupper breed because I would like to know how they got their beautiful spotted coat. I hope you learn to enjoy the different horse breeds if you do not already.

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