

= Lusitano =

The Lusitano , also known as the Pure Blood Lusitano or PSL ( Puro Sangue Lusitano ) , is a Portuguese horse breed , closely related to the Spanish Andalusian horse . Both are sometimes called Iberian horses , as the breeds both developed on the Iberian peninsula , and until the 1960s they were considered one breed , under the Andalusian name . Horses were known to be present on the Iberian Peninsula as far back as 20 @,@ 000 BC , and by 800 BC the region was renowned for its war horses . When the Muslims invaded Iberia in 711 AD , they brought Barb horses with them that were crossed with the native horses , developing a horse that became useful for war , dressage and bull fighting . In 1966 , the Portuguese and Spanish stud books split , and the Portuguese strain of the Iberian horse was named the Lusitano , after the word Lusitania , the ancient Roman name for Portugal . There are three main breed lineages within the breed today , and characteristics differ slightly between each line . There is also the Alter Real strain of Lusitano , bred only at the Alter Real State Stud .

Lusitanos can be any solid color , although they are generally gray , bay or chestnut . Horses of the Alter Real strain are always bay . Members of the breed are of Baroque type , with convex facial profiles , heavy muscling , intelligent and willing natures , with agile and elevated movement . Originally bred for war , dressage and bullfighting , Lusitanos are still used today in the latter two . They have competed in several Olympics and World Equestrian Games as part of the Portuguese and Spanish dressage teams . They have also made a showing in driving competitions , with a Belgian team of Lusitanos winning multiple international titles . Members of the breed are still used in bloodless bullfighting today , where it is expected that neither horse or bull will be injured .

= = History = =

Horses were known to humans on what is now the Iberian Peninsula as far back as 25 @,@ 000 to 20 @,@ 000 BC , as shown by cave paintings in the area . Among the local wild horses originally used by humans were the probable ancestors of the modern Lusitano , as studies comparing ancient and modern horse DNA indicate that the modern " Lusitano C " group contains maternal lineages also present in wild Iberian horses from the Early Neolithic period . These ancient horses were used for war , with clear evidence of their use by Phoenicians around 1100 BC and Celts around 600 BC . It is believed that these invaders also brought horses with them , contributing outside blood to the ancestry of the modern Iberian breeds . By 800 BC , the alliance known as Celtiberians had been formed by the Iberians and Celts , and from this point on the horses bred in this area were renowned as war horses . Xenophon , writing around 370 BC , admired the advanced horsemanship and riding techniques used by Iberian horsemen in war , made possible in part by their agile horses . Legend claimed that mares of the area were sired by the wind ( hence their amazing swiftness , passed onto their foals ) , and one modern hypothesis suggests that the bond between Iberian humans and horses was the initial inspiration for the centaur , which was believed to come from the area of the Tagus River . Later invasions into the area by Carthaginians and Romans resulted in these civilizations establishing stud farms that bred cavalry horses for the Roman army from local stock .

When the Umayyad Muslims invaded the Iberian peninsula in 711 AD , their invasion brought Barb horses , which were crossed with native Iberian horses . The cross between these two breeds produced a war horse superior even to the original Iberian horse , and it was this new type that the Conquistadors introduced to the Americas . Called the Iberian war horse , this ancestor of the Lusitano was used both on the battlefield and in major riding academies throughout Europe . Bullfighting on horseback and displays of high school dressage were common entertainment for the Portuguese gentry .

Mitochondrial DNA studies of the closely related modern Andalusian horse , compared to the Barb horse of North Africa , present convincing evidence that Barbs and Iberian horses crossed the Strait of Gibraltar in each direction , were crossbred with each other , and thus each influenced the other 's maternal bloodlines . While Portuguese historian Ruy d 'Andrade hypothesized that the ancient

Sorraia breed was an ancestor of the Southern Iberian breeds , including the Lusitano , genetic studies using mitochondrial DNA show that the Sorraia is part of a genetic cluster that is largely separated from most Iberian breeds . One maternal lineage is shared with the Lusitano , however , Sorraia lineages in Iberian breeds are relatively recent , dating to the Middle Ages , making the Sorraia an unlikely prehistoric ancestor of the Lusitano .

Prior to modern times , horse breeds throughout Europe were known primarily by the name of the region where they were bred . The Lusitano takes its name from Lusitania , an ancient Roman name for the region that today is Portugal . A very similar horse , the Spanish Andalusian , originally described the horses of distinct quality that came from Andalusia in Spain . Some sources state that the Andalusian and the Lusitano are genetically the same breed , and the only difference is the country in which individual horses are born . The Lusitano is also known as the Portuguese , Peninsular , National or Betico @-@ Lusitano horse .

During the 16th and 17th centuries , horses moved continually between Spain and Portugal , and horses from the studs of Andalusia were used to improve the Portuguese cavalry . Portugal 's successful restoration war against Spain ( 1640 ? 1668 ) was in part based on mounted troops riding war horses of Spanish blood . During the reign of Philip III of Portugal ( also Philip IV of Spain ) , Portuguese horse breeding reached its lowest point . The Spanish passed laws to halt the country 's production of cavalry horses , and what stud farms did exist were run in secrecy with horses smuggled or stolen from Spain . These secret farms , however , provided the base for the modern Lusitano . In 1662 , when Charles II of England married Catherine of Braganza of Portugal , the royal dowry included Portugal 's Tangier and Bombay garrisons . These garrisons included large groups of Portuguese cavalry , mounted on Iberian horses .

Prior to the 1960s , the Iberian @-@ type horse was called the Andalusian in both Portugal and Spain . In 1966 , the Lusitano name was adopted by Portugal after a studbook separation by the two countries . The revolutions of Portugal 's African colonies resulted in the near economic collapse of Portugal . The landed class attracted political agitators , estates were vacated , and stud farms were broken up and their horses sold to Spain . However , the best lines were saved through the efforts of breeders , and breeding soon increased . Today , Lusitanos are bred mainly in Portugal and Brazil , but maintain a presence in many other countries throughout the world , including Australia , the United States , Great Britain , South Africa , and other European countries . Crossbred horses of partial Lusitano blood are popular , especially when crossed with Andalusian , Arabian or Thoroughbred blood .

= = = Strains and sub @-@ types = = =

The Portuguese stud book recognizes six horses ( five stallions and one mare ) that are called the " heads of lineage " . These six horses are the foundation horses of the three main breed lineages : Andrade , Veiga and Coudelaria Nacional ( Portuguese State Stud ) . Although each line meets breed standards , they differ from each other in individual characteristics . The six foundation horses are :

Agareno , a 1931 Veiga stallion , out of Bagocha , by Lidador

Primorosa , a 1927 Dominquez Hermanos stallion , out of Primorosa II , by Presumido

Destinado , a 1930 Dominquez Hermanos stallion , out of Destinada , by Alegre II

Marialva II , a 1930 Antonio Fontes Pereira de Melo stallion , out of Campina , by Marialva

Regedor , a 1923 Alter Real stallion , out of Gavina , by Gavioto

Hucharia , a 1943 Coudelaria Nacional mare , out of Viscaina , by Cartujano

= = = Alter Real = = =

The Alter Real is a strain of the Lusitano which is bred only at the Alter Real State Stud in Portugal . The stud was founded in 1748 by the Portuguese royal family to provide horses for the national riding academy and royal use . The Portuguese School of Equestrian Art ( Escola Portuguesa de Arte Equestre ) uses these horses exclusively in their performances . The strain was developed from

300 Iberian mares imported from Spain in 1747 . When Napoleon invaded Spain in the early 19th century , the Alter Real strain deteriorated due to the introduction of Arabian , Thoroughbred , Spanish @-@ Norman and Hanoverian blood . However , in the 19th and 20th centuries the strain was re @-@ established with the further introduction of Spanish blood . In the early 20th century , with the 1910 revolution that ended the monarchy , the Alter Real strain faced extinction , as records were burned , stallions were gelded and the stud discontinued . Ruy d 'Andrade , a specialist in Iberian horse breeds , saved two stallions and several mares , and was able to re @-@ establish the strain , turning his herd over to the Portuguese Ministry of Agriculture in 1942 , when the stud was reopened . The Portuguese state has maintained ownership of the stud , and continues to produce horses for use in high school dressage .

= = Registration = =

Today , outside of Portugal and Spain , breeding , showing and registration of both Lusitanos and Andalusians are often closely linked . One example is the Australasian Lusitano Horse Association of Australasia ( LHAA ) , which shares responsibility for the Purebred Iberian Horse ( an Andalusian / Lusitano cross ) with the Australasia Andalusian Association , as well as hosting a combined National Show for the two breeds in Australia . The LHAA was formed in 2003 to register and promote the Lusitano breed in Australia and New Zealand , and in June 2005 signed an agreement with their parent organization , the Portuguese Associação Portuguesa de Criadores do Cavalo Puro Sangue Lusitano , to follow that association 's rules and regulations . The LHAA maintains two studbooks ( for the purebred Lusitano and the purebred Iberian ) and a crossbred registry for horses with one Lusitano parent . An example of a combined registry is the International Andalusian and Lusitano Horse Association ( IALHA ) .

= = Characteristics and uses = =

Lusitanos are generally gray , bay or chestnut , though they can be of any solid color , including black , dun and palomino . Only bays are bred at the Alter Real stud . They usually stand 15 @. @ 2 and 15 @. @ 3 hands ( 62 and 63 inches , 157 and 160 cm ) high , although some stand over 16 hands ( 64 inches , 163 cm ) . Members of the breed have narrow , but well @-@ proportioned , heads with profiles that are slightly convex . The necks are thick and arched , leading to well defined withers , shoulders that are muscular and sloping and a deep , broad chest . The horses have short , strong backs and rounded , sloped croups , leading to a low @-@ set tail . The legs are sturdy and muscled . Lusitanos are known as powerful horses , noted for their intelligence and willing nature . The breed 's gaits are agile and elevated , but generally comfortable to ride . The Lusitano differs from the Andalusian through having a more sloped croup , a lower @-@ set tail , and a more convex head profile . The mane and tail are extremely thick in both breeds .

The ancestors of the Lusitano were originally used for classical dressage , driving and bullfighting on horseback . Today , Lusitanos are seen in Olympic disciplines , including high @-@ level combined driving competition . In 1995 , a four @-@ in @-@ hand team driven by Belgian Felix Brasseur won the FEI Driving World Cup , and took the World Championships in 1996 . In 2002 , there was a Lusitano on the World Equestrian Games bronze @-@ winning dressage team that went on to collect a silver medal at the 2004 Summer Olympics . In 2006 , the entire Portuguese dressage team rode Lusitanos at the World Equestrian Games , as did one Spanish dressage competitor . The Belgian Brasseur took the gold medal in four @-@ in @-@ hand driving at the same competition with a team composed solely of Lusitanos . They are still used for mounted bullfighting today , in a form where the bull is not killed and it is considered a disgrace to the rider if the horse is injured . Horses bred for this sport must be agile and calm , remaining in the control of the rider even when confronted by a bull . Between 1980 and 1987 , Lusitanos were used for breeding Colorado Ranger horses , although these crosses are no longer allowed by the breed registry . An Alter Real stallion , taken to Brazil prior to Napoleon 's invasion , was a foundation stallion of the Mangalarga Marchador breed .

