

= Lipizzan =

The Lipizzan or Lipizzaner (Czech : Lipicán , Croatian : Lipicanac , Hungarian : Lipicai , Italian : Lipizzano , Slovene : Lipicanec) , is a breed of horse closely associated with the Spanish Riding School of Vienna , Austria , where they demonstrate the haute école or " high school " movements of classical dressage , including the highly controlled , stylized jumps and other movements known as the " airs above the ground . " The horses at the Spanish Riding School are trained using traditional methods that date back hundreds of years , based on the principles of classical dressage .

The Lipizzan breed dates back to the 16th century , when it was developed with the support of the Habsburg nobility . The breed takes its name from one of the earliest stud farms established , located near the Karst Plateau village of Lipica (spelled " Lipizza " in Italian) , in modern @-@ day Slovenia . The breed has been endangered numerous times by warfare sweeping Europe , including during the War of the First Coalition , World War I and World War II . The rescue of the Lipizzans during World War II by American troops was made famous by the Disney movie Miracle of the White Stallions . Along with the Disney movie , Lipizzans have also starred or played supporting roles in many movies , TV shows , books and other media .

Today , eight stallions are recognized as the foundation bloodstock of the breed , all foaled the late 18th and early 19th centuries . All modern Lipizzans trace their bloodlines to these eight stallions , and all breeding stallions have included in their name the name of the foundation sire of their bloodline . There are also classic mare lines , with up to 35 recognized by various breed registries . The majority of horses are registered through the member organizations of the Lipizzan International Federation , which covers almost 11 @,@ 000 horses in 19 countries and at 9 state studs in Europe . The majority of Lipizzans reside in Europe , with smaller numbers in the Americas , Africa and Australia . Generally gray in color , the Lipizzan is a muscular breed that matures slowly and is long @-@ lived .

= = Characteristics = =

Most Lipizzans measure between 14 @.@ 2 and 15 @.@ 2 hands (58 and 62 inches , 147 and 157 cm) . However , horses bred that are closer to the original carriage @-@ horse type are taller , approaching 16 @.@ 1 hands (65 inches , 165 cm) . Lipizzans have a long head , with a straight or slightly convex profile . The jaw is deep , the ears small , the eyes large and expressive and the nostrils flared . They have a neck that is sturdy , yet arched and withers that are low , muscular and broad . They are a Baroque @-@ type horse , with a wide , deep chest , broad croup and muscular shoulder . The tail is carried high and well set . The legs are well @-@ muscled and strong , with broad joints and well @-@ defined tendons . The feet tend to be small , but are tough .

Lipizzan horses tend to mature slowly . However , they live and are active longer than many other breeds , with horses performing the difficult exercises of the Spanish Riding School well into their 20s and living into their 30s .

= = = Color = = =

Aside from the rare solid @-@ colored horse (usually bay or black) , most Lipizzans are gray . Like all gray horses , they have black skin , dark eyes , and as adult horses , a white hair coat . Gray horses , including Lipizzans , are born dark ? usually bay or black ? and become lighter each year as the graying process takes place , with the process being complete at between 6 and 10 years of age . Lipizzans are not actually true white horses , but this is a common misconception . A white horse is born white and has unpigmented skin .

Until the 18th century , Lipizzans had other coat colors , including dun , bay , chestnut , black , piebald and skewbald . However , gray is a dominant gene . Gray was the color preferred by the royal family , and so the color was emphasized in breeding practices . Thus , in a small breed population when the color was deliberately selected as a desirable feature , it came to be the color

of the overwhelming majority of Lipizzan horses . However , it is a long @-@ standing tradition for the Spanish Riding School to have at least one bay Lipizzan stallion in residence , and this tradition is continued through the present day .

= = History = =

The ancestors of the Lipizzan can be traced to approximately A.D. 800 . The earliest predecessors of the Lipizzan originated in the 7th century when Barb horses were brought into Spain by the Moors and crossed on native Spanish stock . The result was the Andalusian horse and other Iberian horse breeds .

By the 16th century , when the Habsburgs ruled both Spain and Austria , a powerful but agile horse was desired both for military uses and for use in the fashionable and rapidly growing riding schools for the nobility of central Europe . Therefore , in 1562 , the Habsburg Emperor Maximillian II brought the Spanish Andalusian horse to Austria and founded the court stud at Kladrub . In 1580 , his brother , Archduke Charles II , established a similar stud at Lipizza (now Lipica) , located in modern @-@ day Slovenia , from which the breed obtained its name . The name of the village itself derives from the Slovenian word lipa , meaning " linden tree . "

Spanish , Barb , and Arabian stock were crossed at Lipizza , and succeeding generations were crossed with the now @-@ extinct Neapolitan breed from Italy and other Baroque horses of Spanish descent obtained from Germany and Denmark . While breeding stock was exchanged between the two studs , Kladrub specialized in producing heavy carriage horses , while riding and light carriage horses came from the Lipizza stud .

Beginning in 1920 , the Piber Federal Stud , near Graz , Austria , became the main stud for the horses used in Vienna . Breeding became very selective , only allowing stallions that had proved themselves at the Riding School to stand at stud , and only breeding mares who had passed rigorous performance testing .

= = = Foundation horses = = =

Today , a maximum of eight foundation lines for Lipizzans are recognized by various registries , which refer to them as " dynasties . " They are divided into two groups . Six trace to classical foundation stallions used in the 18th and 19th centuries by the Lipizza stud , and two additional lines were not used at Lipizza but were used by other studs within the historic boundaries of the Habsburg Empire .

The six " classical dynasties " are :

Pluto : a gray Spanish stallion from the Royal Danish Stud , foaled in 1765

Conversano : a black Neapolitan stallion , foaled in 1767

Maestoso : a gray stallion from the Kladrub stud with a Spanish dam , foaled 1773 , descendants today all trace via Maestoso X , foaled in Hungary in 1819 .

Favory : a dun stallion from the Kladrub stud , foaled in 1779

Neapolitano : a bay Neapolitan stallion from the Polesine , foaled in 1790

Siglavy : a gray Arabian stallion , originally from Syria , foaled in 1810

There are two additional stallion lines found in Croatia , Hungary , and other eastern European countries as well as in North America . They are accepted as equal to the 6 classical lines by the Lipizzan International Federation (LIF) . These are :

Tulipan : A black stallion of Baroque type and Spanish pedigree foaled about 1800 from the Croatian stud farm of Terezovac , owned by Count Jankovi? @-@ Bésán .

Incitato : A stallion of Spanish lines foaled 1802 , bred in Transylvania by Count Bethlen , and sold to the Hungarian stud farm Mez?hegyes .

There are several other stallion lines that have died out over the years , but were used in the early breeding of the horses . In addition to the foundation stallion lines , there were 20 " classic " mare lines , 14 of which exist today . However , there are up to 35 mare lines recognized by various Lipizzan organizations .

There are traditional naming patterns for both stallions and mares , required by Lipizzan breed registries . Stallions traditionally are given two names , with the first being the line of the sire and the second being the name of the dam . For example , " Maestoso Austria " is a horse sired by Maestoso Trompeta out of a mare named Austria . The horse 's sire line tracing to the foundation sire Maestoso . The names of mares are chosen to be " complementary to the traditional Lipizzan line names " and are required to end in the letter " a " .

= = = Spanish Riding School = = =

The world @-@ famous Spanish Riding School uses highly trained Lipizzan stallions in public performances that demonstrate classical dressage movements and training . In 1572 the first Spanish Riding Hall was built , during the Austrian Empire , and is the oldest of its kind in the world . The Spanish Riding School , though located in Vienna , Austria , takes its name from the original Spanish heritage of its horses . In 1729 Charles VI commissioned the building of the Winter Riding School in Vienna and in 1735 , the building was completed that remains the home of the Spanish Riding School today .

= = = Wartime preservation = = =

The Lipizzans endured several wartime relocations throughout their history , each of which saved the breed from extinction . The first was in March 1797 during the War of the First Coalition , when the horses were evacuated from Lipica . During the journey , 16 mares gave birth to foals . In November 1797 , the horses returned to Lipica , but the stables were in ruins . They were rebuilt , but in 1805 , the horses were evacuated again when Napoleon invaded Austria . They remained away from the stud for two years , returning April 1 , 1807 . But then , following the Treaty of Schönbrunn in 1809 , the horses were evacuated three more times during the unsettled period that followed , resulting in the loss of many horses and the destruction of the written studbooks that documented bloodlines of horses prior to 1700 . The horses finally returned to Lipica for good in 1815 , where they remained for the rest of the 19th century .

The first evacuation of the 20th century occurred in 1915 when the horses were evacuated from Lipica due to World War I and placed at Laxenburg and Kladrub . Following the war , the Austro @-@ Hungarian Empire was broken up , with Lipica becoming part of Italy . Thus , the animals were divided between several different studs in the new postwar nations of Austria , Italy , Hungary , Czechoslovakia , Romania and Yugoslavia . The nation of Austria kept the stallions of the Spanish Riding School and some breeding stock . By 1920 , the Austrian breeding stock was consolidated at Piber .

During World War II , the high command of Nazi Germany transferred most of Europe 's Lipizzan breeding stock to Hostau , Czechoslovakia . The breeding stock was taken from Piber in 1942 , and additional mares and foals from other European nations arrived in 1943 . The stallions of the Spanish Riding School were evacuated to St. Martins , Austria from Vienna in January 1945 , when bombing raids neared the city and the head of the Spanish Riding School , Colonel Alois Podhajsky , feared the horses were in danger . By spring of 1945 , the horses at Hostau were threatened by the advancing Soviet army , which might have slaughtered the animals for horse meat had it captured the facility .

The rescue of the Lipizzans by the United States Army , made famous by the Disney movie *Miracle of the White Stallions* , occurred in two parts : The United States Third Army under the command of General George S. Patton , was near St. Martins in the spring of 1945 and learned that the Lipizzan stallions were in the area . Patton himself was a horseman , and like Podhajsky , had competed in the Olympic Games . On May 7 , 1945 , Podhajsky put on an exhibition of the Spanish Riding School stallions for Patton and Undersecretary of War Robert P. Patterson , and at its conclusion requested that Patton take the horses under his protection .

Meanwhile , the Third Army 's United States Second Cavalry , a tank unit under the command of Colonel Charles Reed , had discovered the horses at Hostau , where there were also 400 Allied

prisoners of war , and had occupied it on April 28 , 1945 . " Operation Cowboy " , as the rescue was known , resulted in the recovery of 1 @, @ 200 horses , including 375 Lipizzans . Patton learned of the raid , and arranged for Podhajsky to fly to Hostau . On May 12 , American soldiers began riding , trucking and herding the horses 35 miles across the border into Kotztinz , Germany . The Lipizzans were eventually settled in temporary quarters in Wimsbach , until the breeding stock returned to Piber in 1952 , and the stallions returned to the Spanish Riding School in 1955 . In 2005 , the Spanish Riding School celebrated the 60th anniversary of Patton 's rescue by touring the United States .

During the Croatian War of Independence , from 1991 to 1995 , the horses at the Lipik stable in Croatia were taken by the Serbs to Novi Sad , Serbia . The horses remained there until 2007 , when calls began to be made for them to be returned to their country of origin . In October 2007 , 60 horses were returned to Croatia .

= = = Modern breed = = =

The Lipizzan breed suffered a setback to its population when a viral epidemic hit the Piber Stud in 1983 . Forty horses and eight percent of the expected foal crop were lost . Since then , the population at the stud increased . By 1994 there were 100 mares at the stud with and a foal crop of 56 born in 1993 . In 1994 , the rate of successful pregnancy and birth of foals increased from 27 % to 82 % as the result of a new veterinary center . In 1996 , a study funded by the European Union Indo @-@ Copernicus Project assessed 586 Lipizzan horses from eight stud farms in Europe , with the goal of developing a " scientifically @-@ based description of the Lipizzan horse " . A study of the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) was performed on 212 of the animals , and those studied were found to contain 37 of the 39 known mtDNA haplotypes known in modern horses , meaning that they show a high degree of genetic diversity . This was what had been expected , as it was known that the mare families of the Lipizzan included a large number of different breeds , including Arabians , Thoroughbreds , and other European breeds .

The Lipizzan International Federation (LIF) is the international governing organization for the breed , composed of many national and private organizations representing the Lipizzan . The organizations work together under the banner of the LIF to promote the breed and maintain standards . As of 2012 , there were almost 11 @, @ 000 Lipizzans registered with the LIF residing with private breeders in 19 countries and at 9 state studs in Europe . The largest number are in Europe , with almost 9 @, @ 000 registered horses , followed by the Americas , with just over 1 @, @ 700 , then Africa and Australia with around 100 horses each . The nine state studs that are part of the LIF represent almost one @-@ quarter of the horses in Europe . Sâmb?ta de Jos , in Romania , has the greatest number of horses , with 400 , followed by Piber in Austria (360) , Lipica in Slovenia (358) , Szilvásvárad in Hungary (262) , Monterotondo in Italy (230) , ?akovo @-@ Lipik in Croatia (220) and Topo??ianky in Slovakia (200) . The other two studs are smaller , with Vu?ijak in Bosnia having 130 horses and Kara?or?evo in Serbia having just 30 . Educational programs have been developed in order to promote the breed and foster adherence to traditional breeding objectives .

Because of the status of Lipizzans as the only breed of horse developed in Slovenia , via the Lipica stud that is now located within its borders , Lipizzans are recognized in Slovenia as a national animal . For example , a pair of Lipizzans is featured on the 20 @-@ cent Slovenian euro coins . Mounted regiments of Carabinieri police in Italy also employ the Lipizzan as one of their mounts . In October 2008 , during a visit to Slovenia , a Lipizzan at Lipica , named 085 Favory Canissa XXII , was given to Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom . She decided to leave the animal in the care of the stud farm .

= = Training and uses = =

The traditional horse training methods for Lipizzans were developed at the Spanish Riding School and are based on the principles of classical dressage , which in turn traces to the Ancient Greek

writer Xenophon , whose works were rediscovered in the 16th century . His thoughts on development of horses ' mental attitude and psyche are still considered applicable today . Other writers who strongly influenced the training methods of the Spanish Riding School include Federico Grisone , the founder of the first riding academy in Naples , who lived during the 16th century ; and Antoine de Pluvinet and François Robichon de la Guérinière , two Frenchmen from the 17th and 18th centuries . The methods for training the Lipizzan stallions at the Spanish Riding School were passed down via an oral tradition until Field Marshal Franz Holbein and Johann Meixner , Senior Rider at the School , published the initial guidelines for the training of horse and rider at the School in 1898 . In the mid @-@ 20th century , Alois Podhajsky wrote a number of works that serve as textbooks for many dressage riders today .

The principles taught at the Spanish Riding School are based on practices taught to cavalry riders to prepare their horses for warfare . Young stallions come to the Spanish Riding School for training when they are four years old . Full training takes an average of six years for each horse , and schooling is considered complete when they have mastered the skills required to perform the " School Quadrille " . There are three progressively more difficult skill sets taught to the stallions , which are :

Forward riding , also called Straight riding or the Remontenschule - This is the name given to the skills taught in the first year of training , where a young horse learns to be saddled and bridled , learns basic commands on a longe line , and then is taught to be ridden , mostly in an arena in simple straight lines and turns , to teach correct responses to the rider 's legs and hands while mounted . The main goal during this time is to develop free forward movement in as natural a position as possible .

Campaign school , Campagneschule or Campagne , where the horse learns collection and balance through all gaits , turns and maneuvers . The horse learns to shorten and lengthen his stride , perform lateral movements to the side , and is introduced to the more complex double bridle . This is the longest training phase and may take several years .

High @-@ school dressage , the Haute école or Hohe Schule , which includes riding the horse with greater collection with increased use of the hindquarters , developing increased regularity , skill and finesse in all natural gaits . In this period , the horse learns the most advanced movements such as the half @-@ pass , counter @-@ canter , flying change , pirouette , passage , and piaffe . This is also when the horse may be taught the " Airs above the ground . " This level emphasizes performance with a high degree of perfection .

Although the Piber Stud trains mares for driving and under saddle , the Spanish Riding School exclusively uses stallions in its performances . Worldwide , the Lipizzan today competes in dressage and driving , as well as retaining their classic position at the Spanish Riding School .

= = " Airs above the ground " = =

The " airs above the ground " are the difficult " high school " dressage movements made famous by the Lipizzans . The finished movements include :

The levade : a position wherein the horse raises up both front legs , standing at a 30 @-@ degree angle entirely on its hind legs in a controlled form that requires a great deal of hindquarter strength . A less difficult but related movement is the pesade , where the horse rises up to a 45 @-@ degree angle .

The courbette : a movement where the horse balances on its hind legs and then essentially " hops , " jumping with the forelegs off the ground and hind legs together .

The capriole : a jump in place where the stallion leaps into the air , tucking his forelegs under himself , and kicks out with his hind legs at the top of the jump .

Other movements include :

The croupade and ballotade are predecessors to the capriole . In the croupade , the horse jumps with both fore and hind legs remaining tucked under the body and he does not kick out . In the ballotade , the horse jumps and untucks his hind legs slightly , he does not kick out , but the soles of the hind feet are visible if viewed from the rear .

The mezar : A series of successive levades in which the horse lowers its forefeet to the ground before rising again on hindquarters , achieving forward motion . This movement is no longer used at the Spanish Riding School .

= = In popular culture = =

Lipizzans have starred or played supporting roles in many movies , TV shows , books and other media .

The 1940 film Florian stars two Lipizzan stallions . It was based on a 1934 novel written by Felix Salten . The wife of the film 's producer owned the only Lipizzans in the US at the time that the movie was made . The rescue during World War II of the Lipizzan stallions is depicted in the 1963 Walt Disney movie Miracle of the White Stallions . The movie was the only live @-@ action , relatively realistic film set against a World War II backdrop that Disney has ever produced . In the feature film Crimson Tide , a discussion between the two main characters over whether Lipizzans came from Spain or Portugal , and whether they are born white or black , is used to represent the film 's suppressed racial conflict and the dividing of the world between two main powers during the Cold War .

Television programs featuring the Lipizzans include The White Horses , a 1965 children 's television series co @-@ produced by RTV Ljubljana (now RTV Slovenija) of Yugoslavia and BR @-@ TV of Germany , re @-@ broadcast in the United Kingdom . It followed the adventures of a teenage girl who visits a farm where Lipizzan horses are raised . Many books and poems mention or star Lipizzans . In 2011 , the Dutch writer Frank Westerman published a book on the history of the 20th century through the perspective of the Lipizzan horses , Brother Mendel 's Perfect Horse . In the 2004 novel The Star of Kazan by Eva Ibbotson , Lipizzan horses and the Spanish Riding School are key elements of both the plot and the setting . Lipizzans and the Spanish Riding School also play a crucial role in Mary Stewart 's 1965 novel Airs Above the Ground and Marguerite Henry 's 1964 children 's novel White Stallion of Lipizza . In the 1960s , the Slovene poet Edvard Kocbek wrote a poem dedicated to the Lipizzan horses . On June 21 , 2011 Annie Wedekind released " Mercury 's Flight : The Story of a Lipizzaner Stallion " through Breyer Horses as part of The Breyer Horse Collection book series . In the Season 1 episode of The Angry Beavers " Fancy Prance " Norbert confesses to Daggett that his lifelong dream is to become a Lipizzaner Stallion . Former concert promoter Gary Lashinsky owned The World Famous Lipizzaner Stallions until they filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy and permanently closed . A new movie based on the World War II evacuation of Lipizzaners from a Nazi breeding farm is expected to hit theaters in December 2016 .