

= Kathiawari =

The Kathiawari is a breed of horse from India , originating in the Kathiawar peninsula . Closely related to the Marwari horse , and resembling both that breed and the Arabian horse from which they descend , the Kathiawari was originally bred as a desert war horse for use over long distances , in rough terrain , on minimal rations . They are found in all colors except for black , and are commonly dun with primitive markings . Breeding diminished after India 's independence , and today there are very few Kathiawaris left in existence . Originally used as war horses and cavalry mounts , they are currently used as mounted police horses and for the sport of tent pegging . The breed registry and annual shows are organized by the Kathiawari Horse Breeders ' Association .

= = Breed characteristics = =

The best quality Kathiawaris are under 15 hands (60 inches , 152 cm) ; horses over this height often appear coarse and deviate from the desired breed type . The breed is found in all colors , except for black . Chestnut is the color seen most often , followed by bay , gray and finally dun . Many dun horses exhibit primitive markings , which shows a possible connection to the Tarpan . Pinto patterns do exist , but are extremely rare . The breed has a concave facial profile , with a broad forehead and short muzzle . The neck and body are proportional and relatively short , while both the head and tail are carried high . Although well @-@ proportioned , many Western breeders consider them to be lacking in bone in the legs . However , soundness is an inherent characteristic of the breed . One of the breed 's most distinctive features is its ears , which curve inward to touch and sometimes overlap at the tips . The Kathiawari has the most extremely curved ears of any breed of horse . At some points in the breed 's history , breeders focused on the preservation of these curving ears , to the detriment of some other , more important , physical characteristics . Like many desert breeds , the Kathiawari can subsist on minimal rations and water and is more resistant to the heat than breeds developed in colder climates . As well as the usual gaits , the Kathiawari also performs a swift , lateral pace , called the revaal . They are known as high @-@ spirited , intelligent and affectionate horses .

They are quite similar to the Marwari horse , another breed from India , having much of the same history and physical features . The main difference between the Kathiawari and the Marwari is their original geographic origin ? Kathiawaris are from the Kathiawar peninsula while Marwaris are mainly from the Marwar region . Kathiawaris tend to have slight facial differences from the Marwari , and are slightly taller in general . The Kathiawari also resembles the Arabian horse , which contributed significantly during the development of the breed .

= = History = =

Although the earliest origins of the breed remain unknown , horses inhabited the western coast of India well before the Mughal Emperors of 1536 to 1857 . Beginning during the Mughal reign , and continuing during the British Raj , Arabian horses were imported to India and crossed with the native stock , creating the ancestors of the modern Kathiawari breed . The Kathiawari may have also been influenced by the Mongolian horse . Traditionally , noble households specialized in their own strain of horses , naming their lines of horses after a foundation mare ; 28 of these lines still exist . These noble houses selectively bred horses that could withstand extreme temperatures and minimal rations , carry a man with weapons and armor for long periods in rough terrain , and still be swift and nimble . They bred for wiry , sleek horses that were ideal for war , and Kathiawaris were noted for their loyalty and bravery in battle , often defending their riders even when wounded themselves . This breeding was maintained until India 's independence .

Although still mainly bred in the Kathiawar peninsula , it is also found in the Maharashtra and Rajasthan states . The Kathiawari Horse Breeders ' Association maintains the breed registry . The Gujarat government maintains stud farms in eleven different locations ; one in Junagadh holds both mares and stallions and is tasked with preserving the breed , while the other ten hold Kathiawari

stallions that are used for improving the local stock of other or mixed breeds . As of 2007 , only about 50 Kathiawaris were held by private breeders . Today , the Panchaal region is renowned for its Kathiawari horses , often producing the most beautiful horses of the breed . In early 2010 , the UK @-@ based Friends of Marwari / Kathiawari Horse asked for donations of used bits . These would be given to owners of horses , including Kathiawaris , in India in place of home @-@ made bits , which often have sharp edges that can injure the horse .

= = Uses = =

In the early 1800s , the Kathiawari was used by the Maratha and British cavalries , and was considered superior to other breeds in this capacity . The use by the cavalry was maintained until the end of World War I , but they are used little by the Indian army in modern times , despite being a native breed . Many Indian mounted police units make use of the Kathiawari . The Kathiawari is also used extensively for the sport of tent pegging . Annual breed shows are hosted by the breed registry .