



The Cat Fanciers' Association, Inc.
World's Largest Registry of Pedigreed Cats

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TONKINESE



Front Top: GC, RW B'ssa Pumpnickel
(Natural Mink Male)

Front Bottom: GC, BW, NW Purretek Shiraz
(Platinum Point Male)

Back: GC, RW Vivatonk Taro of Matsuekitty
(Champagne Point Male)

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TONKINESE

The Tonkinese personality makes this breed popular as a companion cat. Loving, social, active, playful...yet content to be a lap cat. Tonkinese are firmly convinced that humans were put on Earth to love them. Intelligent and generous with their affection, a Tonkinese will supervise all activities with curiosity.

The Tonkinese is a natural at inventing and playing games, using favorite toys to play fetch or delighting in games of tag and hide-and-seek with other pets – or even humans. Tonkinese kittens are great fun, but even the adults tend to remain playful throughout their lives. Scratching/climbing posts and a variety of toys are much appreciated by these fun-loving cats. A Tonkinese will quickly take over, running your home and your life! They quickly endear themselves to family and visitors, becoming your “door greeter” and entertaining guests. Tonkinese get along with children, other breeds of cats, and dogs. They prefer not to be ignored or left alone. Two Tonkinese will keep each other company and also lessen the amount of mischief that just one bored Tonk can get into. It’s also very entertaining to watch two play together.

Do they talk a lot? That will depend on your perspective—when they have something to say, they talk in sentences and paragraphs (not just to hear their own voice). Their vocalizing has a purpose and expects a response. A wise owner will listen to a Tonkinese...or the cat may find an alternative way to express itself.

Tonkinese are beautiful, medium-sized cats, surprising heavy and muscular. Their fur is short, soft, and silky; it’s easy to care for and wonderful to pet!

Tonkinese come in 12 color and pattern varieties. The four base colors are the color of the extremes (face, ears, and tail), which are called the “points.” The coat patterns refer to the amount of contrast between the body color and the points. The four base colors are Platinum, Champagne, Natural, and Blue. The three coat patterns are Pointed – which has a high

amount of contrast between the extremes and the body, and typically have blue eyes; Mink – which has medium contrast and aqua eyes; and Solid – which has a low contrast between the body and the extremities and green to yellow-green eyes. Examples of the color patterns are Platinum Mink, Champagne Point, and Blue Solid.

Although new to modern competition in the 1980s, this is the same breed depicted in *The Cat-Book Poems of Siam* during the Ayudha Period (1358-1767) and imported to England in the early 1800s as “Chocolate Siamese.” In the United States, Tonkinese and Burmese can trace their beginnings back to Wong Mau, a small walnut-colored cat imported to California by Dr. Joseph Thompson in 1930. The Tonkinese we know today was developed in the 1960s and 1970s from the Siamese and Burmese breeds. Breeders wanted a more moderate breed than the extremes of the two parent breeds, and they wanted the new “mink” colors with aqua eyes. The Tonkinese breed was the first pedigreed cat to have aqua eye color. The breed was first recognized in Canada and then accepted for championship status in CFA in 1984. At that time, further outcrossing to Siamese and Burmese stopped.

Choosing a new kitten is an important decision for the entire family. It is a commitment for the life of the cat. Usually breeders make kittens available between the ages of three and four months. Kittens need the time before 12 weeks of age to learn good habits from their mother and siblings; this gives them the necessary socialization and confidence to go to their new home. This is also the time when basic inoculations are given.

Caring for a Tonkinese kitten is relatively easy. A rubber brush can be used to remove shedding coat; they can also be bathed occasionally. Tonkinese think everyone is their friend and have no defensive skills, so they are an indoor cat only. Many breeders will already have neutered or spayed kittens before they leave for their new homes. If this is not the case, you will want to have yours altered promptly. With a new kitten, it’s smart to “cat proof” your home, much as you would for a two-year-old child. Be sure to discuss food and litter choices with the breeder of your Tonkinese to ensure an easy transition.