

The Somali

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Background:

The Somali is essentially a longhaired Abyssinian; which itself was the result of a recessive gene in the Abyssinian cat. The gene created much intrigue among cat breeders and although it's still not fully understood we're grateful to have the beautiful Somali.

The Somali wasn't established as an individual breed until the 1960s, and it wasn't until 1991 when the breed was accepted internationally.

Cat Facts:

- The Somali has been given the nickname "fox cat" because of his bushy tail.
- The Somali's coat can come in chocolate, blue, cinnamon, ruddy, lilac, fawn, or any silver variation of those colors.
- The Somali has large almond-shaped eyes that can come in an intense green or rich copper.
- The Somali can live between eleven and sixteen years and weighs around six to ten pounds.

What's the Somali like?

The Somali is a very well proportioned, medium-sized, muscular cat. He's curious and loves to explore. Unlike most cats, the Somali is constantly moving and usually overseeing everything you're doing. You can teach a Somali to walk on a leash and what's more: he would love it!

Somalis, like Abyssinians, could develop a hereditary health issue called pyruvate kinase deficiency causing intermittent anemia. Other health issues to watch out for include the following: renal amyloidosis and an eye disease called progressive retinal atrophy (which could eventually lead to blindness).

Takeaway Points:

- If you're looking for a sweet, gentle small cat that requires little attention a Somali isn't the cat for you.
- Because the Somali has a soft, dense, medium-length coat you'll need to pay a little more attention to brushing and combing to prevent mats and tangles.
- If you have allergies, this cat can make them worse because they produce dander (although no cat breed is better or worse for people with allergies).

If you have any questions or concerns, you should always visit or call your veterinarian -- they are your best resource to ensure the health and well-being of your pets.