

Bichon Frise



His origin is said to be in the Mediterranean area. The breed is known also as the 'Tenerife Dog' because history has it that fourteenth-century sailors found him on that island, fell for his charms and took him back to France. He was recognised by the French Kennel Club in 1934 though his recognition in Britain did not occur until after both America and Canada entered him on their registers in the 1970s. There are several members of the Bichon family and portraits painted centuries ago depict small white dogs so similar in type they must surely have been his ancestors.

A happy little dog who thrives on being the centre of attention, he is a complete extrovert, full of confidence and intelligence. He loves companionship and has a deep regard for his family, of which he soon becomes an integral part, and he shows his appreciation of all home comforts. Potential owners must remember that he does require a considerable amount of grooming to maintain his glamorous image.

What about Health Issues?

You may be aware that some breeds of dog (and crossbreeds too) can be susceptible to inherited disease. Of course you want to be sure that the puppy you choose is as healthy as possible, and you would like to know that it has not inherited any undesirable disease-causing genes from its parents. There is some help in that DNA tests for diseases in purebred dogs are available for some conditions in some breeds, but there are not very many such tests just yet! There are also, however, a number of clinical veterinary screening schemes that dog breeders can use to increase the probability of producing healthy puppies.

Details of the various screening schemes, both veterinary and DNA, that are available to breeders in the UK can be found on the Kennel Club's website at:

www.thekennelclub.org.uk/doghealth

Puppy buyers should be aware that, at present, the application of various health screening results to breeding programmes is not always straightforward, and breeders may make choices for various reasons. A responsible breeder though, will always be willing to discuss relevant health issues with you. Breed clubs are often useful sources of breed-specific information.

And what health screening is relevant for the Bichon Frise?

There are not currently any veterinary screening schemes or DNA tests for disease relevant to this breed under the Accredited Breeder Scheme, however you should still ask breeders and refer to breed clubs about health issues in the breed.