

THE CHINESE SHAR-PEI

ORIGIN: The Chinese Shar-pei originated from the Guangzhou Province in southern China. They were bred to be hunters, herders, guardians, and just an all-purpose utility dog. They were also once a guard dog and a pit fighter. Their loose skin allowed them to dodge and twist away from fatal bites. When the People's Republic of China was formed, the dog population in China was practically wiped out. A few Shar-Peis, however, were bred in Hong Kong and Taiwan, thus saving the breed. They were brought to the United States in 1973.

PERSONALITY: A well-trained and well-socialized Shar-Pei makes a great family dog because of its devotion to them. They like to be with their owner all the time and seem to enjoy their human companions over dog companions. Shar-peis are usually confident and calm. Because they can be independent and aloof with strangers, "arrogant" is often used to describe their attitude. Shar-peis are intelligent but can be stubborn when it comes to training. They make excellent guard dogs.

APPEARANCE: Chinese Shar-peis usually weigh between 40 to 55 pounds and stand approximately 18 to 25 inches tall. They are solid and muscular in build. Their coats are short and rough, and colors range from black, fawn, cream, tan and lavender. They can have a diluted pigmentation, which means the nose and nails are the same color as the coat. They are best known for their extraordinary deep wrinkles and "hippo face." Shar-peis come in two varieties, super-wrinkled and only mildly wrinkled. Like Chow Chows, the Shar-peis have bluish-black tongues.

INTERESTING FACTS: The Chinese Shar-pei is the 45th most popular dog registered with America's Pet Registry Inc. At one time it was named "the rarest dog in the world" by the Guinness Book of World Records. The name "sha pi" means "sand skin," which refers to the texture of their coat not the color.

These are just a few interesting facts. You can learn so much more about this incredible dog on the internet or by getting a good book on Chinese Shar-peis.

We wish you many happy years with your beloved friend.