

THE BOLOGNESE

UNIQUE ORIGIN: The precise ancestry of the Bolognese is a mystery. It is a member of the Bichon group of dogs, which simply means a small, long-haired dog. Its closest relative in this group is the Maltese, but it is not clear whether the Maltese or the Bolognese came first in the ancestry. The Bolognese is named after the city of Bologna, a city in northern Italy. The Bolognese has been recorded in documentation since the year 1200. Evidence of them is in tapestry work produced by Flemish craftsmen dating as far back as the 17th century. Titian, a Venetian painter, created a painting of the Duke Frederico Gonzaga with his Bolognese. The breed was brought into England in 1990 by Liz Stannard.

PERSONALITY: The Bolognese is a bright, alert, cotton mop of a dog. They enjoy the companionship of people and form a close relationship with their family. Vivacious, playful, and happy, the Bolognese also gets along well with other animals. Because he is eager to please his people, the Bolognese responds well to obedience training, and most experts recommend that training. The Bolognese should become accustomed to people and noises at an early age, as they can be prone to “small dog syndrome.” They can exhibit human induced behaviors where they tend to think they are the pack leaders to their humans. Unchecked, this can lead to some behavior issues such as separation anxiety. The owner of the Bolognese should establish himself as the pack leader early on in the puppy’s life. While Bolognese are perfectly happy to lounge around the house, they should also have a daily walk of around 20-25 minutes. This daily walk does more than just exercise the dog; they establish the leadership of the human in the relationship. They are perfect for families with older children who can help in establishing rules and boundaries for the dog.

APPEARANCE: The Bolognese is a small, white, compact dog with a distinctive white single coat. Their height will vary from 10 to 12 inches, depending on the sex of the dog. The weight varies between 8 and 14 pounds. Their distinctive white coat falls in loose open ringlets all over the body, with shorter hair on the face. The hair is wooly rather than silky. They need daily brushing, but they shed very little.

INTERESTING FACTS: Famous owners of the Bolognese include Catherine the Great of Russia, Madame De Pompadour, and Empress Maria Theresa of Austria, and they appear in paintings by such greats as Goya, Grosse, and Watteau. Many psychologists use this breed as therapy dogs because their soothing, calm nature and their easy demeanor with people help calm patients.