

The Nordland/Lyngen Horse

Strong-Versatile-Genuine

The north part of Norway is rich in resources, culturally complex and physically demanding. The people of the north have always been practical and resourceful survivors. Throughout millennia, this harsh nature and connections between people of different nationalities and cultures have created a versatile type of person with a strong sense of integrity, a relaxed attitude towards the changeable environment and an ability to overcome great challenges.

Like the people in the north, the Nordland/Lyngen Horse has a similarly diverse origin, with resilience to survive and an ability to tackle different tasks. It is born under the light of the midnight sun, and the summer's majesty. The breed has become toughened through long winters of storms and snow, as the northern lights dance across the heavens.

He can be yours and if you make yourself worth his trust, he is unimaginably loyal and will do his utmost for you (... though not always as you quite thought and often with a twinkle in his eye!). His strong connection to the powerful Norwegian nature and his people's demanding lives, makes this horse not just a result of human will and planning. He is also himself. He is the embodiment of culture and nature in the north of Norway.

The History:

The Nordland/Lyngen Horse is one of three Norwegian breeds of horse and is of extremely old origin. The first recognised exhibition of the Nordland/Lyngen Horse was in 1898 on Lyngseidet in Troms, Norway. In the 1930's the organisation of a breeding program for the Nordland/Lyngen Horse began. At the time, the population was located in the very northern counties in Norway, with most of them along the Lyngen Fjord in Troms.

Due to the Second World War and the mechanisation of agricultural practises, the breed suffered a harsh setback. In the 1960's, it was still close to extinction and the first pedigree record book was released in 1969.

Today, the breed is no longer considered to be as close to extinction. However, it is still on FAO's (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United States) list of endangered species with "critical" status (FAO, 2013). Because of the small amount of genetic material within the race, and the desire to keep its particular character without cross-breeding with other known breeds, there is a need for structured and organised breeding programmes to achieve progress.

About the horse:

Nordland/Lyngen Horse is well-balanced and hardy, with charisma and vitality and also an easy temperament. Within the race you can also find variation in types, from light to more heavily built individuals. The horse is very strong in comparison to its size, is sure of foot and is famous for its determination and will to work. In the summer it has a short shiny coat, and in the winter a heavy coat. A small amount of hoof hair is typical for the breed. The wither

height_varies, from 125 cm to 145 cm, (12 – 14 hands) with an average height between 130 and 140 cm. Similar to the closely related Icelandic Horse there is a variety of colouration. Colors include: Chestnut/sorrel, bay, black, palomino, buckskin, silver black, silver bay, silver buckskin, and any of these (colors) with the grey gene (grey).

“... a fantastic small horse, with a heart of gold!”

“I think the Nordland/Lyngen Horse in a way has a “twinkle in his eye” and I like his tough, colourful personality!”

“A proud owner of a horse that I idolize and that can be used for most things. Would NEVER live without a Nordland/Lyngen on my farm. They are my great therapy. “

“You have no idea how amazing it is to tell my French friends that I've been on top of a mountain – on horseback!”

“I like the breed for all its committed supporters, for its quiet temperament, its versatility and history.”

“Naturally beautiful”.

“... and when I got too old for my Shetland Pony to go to trotting races, I wanted a horse I could keep going to trotting races with as a grown up. That is when the Nordland/Lyngen Horse was a natural choice. I think they are fantastic! Calm-headed, sensible, yet active when you ask something of them!

I like their lines and appearance. I like how they work. I like that they are smart and clever. I like that they have a variety of different appearances. I like that they are healthy and robust. I like their fascinating past history. I like that they're from the north of Norway. I like their potential as an 'all-rounder'. Basically I love this breed a lot, and I will not exchange it for another. Never”.

Advice for the use of breeding horses

The Nordland/Lyngen is a breed on the brink of extinction, with approximately 3000 individuals worldwide. For the conservation of the breed it is necessary that at least 200 new foals are produced every year to keep a healthy genetic population of horses. It is not permitted to contribute horses of other breeds into the breeding program of the Nordland/Lyngen Horse. In the early efforts to save the breed, there was some cross-breeding between the Nordland/Lyngen and other horse breeds such as the Norwegian Fjordhorse, Norwegian Dole and the Finnish Horse race. However, since the 1970's there have not been horses of alternative races or cross breeds bred into the Nordland/Lyngen line, and today's representation of the breed is the basis for the future.

To be able to breed a healthy horse population, the key is to use as many breeding individuals as possible, so as many generations from as many different pairs as possible can be produced. In the light of this it must be emphasised that all examples of the breed that are of breeding potential are valuable, irrespective of origin.

The National Norwegian Organisation for the Nordland/Lyngen Horse

The National Norwegian Organisation for the Nordland/Lyngen Horse aims to represent all local Nordland/Lyngen Horse organisations across the country. As a central body, it promotes and coordinates the interests of all the groups to breeding authorities, other horse organisations and the public. The National Norwegian Organisation shall therefore register and encourage all with an interest in the Nordland/Lyngen Horse so that they can work together for a common cause in promoting the breed.

The National Organisation is composed of eight local organisations, from the northern reaches of Troms county to Rogland/Agder in the far south. More information can be found on www.rimfakse.no. 'Rimfakse', a membership magazine for local organisation members, is published with four editions each year.

The North Norwegian Horse Centre A/S – NNHS

NNHS is in the Målselv municipality of Troms county. Established in 1989, it is the national centre for the Nordland/Lyngen Horse. NNHS is a riding school, arranging lessons, courses shows and competitions to contribute to the development of the Nordland/Lyngen Horse breed. Each spring NNHS has stallion shows, and in the summer there are jumping and youngster in-hand showing events.