

Ancient Wonders

Cats have been kept as domestic animals for thousands of years. Learn how Egyptians popularized our love for cats.

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Bastet was purported to be a kind, gentle and loving goddess. She was ascribed with many powers including protection against illness and poisonous animals. She also guarded pregnant women, children and newborns, promoted fertility and was the goddess of dance, music and pleasure. Her worshippers often carried or wore small cat amulets that were believed to protect them from dangers such as snakes or illness. Many Egyptians believed that they had a personal relationship with Bastet through their own cats, which were believed to be a manifestation of the goddess. The lion-headed goddess Sekhmet was often viewed as Bastet's fierce and aggressive other half, and her name means "the female powerful one." She was represented as having the body of a woman wearing a sun disk on her head. This goddess was adopted as the symbol of many Egyptian kings in battle. Cat Worship Then and Now The ancient Egyptians loved their cats for protecting them from the dangers of their era and for bringing happiness to their lives. Today's cat owners love their cats for similar reasons. Scientific studies show that cat ownership protects humans from the dangers of modern society by lowering blood pressure and cholesterol, and increasing brain chemicals that protect against depression. In addition, cats provide their owners with the same love and happiness they did some 6,000 years ago.

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