

## Kitten History: Balinese

**Some consider the Balinese as a long-haired Siamese.**

*Stacy Hackett*

Your kitten captivates you with her long silky hair and gorgeous blue eyes. But from where did she inherit her Asian beauty?

Balinese breeders and fanciers are unclear about the true early history of the breed. Some believe that old Chinese tapestries feature the longhaired cats. Others point to a genetic mutation that produced a longhaired kitten somewhere in a Siamese breeder's litter. Because that's what the Balinese truly is: a longhaired Siamese.

Such cats were reported as early as 1928, but breed enthusiasts point to the 1950s as the true beginning of the Balinese. Marion Dorsey of Rai-Mar Cattery in California and Helen Smith of MerryMews Cattery in New York each decided to breed the fuzzy Siamese they found in their litters. Helen was the one to give these cats the name Balinese, as she believed they resembled the grace and elegance of Balinese dancers.

Breed enthusiasts worked diligently to gain acceptance of their beautiful silky cats, and their efforts paid off in 1970 when the Cat Fanciers Association accepted the Balinese. Today's Balinese breeders continue to promote the breed's beauty and pet characteristics.

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