

Meet the Griffon Bruxellois!

The Griffon is a lively and alert toy dog coming in two coat types, the rough and the smooth and each variety comes in either red, black or black and tan. They are hardy, healthy little dogs with good appetites and strong digestive systems and usually live to their mid-teens. They have a BIG personality, they are a companion dog and have a human like intelligence and thrive on inter-relating with you. Most are very adaptable but they do have an independent streak, they also have a great sense of humour and are fun to live with – just look at the many different expressions on those flat faces!

Griffons have been described as ‘The Connoisseur’s Breed’ and many well known breeders/judges own a Griffon as a special house pet. They fit into most households and will adapt to their surroundings. However it is unkind to expect them to remain happy if you are continually leaving them for more than four hours at a time. As puppies they should not be left for more than two hours at any one time.

Being such a highly intelligent dog they learn very quickly, indeed nearly too quickly as they become bored with repetition, and sometimes you can become bemused to find that you are doing what they want you to do and not the other way round! However it is this intelligence that makes them good for obedience work and agility. They pass the Kennel Club’s Good Citizen tests with ease, that is after a bit of practice!

Given the opportunity they like to be clean in the proper place so it is easy for pooper scooping.

Make sure not to leave them alone with young children and that they treat them gently. Do not let youngsters pick up the puppy unless that child is sitting comfortably on the floor, just in case they drop it. It has been known for a Griffon puppy to leap from the arms of a child and land heavily, damaging their leg bones or shoulder, it has also been known for it to be stunned, as it has fallen onto its chin.

A Griffon is a small dog that will take as much exercise or as little, as you yourself want, and so fits into most households. However they are better suited to a "free" environment and a house dwelling is better for their needs, however a ground floor flat is fine but not one that is on an upper floor. A garden should be proof fenced so that the Griffon cannot get out. It is always curious and likes to see what is on the other side; it also loves to garden more especially to follow on from where you left off!

The smooth coated Griffon needs little grooming, just dust and loose hair brushed away and then a quick rub with a duster, however the rough coated variety needs to have its coat stripped out twice a year, and the hair at the corners of the eyes needs to be kept trimmed on a very regular basis.

One thing to learn is that they are addictive, people once having had one, continue to want to live with the breed. They bring much happiness with their exuberance and understanding of you, at the same time they can be obstinate and thus bring frustration, however they always bring much sadness when they

finally say "goodbye", but do remember that they never bring one moment of regret that you chose this unique breed.

Most breeders will not let puppies go to new homes until they are fully vaccinated and around 12 weeks of age; and as there are fewer than 200 puppies registered with the Kennel Club each year you should be patient and put yourself down onto a waiting list with one of the breeders. Club secretaries and most breeders will be willing to answer your questions and help you as much as possible. No Griffon breeder will have puppies available all the year round but just occasionally there is a slightly older Griffon that has to be re-homed and so there is also a Griffon Rescue Society.

Based on Miss Tessa Gaines (Gaystock) overview of the breed for Discover Dogs and amended 10.08