

# Congratulations on Your New Havanese Puppy



## **Above:**

Cuban CH “Puppy” (1988-2002) the first Bichon Havanese Champion of Cuba. Puppy was born of a litter of six in 1988, and featured here on a 1992 Cuban postage stamp celebrating the nation’s only native purebred dog; the Havanese.

The National dog of Cuba is still the “charming little dog” of the island today. Zoila Portuondo Guerra, founder of the Cuban Kennel Club and the Havanese Club of Cuba, writes, “The world-famous Bichon Havanese is the only existing purebred dog of Cuban origin, a rare blend of intelligence, personality and natural beauty. Bred for its family-oriented temperament and loving ways, the Havanese is prized in the homes of the Cuban people as well as by fanciers in Europe and America.”

Guerra, Zoila. *Bichon Havanese*. Dorking:Interpet Publishing.1999.

## **General Appearance**

The Havanese is the National Dog of Cuba. He is beloved as a friendly, playful, alert and intelligent Toy dog with a mischievous expression. He is a small sturdy dog of many colors and marking patterns. A moderately boned but not fragile dog, the acceptable size range is from 8½ to 11½ inches. The untrimmed long, soft, wavy coat may be brushed or corded. High head carriage, topline rising slightly from withers to rump, rectangular body, and plumed tail carried over the back makes the Havanese outline unmistakable. The unique springy gait sets the Havanese apart from all other breeds.



The Havanese Club of America (HCA) is the American Kennel Club (AKC) Parent Club of the Havanese breed. This introductory information is provided to help you and your new companion get off to a great start.

*For complete information on the Havanese breed, visit the Havanese Club of America at*

[www.havanese.org](http://www.havanese.org)

## **What’s In A Name?**

Although relatively new to the AKC, the Havanese is quite an old breed. The Havanese has been known through history by a variety of different names including: the Havana Silk Dog, the Petit Chien Havane, the Blanquito Cubano, the Spanish Silk Poodle, the Bichon Havanese and the Bichon Habanero.



## **A Good Start In Life**

### **Training**

Basic obedience training will teach skills you will use on a daily basis. The time you spend in training, especially during the first year of your pet’s life, will be repaid by giving you a well-behaved companion that is bonded to you and your family for the rest of his life.

Today Havanese are seen in many areas of dog activities and competitions that are sanctioned by the AKC. Havanese excel in all levels of competition in Obedience, Rally, Agility and Tracking as well as Conformation, and owners are enjoying the challenge. The Havanese are happy little athletes and loyal family companions. As therapy dogs Havanese bring smiles to faces in hospitals, nursing homes and libraries around the country.



### **Grooming**

Weekly grooming will generally keep your Havanese from matting, although you will find that your puppy will need daily brushing as he goes through the change from puppy to adult coat. To make your grooming session a pleasant experience use a good pin brush and take your time. The breeder of your puppy should be your resource for grooming issues that arise as your puppy grows.

### **Pet Identification**

Your Havanese should not be permitted to run at large but should always be on a leash or in a fenced yard. Even with these precautions, some Havanese are lost each year. A microchip implant is a simple procedure that provides permanent identification in case your Havanese is lost or

stolen. There are advantages to permanent identification, including the "Lost & Found" available with AKC Registration through the AKC Companion Animal Recovery Corporation (CAR) program. This offer includes a free dog tag with recovery information and the AKC CAR 24/7 phone number. For more information, see [www.akccar.org](http://www.akccar.org), or phone 1-800-252-7894.

## Health Comes First

Havanese are generally healthy, long-lived dogs. Many individuals reach the age of 14-16 years. To make sure that your puppy is healthy, schedule a veterinary exam as soon as you get him home. The vet will conduct a physical exam and will review the vaccination and health information provided by your breeder. Your breeder should provide you with information regarding the health status of your puppy's parents.

Each breed has different health concerns, so the AKC Canine Health Foundation (CHF) and the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) have teamed up to sponsor a database called the Canine Health Information Center (CHIC). If your puppy's sire and dam have had the health testing required by the Havanese Club of America, they will be issued a CHIC number. The CHIC program provides accurate information about the results of a breeder's health testing. It is easy to check, just go to the OFA website at [www.offa.org](http://www.offa.org) and you can search the records by entering the dog's name or registration number. For an in-depth description of the CHIC program, please visit [www.caninehealthinfo.org](http://www.caninehealthinfo.org).

Visit the Havanese Health section of the Havanese Club of America website at [www.havanese.org](http://www.havanese.org) to learn more about common Havanese health issues.



Demonstrating its commitment to the health of the Havanese breed, the Havanese Club of America is proud to be a benefactor of the Donor Advised Fund for the AKC Canine Health Foundation – a nonprofit charitable organization whose mission is to help dogs live longer, healthier lives. Supporting the Canine Health Foundation helps ensure a healthy future for all dogs. For more information about ongoing health research see [www.akcchf.org](http://www.akcchf.org) or call toll free 1-888-682-9696.

## Responsible Pet Ownership

### Spay/Neuter

Breeding dogs is a huge responsibility that requires time, energy and money. Responsible breeders seek to improve their breed with every litter and they have the responsibility of maintaining healthy breeding stock free from hereditary defects. If you are truly interested in breeding your Havanese, consult your puppy's



breeder and other Havanese breeders before undertaking this serious endeavor. Many pet Havanese are sold with a spay/neuter contract. Spay/neuter does not preclude being able to participate in performance events with your dog such as obedience, agility, and rally.

### Placement

If the day should come when you can no longer keep your Havanese for any reason, what should you do? The HCA urges you to never take your Havanese to an animal shelter. You should contact the breeder of your Havanese for assistance and refer to the contract that should have come with your puppy. Havanese Club of America members have signed a Code of Ethics stipulating that breeders are obligated to take back or help re-home any dog they sell, regardless of the circumstances necessitating return. For more information regarding placement and rescue services, please visit:

[www.havanese.org](http://www.havanese.org)

## Learning More

The Havanese Hotline, the official publication of the HCA, is the must read magazine for all Havanese Lovers! Whether you own an AKC Champion, a Companion Havanese, or you just want to learn more about this very special breed, the Hotline has articles on conformation showing, breeding, raising puppies, performance events, training, grooming, feeding, plus pictures of the cutest Havanese you've ever seen! Order the Havanese Hotline online at [www.havanese.org](http://www.havanese.org).

For complete information on the Havanese breed, visit the HCA at [www.havanese.org](http://www.havanese.org).

Browse the HCA website and you will find answers to many of your questions about training, health and history of our delightful breed. Looking to learn more, meet and socialize with other owners? Check out and possibly join a local club near you, [www.havanese.org/about/local-clubs/52-local-clubs](http://www.havanese.org/about/local-clubs/52-local-clubs); join in the fun!

You should also take a look at the American Kennel Club website at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org). It includes lots of information for new dog owners, as well as details about a variety of dog events.