



Buying a Puppy

GUIDELINES FOR BUYING A BRACCO ITALIANO

It is up to the buyer to research the breed and breeders as fully as possible. The following guidelines are intended to assist in your choice of a Bracco Italiano breeder.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A DOG OWNER

Buying a dog is a lifetime commitment and a major responsibility in time, energy and sometimes money. A Bracco Italiano often live until the age of 12 to 14 years. Before buying a Bracco or any dog for that matter, consider:

- Domesticated dogs cannot fend for themselves. Who will feed, walk, and pick up after your new dog when it's a puppy and when it grows older?
- Can your home and lifestyle accommodate a dog? If you work long hours, travel a lot on business, or have a very active social life and are out much of the time, then don't buy a dog. Dogs are social creatures and need human attention, affection and quality time with family members.
- Have you considered the energy requirements of a Bracco and its effect on your personal lifestyle? While they require less than some of the other sporting breeds, adult Braccos still need a minimum of 45 to 60 minutes of vigorous daily exercise. Puppies will require 2 hours of play and exercise a day. Since dogs generally don't run around a yard on their own, YOU will need to walk, run, jog or hike each day with your Bracco. If you're not an active person, then buy a cat or a dog with lower energy and exercise requirements.
- Braccos have a protective instinct but should not be aggressive. If you're looking for a guard dog, don't buy a Bracco.
- Obedience lessons are essential for all dogs. Will you take time to socialize and train your new Bracco?
- Have you budgeted for the cost of good quality, nutritious food, veterinarians' fees, and obedience lessons?
- Have you found a veterinarian and discussed your new dog's medical care requirements?

EVALUATING AND CHOOSING A BRACCO BREEDER

Good or reputable Bracco breeders will:

- test and ensure only Bracco breeding stock which is cleared of hip dysplasia is used for mating. **ASK TO SEE PROOF OF TESTING** for both the dam (mother) and the sire (father) from the American Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) or International Canine Genetics (PennHIP) in the USA. Ask if the breeder also has copies of test results for the puppy's grandparents and great-grandparents. The more dogs tested and cleared against hip dysplasia in the puppy's background, the better! **NO TEST RESULTS, NO SALE!**
- also ensure that their breeding stock is tested and cleared for other genetic diseases known to affect the Bracco breed, eg., eye diseases: entropion or ectropion (dogs cleared of these diseases will have an up-to-date Canine Eye Registration Foundation (CERF) certificate; **Ask to see clearance certificates/documents.**
- know the breed standard and have a copy available on hand. The Pastrone Standard is the written description of what the Braccos appearance, temperament and movement should be like. **Stay clear of breeders who don't know the standard or who can't provide you with a copy.**
- be aware of and understand the Braccos faults and major health problems. Every breed has some. Avoid the Bracco breeder/seller who says there is none or doesn't know what they are!

Good or reputable Bracco breeders will also:

- know the pedigrees of their own dogs well. If they don't, it means they haven't put any thought into the breeding and are possibly out to make a buck and at your expense.
- show you the dam and the sire (if he is on the premises) and provide copies of their registration certificates. **If you're seeking a puppy and aren't permitted to see the dam, don't buy the pup, no matter how cute it is!** Also ask to see where the puppies are whelped and raised. This should be a clean, heated, indoor facility. The state of the dog's living conditions will give you an idea of the quality of the breeder. **DIRTY, UNHYGIENIC CONDITIONS, NO SALE!**
- not make the hard sell or be overly anxious to sell you a Bracco. Reputable breeders will want to interview you or ask questions about your lifestyle and interests. They will also want you to know as much as possible about the breed characteristics to ensure a good match. **AVOID THE SELLER WHO DOESN'T EXPRESS ANY INTEREST IN YOU, WHY YOU WANT A BRACCO OR WHO KNOWS LITTLE ABOUT THE BREED OR THEIR DOGS.**
- put things in writing. Buying a puppy is a very risky business these days. To protect your rights, ask for a written agreement which, at a minimum, guarantees the dog is a purebred Bracco. Ideally the breeder should include representations that to the best of her/his knowledge, the dog is from sound, healthy stock and, if given proper affection, care and nutrition, should develop into a sound representation of the breed. A caring breeder will also outline in writing what s/he is prepared to do if you encounter problems or have to give up the dog. Most

breeders give you 48 to 72 hours to have your own vet check your puppy and if necessary return or exchange the dog. **NO WRITTEN AGREEMENT, NO SALE!**

- provide you with written instructions on the care and feeding of your new Bracco puppy, and ideally will send your puppy home with a small supply of food.
 - be members of Bracco Italiano Club of America.
 - provide follow-up support and assistance after you bring your dog home and will encourage you to call or write if you have questions or problems.
 - happily provide references from other puppy buyers, other dog owners, or breed club members.
- ASK FOR THEM! Talking to the breeder's previous buyers will tell you a lot about the individual with whom you'll be dealing if you purchase his/her dog.**

AVOID BRACCO ITALIANO BREEDERS:

- Whose major income is derived from the sale of puppies.
- Who routinely practice in-breeding: i.e., mating sister to brother, mother to son, father to daughter.
- Who breed females younger than 2 years and older than 7 years.
- Who breed the same bitch year after year.
- Whose dogs appear nervous, fearful, aggressive, or in poor health.
- Who don't appear interested in you or what happens to the pup after it leaves the breeder.
- Who keep dogs chained outside or locked up in outdoor kennels all the time or in poor physical conditions. Braccos need lots of attention and love from humans; they don't get it in these sorts of situations.