

## The Smoothest Saddle Horse in the World By A.N.C.P.C.P.P.

The **Peruvian Paso Horse** is a breed close to five hundred years old developed from the horses that arrived with the Conquest. Its racial ancestors, combined with the geography and nature of its habitat, resulted in a travelers' horse characteristics. This breed is unequalled because of its comfort to the rider; its intense, yet noble temperament, its arrogance, and unique passive equitation.



### Origin

The first horses to reach America with Christopher Columbus on his second expedition were the forebears of the Peruvian Horse. The Royal Decree of May 23rd, 1493 certifies that King Ferdinand of Spain and Queen Isabel ordered for 20 mounted lancers to be included in the second expedition.

In the course of time, breeding stables were set up along the Caribbean Islands and Central America from where Francisco Pizarro and his company in arms acquired their horses for the Conquest of Peru. These all had their origin in Spain where the horses carried Spanish, Friesian and Berber blood in their veins. The Spanish provided its elegant bearing, the Friesian, its propensity to a mid-size conformation and its front leg action, the Berber, its inclination to the ambling gait that was to determine the characteristics of the Peruvian Paso Horse



Since their arrival to Peru in 1532, horses went through a natural process of selection and adaptation to the environment, increasing their endurance as they had to travel long distances across new and rugged surroundings, the ambling gait and the gentleness in the saddle inherited from their forebears was the functional excellence required and preserved once fixed as a racial characteristic.

With the passing of time, this strong horse, of light pace and comfortable displacement, became the main means for traveling in Peru, later on to be used in agricultural activities, city transport and diverse public celebrations.

While other nations in America were crossing breeds to develop horses adequate to specific activities, the breeders of the Peruvian Paso Horse were improving the breed through a process of selection.

The long distances covered on horseback by travelers, muleteers (driver of mules), landowners, the military and outlaws across endless deserts and small valleys of the coast and regions in the altitudes of our Andes, contributed to the molding of the Peruvian horse.

Later on, with the arrival of roads and automobiles, the use of horses as a means of transport declined, with farms and haciendas becoming a refuge for the breed, where it was preserved for agricultural activities and considered irreplaceable.

## Racial Characteristics

The Peruvian Paso Horse is an equine breed unique to Peru; of mid-size morphological conformation and Berber (*equus caballus Africanus*, with origin in northern Africa) features, of which the most striking is its head profile, sub-convex or straight, with slanting eyes, and thick mane; not very pronounced withers, “sloping” rump and low tail-set. To stand it must do so with the forelimbs slightly pulled in and the hind legs below the body mass due to the angulation of its hocks.



The Peruvian Paso Horse ranges between 1.43-1.51 mts. in height and weighs between 400 and 500 kgs.

Practically all colors are found.

## Pisos

The word “*Pisos*”, when referring to the Peruvian Paso Horse, is a Peruvian term describing the different “airs” derived from the ambling gait. Peruvian horses are born with Paso; an inherited and natural racial trait preserved from the time they first reached Peru, almost 500 years ago.

The *Piso* is the disengaged pace in four beats in which the sequence of motion of the limbs is: first, the hind leg, then the foreleg of the same side; third, the hind leg of the opposite side, then the foreleg of the same side.

The gait, performed in this manner, is referred to as “Paso Llano” in its most widespread rhythm with a variation of other denominations depending on the tempo, bracing and elevation of limbs on the ground.

Unlike trotting breeds, the Paso horse permanently braces the ground. Its center of gravity has hardly any upward thrust. It has a smooth horizontal swing, making it both comfortable and pleasant for the rider. The smoothness therefore being one of the more notable virtues of the breed, following with the advance, which means that the hoof print of the hind leg caps of passes the hoof print left by the foreleg.

The virtues of the Peruvian Paso Horse are complemented by its elegance and arrogance in performing its natural airs with an elegant swinging of the forelegs which, while rising turns outwards to land squarely on the ground; *adornos* known as “*agudez*” (lift), “*término*” and “*extension*” respectively.

### **Diffusion of the Peruvian Horse around the world**

Our exceptional equine breed has been exported to diverse countries around the world since the 19th century.

The United States and Canada in North America; all Central American countries, including Panama; and, in South America, mainly Ecuador, Argentina and Bolivia. In Europe, these horses are raised in Germany, Switzerland, France and Spain. Peruvian Paso Horses are also bred in Australia and Japan.

### **The Asociación Nacional de Criadores y Propietarios de Caballos de Peruanos de Paso (National Association of Owners and Breeders of Peruvian Paso Horse)**

The *afición* for the Paso Horse led Peruvians to hold show son major festivities and later on, beginning the 20th century, prize-awarding shows.

In 1947, a group of breeders founded the Asociación Nacional de Criadores y Propietarios de Caballos Peruanos de Paso A.N.C.P.C.P.P. (National Association of Owners and Breeders of Peruvian Paso Horse) which, by appointment of the Central Government, is responsible for keeping the Genealogical Registry of the breed; arranging and supervising the selection, breeding and genetic improvement as well as promoting the breed by way of organizing shows and competitions.



Every year in April, the **A.N.C.P.C.P.P.** holds the National Show that gathers breeders from all over Peru and diverse parts of the world.

After more than 50 years of prolific institutional work, the breed has gained in beauty, elegance, quality of Paso and smoothness while maintaining its energy and brio. The future of this singular and extraordinary breed native to Peru and a symbol of national pride and creole tradition, a living legacy of *peruanidad*, is secured on account of its usefulness,

smoothness and elegance, and the support of an ever increasing *afición* that is Passed down from father to son.

Our show grounds are located in Mamacona, at the foot of the Pachacamac archaeological site (km. 26 of the old South Pan American highway).

Our installations can hold receptions of up to 500 persons including a bar, kitchen and restroom facilities.

We also count with a small colonial-style chapel; parking space for vehicles and

lots of open green areas.

Additionally we have ample show grounds, with their electric illumination and capacity to hold up to approximately 4,000 spectators.

## The Training

The training of the Peruvian Paso Horse is called the *enfrenadura*.

It differs from the traditional methods used with other breeds and their schools of equitation insomuch that the horse is familiarized in the use of the bridle in the use of the muzzle, which, acting over the hackamore, results in docile horses responsive to the bridle.

Another particular feature of this training method is that our horses turn with their forelegs and displace the rump.

## The National Riding Gear

The riding gear of the Peruvian Paso Horse is very typical, traditional and made by artisans.

This singular handcraft is highly appreciated overseas. In its making, the skills of saddlers, carpenters, braiders, engravers, silversmiths and *pellón* (saddle blanket) makers are all combined.

The *sampedrano pellón* is made of twisted strands of dyed lamb's wool and serves as a cover for the saddle, making long journeys more comfortable for the rider.

The riding gear consists of the *jato* (halter headstall and chain), blinkers (*tapajo*) and reins made of un-tanned hand-plaited leather and the saddle, which is of engraved or carved leather; stirrups, that are made of wood; underleathers and trappings.

## The Outfit of the Chalán Rider

Consists of hat, white neckerchief, shirt, and white pants, boots or half boots and spurs (made either of silver, nickel or stainless steel). Finally, the poncho, in a wide range of colors, which is made of linen, cotton, and alpaca or vicuña wool.



