

Mangalarga Marchador Characteristics

The head of the Mangalarga is triangular (not concave), with a large, flat forehead tapering to a small, fine muzzle. It has a straight profile and large dark eyes, which are set wide apart and are extremely vivacious, typical of the Barb horse. The ears are proportional to the head, mobile, parallel and well set-erect, with the tips turned inward. They have an alert, attentive attitude and the upright ears echo the firm look in the eyes that profess they are equal to any obstacle encountered along the way.

The mouth is of medium width and sensitive to the bit. The nostrils are large, dilated and flexible. The neck is of medium length, sufficient for the horse to be well balanced for riding and reining. It is well arched and muscular, inserted in the top third of the chest to allow for a proud, high carriage. The thorax is deep and allows for great lung capacity, one of the reasons for the legendary stamina of the breed. The back is of medium length with short and well-muscled loins. If the distance from the back to the loins is of lesser or equal distance to the length of the croup, it is a sign that the horse possesses excellent conformation. The croup is slightly sloping and long, the tail is set at a medium height, with a short, fine dock pointed down but slightly raised when the animal moves.

The gaskin and forearm tend to be long, well muscled and articulated and the cannons are short. The pasterns and hooves are at the slightly lower angle typical of Spanish horses. This allows him to overreach well and without excessive stress to his suspensories. In Brazil, unless the horse is worked hard every day it is kept barefoot, with only an occasional hoof trim required. It has very thick and tough feet.