

The Gaits of the Marchador

The only horse to consistently perform a lateral and diagonal gait.

What is different about the Marchador gait?

The gait of the Mangalarga Marchador is its hallmark. Unlike many gaited breeds, where the approach is to judge gait quality, the Marchador horse can present any one of three broad gait categories: the "**Marcha Picada**" (a lateral gait, ranging from a somewhat pacy running walk to a pace similar to the Icelandic flying pace); the "**Marcha Batida**" (a diagonal gait similar to the foxtrot or Peruvian trocha) and the "center march" (very close to the classic running walk of the Tennessee Walkers of the 1930s or early '40s).

In addition to the walk, canter, and gallop, there are two long reaching, four beat gaits. While there are similarities with other gaited breeds, it's the extended reach in front with propelling action from behind that is stabilized by nano-second triple hoof support that makes this breed so different. This is the only horse breed in the world that can perform on a lateral and diagonal, making this breed a joy to work with and a pleasure to ride.

Marcha Picada (lateral) Gait

Four beat gait characterized by lateral leg movements, with the sequence of the hoofs being: right rear, right front, left rear, left front, the hind foot touching the ground a fraction of a second before the front foot. The continuous triple hoof support and the over reach of the hind hoof, makes the gait very smooth. This differs from "the Pace" which is an exclusively lateral movement to the limbs, where the two legs on the same side (foreleg and hind leg) go up at the same time as the other side goes down, which results in only half of the horses body mass being set on the ground at each time of movement. At extended speed the head and body lifts up like a speed boat in front to create a "plane-like" sensation that makes you feel like you aren't moving

Marcha Batida (diagonal) Gait

Legs moving in a diagonal four beat sequence, also with moments of triple hoof support. Although some ways similar, this gait differs from the trot (suspended moment of all the legs in the air) as the horse is always in contact with the ground. The longer and more frequent the moments of triple hooves support, the more comfortable is the gait. However, with similar diagonal movement the horse is easily taught to trot, which is a necessity in events such as dressage.