



## CARE &amp; NUTRITION

**Nutritional Care & Health**

Andalusians are easy keepers and in general, don't require excessive supplementation or a heavy regiment of grain. They are surprisingly hearty in comparison to other breeds, as they evolved on sparse conditions in the Iberian peninsula. Care must be taken to monitor their intake as they may easily gain excessive weight if you feed them as you would most other breeds.

Our herd lives in a pasture setting. We feel its vital for growing horses to have ample space and exercise for proper development of bone, sinew, muscle, heart and lung capacity. They are on a diet of grass hay [timothy & orchard] with a fractional amount of alfalfa. Growing horses, breeding stock and working horses receive whole organic oats and an organic pellet. Currently we find Triple Crown Naturals to be readily available. Some of our horses do not require any grain and do very well on the assortment of native pasture grass and the higher proteins from the orchard, timothy and alfalfa added to their diet.

We supplement with Figuerola Labs Equine Saver, an organic compound made in Santa Ynez, CA, with over 320 ingredients, and/or ABC Plus Fortified by Advanced Biological Concepts by Hefler Industries. Both are available online.

Diatomaceous earth and free choice minerals are also given along with a mineral salt block and fresh water. Each horse is evaluated and fed individually to meet its specific needs.

In addition to their poise and grace, Andalusians are very aware of their bodies. They are not as accident prone as other horses and rarely injure themselves. They are sensible and don't panic when in trouble. Caught in a fence and they will stand there patiently waiting for you to come and release them, rather than thrashing and making things worse. Generally they tend to have great health even in their senior years giving them a long and useful lifespan.

*Arisca IV in foal at age 23***Coat Care**

The Andalusian typically has a thick, long mane and tail of a fine silky texture, in some cases almost as fine as human hair.

Traditionally in Spain, manes and tails are shaved on the foals and adult mares. All yearlings have completely shaved tails. Colts are shaved until age two, then allowed to grow. The process is thought to encourage thicker growth. Traditionally the fillies and mares manes and tails are kept roached and clipped. Trimming of the forelock is optional. Age groups are distinguished according to length of tail thus easy making for easy identification out in the pasture.

There is a precise measurement for shaving the tails: for 2 year old fillies, the tail is shaved 15 cm from the top and cut off 10 cm below the end of the root. For fillies 3 yrs old and over, the tail is shaved 25 cm from the top and the end of the tail meets the middle of the hock.

Inside ear hairs are left natural for protection against the elements and muzzle hairs are left unshaven for they also serve a purpose as antennae.

At Mythos, mares and foals are kept in a natural state in an effort to provide greater protection from the harsher winters at 7,000 ft altitude and in summer from flying pests. No to mention the enjoyment of a breathtaking mane and tail at a full gallop dancing on the wind!

**Hoof Care**

Farriers constantly praise the Andalusian feet as ideal for their hardness, shape, condition and overall natural health. The hoof is more upright than most breeds, round and of good size. The frog is naturally set higher off the ground, thought to be a natural evolution from their marshland habitat. The heel is well pronounced and rarely underslung. Any farrier new to the breed must take care that ample heel is left. I have seen several farriers remove too much heel and lame an Andalusian. Generally the angle of the hoof is around 57 degrees. Its best to show your farrier the horse at walk and trot before he trims an Andalusian for the first time so he can see the customary high stepping action and overreach.

Many Andalusians are successfully kept barefoot even for working without a problem with cracks, chipping or bruised soles.

**Kari Crawford riding Dante in Medieval Games****Training: Starting the Young Horse**

The general recommendation is to start young Andalusians under saddle lightly after their 3rd birthday. The Andalusian matures slowly and should not be ridden young. We often longe line them after age 2-2 1/2 to establish the queues from the ground. They respond well in a side pull or well fitting halter. We strongly recommend AGAINST lunging a young horse on circles or in round pens as this can result in joint damage.

If you come from the Arabian breed this will seem perfectly natural to wait, but if you are from TBs and AQHA, please be patient and allow this slow maturing breed extra time to develop, it will pay off in the long run and you will have a sound horse well into their twenties. For more information please check into Dr Deb Bennett research on when horses are truly ready based on their backs and other joints closing. It may surprise you to learn that her scientific research indicates that all breeds need more time than we think before they are ready to carry a rider.

Andalusians are quick to learn and sensitive to your queues. They don't require the number of repetitions for understanding and this surprises most trainers. They are inherently smart, willing to please, and advance faster in training but because of their sensitivity, we recommend a gentle approach.