



*The Cartujano  
(Carthusian)*

*Paintings by Jose Manuel Gomez*



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### *Carthusian History According to Wikipedia & Oklahoma State University*

The Carthusian originated in Spain. It is also known as the Cartujano. It is used for riding and is typically 15.2—16.2hh. The Carthusian is not a separate breed from the Andalusian, but is a distinct side branch of that breed and usually considered the purest strain remaining. This is one of Spain's most prestigious lines of the Spanish horse and has one of the oldest stud books in the world. The Zamora brothers, who had mares of this breeding, purchased a horse named El Soldado. They bred him to two mares. The resultant offspring were a colt and a filly; the former was Esclavo, the foundation sire of the Carthusian strain. Esclavo was a dark gray, considered to be a perfect horse. He produced many outstanding offspring, which were purchases by the breeders of Jerez.

Esclavo produced a group of mares that about the year 1736 were sold to Don Pedro Picado, who gave some excellent specimens to the Carthusian monks to settle an out a debt he had incurred. The rest of the stock belonging to Don Pedro Picado went to Antonio Abad Romero and were eventually absorbed into the Andalusian breed. The Esclavo stock at the monastery was integrated into a special line and came to be known as Zamoranos.

The stallion Esclavo is said to have had warts under his tail, and his characteristics were passed on to his offspring. Some breeders felt that without the warts, a horse could not be of the Esclavo blood line. Another characteristic sometimes seen in the Carthusian is the evidence of "horns", actually frontal bosses. The descriptions of the "horns" vary from calcium-like deposits on the temple to small horns behind or near the ear. Unlike the warts beneath the tail, the horns were not considered proof of Esclavo descent. Throughout the centuries that followed, the Carthusian monks guarded their bloodlines, even defying a royal order to introduce Neapolitan and central European blood.

Don Pedro and Juan Jose Zapata bought a good number of mares from the Carthusians. In 1854 Don Vincent Romero y Garcia, a Jerez Landlord, purchased what he could of the excellent group of horses. Don Vincent lived to be ninety-two years old and because of his knowledge of breeding, greatly improved the quality of the horses without using any outside blood.

Without the dedication of the Carthusian monks, the Zapata family, and a few other breeders who refused to cross their horses with other breeds, the purest line of Andalusian blood would have been lost to the world.

Today Carthusian horses are raised in state-owned studs around Cordoba, Jerez de la Frontera, and Badajoz. The predominant color is gray, attributed to the important influence of two stallions of this color early in the twentieth century. Some Carthusians are bay, black or chestnut. Nearly all of the modern Carthusians are descended from the stallion Esclavo.

The Carthusian head is light and elegant with a slightly convex profile, broad forehead, small ears, and large, lively eyes. The neck is well proportioned and arched; the chest is broad and deep; the shoulder sloping; the back short and broad; the croup sloped; and the legs are sturdy with broad, clean joints.

Population Status: RARE

*Reference: Hendricks, Bonnie L., International Encyclopedia of Horse Breeds, Univ of Oklahoma Press, 1995.*

