

Is a GOLDEN RETRIEVER the right breed for you?

If you are considering the purchase of a Golden Retriever, you ought to know all the facts, the delights, and the frustrations of owning this lovely breed of dog!

The Golden Retriever is a good sized dog with males running up to 25 inches at the shoulder and females slightly smaller. While you may adore the charming puppies, perhaps a dog of this size is not suited to your home and lifestyle. On the positive side, with proper training, Goldens develop very good manners and can minimize the problem that might otherwise be associated with their size.

Golden Retrievers have long hair. They shed to some degree throughout the year, just as humans are continually shedding hairs from their scalps. Once or twice a year they will shed substantially, as they are a double coated dog -- a soft undercoat beneath their water repelling outer coat. Though this shedding does not approach the proportions of a Collie or Old English Sheepdog, daily brushing is recommended during these few weeks of heavy shedding. If your family has an allergy problem or if your life style requires uncompromising housekeeping, you may find one of the non shedding breeds more suitable.

Golden Retrievers are extremely intelligent. This intelligence is required to learn the complicated commands for blind retrieves in the field, acting as Seeing Eye dogs and being outstanding competitors in formal obedience competition. While this is a positive factor in your companion, it also means that you must take the time to at least take your Golden through a basic obedience class and start training him as a well mannered member of your family. While formal obedience may not start until your dog is about six months old, you will be unhappy if you do not start teaching him his place in your home the very day you bring him home. Cute puppy tricks lose their charm in a large dog. Goldens are likely to be spirited and exuberant and you will not remove this with proper training but simply put it in its proper perspective. It will take some time and effort to have a well trained dog. If you do not feel that this would be feasible for you, you might want to consider a more placid breed of dog.

Golden Retrievers are known for their loving, affectionate temperament and should never be aggressive. They excel when they are members of the family living in your home. While their physique can tolerate kennel living when necessary, if you want a kennel dog, you would do better to choose a breed that is less devoted to family life. Even breeders with large kennels see that each dog spends time in the home with the family. Human companionship is an essential requirement for a Golden.

If you are convinced that this is the breed for you, you should make your purchase most sensibly. Screen the breeders for a quality puppy with good pedigrees and all the health credentials behind him.

Written by: Kathy Uhrman, Bridlewood Golden Retrievers

Jane Pappler, Redlion Kennel
7 Easton Way, Southampton, NJ 08088 - 609 859-3570
nofleas@aol.com - www.redlionkennel.com