

The most original oasis of Cairo, invites for the Festival of Arabian Horses

November 12th to 16th 2015

In 2015 it's the 17th time for the National Championships to take place in Cairo, with an international B show immediately after. Both competitions are guided by the ECAHO set of rules. The marathon event is supported by the Secretary of Agriculture, Mr. Essam Fayed, as well as by the EAO (the Egyptian Agricultural Organization), and is carried out in the green oasis of El Zahraa state stud in Cairo. All told, more than 300 horses are expected to take part in both shows – from Egypt as well as



from the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan, Italy, Germany, and Belgium.

In addition, a whole range of activities is planned for the guests from abroad, such as stud tours and sightseeing featuring the historic highlights of the city.



El Zahraa has always been more than just a stud.

Particularly for breeders involved with straight Egyptian Arabians, the impact of the name of "El Zahraa" is sort of magical. Based on this historic location, for more than 80 years the Egyptian government has taken measures to promote and preserve the breeding of Arabian horses in their own country, for the most part on the foundations laid by the famous breeding of the Khedives Abbas Pasha and Ali Pasha Sherif. El Zahraa has always been more than just a stud – it is acknowledged world-wide as a symbol for authentic Arabian Horse breeding, as a synonym for the dialogue between the people of different continents and cultures with a common passion: maintaining and improving Straight Egyptian Arabians, a breed of their own within the Purebred Arabian breed.



In El Zahraa, the most renowned international studs of the world discovered their stock horses. From there, Henry Babson imported the first horses to the USA in 1932; from there, the stable masters of Marbach State Stud in Baden-Wurttemberg (Germany) imported the first Nazeer son, Hadban Enzahi, in 1955; and in the same year, Ghazal (Nazeer x Bukra) arrived in Germany. He was followed by the Nazeer son Kaisoon in 1958, who was a noble present of the state, and then there was another Nazeer son, Aswan, who became an improver in the Russian state stud of Tersk, more or less founding the Tersk Arabian stock. In 1968, Babolna state stud in Hungary imported the stallions Ibn Galal and Farak. Dr. Nagel purchased his famous stock mare Hanan and four other beauties in El Zahraa in 1968. Doug Marshall imported the famous Morafic to the USA, and Judith Forbis found her stock Arabs such as Bint Bukra, Ibn Halima and other important horses, hugely famous today, just there – in El Zahraa. There were many in the next years to follow along these same lines, founding their studs on the basis of horses from El Zahraa, "the flower" of Cairo.



The sheer number of Egyptian horses exported from El Zahraa resulted, on the one hand, in heavy losses for the breeding strategy of the stud. On the other hand, the enormous popularity of this oasis of horse breeding increased, with the stud achieving unparalleled fame with horse friends all over the world.

The breeding stock of El Zahraa is based on a historic gene pool that was affectionately preserved and protected from genetic influences out of new and foreign pedigrees. The studbook for the state stud El Zahraa has been "closed". The gene pool consists of somewhat more than 400 horses whose offspring is sold by auction once a year. There are well-defined mare tail lines that have coined their respective Arabian types. In their spacious paddocks, they will play with each other, go and feed together from the renowned feed mangers of El Zahraa constantly filled with fresh green Alfalfa grass by the grooms, or just lie in the sun sleeping. The peaceful silence brings to mind the vast expanses of the desert, and the infinitudes of life. Even many of the stud's staff are rooted deeply in horses, often for generations, in the ancient tradition of Bedouin breeding.

During the national and international shows on the stud premises, visitors can experience two different horse worlds just 50 metres apart – a rare opportunity to see and take part in both.

In the fascinating world of the show ring, accompanied by music and cheered by a lively audience, the most beautiful horses anybody can imagine are presented by their handlers. They are the modern international Arabian horses, sometimes evoking thoughts of a kind of uniform look, many of them imported or, during the last 20 years, successfully home-bred in one of the enormous number of recent private studs in Cairo. Straight Egyptian tail lines are no longer a priority, more important is the winning type. Now they contest for their cheering owners, displaying stand-ups, floating gaits and raised tails in order to win ribbons, cups, or at least honor for their studs.

In the no less fascinating world of Straight Egyptian breeding, the Straight Egyptian horses of El Zahraa also have loads of charisma and the most impressive floating trots to offer. We will experience them there in their activities - however, emanating the playful power of composure and of herd instinct.

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