

“Italy at its best”

Breeders Tour
September 5th - 7th 2018

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Right after the Egyptian Event Europe at Schloss Dyck in Jüchen, the Pyramid Society offered a stud farm tour in Italy. President Bettina von Kameke had made arrangements to meet in Venice and commence from there to several Straight Egyptian stud farms located in the scenic areas of Umbria and Tuscany. So a group of breeders and dedicated Arabian horse lovers from Germany, Denmark and Egypt/Qatar went by private coach from Venice via Bergamo to Perugia and finally finished in Florence. The tour offered insights into a variety of breeding programs as well as many enjoyable glimpses into Italian culture and hospitality. Italy has always been a country that fascinates by its famous sense for beauty and its way of living. Over the last decades Italy also became a hotspot for Arabian horses. There are as many as 14 shows a year and the number of renowned training stables and breeding farms has reached a high level. So even if the 3-day tour could only cover a small bit of what's going on in Italy, it comprised visits to training and breeding centers, who work on a large, professional and international scale as well as to farms that combine today's global horse breeding with a more national level and traditions and a personal private bond to their Arabian horses.

ASSA EGYPTIAN ARABIANS, VENICE

Right next to Venice day one started with an invitation to Vincenzo Pellegrini's Assa stud. Vincenzo Pellegrini, former president of ANICA, the Italian Arabian horse registry, and his wife introduced the group to their breeding program that was started some 10 years ago. Besides being a lovely facility to breed horses, Assa stud has a feature that is very rarely seen in Arabian horse breeding: there are numerous stable areas and boxes that are empty. With a smile the owner explained that so far he has been able to stick to a limited number of horses so that there is still an individual relation with each horse. In Assa stud's breeding program, major influences are from the famous mare Maysouna Guasimo (by Maysoun) and her half sister Ghaida (also by Maysoun) combined with the Katharinenhof stallions NK Hafid Jamil and NK Ibn Nejdy. With this combination the breeder strives to add the Katharinenhof stallions big eyes to the well-balanced elegant bodies of his mares. As the pedigrees of his





Majid EQ

Foto: Sachs



U. Kreye

horses show, Vincenzo Pellegrini is not reluctant to consolidate the features that are wanted by linebreeding or inbreeding. One example is his broodmare Nefara Guasimo, a fleabitten 2008 mare by Ibn Nejdy out of Jamilla Guasimo by NK Hafid Jamil. Her exotic look tells all about her pedigree at first sight. The presentation continued with the half sisters Assa Guasimo and Assa Zakiyyeh, who are out of foundation mare Jawara Guasimo (Messaoud x Ghaida by Maysoun) by Rashid Guasimo (Ibn Nejdy x Maysouna Guasimo) and Majid EQ (Shahir x Miss Maggie Mae). Other lovely mares are Samha and Alkira Guasimo, who are both by Marduk Guasimo (another Maysouna Guasimo son), with Samha being out of Malikah (Maysan x Ghaida) and by this linebred to Maysoun, which clearly shows, and the chestnut Alkira out of Abbas Pasha I-3 bringing in Babolna blood. After enjoying the mares running free on a green



Bariq HD

paddock, we moved on to see the stallions, also loose on the grass. Hur Guasimo, a fleabitten square and compact 2006 stallion, who loves showing, is full brother to the afore mentioned Nefara Guasimo and very much alike. Quite a contrast in appearance is the Obbeyan stallion Majid EQ, an elegant 15 year old with a long neck and body. His son Assa Naif (out of Farida Nur), a fleabitten 2013 stallion with an extremely expressive head, is also at stud. And there is no lack of stallions: Future hope PSE Al Dahmar, a PSE Al Rakhan son from 2016, is in waiting position, and SM Bariq (2014, Sameh Al Rayyan x Shawq Al Nasser by Ansata Sokar, on lease from Mr. Salman M. al Damer), who already has good foals to his credit. After relaxing a bit with more nice chatting and exquisite snacks in the shade, we extended our thanks to our kind hosts, who had spent a lot of their valuable time on us, giving us the opportunity to understand the breeder's thoughts and exchange views freely. This is exactly what makes stud farm tours so precious: fun and educating aspects plus a little networking .

ZANIBONI ARABIAN TRAINING CENTER, OFFLAGA

From ASSA stud we went on for a short stop over at the training stable of Roberto Zaniboni and his son Alessandro in order to see ASSA stud's leased stallion SM Bariq, who resides there at the moment. SM Bariq is a very refined Hadban Enzahi stallion, who impressed with his very classic typical Egyptian look and put on a great show for us, displaying his qualities as a mover in a round paddock.

Of course the group took the opportunity for a short inspection of all the other Arabian horses of that center. Everybody had some fun as communication was not that easy, because none of the group spoke Italian and the trainer and his son, on the other hand, were not that fluent in English. Yet they kindly showed us some additional horses like the impressive Ansata Nile Echo son FA Nile Safir (2011 out of Sabyah Al Thawi, owned by Florio Sabato), displaying the powerful trot his sire is famous for.



FAUSTO SCANZI, BERGAMO

In the afternoon we proceeded to the area of Bergamo, north of Milan in the Lombardy region, our destination being the Arabian Horse farm of Fausto Scanzi, breeder since 1984 and international A show judge. Trying to find the stud gave us quite some adventurous moments as it is in a location with seemingly no flat area, many old streets being very steep and narrow - sometimes so narrow that the group's bus was in danger of getting stuck. As it turned out later on, this was to be a matter that we would face repeatedly. The picturesque old town centers are definitely not meant for larger vehicles and approaching our mostly centrally located hotels provided quite some excitement and - but only in hindsight - fun. However, once the parking problem was solved, it was fantastic to explore the medieval or renaissance cities such as Bergamo and Perugia and of course, later on, Florence.





Foto: Sachs



Foto: Sachs

So finally and safely arrived at Fausto Scanzi's place, the group enjoyed a presentation of 12 notably elegant, athletic and well-moving Arabian horses. Fausto Scanzi's foundation horses were the stallion Halim Raquim (Halim Al Kadir x Bint Ragawat) and the mare Bint Masuya (Al Kidir x Al Sachra Mayusa). Today they are represented by, for example, the very refined and typey OR Violetta (Ansata Shaamis x Halima Wanisa by Halim Raquim, 2009) and OR Washalla (MB Shattal x OR Walima out of Halima Wanisa, who goes back to Al Sachra Masuya). So the roots are in Germany, Kùbe stud. The horses all appeared well trained, which might also be due to the stud's location that consists of all uphill and downhill areas, so that the horses are trained already by moving from one level to another. They also made an athletic entrance to the presentation paddock, as they came running free from a downhill stable, thus appearing a little bit like a Jack out of the box to the spectators - a lovely sight. OR Walima appears in the pedigrees of two nice youngsters: OR Myotosis, a 2018 foal by Ayal El Asil out of OR Magnolia (thus doubling The Vision), and the very feminine 2017 half sister OR Matilda by Frasera Mashar. Another important broodmare was Halima Azzalea (Halim

Raquim x Ansarea by Ansata Hejazi), who gave the daughters OR Rosetta (by Frasera Dubai) and OR Petunia (by Whaid El Dine). Petunia in turn produced OR Mango by FA Nile Safir and OR Mimosa by Authentic Khazim. The youngest offspring of this branch is OR Chrysantos, Mimosa's 2018 colt by Fahad Al Rayyan, who inherited his sire's round dark big eyes.

The visit with Fausto Scanzi had a very nice extra on top: Our host delighted us with a private guided evening tour to the old upper district of Bergamo. On our way to a nice restaurant we climbed the city hill by a short cable car ride, passed typical streets of cobblestone enclosed by high walls, piazzas and the Duomo (cathedral) di Bergamo, and at the end of the evening we admired the lights of the new town from above and then had an almost romantic little footwalk back down the hill, following the Venetian walls that encircle the upper town. It was a perfect occasion to get a glimpse of the truly enchanting city and enjoy the excellent regional Italian cuisine. And since September is a very recommendable month for traveling this region, the temperatures were perfect for having stud farm visits at daytime and spending evenings outside on Italian Piazzas.

LUCA OBERTI ARABIANS

Day 2 started with an invitation to Luca Oberti's Arabian training center. It is a very successful modern training center and breeding facility for some 50 horses, situated close to Milan. Entering the farm provides the first lasting impression already: a broad alley of trees forms a green tunnel, lead- towards the farm buildings and gives soft shade. Grazing mares and foals left and right on green pastures create a peaceful, park like atmosphere. Luca and his team gave us a warm welcome and were ready to present a fine selection of the most interesting and well known equine personalities that are residing at the farm at the moment. The presentation started off with horses from El Khorafi stud: the exquisite Malak El Khorafi, a Gamil Saqr daughter with Adl on the dam's side, and her equally fascinating very tall bay 2016 daughter Yasmeeen by Gasir Al Rayyan. They were followed by noble Al Rayyan youngsters, who are right now collecting show merits with great ease: Safiyah, Chtoura and Batoul Al Rayyan, whose pedigrees feature such highlights as



Ansata Selket or Bint Mohssen. Ansata Selket is also grandmother of Julnar Al Rayyan, an eleven-year-old mare who is every Arabian horse lover's dream. The next mare had Italian roots for a change: Frasera Masharina by Phaaros out of the wonderful Frasera Mashara, whose striking chestnut color she did not



inherit. We were also very happy to see a wonderful mare representing the older generation: 25 year old Dalima Shah (Ansata Halim Shah x AK Bint Dalia II), a fleabitten mare with a superb broad forehead and lovely eyes, and in excellent shape.

Then the group was in for a rare sight, as two true icons of the Arabian horse breed were shown: Al Rayyan's exotic broodmares Naama Al Rayyan (Safir x Ansata Majesta) and RN Farida (Salaa El Dine x Noha). Not that young anymore (20 and 23), they are still in production (at least via embryo transfer). The last time I had seen RN Farida was at Al Rayyan back in 2002 and I found it touching to now see her more beautiful and charismatic than ever. With all their unexcited grace and the charisma of elder Arabian mares, these two managed to outshine the beautiful younger horses that had presented themselves so spectacularly just minutes ago. Naama and RN Farida caused so much enthusiasm that it was somehow inevitable to take a lot of extra photographs - well knowing that this came quite close to today's "selfie mania", which is certainly nothing to strive for. But sometimes there is a need for

exceptions... As soon as we had cooled down a bit, it was time for three Al Rayyan stallions. There was young Mueer Al Rayyan, an Al Adeed son out of the lovely Sundos Al Rayyan, followed by Bashir Al Rayyan, a 6-years-old, snow white, classic in type and featuring an impeccable pedigree: Ansata Nile Echo x G Shafaria. Finally with Fahad Al Rayyan, another horse with heartbreaker quality took the stage. No wonder: he is an RN Farida and Ansata Nile Pasha grandson - so obvious to see - by Sinan Al Rayyan out of Noof Al Rayyan, born 2009.

During the whole stud farm tour there was much talk about the importance of the eye in breeding programs. Undoubtedly the eye is what breeders will want from Fahad. Yes, he has that very special look. There is no photoshop in the advertising for him; he has those fascinating round huge black eyes in a picture-perfect Arabian head. And as we could see he passes this trait on. Although there would have been many more horses which we would have loved to see and spend more time with, the group had to move on because a 5 hour trip to the next farm had to be tackled.



Fahad
Al Rayyan

Foto: Sachs



RN Farida

Foto: Sachs

GIACOMO CAPACCI ARABIANS

“The world is our stage”

The destination was Giacomo Capacci Arabians in Cortona, Tuscany. Typical for a nice and educative stud farm tour the participants see a variety of different Arabian horse homes. Now Giacomo Capacci's training and breeding center is certainly at the top of the scale for spacious state of the art training facilities. Impressive and professional in every corner. The not that modest motto “The world is our stage” indicate, what is in the focus here. In accordance with this, we were treated to a top level international Straight Egyptian stallion parade. The stallions were presented two by two, facing each other, which had the catching effect that the stallions presented themselves all alert and on the other hand it was a wonderful opportunity to compare and see the differences. It was astonishing to see three sons of the legendary late mare The Vision at a time: the full brothers Al Lahab (1999) and Al Raheb (2006) by Laheeb and their half brother Al Ayal (2008) by Al Ayad. Seeing All Lahab again was a real joy for me, like meeting a



Naseem Al Rashediah



Shamekh Aldanat



much-admired old friend after a long time: I first met him at a photo session at the Friedmann stud when he was hardly 3 years old, and followed his career in the media ever since, sometimes meeting him in the flesh in between. But here he was again, sparkling with charisma, and although Al Lahab and Al Raheb are both beautiful individuals, they are of a surprisingly different Arabian type. We could also compare them with a third Laheeb son: Zain Al Dean, a 2011 stallion out of Jowhara Al Okab. As we were still busy with analyzing about this, the arena was entered by another classic Arabian fairy tale stallion, the very successful snow white Shamekh Aldanat. Quite a change in appearance was the dark bay 20 year old stallion Alixir by The Elixir, who was in very good athletic shape. The presentation closed with two Al Adeed Al Shaqab sons: yearling Marsilio GCA out of Al Ilah Bint Halim Shah I-1 and the well balanced noble rising star Naseem Al Rashedia, whose dam is the incredibly typey and bold-moving black bay mare Nabaweyyah Ezzain. Naseem has already gained much fame at the age of just four, and seems to be a much sought-after sire already.

So what we saw was a breathtaking collection, no need to enumerate all the show successes and merits of these famous show and breeding stallions.

Although the guests were given enough time to build their opinions on the horses, time passed all too quickly and after a short round through some stables we were heading for Perugia for the night. The parking adventure continued as we tried (successfully) to enter the old town center by Mini Van.

With a good deal of luck we managed to reach a lovely retro style hotel right in the center and then almost failed to maneuver the van out again, squeezing through extremely narrow and partly steep streets of cobblestone with high stone walls on each side. Once rid of the car it was a pleasure to walk the old lanes and take in the historic atmosphere.

The day ended with a glass of wine on the rooftop terrace of the hotel, overlooking the roofs and lights of Perugia. Those who still had some energy kept on talking, some found the time to feed the social media, and others needed a bit of sleep to cope with all the day's impressions.

MONIKA SAVIER TRE BALZANE STUD

“Only a happy horse is a beautiful horse”

On the third and final day of the PSE tour, Monika Savier of Tre Balzane stud, equestrian journalist, breeder and multi talent in many aspects, invited the group to her idyllic stud and nearby home estate, located in the scenic landscape of Umbria. What we experienced there was a peaceful place, where the owner's love for nature shows. Buildings in picturesque Italian rural style, surrounded by endless pastures for the horses to stretch their legs, the soft hills of Umbria creating a wonderful background. The stud does of course have all the functional means that are necessary for professional horse breeding – for example, they are licensed as a European Stallion Station – however, all of this is blended in so well that nothing disturbs the natural countryside charm. Monika's motto in one of her ads, “Only a happy horse is a beautiful horse”, indicates how much care is taken to meet the individual horses' needs (and those of numerous other animals like chicken, ducks, a goat named Ghazalla, and Ambra, the little she-donkey). Getting in touch with the horses in the stable before the presentation showed how close the bond between horse and human is in this place: All animals greeted us with friendly curiosity. Monika and her team, headed by her Austrian stud manager Elisabeth Auer who has been doing an outstanding job there for 13 years now, then started to show their breeding stock in the arena one by one, handled by Giuseppe Baragiani. They took the time to explain about the characteristics of each individual and the history of this breeding program.

Tre Balzane's breeding program was founded 30 years ago and is influenced by the original lines of Dr. Nagel's Katharinenhof. Monika has combined this with some very interesting and more rare blood. She included, for example, the stallion Ibn El Nil whom she imported into her program from Cairo. He was of very refined type and passed his qualities on, but sadly he did not have a long life. He left his son TB Hafid El Nil (sold) out of Tre Balzane's foundation mare Sulifah, who sired TB

Muneera, a 2014 mare out of the Salaa El Dine daughter Mia Mouna. TB Muneera proudly presented her 10 week old lovely filly TB Maha by Naseem Al Rashediah. Monika seems to have a lot of faith in young Naseem,





as two of her other broodmares, Diva Shalima and La Diva Noor, are in foal to him too. Another mare by Ibn El Nil is TB Helwa out of the bay cornerstone broodmare TB Hasna. TB Helwa proved her producing qualities with TB Fayza, a fantastic 2 year old filly with a chiselled head and floating movements. No surprise that TB Helwa - after bringing TB Fayza and her full brother TB Farouk - is once more in foal to Jamil Al Rayyan. TB Farouk as well as two other promising colts will sooner or later have to leave; Monika explained that nowadays, under the dominance of the stallions from the Gulf, it's hard to make a good colt into a great stallion in Europe, and it's more convenient in today's world to „get your stallions via container“ than to keep them at the farm.

This is undisputable, but rather sad for all those who love to admire sires at stud farms. Since Monika has - through her work as an equestrian journalist and breeder - seen a great deal of the Arabian horse breeding worldwide and in various cultures, it provides great pleasure to listen to her analytic thoughts, give some input and end up in a vivid discussion or in exchanging most astonishing anecdotes. After enjoying the typey TB horses there was luckily more room for sharing Monika's incredibly broad knowledge on Arabian horses, culture, and politics as she invited us to her home, a 300 years old small former monastery where a typical - self-cooked - Italian fish and pasta meal was waiting. Yummy!

The final destination of the tour was the most stylish Palazzo Gaddi hotel in Florence, where we had a last wonderful dinner and could reflect on what we had experienced in three exciting days:

Charismatic and strikingly beautiful horses, wonderful hospitality, splendid weather, lovely overnight stays in scenic Italian towns, and great company. After all the tour was an all too short encounter with the status quo of Straight Egyptian breeding in Italy, a little bit of Italian culture and „la dolce vita“ to all of us.

This PSE stud visit tour proved once more that such tours are a perfect format to broaden the mind, educate the eye, make new contacts and probably friends. We learned, once more, that Arabian horse breeding comes in a broad variety of styles: Professional perfection in a large luxurious style on one end of the scale, and on the same level of professionalism, the completely different charming natural/rural look, for example chosen by Tre Balzane, as well as the wonderful combination somewhere in between as seen at Luca Oberti's farm.

The Pyramid Society Europe seeks to strengthen the aspects I mentioned, such as broadening the mind and making new contacts - by the EEE itself and by the post EEE tour. President Bettina von Kameke already stated that she is ready to continue her efforts to provide future post EEE tours for the benefit of breeders and friends of the SE horse. In my experience and opinion, this is a very good concept and a very worthy undertaking for the PSE, for which we thank all the people actively engaged in making it possible. Thanks as well to all of our Italian hosts, and once more to the organizers!