

## Breed Profile - Japanese Tosa

### History:



The Japanese Tosa, also known simply as the Tosa, Tosa-Inu or Tosa-Ken, is a very rare breed of dog that originated in Japan in the mid to late 1800s. The original Tosa bloodline was a cross between a Kochi, a local Japanese breed, and native Shikoku fighting dogs. The Japanese Tosas of today are crossed between the Great Dane, Mastiff, Bulldog, Bull Terrier and Saint Bernard, which was used to increase its size. These dogs have a history of dogfighting in Japan, and as a result they have been banned in many international locations. They have recently been introduced to the US, and while they are not a suitable dog for a first time owner, with the proper handling and training they make excellent family guardians.

### Characteristics:

The Tosa is a powerful, agile and athletic mastiff-type dog. They have a need for exercise and perform quite well in weight pull competitions; they have been referred to as "the sumo wrestler of dogs". Japanese Tosas are very brave and bold, while being sensitive to others, especially to the tone of voice used in their presence. Their demeanor is very reserved and they tend to be a well-mannered and quiet dog, this is the result of their history in Japanese dog fighting - the dogs had to remain absolutely silent in the ring. They are usually a bit shy toward strangers, but will welcome most anyone with whom the family seems comfortable. Over time they will become more comfortable with people whom they spend generous amounts of time with.

### Temperament:

The Tosa is calm, quiet and patient. Their high level of intelligence makes them easy to train for a firm pack leader, and repetition in training is not often necessary; a friendly and constant approach works best for the Japanese Tosa. They are very affectionate toward their family members and will fight to death if they feel their family is in danger, but will not seek out fights. They are excellent judges of character and are very attuned to whether or not things are out of place. The Tosa is very tolerant and loving of all children. This breed is an excellent watch dog, as their sheer size and loud bark is often enough to scare off many would-be intruders. Many Tosa show signs of dog aggression and should not be placed in a home with a dog of the same sex or similar temperament; they are fine with other pets if raised with them from puppyhood.



**Care/Exercise:**

These dogs do fine indoors with small yards as long as they are taken on daily walks. The Tosa does not do well in kennel situations as they thrive on human connection, many kenneled Tosas suffer from depression and OCD. An occasional brush is all that is needed to keep this breed looking good; bathe very infrequently, only when required.

**Health Issues:**

Like all large breed dogs, the Japanese Tosa is susceptible to bloat, also known as gastric torsion.

**Average Height:** In US, 24 inches

**Average Weight:** In US, 85 to 200 pounds

**Colors:** Red, Black, Black and Tan, Yellow, Fawn and Brindle.

**Category:** Mastiff, Rare