The Bernese Mountain Dog: A Dog of Destiny by Bernd Guenter

So Much More Than Just A Simple Coffeetable Book

Breathe deeply before opening this book and prepare to be overwhelmed by the breathtaking beauty of the photographs within. Written and photographed by an internationally acclaimed authority, this book is a must-have for your home library. The text describes the essence of the breed while superb photographs capture the beauty of the Bernese Mountain Dog in glorious images, many of which were taken in authentic Swiss settings.

My Personal Review:
This book sets the standard of "compleatness" on the Bernese Mountain Dog. It is way beyond that of just a typical guidebook. Bernd Guenther has left, proverbially, no stone unturned here. The author's breadth of research, resources, insights, and details are on a level of the highest competence as to be priceless; this kind of preliminary (for the new and even seasoned owner) information cannot be overestimated.
But it's more than just an information book for breeders and owners; you are made to completely inhabit the world of this legendary, mythological breed. Guenther takes you on a delightful life-guide of several Berners, noting distinct personality traits, whimsical anecdotes, and a good deal of sharp-viewed observations. Without ever being heavy-handed, Guenther takes the reader onto a serious study of the breed. As he makes clear, this is an extraordinary dog, one that needs like considerations. No prospective Berner owner should be without this book, as the author has the kind of sagacity and knowledge that was gleaned as a true lover and connoisseur of not just his own dogs, but for the breed in general. Indeed, some of the information is not to be taken lightly, especially genetic problems, and some tough sacrifices one must potentially make. And - this is a good thing - the book will either make you say a firm "yes" or "no" when considering bringing a Berner into your life. On the one hand, this beautiful, loyal, human-like dog may have you on the phone tomorrow looking for one; on the other, the responsibilities can be made to seem overwhelming - be prepared to GIVE UP your life BB (Before Berner) as you have known it!
You cannot get any dog as if you would a piece of furniture, but with Berners, there are absolutely no options: the dog has to be a total part of your family, your life. Guenther makes clear as to what adoption of a Berner entails. Freedom will be limited. Berners are not for jet travelers or workaholics. After reading Guenther's precise requirements, a prospective owner will be made to realize the exacting responsibilities involved. Berners are frighteningly intuitive creatures, and to compromise the existence of them would be sheer misery for them.

Crowning this achievement are the astonishing photos; they will literally make you gasp. Some will bring tears to your eyes. You will see why this breed is the King of Dogs: their physical magnificence is almost unreal. Perhaps the most fascinating set are of one dog, captured from the time of near birth, from every few months, and then to yearly intervals, to near the end of its life.

This is more than just a book: it is an incredible generosity of spirit. Don't even THINK of bringing a Bernese Mountain Dog into your home without it.

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