

A Rescue Dog as an Alternative

By Peter Wax

A well bred French Brittany or Epagneul Breton is not all that common and a relatively expensive product. If you have done the research and think one would be perfect but you cannot get over the sticker price maybe you should investigate rescuing one.

I would not recommend this option for most breeds but I know of very few truly evil French Brits.

The French Brittany Gundog Club of America <http://fbgda.org/index> maintains a rescue page as do a number of breed clubs for sporting dogs that might turn up a likely candidate. While nothing in the world is as wonderful as a puppy, getting an already house broke buddy is attractive and don't believe that bull about bonding only with a puppy for if you and the dog are emotionally whole you'll bond just fine.

While it is probably unrealistic to hope for a great hunter (I have heard of a few) nearly all will be loyal friends, unselfish foot warmers and personal councilors.

The wonderful people and agencies that are hosting these dogs are usually limited in space and finances and eventually some of these pups are going to go to the big trial in the sky without ever having run – they are dead dogs walking.

As in all things there is no free lunch. A rescue dog needs to be researched carefully. Some of these dogs are in shelters because they have health or behavior problems that the original owners could not afford to deal with and you do not want.

Take it from experience, life is too short to attempt to rehabilitate a dog with emotional problems like aggression, fear phobia, separation phobia, or serious health problems like diabetes. On top of this, if you have a soul it is very hard to discard a dog you let into your home and if you have children, nearly impossible.

Take all the information you receive about an adoptive dog skeptically. The folks with these dogs are looking to place mans-best-friend and they do it because dogs are better than people – and that includes you.

I would look for a dog needing to be placed because it's not brood potential due to things like crooked teeth, slight dysplasia, over or under breed standards, white ears or eyes etc. Other options would be a dog whose owner could no longer take care of it because of age or work situations or one whose master departed for the happy hunting grounds leaving his partner behind.

If you decide to take this route you are a braver and more decent person than myself and I wish you good fortune with your choice for all the days of your life.