

LUSITANOS

## d'Atela

*Bessa de Carvalho Stud was founded 28 years ago by the Portuguese School of Equestrian Art's renowned rider Francisco Bessa de Carvalho.*

*Passionate about the Lusitano breed since he was a child, the history of the stud is intrinsically connected to his life and that of his family, with his wife and children actively contributing to the daily management of the stud. The love for his animals is unconditional, and the pride in the legacy that he has built is clear, as he walks amongst his mares telling us stories and anecdotes about each one of them.*

LUSITANOS  
D'ATELA –  
BEST BREEDER  
AT THE  
INTERNATIONAL  
LUSITANO  
HORSE SHOW  
2017

**H**e divides his time between the Portuguese School of Equestrian Art, the iconic riding school of Quinta da Fonte Santa, (where the young horses over the age of four are trained) and the green pastures of Paul d'Atela. The Stud's birthplace is where the 20 broodmares and young horses up to the age of three are carefully monitored. Francisco Bessa de Carvalho leads a breeding project that stands out not only in Portugal but also internationally.

Aiming to breed horses with character, functionality and beauty that stand out in the international sports panorama, the Lusitanos born at Paul d'Atela have been proving the merit of the stud. With several horses competing internationally at the highest level, 2017 has been a good year for Bessa de Carvalho Stud, they recently received the award of Gold Mare at Expoégua and reached the title of Best Breeder at the XXIX International Lusitano Horse Show, where they presented 15 horses of their brand.

Jovial and always friendly, Francisco opened the door to his home and told us a little bit more about the history of his Stud, which is also his history.

FRANCISCO BESSA DE CARVALHO

**LW:** How did the story of Coudelaria Bessa de Carvalho Stud begin?

**FC:** It was the year of 1983 when I accompanied Master Luís Valença on a visit to the Visconde dos Olivais's Stud, the property of Mr Eduardo Veiga de Araújo, with the objective of choosing some three-year-olds for Lezíria Grande Equestrian Center. These colts had no management at all, so I offered to begin their training. It was agreed that in exchange for my work, I could choose one of the fillies born to the stud that year. The filly I chose was 'Baunilha', and she was the first mare in my Stud. And so the dream began. I presented her at the Agriculture National Fair, for the two-year-old female class of model and movements competitions where she obtained first place and a gold medal! 'Baunilha' remained as part of my stud until she died and to this day we still have some of her progeny in our herd. We had this agreement of trading a mare for starting the three-year-olds, and these were the mares that founded Bessa de Carvalho Stud.

The stallion that I used was 'Danubio' (MV) who was the property of Mr Francisco Sousa Cardoso and a horse I had the privilege to ride. He was Champion of Champions at one of the International Lusitano Horse Shows, in Lisbon.

**LW:** Why Lusitano horses?

**FC:** I was fortunate to be born in Portugal, the cradle of the Lusitano breed, and to have had the opportunity to ride since I was nine years old with Mr Fernando Ralão in Lisbon. Later I met Master Luís Valença Rodrigues, who had just set up his new equestrian centre. This gave me the opportunity and the privilege to be in contact on a daily basis with an equestrian professional that I could look up to; he inspired me to dedicate my life to riding and the Lusitano horse.

**LW:** What are the foremost goals of your stud? What type of horses do you aim to breed and what are the characteristics that you would like to retain in your bloodlines?

**FC:** The priority is to breed horses with type, beauty and functionality, giving particular attention to good temperament



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and develop big uphill moving horses. We focus on quality in the walk and canter, essential for the saddle horse, but without forgetting that modern use of the sports horse demands a quality and expressive trot. Alongside beauty and type, our aim is to breed horses with good size to ensure competitiveness and a great performance internationally.

**LW:** Which are the main reproductive lines that you use in terms of mares and stallions?

**FC:** Our broodmares originate from the mares from Visconde dos Olivais crossed with stallions from Veiga, Arsénio Cordeiro and Coimbra bloodlines. This basis was later mixed with the stallions Hostil, Rico and Soberano from Dr Guilherme Borba Stud.

All the stallions that we use nowadays are tested to the highest level, with special highlight to 'Soberano', a recommended stallion for his model and his movements. He has three gold medals, two titles of champion of champions and also awarded stallion of merit for dressage. He obtained his best results during the world equestrian games in Caen, France in 2014, where he earned the highest score for the Portuguese Team, ridden by Carlos Pinto.

**LW:** What is the importance of the mares for the results of the Stud?

**FC:** I believe profoundly in testing all the male and female breeding stock, this is because you can make better and more educated decisions on the pairing. By doing this, you can work at eliminating the unwanted flaws and giving priority to the essential qualities of a saddle horse.

**Photo 1** Xenofonte d'Atela with Olympic Rider Miguel Ralão Duarte.

**Photo 2** Eros d'Atela.

**Photo 3** Idolo d'Atela.

**Photo 4** Francisco Bessa de Carvalho receiving best breeder 2017 award.

**Photo 5** Hercules d'Atela.



Above award for champion and founding mare 'Baunilha'

“The priority is to breed horses with **TYPE, BEAUTY AND FUNCTIONALITY,** giving special attention to good temperament and **DEVELOP BIG MOVING uphill horses**”



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**LW:** How many broodmares do you have now at Paul d'Atela and do you plan on increasing or decreasing the size of the herd?

**FC:** At the moment we have 20 broodmares, and we intend to maintain this figure.

**LW:** We are aware that the stud has been using embryo transfer. Do you consider this strategy a catalyst for increasing the quality of your animals?

**FC:** The modern methods of assisted reproduction are a tool that acts as a catalyst for the breed's improvement, as it allows the mares to be tested to a higher level competition, without hindering their reproductive life. This is the reason why we have used this method for our top mares, giving us some very impressive animals of excellent quality.

**LW:** Bessa de Carvalho Stud has horses with exceptional results both nationally and internationally. Recently, you received the title of Gold Mare at Expoégua with 'Guhapa d'Atela'. Tell us a little about this astounding mare and the perspectives for her progeny.

**FC:** 'Guhapa d'Atela' is a result of our embryo transfer program: a daughter of 'Quimera' and 'Hostil', we used a Lusitano surrogate mare that we kept in the herd to make sure the breed-specific and environmental factors remained the same as that of the other animals in our Stud. 'Guhapa' was ridden for one and a half years to test her qualities and assess the best pairing for her. We have now two fillies from 'Guhapa', the first by 'Destino dos Pardinhas' and the youngest by 'Escorial'. Both have displayed good breed-specific qualities and an exceptional temperament.



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Photo 6 Gata d'Atela.

Photo 7 Leste d'Atela.

Photo 8 Guerrita d'Atela.

Photo 9 Eros d'Atela.

**LW:** Additionally, you have also achieved the title of 'Best Breeder' at the International Lusitano Horse Show 2017, where you presented 15 horses. What does this mean to you?

**FC:** This title of Best Breeder feels even better as it represents the recognition of the Stud's maturity by the breed experts. It was very gratifying to present 15 horses and have 11 of them achieve a classification within their classes, with four silver medals and two gold medals. This title, which we feel very honoured to have received, is also a challenge for the future of the Stud.

**LW:** What were the horses that contributed to your victory and what are your perspectives on it?

**FC:** The horses that contributed to this title were: one-year-old filly 'Menta d'Atela'; two-year-old filly 'Luz d'Atela'. The amazing 'Guhapa d'Atela', who received a medal again for her model and movements. We also presented Quimera's progeny with the horses 'César d'Atela', 'Guhapa' and 'Isadora d'Atela'. In the class of ridden mares, we showed two very promising mares: 'Guerrita' and 'Gata d'Atela'. In the males classes, 'Idolo' and 'Instinto d'Atela' competed in the ridden four-year-old males class. Lastly, in the three mares Cobra ( a group of the mares) we presented 'Bohemia', 'Xiclete' and 'Granada d'Atela'. We chose this group of mares because Bohemia is progeny of the first generation of the Stud (Garça VO by Hebraico MV), 'Xiclete' is a third generation (Queijada x Querer) and direct progeny from our VO lines and Granada is a daughter of 'Soberano' on 'Xiclete', i.e. a fourth generation of the stud.

**LW:** The objective to breed sports horses has been leaving a mark on some of your best products. From the horses that are still competing to date, which are the ones you would like to highlight and why?

**FC:** It is indeed our goal to breed horses with sporting potential. It was the main reason why we selected 'Soberano' – whose career we supported until he competed in the Dressage World Championship as the main stallion for the Stud.

At the moment, we would like to emphasise 'Xenofonte d'Atela'

competing at the international scene in 5\* competitions with Olympic Rider Miguel Ralão Duarte.

Also, 'Cappuccino d'Atela' with Catarina Lopes had good results in young riders. 'Assirio d'Atela' with Salvador Pessanha was vice-champion in Portugal's Dressage Cup before he was sold abroad. 'Quartz d'Atela' in France with Bianca Roch, competed in GP FEI and was European champion in Masters du Cheval Iberique. 'Gin d'Atela', the property of Paolo Merli and now in Italy, did well in dressage and was Italy's vice-champion of the breed.

We currently have two six-year-old mares in preparation to compete, and another is already competing in dressage at C level with great results: 'Guerrita d'Atela' with Salvador Pessanha. The other two are 'Geada d'Atela' with Miguel Ralão Duarte and 'Gata d'Atela' with Gonçalo Sampaio.

**LW:** Which do you highlight as your major accomplishments/happiest moments throughout your path as a breeder?

**FC:** Happiness is not simply an objective: it's a constant search and all steps achieved throughout these 28 years of breeding that have been the incentive to carry on that search incessantly. The fact that we have had horses classified in first places, male champions, female champions and champion of champions titles, as well as Lusitano European Champions, is a recognition that we are heading in the right direction, but always remain alerted to corrections and improvements that are within our reach.

We highlight just a few such as 'Xenofonte d'Atela', 'Hercules d'Atela', 'Guhapa d'Atela' in Portugal, 'Absinto d'Atela', 'Ehpico d'Atela', 'Exparta d'Atela', 'Conquistador d'Atela' in the UK, 'Galileu d'Atela' and 'Gin d'Atela', in Italy.



#### FACTS & FIGURES

- 28 years breeding Lusitanos
- 70 hectares of pastures
- 70 horses at the Stud Farm
- 20 breeding mares
- 15 to 20 new foals each offspring
- 15 horses sold every year
- **Horses from Bessa de Carvalho brand all over the world:** UK, France, Spain, Germany, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, Czech Republic, Sweden, Netherlands, Australia, USA, Brasil, China, Jordanea, Mexico, Canada and Argentina.
- **Main Achievements in 2017:** Best breeder at Feira da Trofa; Gold Mare at Expoégua; 2nd place at the National Competition of Portuguese Studs; Best breeder at the International Lusitano Horse-Show.



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Happiness  
is **NOT**  
SIMPLY an  
objective: *it's a*  
**CONSTANT**  
**SEARCH...**



One of the awards that we rejoiced over was given to 'Hercules d'Atela', which won the title of Lusitano European Champion in 2016, in Germany. This horse will be exported as a breeding stallion for Haras Vila de Sagres.

At the beginning of 2017, we sold five horses to Argentina, three mares and two stallions and they will join a pioneer project of breeding Lusitano horses in that country: La Sagisciana. Two of these horses, both sired by 'Soberano' and will compete in dressage in this country.

*LW ~ Every time we speak to a horse breeder, Lusitano or other breeds, we can't resist asking their opinion about the evolution and potential of the Lusitano horse. During our conversation, we had the opportunity to exchange some impressions with Francisco Bessa de Carvalho about the evolution and future of our Lusitano Horse.*

**LW: How do you perceive the evolution of the Lusitano breed in the last decade?**

**FC:** The improvements in the Lusitano breed have been steady since the studbook's establishment. The genetic makeup is of great quality and the ability to organise a selection program that gave privilege to the zootechnical improvement, respecting the breed's type and functionality was a focus since the beginning. This selection, through a grid of just eight parameters that weighted at 1.5 the characteristics that benefit type and functionality, was an astute foresight of its designers since with a small number of sections and a summary evaluation of the breeding stock, their objective of selection was achieved.

**LW: In your opinion, does the Lusitano horse have a place in the upper levels of International Dressage Competition?**

**FC:** I believe so, even though in the past



the breed did not have competition potential as an objective, however, now they have had several noteworthy results internationally.

Nowadays, with a competitive objective assumed and out in the open, the number of horses with a high level of sporting capacity will increase, and the likelihood of them being handed to riders with the ability to explore this potential will increase exponentially. A good pairing between horse and rider is compulsory to achieve success.

**LW: Which are the characteristics, as a Lusitano Breeder, that you value most?**

**FC:** Type, functionality and beauty.

**LW: As a rider, would you say that the characteristics you search for as a breeder are the same?**

**FC:** Yes, the better the raw material the greater chance of achieving what we desire in a ridden horse, no matter the discipline we practice.

**LW: What do you wish your contribution to the development of the Lusitano breed to be?**

**FC:** Through a consistent, objective and lasting breeding selection program,



*Photo 10 d'Atela mares and foals in a field. Photo 11 Winning one-year-old filly 'Menta d'Atela'.*

*Photo 12 Champion mare 'Guhapa d'Atela' with filly foal by 'Escorial' at foot.*

we seek to develop the characteristics of good saddle horses, developing the breed and bringing back the old type characteristics as initiated during the Foundation of the 'Puro Sanguie Lusitano' Stud book.

*Lusitano World would like to thank Francisco for taking the time to talk to us about his successful and forward thinking breeding program.*

*If you are interested in knowing more about Lusitanos d'Atela visit their website [lusitanosdatela.com](http://lusitanosdatela.com). If you want to dive into the World of the Lusitano follow [lusitanoworld.com](http://lusitanoworld.com) and like our Facebook Page. ➤*

WILLOBIE  
LUSITANOS  
AUSTRALIA

is Proud to Present

# Asceta d'Atela



PHOTOS BY: Lisa Sultana Photography



**Son of Soberano**  
Who Represented Portugal at the  
2014 WEG and carries the Hostil  
and Zico Blood Lines.  
Dam: Rajada

**Born: 26<sup>th</sup> March 2005**  
**Height: 16.3hh**  
**From the Stud: Lusitanos D'Atela**  
**and Francisco Bessa de Carvalho**



Asceta proves time and again the amazing ability of the Lusitano Breed. His impeccable temperament, sensitivity, loyalty and willingness to please makes Asceta a pure delight to handle, train and compete. Imported to Australia in October 2013 Competing Successfully at FEI PSG Training FEI Inter I and II **Available for Cross Breeding** By AI Only: Fresh, Chilled and Frozen Includes LFG Will be available at Goulburn Valley Equine Hospital in October and November 2017 (Dates to be confirmed)

**COST \$1600**

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