

The living tradition

Media Folder





The Barry Foundation - a resume

Who are we ?

Following its creation in January 2005, the Barry Foundation took over the breeding kennel from the Great Saint Bernard Pass Hospice (Holy Order of the Great Saint Bernard Monastery) together with the kennel's famous Saint Bernard dogs. Our foundation has been the owner of the 300-year-old breeding kennel since April 2005, making us the oldest and most important Saint Bernard kennel in the world.

The Barry Foundation owns about 30 Saint Bernard dogs. In keeping with the tradition of Saint Bernard breeding at the Great Saint Bernard Hospice, we mainly breed short-haired dogs. Only a few of the Saint Bernards in our possession are long-haired.

An average of 20 pedigree puppies are born in our breeding kennel each year. A team consisting of a breeding manager, nine animal keepers and three trainees takes care of their well-being, their optimal development and their professional training.

The Barry Foundation is a member of the Swiss Saint Bernard Club and is a recognised non-for-profit institution.

Our mission

- Ensure the survival of the famous, legendary Saint Bernard dog breed by providing a breeding kennel founded on ethical and scientific knowledge.
- Preserve the typical hospice dog.
- Keep our dogs in their place of origin on the Great Saint Bernard Pass.
- Gain recognition as a reference on breeding issues in Switzerland and worldwide.
- Make the public aware of the fact that the Saint Bernards from the hospice are both a Swiss cultural asset and a symbol of the friendship between man and dog.
- To be recognised in Switzerland as a centre of excellence for animal-assisted interventions with dogs (therapy, education, coaching and activities) and to be a leader in terms of the quality of the interventions.

Our main tasks

- Maintain the tradition of breeding healthy dogs from the Saint Bernard breed.
- Promote the dogs' well-being.
- Maintain and increase public affinity for the Saint Bernard breed.
- Draw the public's attention (adults and children) to the fact that a Saint Bernard is a unique, non-judgemental companion that is always there for you.
- Build up and maintain a trusting relationship between man and dog.

Breeding quality guidelines

Our aim is to breed Saint Bernards in the spirit of the original breed. We place special emphasis on robust health, longevity, sociability and the placid, harmonious personality of this type of dog.

Breeding conditions

- Availability of sufficient surface area
- Splitting the dogs up and duration of the care given at the kennel
- Consideration taken of the development period of the puppies
- Genetic quality of the dogs: eliminating genetic predispositions
- Specific measures to further increase health and longevity
- Specific measures to further improve constitution and behaviour
- Transparency regarding breeding style
- Providing puppy purchasers with an after-sales service
- Fielding post-breeding enquiries (owner satisfaction, dogs' health and behaviour).

Training and looking after our dogs

- Experienced staff always on hand: greater socialisation and supervision of our dogs, more time spent with the dogs.

Many activities for our Saint Bernards

- Walks: the dogs are exercised in the countryside every day
- Therapy dog: animal-assisted interventions in the social sphere (activities, education, therapy and coaching)
- Walks: around the Great Saint Bernard Pass in summer, in Martigny in spring and around Lake Champex in winter.

Organisation chart of the Barry Foundation (Fondation Barry du Grand-St-Bernard)



Foundation Board



President

Jean-Maurice Tornay, former prefect of Entremont

Vice-President

Claude Moret, former director of the Valais Cantonal Bank (Martigny region), Martigny

Board members

- Dr Roland P. Bühlmann
Businessman, Basel
- Eric Cachart
Hotelier, Chalet d'Adrien, Verbier
- Marc-Henri Favre
Businessman, former mayor of Martigny, Martigny
- Esther Gassler-Leuenberger
Former cantonal councillor of Canton Solothurn, Schönenwerd
- Corrado Jordan
Regional councillor of the Aosta valley, St-Rhémy-en-Bosses (Italy)
- David Martinetti
Deputy mayor of Martigny municipality, Martigny
- Jean-Henry Papilloud
Former director of Médiathèque Valais, Martigny
- Gilbert Tornare
Representative of the municipality of Bourg-St-Pierre, Bourg-St-Pierre
- Roger Mège
Secretary of the council (not a member), former municipal councillor of Martigny, Martigny

The Saint Bernard

Origin

In the 11th century, monks founded a hospice as a refuge for travellers and pilgrims on the 2469 metre-high Great Saint Bernard Pass. Large mountain dogs have been kept at the hospice since the mid 17th century to guard and protect those staying there.

The first documentary evidence of the presence of mountain dogs dates back to 1695, and the first written document is a hospice memo from the year 1707. The animals were rapidly adopted as companion dogs and above all as rescue dogs for travellers who lost their way in the snow and fog. The dogs from the Great Saint Bernard Pass saved the lives of a great many people, averting numerous deaths in the snow. The reputation of the Saint Bernards (also known as “Barry dogs” from the early 19th century) grew throughout Europe in the 19th century thanks to chronicles published in many languages and to reports passed on by word of mouth by the soldiers who had crossed the pass with Napoleon Bonaparte in 1800. The legendary Barry became the archetype of the rescue dog.

The direct ancestors of the Saint Bernards were the large farm dogs found widely across the region. In the space of a few generations, these dogs were bred according to specifically defined ideal criteria to make them into the breed that exists today. In 1867, Heinrich Schumacher from Holligen near Bern became the first person to present documents showing the ancestry of his dogs.

The Swiss dog register was started in February 1884. The first ever entry was a Saint Bernard called Léon, and the 28 subsequent entries were all Saint Bernards, too. The Swiss Saint Bernard Club was founded in Basel on 15th March 1884. On the occasion of an international cynology congress on 2nd June 1887, the Saint Bernard was officially recognised as a Swiss dog breed and mandatory standards set for the breed. The Saint Bernard has been regarded as Switzerland’s national dog ever since.

The story of the legendary Barry I

Barry I lived at the hospice from 1800 until 1812 and was doubtless the most famous of all the dogs that ever provided rescue services on the pass. He saved the lives of more than 40 people. The many legends surrounding his name greatly contributed to the Saint Bernard’s favourable reputation. As a result, there is always a male dog called Barry in the kennel.

In 1812, when Barry I started ageing, one of the Fathers took him to Bern on foot. He was well taken care of in his new home but finally died of old age two years later. In 1815, he was put on show in the Natural History Museum. The restored preserved body of Barry I has been displayed there since 1923.



The Saint Bernard breed today

Name

Saint Bernard

Country of origin

Switzerland

Classification

FCI group 2, standard no. 61

Occurrence

Approximately 600 animals in Switzerland, not a very common breed, average number of puppy entries per year: 100.

Appearance

- Instep height: dogs at least 70 cm, bitches at least 65 cm
- Weight: dogs 70 to 80 kg, bitches 50 to 65 kg
- Coat: long- and short-haired.
Colour: primary colour white, with reddish brown plate-like splashes of varying size (splash coat) or even a constant reddish brown upper coat on the back and flanks (mantle coat).
Short-haired variety: upper coat thick, smooth, close-fitting and dense with lots of ground fur.
Long-haired variety: mid-long, straight upper coat with lots of ground fur. Regular grooming is essential.

Life expectancy

An average of 8 years.

Personality

Generally friendly, temperament ranging from quiet to lively, alert, slightly independent.

Exercise

Several walks each day as well as freedom to move about in and around the house.

Training

The Saint Bernard is primarily a family pet but can be suited to sport and dog-cart pulling depending on its build.

Type of owner

A Saint Bernard is well suited as a family dog. The prerequisite is that its owner has plenty of time to look after it properly and enough outdoor space for the dog to move around freely.

Observations

The Saint Bernard has been the Swiss national dog since 1884.



Saint Bernards - activities

The Saint Bernards from the Barry Foundation not only enjoy their twice daily walks, but also benefit from a varied, well-balanced activity schedule. The hospice dogs are to be encountered in the following areas:

Social dog*

With its dogs, the Barry Foundation offers a wide range of animal-assisted interventions in the social sphere. Our dogs love being around people and, together with their handlers, form what is termed a “therapy dog team”, which receives training. Our animal-assisted activities include, for instance, visiting residential and care homes to bring smiles and variety into the lives of the residents. But we are also deployed for support programmes involving, for instance, people living with dementia. We also provide outreach in Swiss prisons, where we help inmates to resocialise and accept responsibility. Our interventions in the realm of animal-assisted education support the social development and learning of children and young people. In partnership with teachers from various schools and other institutions, we design camps lasting several days as well as longer-term programmes, and we provide support with special needs measures. Our Saint Bernards are also deployed in hospitals and for rehabilitation. Interventions of this nature are classified as animal-assisted therapy. In the realm of counselling, our dogs act as co-coaches by helping people with special needs or facing challenging life situations unleash their potential. Our goal is to be available for interventions 365 days a year.

**In Switzerland, the term “social dog” is now used for dogs deployed in social rather than strictly therapeutic contexts. This distinction is not made in English.*

Cart dog

The Saint Bernard is an archetypal drafting dog. Its size and power mean that it is well suited to pulling loads. The dogs of the Barry Foundation pull carts for

training purposes in the summer and sledges when deployed for winter walks around Lake Champex.

Target search

This kind of work is very strenuous for the dog, as it calls for heightened concentration. A target object search involves the St. Bernard sniffing out a hidden item. It signals that it has found it by lying down next to the item.

Tricks

Learning little tricks is real mental work for the dog that calls for concentrated attention. Both dog and handler find the training great fun.

Intelligent dog toys

To promote mental activity in our dogs, we often work with specially designed dog toys. The principle is always the same: a treat is hidden inside the toy. The Saint Bernard can only get to the treat by manipulating (pushing, squeezing, turning, pulling) certain elements. These toys can have different levels of difficulty.

Mobility

Regular training involving obstacles (mobility) – a type of agility exercise for large dogs – helps keep our Saint Bernards fit and is something they really enjoy.

Foodbag exercise

Searching, carrying and retrieving – these are skills that are practised with the treat bag. The tasty reward following a successful retrieval comes straight out of the bag.

Walks

Our Saint Bernards are athletic dogs that love the great outdoors. In spring, summer and winter, we offer walks in the company of our dogs in Martigny, on the Great Saint Bernard Pass and around Lake Champex.

List of dogs owned by the Great Saint Bernard breeding facility

Nom	Sex	Date of birth	Coat
Alba Alpine Dream	Female	07.06.2015	Longhaired
Ann (Abby) vom Baronenschloss	Female	03.10.2020	Longhaired
Athena du Grand St. Bernard	Female	03.05.2019	Shorthaired
Baltic du Grand St. Bernard	Female	09.11.2019	Shorthaired
Dasty du Grand St. Bernard	Male	01.04.2020	Longhaired
Djune du Grand St. Bernard	Female	01.04.2020	Shorthaired
Edène du Grand St. Bernard	Female	04.04.2020	Longhaired
Finesse du Grand St. Bernard	Female	01.12.2020	Shorthaired
Fiorenzo Pastor de Orellana	Male	15.10.2023	Longhaired
Haïka du Grand St. Bernard	Female	22.02.2021	Longhaired
Japlou du Grand St. Bernard	Male	21.12.2021	Shorthaired
Jazz du Grand St. Bernard	Female	21.12.2021	Shorthaired
Joy du Grand St. Bernard	Female	09.06.2013	Shorthaired
Lio du Grand St. Bernard	Female	08.03.2022	Shorthaired
Muffin du Grand St. Bernard	Female	31.07.2022	Longhaired
Noline du Grand St. Bernard	Female	20.11.2022	Shorthaired
Ourale du Grand St. Bernard	Female	25.11.2022	Shorthaired
Patsch du Grand St. Bernard	Female	25.12.2015	Shorthaired
Plume du Grand St. Bernard	Female	02.01.2023	Longhaired
Qualya du Grand St. Bernard	Female	19.04.2023	Longhaired
Rangoon du Grand St. Bernard	Female	18.08.2016	Shorthaired
Replay van de Burggravehoeve	Female	22.04.2018	Longhaired
Rhooona du Grand St. Bernard	Female	28.08.2023	Shorthaired
Roanne du Grand St. Bernard	Female	28.08.2023	Shorthaired
Roxy van de Burggravehoeve	Female	22.04.2018	Shorthaired
Syrah du Grand St. Bernard	Female	22.03.2017	Shorthaired
This is Hope van de Burggravehoeve	Female	30.05.2020	Shorthaired
Tosca du Grand St. Bernard	Female	25.03.2017	Shorthaired
Vénus du Grand St. Bernard	Female	07.09.2017	Shorthaired
V'Barry du Grand St. Bernard	Male	07.09.2017	Shorthaired
Zeus du Grand St. Bernard	Male	11.04.2019	Shorthaired
Ziva du Grand St. Bernard	Female	11.04.2019	Shorthaired

Barryland

Barryland in Martigny is a place of encounter where people are brought together with the Saint Bernards from the Great Saint Bernard Pass. This is where visitors are immersed in the history of the Swiss national dog, follow its tracks to its origins on the Great Saint Bernard Pass and have an opportunity to admire the Saint Bernards at close quarters, playing, sleeping, training and much more.

The experience is suitable for all ages and visits can be undertaken at any time of the year and in any weather.

Saint Bernards at close quarters!

The particular attraction is the famous hospice dogs, which can be admired daily in Barryland. The ground floor of the building houses the individual kennels and grooming facility. The kennels allow access to outdoor enclosures where the Saint Bernards can move freely and romp around under the eyes of the visitors.

Museum

The museum is dedicated to Switzerland's national dog, the Saint Bernard. It presents the Saint Bernards in art, in painted pictures and engravings, in advertising that's over 100 years old, and in cinematic entertainment, comic-strips and advertising. The museum also explores the role of the Saint Bernard through the ages – from the former avalanche dog to the therapy dog for people with particular needs and those facing challenging life situations. A photo box invites visitors to take a souvenir photo with freely selectable motifs.



The exhibits on permanent display are complemented by a temporary exhibition. Temporary exhibition 2024: “Of dogs and men” – St. Bernards in photographs. The canons of the Great Saint Bernard Hospice have been inextricably linked with their dogs throughout its long history. Their association is legendary and has been part of daily life at the hospice for centuries. The unique relationship that has grown up between these men of prayer and their endearing animals has sometimes been captured by photographers, and these remarkable images from the well-stocked Médiathèque Valais - Martigny library and the Great Saint Bernard Hospice collection are on display in an exhibition of one hundred historic photographs.

The “Barry Family” zone on the second floor offers fun and games for our little Saint Bernard fans. Barryland also puts on regular activities for children throughout the year (by prior arrangement).

Café de Barry restaurant

The restaurant offers a daily changing menu, seasonal specialities and regional products. The tranquil terrace opposite the amphitheatre is particularly enticing in summer.

Barry Shop

The museum shop stocks a wide range of souvenirs, exclusive quality products and selected gift ideas.

With around 80,000 visitors in 2023, Barryland is the second most popular attraction in Martigny. The “Musée et Chiens du Saint Bernard”, the original institution, was founded in 2006 by the Bernard and Caroline de Watteville Foundation. Through an agreement with the Barry Foundation, Saint Bernard dogs – and occasionally puppies – formed a permanent part of the exhibition. As a consequence of this long-standing collaboration, the Bernard and Caroline de Watteville Foundation and the Barry Foundation

decided in 2014 to join forces through a merger and to accord more weight to the presence of the Saint Bernards. Since then, the museum has been under the management of the Barry Foundation, which renamed it “Barryland”. Lasting impressions are guaranteed through Barryland’s blend of information, entertainment and gastronomy, complemented by the engaging encounters with our Saint Bernards.

Closed on 24 and 25.12.

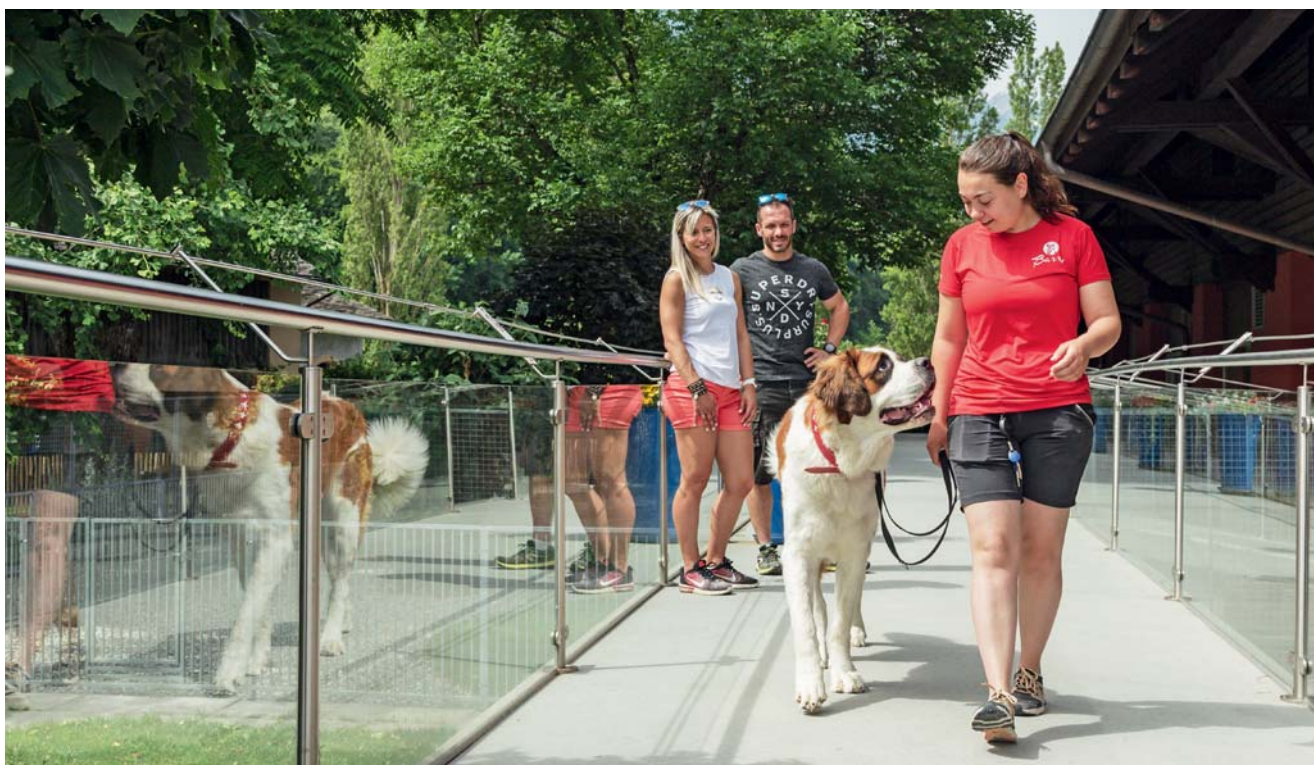
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Project “Barryland Theme Park”

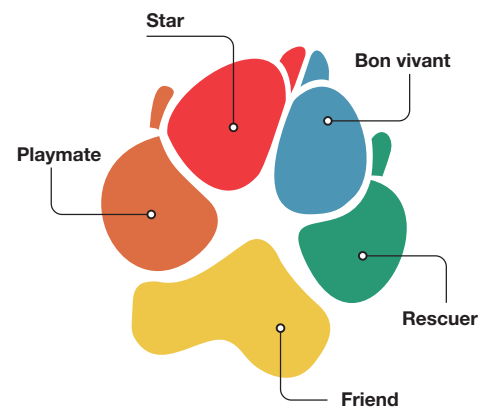
A new showcase for a Swiss cultural icon

The Barry Foundation celebrated its fifteenth anniversary in 2020. The Foundation took over the legendary St. Bernard dog breeding programme in 2005, inheriting the honour from the canons of the Hospice on the Great St. Bernard Pass. Over the more than fifteen years that have since passed, the Foundation has continued to keep the three-centuries-old tradition of this Swiss national symbol alive – most notably by giving the breed a new mission in keeping with its noble status; today, the former rescue and avalanche dog is now the perfect social companion and therapy dog.

Backed by a wealth of expertise gained since its founding, the Barry Foundation has positioned itself as a veritable centre of excellence – not only in regard to breeding St. Bernards, but also in terms of the social interventions that the dogs are involved in. We want to showcase all of this and more as part of a new, expanded, modern Barryland that will be both educational and entertaining. The rather cramped confines of the current museum leave little room to introduce new attractions or welcome the growing number of visitors. This is why we’ve launched our “Barryland Theme Park” project. Visitors to our 20 000 m² site will get

to learn everything we know about our favourite four-legged friend: from the myths and legends surrounding the breed’s 300-year history to the traits that make the St. Bernard a St. Bernard, this Swiss national treasure will share the many aspects of its character with the world.

Visitors will discover the St. Bernard through five thematic worlds that epitomise the breed’s characteristic personality: Rescuer - Friend - Star - Playmate - Bon vivant. These will accompany the visitor throughout their visit and will ensure that they have a unique and unforgettable experience. The opening is planned for summer 2025.



Some images from the Barry Foundation collection

Barry Foundation



Barryland



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www.fondation-barry.ch/EN/mediacorner

Logo



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