

# Connemara (Con-A-Mare-A) Pony Facts

Info from: <https://www.irishcentral.com/culture/top-ten-facts-about-connemara-ponies>



The Connemara pony is a hardy, yet kind-hearted, breed of horse unique to Ireland, known for its rugged, yet beautiful landscape. This is where the Connemara pony comes from, learning to adapt to its surroundings and develop all the essential qualities it needed to survive. LTRC has it's own Connemara pony - Trigger. He's been in horse shows (at left with rider Caroline) and is a trusted pony used in lessons. (below right)

**1. The Connemara Pony is Ireland's only unique and official breed of pony, but it came from Scandinavia and Spain:** In 795 AD, an earlier version of the breed was among the many things the Vikings brought with them to Ireland, but it wasn't until the Spanish Armada ran aground in 1588 that the Connemara pony was formed.

When the Spanish Andalusian horses were set loose by Spanish sailors and began to breed with the wild Scandinavian ponies in the Connemara mountains. A new breed was born, bringing with it some of the best qualities of the two parent breeds.

**2. They have a fantastic temperament:** Connemara ponies are famed for their kind eye and good nature, making them perfect for children because they are gentle, trusting, honest and willing. They can be found at horse shows, eventing, trail riding, as a companion or in therapy programs like at LTRC! Connemara ponies have a special kindness, a huge heart, and an ability to bond with their human handlers that is unique to this breed."

**3. They were a family horse to many Irish families:** They were well loved by Connemara families, who usually owned one pony that they relied on heavily to help in farming and transportation. Up until the mid 20th-century, the pony was a backbone in these families' lives, pulling plows, carrying and hauling in seaweed to fertilize the land or bringing the family to church or into town.

**4. They can jump REALLY HIGH!** Despite their smaller stature, Connemara ponies adapted to the terrain in their local area by becoming fabulous jumpers, a trait they carried with them when they left the work fields behind and entered the equestrian ring. In the 1930s, 22-year-old, 15-hand Connemara gelding, The Nugget, cleared a 7' 2" jump and went on to win over 300 international jumping prizes. A 14.1 halfbreed Connemara named Stroller was one of only two horses to jump a clear round in the entire 1968 Olympics.

**5. The Connemara is the largest of the pony breeds:** The Irish breed is among the larger of the pony breeds, ranging in height from 13 to 15 hands, with 14 to 14.2 hands as the average (between 50 and 58 inches or 128 and 148cm). Although they reach maturity at five years old, they can live well into their 30s.

