

The Story of Little Moza

(Editor's Note: Carol Anne contacted EMRO earlier this spring with her Mau dilemma. EMRO wasn't set up yet to provide her directly with one of our Maus, however we were able to direct her to Animal Friends, a local Cairo animal shelter, who did have a Mau, which she ended up adopting. EMRO hopes to help provide similar service shortly, so keep checking with us on this. Thank you Carol Anne for sharing your story with us and for other people hopeful of adopting their own Mau from Egypt. If anyone wants to contact Carol Ann, please feel free to direct an email to her via info@emaurescue.org and we'll be pleased to forward your email to her. We are hopeful of printing more success stories soon! Keep posted!)

Little Moza's Great Adventure





This story actually began over 15 years ago with my first international living experience in Saudi Arabia To make a long story shorter, we captured a tiny, sick feral kitten, who grew up to be a beautiful exotic looking cat. Upon returning to the states, my vet and I decided our cat, Fahad, had to be of an Egyptian Mau bloodline. Fahad was the most unique animal I'd ever encountered and I found myself totally enamored with the breed.

We lost Fahad several years ago, but I've never stopped missing him. Yes, it would have been possible to get another Mau in the States, but it just didn't seem like it would be the same, so I forgot about the idea.

As fate would have it last year my niece took a job in Cairo and I decided to visit for a few months. In the back of my mind I was thinking, "Wouldn't it be great if I could catch another wild Mau". I bought a bag of cat food and carried some in my purse at all times. Yes, I probably was the crazy lady you saw feeding the cats at all the major temples and sites in Egypt. It quickly became clear this plan was not working. To successfully tame a feral cat, you must get them very young, and I found natives reacted oddly to me diving into trash piles and chasing cats.

It was a surprise to me that locals knew nothing about Maus. I made many inquires and continued to come up empty handed. A few suggested I check with pet shops, but Cairo is a very large city and I didn't even know how to find a pet shop.

My stay was coming to an end and I had all but given up on the idea of finding my Mau. But, one slow morning I thought about killing some time on the internet and started looking for sights on Egypt, Maus, Cats, etc. To my great surprise I found a couple of good sights.



I wrote down phone numbers and contacted a couple of the sights, thinking nothing would probably come of it. However, I did get replies and they didn't act like it was impossible for me to find a kitten. My niece made some of the phone calls and her friend, Mahmood also helped with translations when needed. Once again fate was on my side, when we found a rescue organization that was located only a couple of miles from our flat and they had one little male Mau kitten. At this point I started to get excited, but I was within 2 weeks of my departure. We caught a taxi, asked directions about 5 times and there we were. It was love at first sight when Moza was brought out. His personality brought back a flood of memories and I was determined this little guy was going home with me!

The process was incredibly simple. I filled out adoption forms, paid for Moza's shots, and he was mine. This happened so quickly we weren't prepared and he stayed at the shelter while we found a pet shop to purchase a carrier, litter and food.

Now came the problem of how to get Moza from Cairo to Texas. The shelter helped us with information they had. Fortunately, they have vets who are willing to assist you and willing to take your phone call and answer questions. The vet said Moza had to stay in Cairo for 30 days to let his rabies shot take effect. And no more than 7 days before departure, a vet must examine him and issue a Health Certificate, saying the animal appears healthy for travel

Unfortunately, my reservations were to depart within a week, but my niece would not be traveling until three weeks later. She took Moza in for a booster shot, but he had developed an intestinal infection and needed antibiotics for a week. Six days before

departure, she returned to the shelter where Moza was examined by the vet and given his “Bill of Health”. Moza was ready to travel!

Rules and requirements vary from airline to airline. You need to talk early and frequently to your flight carrier. The information I have is only for AirFrance. At this time, they would allow you to carry on a pet that weighs less than 2 kilos (4.4 pounds). The carrier must fit under your seat. I used a soft cloth carrier and did not find a hard carrier small enough to go under the seat.

When dealing with an airline, ask for exact dimensions and make notes of whom you talk to and when. We found that we got different facts on different days, so you need to have your information and do not be afraid to argue your point.

I was also told there should be a vet at the airport 24/7, who can issue a Health Certificate. This is probably true, but I think that’s cutting it a little close and we found it easier to work with the animal shelter.



Moza made the flight with no problems. Upon arrival and clearing Customs in the U.S., my niece tried to show them the cat and his papers. The customs official was not at all interested, he only wanted to know if she had carried any food for the cat (which she had not). About 12 hours after arrival, Moza finally had a little breakdown. I think the jet lag and cat reality that something had happened set in. He crawled under the sheets on the bed and stayed all day. By the next morning, he was back to his usually self, up running, playing and getting into suitcases.

A few tips and suggestions I’d like to leave with you. Start this process early, it is not easy to get things done in a large city and where you do not speak the language. Everyone I had dealings with did speak enough English and they were very nice, patient and helpful. A good attitude goes a long way!

Try to have time to get to know your pet and build their confidence in you. Get the carrier they will be traveling in and gently encourage the pet to check it out. We never locked Moza in his carrier, but put a soft blanket in and placed his toys inside. He automatically began napping there and playing inside. I believe this is important to help lower the stress on the animals when they travel. For weeks after we got home, if anything frightened Moza he ran straight for his carrier. It was his place for safety. While I still keep it out for him, we mainly keep his toys there now, as he prefers to sleep with me! My niece commented during the trip, she'd hear the bells on his toys as he rolled and played before going to sleep. For the actual trip, we placed a baby diaper in the carrier and my niece carried a small bag of diaper wipes and disinfecting wipes. She never had to use any of these items. Generally, when cats travel they refuse water and food and seldom soil their cage.

If your pet must fly in the "luggage hole", take a photograph and ask the flight attendant to give it to the pilots and tell them your pet is traveling too.

The total cost for all of this was less than \$200 USD and it has been worth every penny. Be persistent, don't get frustrated and start early. I would do it over again a thousand times to have this little cat! And maybe we'll see about getting him a playmate someday.

Best luck to you all.

Carol Anne, Texas, USA