

As excerpted from Jack Hanna's Pet Tips

Did you know almost 30 million of us have traveled with our pets? How about you? Thinking about taking along the family's best friend on your summer vacation? Or maybe you've already discovered the fun of vacationing with your pet but need some new ideas? Here's a few things to think about as your planning your summer travel fun:

Are You (And Your Pet) Ready?

- Only take your pet on your vacation if you plan ahead for enjoying pet-friendly activities. If your pet can't have some quality recreation time with you every day, he may be happier at home.
- Start small. Do a few day trips first. Next, try an overnight trip - even if you just stay with a friend. If that goes well, take a couple of weekend trips closer to home before planning a full week or more of vacation.
- To acclimate your pet to strangers, crowds and noise, search out pet-friendly activities in your area and take your pet. Visit a local off-leash dog park to introduce your dog to other dogs or take short hikes in nearby parks.
- When you and your pet are ready, start planning your vacation.

Do Your Research

You'd be surprised at the number of places where well-behaved pets on leashes are welcome. Time spent researching before your trip can prevent disappointment, and ensure a good time for everyone. Once you choose your destination, look up pet-friendly activities for that area.

Settle On Your Itinerary

You've chosen your destination and planned some great activities - now it's time to plan your travel route. Give yourself extra time for plenty of stops along the way. You and your pet will enjoy the trip more if you aren't in a rush.

Use a trip planner, like the nifty one here at motel6.com, that way; you can plan ahead for each night's stay at a pet-friendly property.

Pets Welcome - Your Accommodations

When booking your room, ask for a first-floor room with the door leading directly to the outdoors. These rooms are easier for you and quieter for other guests when taking late night and early morning walks.

Book your accommodations well in advance. You don't want to get stranded in a strange city with a pet and no place to stay.

Regardless of the information you may have, when making your reservations *always confirm*:

1. They take pets
2. If there is a pet fee or deposit and what the amount is per night
3. There is a pet walking area provided on the property

When you check in, ask for directions or a map showing the pet walk area - and don't forget to scoop after your pet.

Packing For Your Pet

- Wash and check your pet crate now, so it's clean and ready-to-go when you are. Splurge on a trip to the groomer's right before you leave. A clean, freshly-groomed pet will make a more enjoyable traveling companion.
- Bring your pet's regular food to avoid stomach upsets.
- Carry food and water in the car, so you can feed your pet at his regular time, even if you are out late.

- Pack some favorite toys. Chewies and toys from home provide activity and comfort.
- Pack an extra leash, so you can always have a spare one in the car
- Check with your vet and get the following:
 1. A copy of your pet's current vaccinations and health record
 2. A current rabies tag, if you don't have one
 3. An extra prescription for any medications your pet takes
 4. Your vets phone number

Pet-Friendly Car Rentals

Is your car appropriate for transporting your pet? Most car rental companies allow the use of their vehicles for transporting pets. Call the car rental company directly for their policy. Some charge a pet deposit or fee to cover cleaning costs.

Home Again

Try to schedule your trip so you have at least one day at home together so that you and your pet can get back into your regular routine. And keep up all that outdoor activity with your pet that you established during your vacation. You, your family and your pet will be healthier and happier. This is Jack Hanna wishing you a summer vacation filled with happy trails and wagging tails!

Travel safe!

Resources To Help You Plan Your Trip

Books

DogFriendly.com's United States and Canada Dog Travel Guide(Paperback), 3rd Edition
by Tara and Len Kain 2006

Dog-Friendly New England: A Traveler's Companion
by Trisha Blanchet 2006

Canine Washington: The Bona Fide Guide to Where to Play and Stay with Your Dog
by Cheryl Smith 2005

The Dog Lover's Companion To California (Dog Lover's Companion to California)
by Maria Goodavage 2005

Cruising With Your Four-Footed Friends: The Basics of Travel with Your Cat or Dog
by Diana Jessie 2003

Jack Hanna's Ultimate Guide to Pets
by Jack Hanna, Hester Mundis

Monkeys on the Interstate: And Other Tales from Americas Favorite Zookeeper
by Jack Hanna