

How to Be Prepared for Holiday Travel with Your Dog

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Whether you are planning to travel with or without your dog over the upcoming holiday season now is the time to make relevant reservations and see that your dog's vaccinations and any medicinal prescriptions are current.

Leaving Her Home

These days, with companies such as DogVacay.com, Rover.com and Fetch.com, it's easier than ever before to find a professional caregiver in your neighborhood. The advantage of such services is that these companies vet the sitters, they are licensed and bonded, and there is a 24-hour support line. Nevertheless, the further ahead you book, the better your chances of finding someone you really trust. It's advisable to set up a meet and greet so that you are absolutely sure you have found the right person in terms of your pet's needs and personality. And, if they don't answer questions to your satisfaction, or are "too busy" to meet you, consider it a red flag and you will still have time to find someone else.

Popular dog hotels also book up well in advance as they often have a lot of repeat business.

Taking Her With

These days, most of the major hotel groups are pet friendly. However, a word of caution; many hotels in popular hotel chains are franchised and may not necessarily have a uniform pet friendly policy like other hotels in the same group. So don't take it for granted. Make that call!

And, when it comes to resort hotels, often there are only a few pet friendly

rooms. So once again, the sooner you start researching the better.

Similarly, make a flight reservation for your dog at the same time as you do your own bookings. Most airlines allow a limited number of pets in their first class, business- and economy class cabins. Remember to book the most direct route; it's less stressful on your dog. The individual airline websites will spell it all out.

And, if you are planning a road trip with many stops along the way, the AAA has a book offering all kinds of pet-friendly accommodation from camping sites, motels to five star resorts. You can purchase it here. (

http://www.aaa.com/petbook/travel_tips.html)

With an elderly dog, it's advisable to take him for a veterinary checkup before traveling. This is the perfect opportunity to check that his vaccinations are current and stock up on any medications that you may need too.

You will have a much better time knowing everything has been taken care of well in advance. And so will your pooch as he won't pick up on your stress!