

TOP PET TRAVEL TIPS FOR STRESS-FREE VACATION

If you want to have a nice holiday, you need to be well prepared: book your accommodation, get the travel tickets, check that your passport is up to date... For animals too, the holidays need to be thought through! Whether your dog or cat is traveling with you or staying at home or in a pet hotel this year, you should think about it well before you leave, to make sure everything goes well this summer! Here are some essential pet travel tips.

Taking Your Pet on Holiday to Fight Abandonment

Every summer, tens of thousands of pets are abandoned when their owners go on holiday.

This is why the World Day Against Pet Abandonment was launched: to remind pet owners that pets are for the whole year, and for the rest of the animal's life!

By going on holiday with your pet, or by finding a suitable care solution for it if necessary, you will set a good example for all pet owners, which is equivalent to participating in the fight against abandonment.

Whether or not your pet goes on holiday with you this year, it will always have the opportunity to have a great summer if you make sure you give it to it. With a little anticipation and foresight, your dog or cat will enjoy the sunshine as much as you do!

A Visit to the Vet before Leaving

Before going on holiday, take your dog or cat to the vet! This will be an opportunity to check that their vaccinations are up to date, including the compulsory rabies vaccine, and any other vaccinations that may be required for a trip abroad.

Also take advantage of this opportunity to make sure that the details on your pet's microchip are correct: if your dog or cat ever runs away from your holiday destination, it will be essential that you can be contacted if it is found!

And if your pet is not yet identified, ask your vet to take care of it before your trip. This will formalize the link between you and your pet, as required by the law, and give you peace of mind during your holiday.

Beyond these administrative precautions, an appointment with the vet before your holiday will ensure that your pet is in good shape, and will not suffer any invisible ailments while you are away from your regular vet.

What Means of Transport to Use?

CAR

If you're driving with your dog or cat, make sure you bring a carrier bag or an adapted safety harness. Your pet's safety depends on it!

Don't feed your pet just before you leave, in case he gets motion sickness, and make sure you give him the opportunity to go outside to stretch his legs and relieve himself every few hours. And in the event of an accident, don't scold your pet! He is facing an unusual situation and maybe a little stressed.

Caution: never leave your dog or cat alone in the passenger compartment of a car in summer, not even for 5 minutes! The temperature inside the vehicle can rise beyond the bearable limit in just a few minutes. Unfortunately, every summer, pets die from being left inside a car that is too hot.

PLANE

If you're flying with your pet, be aware that each airline has its own rules and regulations, and you'll need to contact your airline to find out how to proceed.

Brachycephalic dogs such as Pugs and Bulldogs, which have crushed noses, may have breathing difficulties if they have to travel in the hold.

That's why many airlines require them to travel in the cabin, or simply do not allow them on board. Find out well in advance to avoid unpleasant surprises!

TRAIN

Again, you will need to get close to the railway company of your choice to travel with your dog or cat on the train safely.

For trains, simply tick the "add an animal" box when you book online and follow the instructions to buy a ticket for your dog or cat and find out about the regulations.

For travel abroad, the rules will not be exactly the same. In addition to being kept on a leash or in its carrier, your pet may be required to wear a muzzle, or travel on a specific part of the train.

Be aware that some countries do not accept certain breeds of dogs on their territory! This is the case in the UK, for example, where Pit Bulls, Tosa, Argentinean Mastiffs, or Fila Brasileiro are refused at the border. Find out beforehand for the safety of your pet! Categorized dogs are particularly subject to such restrictions.

Precautions at the Holiday Destination

If you're travelling to an area where it's going to be hot, remember to protect your pet from the sun. They

too suffer from the heat, and can get sunburned, despite the hair that protects their skin!

Sunscreen for dogs and cats: If your dog or cat has a light muzzle, it will be particularly prone to sunburn. Apply cream to your pet's nose, ears and all areas where the skin is not protected by hair. Try, as far as possible, to prevent your dog or cat from licking itself after having spread the cream on it, and avoid leaving your pet in full sun between 10 am and 4 pm, the sunniest hours of the day. This will be especially important for older pets, who are even more sensitive to heatstroke. You can also refresh your pet by putting a wet washcloth over its coat.

Grooming, for a lighter summer experience: For long-haired dogs or cats, remember to have them groomed when the weather turns nice. This will allow them to feel less hot, in addition to protecting them from spikelets, very common in summer, which nestle in the hair of dogs or cats and can cause a lot of damage.

How to Feed Your Pet?

Finally, not to upset your pet's habits more than necessary, take their usual food with you when you pack their bags. And if you are ever forced to change your pet's diet during the holidays, make a dietary transition over several days so as not to upset your pet's stomach.

Of course, have several water bowls in several places around the house so that your pet always has something to drink even if it spills one of its bowls while you're away. Change the water every day and make sure it's fresh, but not cold.

In addition, to encourage your pet to drink more, keep water bowls one meter away from food bowls. It's not always known, but cats, in particular, can be wary of water near food scraps, which in nature can decompose and contaminate a water source.

A water fountain is also a great way to encourage your pet to drink more, especially cats who are particularly amused by moving water. All cats who love to play with the trickle of tap water will attest to this!

Accidents happen! If you ever need to contact a veterinarian during your stay, you can find a caretaker near your holiday location, call your regular veterinarian on the phone or consult a veterinarian remotely thanks to veterinary teleconsultations.

Dog or Cat Staying at Home or Pet Hotel

Of course, it is not compulsory to take your dog or cat on holiday! For certain animals or situations, it may be better to leave your furry companions in good hands rather than go on holiday with them.

You can send your pet to a pet hotel, where it can play with other pets as much as it likes, have a

pet sitter come to your home or drop your pet off at a relative's house.

To choose between these three options, take your pet's character and needs into account: the cat, who is more territorial, will often be more comfortable in its own space, as long as there is a pet sitter every 2 or 3 days, but this is not the case for all cats.

Similarly, while many dogs will like to be well surrounded in a hotel, for others it will be preferable to stay in a quiet place at home, with a relative to cover them with cuddles!

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