

Luxury Unleashed: Traveling in Style

Whether you want one versatile carrier or 21 fashion-inspired pet purses, carefully consider your needs.

Charlotte Reed

Pop singing sisters Jessica and Ashley Simpson always travel in Louis style — Vuitton — that is. They would have nothing less for their Maltipoo canine cousins, Daisy and Blondie.

Although most dog owners can't afford to spend \$1,400-plus for a Louis soft-sided bag, dog carriers are the pet accessory of the moment. Whether you want one versatile carrier or 21 fashion-inspired pet purses, carefully consider your needs and those of votre petit chien.

First, look to purpose. Is the tote for everyday life, such as running errands, or just for vet visits? Will you use it for travel? Or, do you merely want a carrier to complement your fall wardrobe? Chat it through with your favorite salesperson; she'll suggest the best carrier for your purpose and budget.

Most carriers accommodate dogs up to 14 pounds, so don't try to cram your canine friend in the same way you stuff yourself into a pair of jeans. For a stress-free ride, check out your dog's stretchability factor while in the carrier. Make sure she can breathe, too. Vents on at least three sides allow ample air.

Once you've evaluated a carrier's basic features, it's all about looks.

"Carriers are so hot right now because they reflect the fashion of our time," says Marge Fink of The Pet Pantry Warehouse's designer boutique section. This fall the most fashionable carriers will be designed in sporty or high-fashion styles with more outside pockets, matching cell phone cases, dog coats and purses, and in seasonal colors of chocolate brown, houndstooth patterns, and faux crocodile prints.

A few of my favorites

Sporty: Need a casual look for your Yorkie? Choose Cellteis Active Pak-o-Pet in khaki with detachable cell phone pouch, pullout waterproof floor tray, and water bottle with tube holder.

Fashion statement: The celebrity sets must-have. PuchiBag's orange and brown Autumn Tweed is a beautiful wool carrier with suede trim for the fashion-conscious owner.

Basic black: Petotes Black Croco is a classic addition to your wardrobe. Designed for your pet's comfort and safety, this bag features crocodile-pattern embossed leather with Italian hardware.