

Homeless Pets Come to the People

Innovative new shelter opens among New York City's trendiest boutiques.

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Shoppers in New York City's trendy SoHo district can adopt homeless dogs from a new pet adoption center that has opened in the fashion-retail district known for its trendy boutiques and cafes.

Animal Haven, a nonprofit animal welfare organization that helps place abandoned pets, decided to open the 7,000-square-foot, three-story "boutique" center in the hope of unleashing a new view of animal adoption.

"One of the main reasons was to tap into [the SoHo] clientele and the public in general who would not venture out to a shelter or what they think a shelter would be," said Marcello Forte, the executive director of Animal Haven, in a statement.

The center is located at 251 Centre St., between Broome and Grand Streets, near retailers such as Bloomingdales, Calypso, and Diesel.

Organizers say the well-trafficked area will attract would-be animal owners who wouldn't normally trek to one of the five city shelters, which are scattered throughout the boroughs and not necessarily easy to reach.

The center will house 15 to 20 dogs and 30 to 40 cats who come from city shelters and Animal Haven's shelter in Flushing, N.Y.