

The Dog-Friendly Hotel

Find accommodations that welcome your best friend.

Maria Pecoraro

Posted: Tue May 3 00:00:00 PDT 2005

Hotels nationwide are rolling out the red carpet for Bowser, enticing millions of dog owners to join the fast-growing trend of traveling with pets in tow. You know you've arrived at a pet-friendly hotel when the bellhop escorts both you and your dog to the room with no questions asked. If you're planning a trip with your dog, these tips will help you select a dog-friendly hotel. Call ahead to verify the hotel currently accepts pets. Policies often change. Find out the size and number of pets allowed per room. Ask if Bowser can stay alone in the room if he's crated. If not, check out the hotel's list of local pet-sitters. Confirm fees (per night) and deposits (per stay). Ask about any additional cleaning fees. Call the front desk (not the toll-free reservation number) to inquire about safe walking areas nearby. Try not to stay near train tracks or busy highways.

Different hotels have varying levels of amenities for canine visitors. If you're greeted by the following, you've arrived in dog-friendly territory. Room service delivery of gourmet doggie biscuits and bottled water for Bowser. Housetraining pads in the bathroom. A lush pillow bed-on the floor. A placemat with silver feeding bowls.

And to top it off, "An in-room doggie massage can be arranged by our concierge to help relax your pet," says Robert Prohaska, director of sales and marketing for the Sofitel Chicago Water Tower in Illinois. If you forgot your dog's food, Prohaska says, "We also have room service meals featuring a heart-healthy menu for your pet."

Now those sound like pet-friendly services that would leave any dog feeling like a pampered pooch.

If you travel frequently with your dog, you'll learn how to make your trips less stressful in Maria Pecoraro's article, "Hotel Etiquette 101" on page 60 in the June 2005 issue of Dog Fancy magazine.