



## FEATURE

# Pet Friendly DESTINATIONS

Helpful tips for taking your canine friend on holiday.



With 38% of the Australian population living in a household with a canine companion (NSW, with ACT 35%), it is any wonder that when we go on local holidays, we want to take our canine companions along. After all, they are part of the family. About 20% of dog owners take their pets with them on holidays, and this percentage is on the rise. If people take their dogs to parks, the beach, or on day trips, why not for overnight stays away from home? It also means there is no need to use pet-minding services or expensive boarding facilities when pet owners want to go away.<sup>1</sup>

One of the issues when going on holidays with a pet is finding suitable dog-friendly accommodation. Properties that advertise themselves as being dog-friendly can actually be quite varied in the facilities provided and the rules that apply to pets staying with their owners. It is important to keep in mind that accommodation that is specified as being dog-friendly doesn't automatically permit dogs to come inside and snuggle up in bed with their owners.

## What dog-friendly means

Keep in mind that dog-friendly doesn't always mean dogs can come inside, sleep on furniture, or be provided with complimentary bedding and treats. There may be a number of conditions that a property owner puts in place for the comfort and benefit of current and future guests, as well as other people in the vicinity.

Different dogs and their owners have different needs, so not every property listed as being dog-friendly is suitable for you and your pet. That's why it is important to contact accommodation managers prior to booking to discuss you and your pet's specific requirements.

## Outside Only Dogs

Around 24% of pet dogs are exclusively kept outside the family home. Therefore accommodation which permits dogs, but only if they are kept outside, can offer a very suitable place to stay for a significant number of dog owners. These properties may provide pets with a kennel in a sheltered outdoor area and a securely fenced area for dogs to run around within.

## Inside & Outside Dogs

65% of pet dogs spend time both inside and outside the family home. Some of those dogs may be permitted inside the home only under supervision and may actually still sleep outside. There are a significant number of holiday properties that welcome pets inside, but only in designated areas, such as within rooms that have hard floors. They may also have restrictions with regards to dogs sleeping on soft furnishings or on beds. For a dog that spends time both inside and outside, these restrictions may be quite suitable.

## Caravan parks

Many caravan parks or holiday parks are dog-friendly, however, restrictions can vary significantly. Managers need to balance the needs and comfort of those guests with pets and those without, particularly due to the size of some of those parks and the large number of guests. Some parks may only permit dogs with site bookings, so guests would need to keep their pet on a leash within the area around their caravan or tent. A few parks have dedicated dog-friendly cabins, which not only permit pets inside, but also provide a private fenced area around the cabin for dogs to run around.

## Hotels & Motels

It can be challenging to find a hotel or motel that allows you to bring your dog inside with you, however some managers have set aside rooms which are dedicated for those with pets. If you are happy for your canine companion to stay outside, a number of motels can cater for pets, with sheltered and secure outdoor areas, although owners may need to bring their own pet bedding.

## Pet Friendly Accommodation Websites

There are more pet friendly accommodation sites than ever before on the internet, as the demand for 'all members of the family' to go on holiday escalates. Please see a brief description of the more popular sites over the next few pages, featuring a few of their favoured selections at different locations throughout NSW.

You will find that some sites specialise in their own state, while others are nationwide. The accommodation varies from holiday caravans/cabins to luxury hideaways so there is something for all tastes and budgets on these sites, providing you can bring along your canine friend.



## HOLIDAY PARKS

**BIG4 Holiday Parks** provide the flexibility to choose from a range of dog-friendly camping, caravan, and self-contained holiday destinations across the country. They have designed some brilliant travel itineraries to help you get out and about and explore Australia with your dog, whether you are wanting to take on the Mighty Murray, wander around Western Australia or parade down the Pacific Coastline with your pooch. When booking a holiday with your dog, they do advise to phone the individual parks to discuss the accommodation types available and any restrictions that may be in place. All BIG4 dog friendly parks have their own set of terms and conditions which can be viewed at [BIG4.com.au](http://BIG4.com.au)

### BIG4 Great Lakes at Forster-Tuncurry



The twin townships of Forster-Tuncurry are a great option for those looking for pet-friendly accommodation. There's a dog agility track at Beach Street Reserve that is sure to keep your four-legged friend happy. This is a tropical holiday oasis, with modern self-contained accommodation/cabins set amidst great facilities in a stunning lake and riverfront location. It has a heated pool, water playground, camp kitchen, boat ramp, cafe, plus it's close to restaurants, shops and beaches.

<https://www.big4.com.au/>



**Holidaying with Dogs** provides access to over 2,000 pet-friendly accommodation options throughout Australia. Listings can be found on the website as well as in the hard copy directory. Holidaying with Dogs is focused on promoting companionship, fun, exploration and experiences for pet owners and dogs alike. Keep an eye out for Five Paw Award Winners, who offer the gold standard in pet friendly accommodation. Find them on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Their current award pick for NSW is:

### Pub Hill Farm Bed & Breakfast



Pub Hill is a 250 acre farm running beef cattle. It is situated high on a hill overlooking the beautiful Wagonga Inlet, with views over Mt Dromedary to the south. Pub Hill has 2 km of water frontage on to both the Wagonga Inlet and Punkallah Creek. Surf beaches, bowls, tennis, bush walks in the surrounding forests and trail riding are all only ten minutes away as is the town of Narooma which boasts one of Australia's most renowned golf courses. The self contained cottage has a wonderful mezzanine bedroom with breathtaking views over the inlet through huge windows and has everything you will need for a comfortable stay, a full kitchen with all appliances, large fridge, washing machine, barbecue and a covered outdoor area. It is surrounded by lawns and native plant gardens and has a cosy wood fire for winter (wood supplied). As with all guests at Pub Hill Farm, you are welcome to bring your pets.

<http://www.holidayingwithdogs.com.au/>



HOLIDAYPAWS.COM.AU

**HOLIDAY PAWS** is specifically designed for finding a holiday property where you can take your pet. Not only that, it also makes that search a whole lot easier by providing all the property information that a discerning pet owner will need.

They provide details on important aspects of choosing a pet friendly property, including but not limited to fence height, pets allowed inside, maps including location of dog parks & vets. To assist there is also a chosen desired features at the side and you can sort by name, town and price. There are also reviews on this site for each property listing as well as a ratings on cleanliness, comfort, location and quality.

They offer accommodation listings in the Hunter Valley wine region, the rugged South Coast, Port Stephens area, beautiful NSW Northern Rivers and Byron Bay or Coffs Harbour areas, with many more locations yet to come. With most properties a mere stroll from some of Australia's most beautiful landmarks, your days will be filled with things to do. and when you have finished exploring for the day, each luxury pet friendly accommodation property affords you the highest comfort, giving you the perfect place to while away a lazy holiday night.

### **Mount Browne Cottage, Upper Orara, Coffs Harbour and Mid North Coast NSW**



Mount Browne Cottage is located in the picturesque Orara Valley, nestled against a tranquil rainforest setting and just 10 minutes drive from Coffs Harbour. Inside has a cosy feel, with a lovely fire place perfect for a relaxing country holiday. For those who like to cook, the cottage features a quality kitchen and the peaceful outdoor area includes a fire-pit and large fully enclosed rear yard. Perfect for a getaway or a comfortable family vacation with pets.

The property boasts a queen master suite plus a second guest room fitted with a double and single bunk bed configuration. For a true holiday experience, you'll be provided with quality towels and linen.

Animals of all shapes, types and sizes love the pet friendly accommodation and there is a wonderful yard and creek area for them to explore. A fully fenced backyard with direct access to the inside of the cottage enables pets their own access to and from the cottage. If your animals live inside with you at home, they are welcome to stay inside the cottage too.

With solid timber floors and tiles throughout, the cottage can handle the biggest paws through to the littlest ones. They also supply dog bowls, dog blankets, extra dog towels and dog toys.

<http://holidaypaws.com.au/>



Take your Pet is a search website for pet friendly areas nationwide. Not only does it search for pet friendly accommodation in the suburb or state in which you are interested, it also provides pet friendly caravan parks, beaches, cafes and dining, parks, services and supplies, including vets in the area in which you want to stay. For example, I found a featured property with five stars at Byron Bay and then looked for a pet friendly beach nearby.

### **Rainforest Villa, Byron Bay**



Rainforest Villa has two double bedrooms, a fully equipped kitchen, a spa bath, a fully fenced yard with a lovely rain forest garden and outdoor dining (large deck with BBQ). It's 5 minutes walk to popular cafes and restaurants and has two dog friendly beaches as well as a golf course nearby. One of the beaches close by is Belongil Beach, Childe Street, Byron Bay. (see picture below).



<http://www.takeyourpet.com.au/>

# Your Pet Friendly Checklist

## ... before you leave



### 1. Accommodation ✓

Before booking, contact your accommodation destination ahead of time, to ensure that they do provide pet friendly accommodation. Even though some places may advertise that they do allow pets, there may be particular times of the year or certain circumstances, where they will NOT allow pets. Have a list of questions ready to ask, such as where your best friend will be allowed to sleep at night and whether they are allowed inside. Being prepared and informed will allow the most friendly and stress-free holiday for you and your pet.

Health regulations usually forbid pets being allowed inside on-site accommodation in tourist parks or most self-catering accommodation. However, not every place provides a suitable place for your pet to sleep away from bad weather. Many places now can provide kennels or sheltered places. Ask ahead if these are available.

### 2. Pet Friendly Activities & Places ✓

In Australia, domestic animals i.e. dogs, cat etc are banned from National Parks, Nature Reserves, Aboriginal areas and State Recreation Areas because they are potentially dangerous to the native wildlife and animals. However, there are some forests that will allow dogs for visits during the day and overnight camping. During a visit to one of these areas your dog must be controlled and on a lead at all times. You should contact the relevant governing body before your visit.

When booking, ask the property manager or owner, or do your own research into where you can take your dog on outings, whilst on holiday. It might be to the nearest park, reserve or a dog friendly beach. You do not want to be near a wonderful beach



or take your dog for a walk only to be greeted with a 'NO DOGS ALLOWED' sign upon arrival.

Eating, swimming, and playing are favourite pastimes for most pooches, so a real treat for your pet is to go on picnics wherever you holiday. Instead of limiting yourself to restaurants, where they are usually not welcome, consider packing a gourmet picnic for yourself, and some special doggie delights for your friend. Find out from locals or tourism offices which local parks welcome dogs, and head out for some fun.

**Don't forget** before you depart for your holiday to also find a local vet, where you will be staying, in the event of an unforeseen occurrence or your pet getting lost.

### 3. Pet Identification ✓

We all know our dogs love to go exploring, especially when in new locations. Due to this reason, making sure your dog is micro-chipped will allow others to return him/her back to you, if they decide to explore a little too far away. If your dog is micro-chipped, ensure it is up-to-date. Also make sure your dog has an ID tag with a number where you can be reached while you're away. This may mean getting a new tag done with your mobile phone number on it. Bring along some printed photos, just in case the unthinkable happens and they do get lost.

### 4. Vaccinations ✓

Before leaving home, make sure your dog/s are up-to-date with all their vaccinations. If it is likely that your dog will be mixing with various other breeds, be sure to treat your dog with a C5 vaccination. C5 vaccinates against 'Bordetella bronchiseptica' which is a bacteria leading to severe kennel cough, which can be prolonged for long periods of time. Dogs of any age can be affected. Also ensure that your dog has had a current flea and worming treatment.

### 5. What to take ✓

Even if you plan on buying your dog fresh food every day, dry or canned food must be taken in case of any emergencies, or if your dog wants some extra food. Remember to take food and water bowls and some fresh water so that your friend can keep hydrated en-route. Some accommodation do provide bowls and other necessities, but it is best to take your own.



FEATURE

# Your Pet Friendly Checklist

## ... before you leave

### 5. What to take ✓

Do take a dog lead as some places require your canine friend to be kept on leash at all times. Take some clean bedding (an extra blanket if the weather is cold) so that your dog can feel at home, as well as his favourite toy/s as it will make their holiday so much more enjoyable. Even consider bringing along a portable crate for sleeping. Balls and play toys are particularly good, especially if you are going to the park or a beach. Extra towels are also beneficial if your dog is going swimming or even if you need to give your dog a bath whilst away.

Even though you may have a located a vet close by, it is important to take along a **Pet First Aid Kit**, which should include the following:

- **bandaging material**
- **cotton wool**
- **gauze swabs**
- **irrigating solution**
- **an antiseptic solution such as Betadine (avoid Dettol as it is too strong for animals)**
- **antiseptic cream**
- **bite solution**
- **thermometer**
- **tweezers**
- **blanket**



### 6. On route ✓

If travelling by car, please ensure that you dog is harnessed correctly with a seat belt or a car restraint.

Take regular breaks. Just like everyone else, pets need to get out and stretch and walk around once in a while and take toilet stops. Some pets may get aggressive and/or sick if they aren't given this opportunity. If your dog is not used to car travel they may get motion sickness. Before travelling, it might be best to go on a few short trips and gauge your dogs tolerance to car travel. Treat your pooch as you would want to be treated.



Just like babies, pets cannot be left in a hot car as their temperature will rise and this can be fatal! Short nosed pets, such as pugs, and pets with medical conditions are at higher risk.

Please ensure lots of cold water is available for your pet to drink at all times

Make sure you dog is comfortable and they have a few home comforts for the journey such as a favourite toy or blanket.

### 7. Pet Etiquette ✓

Ensure your dog is well trained and under control. You will not have an enjoyable holiday with your pet if he/she is disobedient! Maybe consider enrolling your dog in some obedience classes before going away. Your pet will need to be able to respond to your commands when not on a leash and also have controlled barking. There is nothing worse than a dog that barks incessantly, especially when left alone.

If you know your pet has separation anxiety, do not leave them alone whilst on holiday. If you know that you will want some pet-free time alone, perhaps consider organising a pet-sitter.

You, as a owner, need to be prepared to clean up after your dog all times. It is not only for your own sake, but also for the sake of the accommodation proprietor and other holiday makers and pets in the area. Don't forget to pack some disposable poo bags.

### 8. Memories ✓

Remember to have lots of photos taken of you, your family and your canine companion enjoying the holiday together. Scenic backdrops and special times add to the joy of photos many years later and maybe even add some of their paw prints for good luck. We have our canine friends all too short a time, so you can look back on those happy times together.

#### References:

1.) *Statistics related to pets are relevant to Australia only, and have been taken from the Animal Health Alliance (Aust) report which uses a number of resources, including Galaxy Research and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.*

<http://blog.travelvictoria.com.au/2015/05/23/dog-friendly-holiday-accommodation/>

<http://www.holidayingwithdogs.com.au/news/5/> - Golden rules for Pet holidays

<https://www.australianexplorer.com/pets/holiday.htm>

<http://holidaypaws.com.au/>

<http://www.takeyourpet.com.au/>

<https://www.big4.com.au/>

<http://www.holidayingwithdogs.com.au/>

### Competition

For your chance to win a 2 night stay at beautiful, pet friendly 'Blue Patch,' a delightful 4 bedroom house at Culburra Beach, please see page 19.

