

10 of the world's best hotels for pets

Gucci bowls and cashmere sweaters -- you'll never believe what these hotels can do for your pet

By Anthea Gerrie 14 October, 2011

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Sometimes, Max and Felix deserve a break too. And when they do, you might feel a little envious.

Some of the options available to your furry best friends can make your last vacation in that three-star hole behind the construction site on that oily beach seem somewhat lackluster.

1. Las Ventanas, Mexico



"And after this, can you fetch me my leather chew-shoe?"

This luxury resort in Los Cabos offers pets their own five-star experience, from special menus and stress-reducing neck massages on arrival to a portable cabana in which to accompany their owner to the beach or pool in shady comfort.

Feline room service delights include The Claw Cleaner (albacore tuna, chopped egg and sour cream) and a kitty-sized portion of scrambled eggs and poached salmon, while dogs can tuck into beef short ribs with risotto and gravy or chicken breast with rice and tomato.

All posh pet dinners are served in bowls embellished with faux gemstones on bone-shaped place mats, and pooch can work up an appetite on a bracing walk with a staff dog-walker.

Las Ventanas, San Jose del Cabo, Baja California, Mexico; +52 624 144 2800; www.lasventanas.com

2. Rathmullan Hotel, Ireland



Suddenly there's a use for granny's old armchair.

The ultimate in dog-friendly hotels has to be one which offers pooches their own luxuriously furnished space.

At the Rathmullan, the canine suite adjoins the owner's room and has its own bed, coat hook, canine portraits hanging on the wall and direct access to the garden.

There are even canine hosts -- dogs are invited to socialize with the hotel's own golden retriever, Suzie, and pair of resident Jack Russells, who will show four-legged visitors around the grounds of their elegant Donegal mansion.

Rathmullan House, Rathmullan, County Donegal, Ireland; +353 7491 58188; www.rathmullanhouse.com

3. Fonteverde Thermal Spa, Italy



Padstow likes a detox too.

Italians believe fervently in the healing powers of their native hot springs -- and at Fonteverde Natural Spa Resort in Tuscany they believe ailing pets deserve the benefits of the healing waters too.

There's a special thermal pool designed for pets suffering from arthritis and skin ailments, who are pampered in other ways, too. They are served breakfast in bed and get a canine-tailored nightly turndown service -- bedding is refluffed and towels that have been used to wipe off thermal mud are replaced.

Fonteverde, San Casciano dei Bagni, Tuscany, Italy; +39 0578 57241; www.ihw.com/fonteverde

4. Rome Cavalieri, Italy



The Gucci food bowl is just the start of the extravagance.

Not to be outdone by their country cousins, the Rome Cavalieri treats pets like kings when they come to town.

They get a Gucci food bowl for their primi piatti and canine chocolatini, pooch-sized waffle cotton bathrobes and a personalized cashmere dog sweater embellished with rhinestones.

If you're too busy to promenade with your pet in the six hectares of parkland, staff will do it for you; or they can whisk them over to the nearby doggy spa for a shampoo and comb-out, massage or skin treatment. By night, dog-sitters allow you the time to go out and take in la dolce vita.

Rome Cavalieri, Via A. Cadlolo, 101, Rome, Italy; +39 06 35091; www.romecavalieri.com

5. Hôtel Fouquet's Barrière, France



Five stars, for four legs.

The newest five-star hotel in Paris welcomes four-legged guests with a plush bed and a personalized mat embroidered with their name.

They also cook up gourmet meals for pets, serve them up in designer bowls, and send along designer-brand mineral water. It's only what you'd expect in a country where dogs often accompany their owners to restaurants and every motorway gas station puts out water for man's faithful friend.

Expect Evian on arrival to welcome Fido after he's bowed in by a respectful doorman.

46 Avenue George V, Paris, France; +33 1 40 69 60 00; www.fouquets-barriere.com

6. La Quinta Resort, United States



Man's best friend becomes man's master.

This elegant 1920s resort in California's Palm Desert is known for its spa, and the therapeutic offerings have now been extended with a range of special pet treatments.

Certified animal therapist Tom Galligan offers dogs a one-hour massage for US\$100 in a special Canine Suite with lowered lights and music known to be soothing to man's best friend.

La Quinta has also developed a unique take on the couples' massage with a US\$320 Me and My Best Buddy version in which man (or woman) and pet get their strokes simultaneously.

Spa treatments are additional to the US\$50 Paws La Quinta package, which includes a dog bone at check-in, a signature fluffy bed and a take-home travel tote bag packed with stainless steel dog tags, travel-size deodorant and organic pet treats.

La Quinta, 49-499 Eisenhower Drive, La Quinta, California, United States; + 1 760 564-4111; www.laquintaresort.com

7. Oare Manor, England



At least this pooch dressed up.

At the baronial Oare Manor Estate in southwest England, home of the Exmoor Hunt, a butler takes care of a dog's every need, including accompanying them on early-morning walkies while the owner lies in with tea in bed.

There's even a dedicated pet shower and blow-dryer to wash off the dust of the Somerset hills after a bracing hike. Only what you would expect from a hotel so pet-friendly that it even welcomes guests' horses.

Oare Manor, Oare, Lynton, Somerset, England; +44 (0)1598 741300; www.oaremanor.com

8. Inn by the Sea, United States



COURTESY INN BY THE SEA

The only hotel where dogs take precedence over humans in the pool.

Dogs Days at Inn by the Sea on the Maine coast include in-room spa services, pool playtime, gourmet pet menus, handmade turndown treats and a dedicated happy hour -- or perhaps that should be yappy hour.

Pets can lap up complimentary ice cream while their owners order cocktails, and are then allowed to join them for dinner in the Fireside Lounge or the seaside deck, choosing from their own gourmet menu.

In the last two weeks in October the pool is closed to humans and canines alone are allowed to cavort in the water.

Inn by the Sea, 40 Bowery Beach Road, Cape Elizabeth, Maine, United States; +1 207 799 3134; www.innbythesea.com

9. Bailiffscourt Hotel & Spa, England



COURTESY BAILIFFSCOURT HOTEL & SPA

No dogs here – they're all inside with their chicken vitality drinks.

For the dog who has everything, an edible toothbrush and a Love Glove to pet them with are irresistible treats.

They're just two of the delights available from Doggy Room Service at Bailiffscourt Hotel & Spa, former home of the Guinness family.

This 1920s hotel offers a more inventive doggie menu than most, including pig's ears, meaty spirals and a daily chicken-flavored vitality drink.

Bailiffscourt Hotel & Spa, Climping, West Sussex, England; +44 1903 723511; www.hshotels.co.uk

10. Riverview Retreat, Australia



Best way to bond? Try not to drown together.

A professional dog trainer has created a heaven for pooches at picturesque Burrum Heads, described as the most dog-friendly town in Australia.

As well as the Doggy Den, a beautiful fenced enclosure where pets can get their waterfront exercise with plenty of shade and no need for accompanying owners, they get to attend dog training sessions with their owners on holidays designed specifically to improve the bond between dog and owner.

Riverview Retreat, Riverview Drive, Burrum Heads, Queensland, Australia; + 61 7 4129 569; www.riverviewretreatburrum.com.au