

The hospitality industry's pet-friendly evolution

Over half of people (57%) internationally have at least one pet according to a recent global study and amongst these pet owners, there is a noticeable shift in the way they treat their pets - becoming more willing to pamper them with tailored diets, advanced vet care and specialty services. An increasing amount of travelling pet owners are hesitant to leave their furry companions at home and are demanding pet-friendly accommodation and facilities.



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Dale Simpson, curator of Radisson Red Hotel V&A Waterfront, Cape Town, says that as the market of devoted pet owners continues to expand, the hospitality industry can either evolve to cater to it or forego a growing number of potential guests as a result.

“Not so long ago, travelling with your pet wasn’t really a viable option – logistically. However, as airlines, cruise ships and doggy-car-seats continue to make it progressively easier to travel with pets, more and more pet-parents are insisting that their fur-children be allowed to vacation too. There is also the growing consensus among this market that bringing their pet along will actually enhance their holiday, as it eradicates the overwhelming guilt that is commonly experienced by having to leave them behind in a kennel.”

SA lagging behind in catering for pet-parents

Simpson says that while the international hospitality industry has been fairly quick to cater to this growing market, South African establishments don’t appear to be adapting as swiftly. “According to Hotels.com, a booking platform that offers the choice of hundreds of thousands of hotels in more than 60 countries, one-third of the hotels listed on their site now welcome guests with pets. In South Africa, however, options remain fairly limited when looking for pet-friendly accommodation – particularly luxury accommodation.”

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We are very excited to welcome man's best friend to #RadissonRED. Post a pic of your dog, tag us and we'll share you're cutie with everyone. #PetFriendly #Baxter #BostonTerrier #CapeTown #MotherCity #SouthAfrica #DogsOfInsta #InstaPets #InstaDogs

A post shared by Radisson RED Cape Town (@radissonredcpt) on Aug 4, 2017 at 3:26am PDT

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This is why Simpson says the soon-to-launch Cape Town Radisson Red hotel maintains a liberal pet policy. “Red’s mascot is a Boston Terrier named Baxter, and Baxter insists that guests’ four-legged friends be invited to the party – so long as they adhere to his pet policy. This policy allows friendly dogs and cats that weigh under 8kg – no more than two per room – to join their parents on vacation, granted they book a pet-friendly room and are kept on a leash or in a carrier when outside the room.”

As a lifestyle select brand that connects with an ageless millennial mindset, Simpson says that Radisson Red caters to the lifestyles of all guests. “We understand that for many people, their pets are part of the family, and we believe they should be treated as such. Red’s pet programme even includes a bandana, bed, food and water dish for our furry guests’ use during their stay. This may not be the norm, but neither are we. Welcome to the RedVolution Cape Town!”

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