



Dog's Eye View

Yes, it is called the GoPro Fetch™ Dog Harness, but cats and other pets can wear it, too. Once the go-everywhere waterproof camera is mounted and the harness is on, you can see what your pet sees when it is hiking, tree-climbing or just hanging out on the couch. shop.gopro.com

travel & lifestyle

By Margaret Littman



Train Travel Is Back

Forget the friendly skies. Amtrak now allows cats and small dogs on select train routes. Grab your travel gear, put Fluffy or Fido in an approved carrier (there's a one-pet-per-passenger limit) and hit the rails. You can see the USA from your window seat. You must make a pet reservation in advance. Call 800-USA-RAIL for reservations and to check availability on your route. www.amtrak.com/carry-on-pets



PHOTO: SLEEPYPOD.COM

Water Smarts

Getting your pup out on a paddleboard or a kayak can be a great way to bond together and get a little exercise. To get your dog feeling good about the outing, get him used to the equipment first. Let him stand on the board in your backyard, sniff the paddle in the kitchen, and teach him commands—like “hop on” and “hop off”—that are specific to your sport, so he'll know what to do when you get out in the fresh air.



Glamour Shots

Who has the best vacation pics? The #dogsofinstagram, of course. Check out the hashtag on the popular photo app to see great canine adventures, including @rowdyretrievers dock diving and @lainesimmonspena checking out Falls Creek Falls in Tennessee. There's a #catsofinstagram, too, but they don't seem to get out as much.

Jump in the Ocean

Few things say “pure joy” like a dog running on the beach, ears flapping in the wind. Two beaches that get four paws up from pets and owners in the South include: Jupiter, Florida's dog beach, which includes 2.5 miles of off-leash sand along A1A; and Ocean Springs, Miss., the Gulf of Mexico town that was Elvis's beach getaway and now welcomes leashed dogs on all its Jackson County beaches.



Water Smarts 2.0

Just as even the best human swimmer needs a life jacket when out on open water, so too, does the most water-loving Lab. When taking your dog out on a boat, consider a pet flotation device (PFD) with the flotation on the bottom. MTI's UnderDog puts 90% of the effective buoyancy under the animal's chest and neck. MTI says the vest allows a more natural swim angle, with the hind legs lower than the front. We say it is easier to grab a pooch out of the water with this set-up than with a traditional PFD. www.mtiadventurewear.com



Celeb Style

Country crooner Miranda Lambert is as legendary for her love of animals as she is for her singing voice. This summer she's taking it to a whole new level. MuttNation™ Fueled by Miranda Lambert is a new line of collars, toys and pet beds that will hit stores in July. Proceeds from the line, which will include a bandana print fabric, will fund rescue and adoption programs of Lambert's MuttNation Foundation.



- Margaret Littman is a Nashville-based writer and guidebook author.

TOP FACTS FOR CAT PEOPLE

8 ways to keep tabs on your tabby's mind, body and soul.

By Dr. James Randolph, DVM

The first cat to own me was Charlie. I was not a cat person when a senior veterinary student asked me to adopt an abandoned kitten. Reluctantly, I said yes. Since Charlie, I have been blessed by B.D., Sally, Buzzy, Jig, Martha, Max and Frida Kahlo. I am now a proud "cat person."

Everyone knows that cats don't have nine lives, but here are few things you might not know about your pet's health and well-being.

1 Drinking more or less can signal a problem.

Diabetes mellitus is an increasingly common malady in cats. The trend to indoor living means more cats are becoming obese, the No. 1 cause of diabetes. The fix? Feed less and purchase interactive toys that encourage exercise: chasing a flashlight beam, pouncing on a peacock tailfeather or retrieving a ball. Excessive thirst can be a symptom, and can also be a sign of kidney disease, as well as at least 17 other serious conditions, and should always call for veterinary intervention. Cats who suddenly drink less are probably ill, and may also require a doctor visit.

2 Hydration helps.

Few cats drink as much as they should. Canned food contains more water than dry food and gives your cat more fluids. Adding water to both canned and dry food can also help. Slowly increase the amount added each day to get your cat to go along with the diet change. Or, install a water fountain to encourage your cat to drink more water.



3 Cats sweat mostly through their paws.

Cats have sweat glands in their skin, like us, but far fewer, and theirs are insulated with hair. A cat walking across a hard surface in the summertime may leave sweaty footprints. Really hot cats pant to remove heat. Overheated cats will drool onto their coats so that the evaporating saliva can remove heat, just like sweat does. Both of these are signs of distress.



4 Litter boxes matter.

Not having enough litter boxes can stress your cats. My wife and I once had three cats. Our path to crazy cat people fell apart when Buzzy began refusing to use the litter box after Sally or Jig had been in it. We tried multiple litter boxes, but Buzzy wanted her own. Or, the carpet or the ficus in the living room. None was an acceptable option for us, so Buzzy went to live where she could be an only cat. Cats can be finicky about their litter boxes. You may need a litter box for each cat, or even boxes with different litter substrates, depending on all your cats' tactile preferences.

While a kitten may tolerate less-than-ideal litter box conditions, a cat's preferences may change between ages three and five. Just because, "He never did 'that' before," may only mean he's no longer a kitten.

