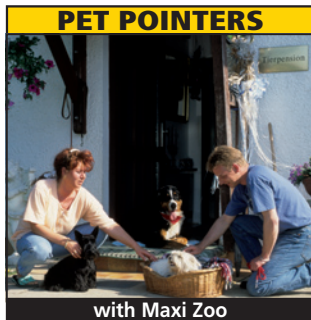


# HOLIDAYING WITH ANIMAL LOVERS

18704

Holidays should be fun and refreshing – that goes for people and animals alike. However, young masters and mistresses can't always spend their holidays with their pets. If there's no friend, family member or sitter available who can look after the animal, then an animal hotel is a good alternative. But how to choose the right one? Experts from the specialist retail chain Maxi Zoo have compiled a checklist to help assess the quality of an animal hotel – so that the well-being of the one left behind is also catered for.



**Get an impression in advance:** your local vet or animal welfare association can give you an opinion on which hotels near you can be recommended or not. Pay them a visit yourself – a spontaneous one is best. This way you gain an impression of the cleanliness of the facilities. You could also book a short, trial weekend visit first. This way your pet can familiarise itself with the new situation and you can find out how it reacts to it. This is particularly advisable for cats who often find it difficult being in strange surroundings.

**Check how professionally the pet hotel operates:** does the proprietor or attendant have the required certification in compliance with the Animal Welfare Act? Will your animal receive veterinary help in the case of an emergency? If yes, then from which doctor? Will the hotel only take your animal in if it's been vaccinated and wormed? Do you have to produce evidence of a flea prophylaxis?

**Find out what's on the menu:** does the hotel operator attach importance to high quality foods? Are they prepared to cater for your special requirements if, for instance, your animal is on a diet or needs special foods? Is there always fresh drinking water available?

The following practice routines are well suited to rabbits as they correspond to the animals' typical movement patterns and are relatively easy to learn.

**Clarify these questions after your pet has been checked in:** get them to show you your animal's quarters. How does it look? Big enough, clean, bright and not stuffy? For dogs: as well as having a roof over their heads, is there an additional

facility for them to run around? For cats: are there climbing frames, scratching trees, reclining boards and cat toilets in place? Can animals which get on well with their own kind also be accommodated in a group? Is there a generous outdoor enclosure? Does the locality offer sufficient opportunities for walking and romping around? How often and for how long will your dog be walked?

**Have regard to the price-performance ratio:** a good animal hotel can certainly be had for a daily rate of below 10 euros for smaller dogs, cats or small animals. For larger dogs, up to 12 euros is also reasonable. However, there are also more expensive, very luxurious hotels where, for example, you can keep an eye on the well-being of your dog via webcam.

You'll be on the safer side if you and the hotel proprietor sign a written care agreement in which all the information and special requirements of your animal are noted down. Read through the contract conditions thoroughly so that there are no nasty surprises in the end – for example, if you return late from holiday. Apart from that, make sure you can be reached where you're staying on holiday – either by telephone or at an address.

Log onto [www.maxizoo.ie](http://www.maxizoo.ie)  
for more pet tips and MAXI ZOO special offers.



[www.maxizoo.ie](http://www.maxizoo.ie)