How to enjoy happy holidays with your pet

From camping grounds and caravan parks to beachside apartments and hotels, there are a number of holiday destinations that allow you to enjoy a getaway with your pet. Veterinarian Dr Katrin Swindells, from Murdoch University Vet Hospital, offers this advice to help make your holiday with your pet memorable – for all the right reasons.

🔍 Check your pet has an up-to-date ID tag.
Your pet could escape to explore their new environment – so an ID tag with your contact details (or your vet’s details) will help them to get reunited with you quickly. Microchips as a permanent form of identify are also recommended.

🔍 Don’t release your cat outdoors in a strange environment.
They’re likely to try to find their way home, which could be very dangerous.

🔍 Travel safely in your car.
Generally, the safest place for your dog to travel is in a pet harness on the back seat. Your dog needs the same air temperature as you do, so check that the air-conditioning reaches their space, or that a window is open for cross-ventilation. If your dog needs to be tied up at the back (e.g. in a ute), always make sure you use a short strap tied to the centre to keep them secure in the event of an accident.

🔍 Be safe at the beach.
Watch out for blowfish on the beach; they contain the same toxin as a blue-ringed octopus. Ingesting a small dose of this toxin could make your dog vomit; a large dose could lead to paralysis before your dog has a chance to vomit, and they could stop breathing within 15 minutes. If you see a blowfish at the beach, pick it up and put it in the bin to protect your dog and other dogs.

🔍 Don’t throw sticks for your dog.
They can act like spears and cause serious trauma and injuries for your dog. It’s best to pack familiar toys from home, rather than improvise with potentially dangerous alternatives.

🔍 Take drinking water.
This is especially important when you’re going to the beach, so your dog doesn’t have to resort to drinking salt water which could put them at risk of salt toxicity.

🔍 Don’t exercise in the hottest part of the day.
If it’s too hot for you to walk on the sand or pavement in bare feet, it’s too hot for your dog’s paws. Because they cannot sweat, dogs which exercise in hot weather have a higher risk of developing heatstroke than people.

For more summer tips, find out how to [protect your dog from heatstroke](#) or [festive tips to keep your pets healthy over Christmas](#).