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DECEMBER 2023

WELOVEPETS

SOUTH AFRICA

canine couture

TRENDY FASHION
FOR PETS - MOM &
DAUGHTER LIVING
THEIR DREAM

THE ULTIMATE
CHRISTMAS
SHOPPING LIST

10 REASONS
WHY THE ELDERLY
NEED PETS

PET-NUPS
BECAUSE
BREAKING UP
IS LEGALLY A
NIGHTMARE

ROAD TRIP
EXPLORING THE BEST
PET FRIENDLY PLACES
ON THE WEST COAST
WITH THE THREE G'S

PET FIRST AID
ESSENTIAL GUIDE
FOR PET OWNERS

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DECEMBER 2023

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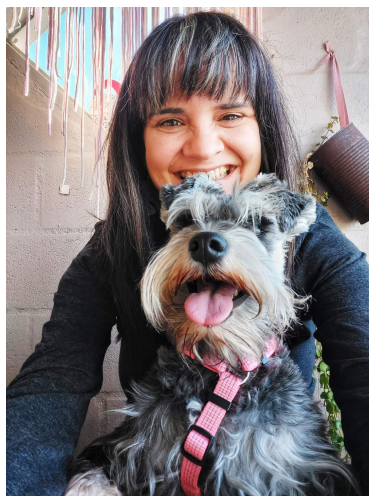
ON THE COVER

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canine couture

TRENDY FASHION DESIGNED WITH FUNCTIONALITY,
DURABILITY, AND THE WELL BEING OF PETS IN MIND.

Elize,
the Mom

Our journey at Goofy Woofs began with a simple but profound moment — when Chéri, our daughter, brought home her dream companion, a delightful French Bulldog. This furry addition to our family ignited a passion for high quality dog accessories that would soon become the foundation of our brand. I made a life-altering decision to retire from my full-time job and with newfound dedication started the journey of turning our shared love for pets into something tangible and extraordinary.

Chéri, the
Daughter

Our motivation was clear from the outset—we wanted to fill a niche in South Africa's pet market by introducing the concept of luxury pet accessories. We recognized that, just like their human counterparts, pets deserve the finest, most stylish accessories that reflect their unique personalities. This was the driving force behind our commitment to creating a brand that exuded vibrancy and uniqueness.

goofy
woofs  
bark in style





Understanding the deep bond between pets and their owners, they wanted to contribute to the joy of making our four-legged companions look and feel out of this world. Every product at Goofy Woofs is crafted with the utmost care, ensuring that your pup not only enjoys the functional benefits but also revels in the fashion-forward aesthetics. Since their official launch, the response has been overwhelming, and there's been no looking back. *"We are immensely grateful for the community that has embraced Goofy Woofs, and we continue to evolve, inspired by the love and joy our products bring to pets and their owners alike."*

Celebrate the success of others

TOP TIP

REDEFINING
THE PET
LIFESTYLE
EXPERIENCE

There is room for all of us and we think it's so important to cheer each other on. Together, we can create a vibrant network that not only celebrates the uniqueness of each business but also contributes to the overall well-being of our local economy. Let's wag our tails in unity and make a positive impact on the community we all cherish!

WHY WE LOVE WHAT WE DO

Our favorite aspect of running a pet business, like Goofy Woofs, is the joy and positivity that radiates from the close bond between pets and their owners. Being part of a community that cherishes these furry companions brings a unique sense of fulfillment. Witnessing the happiness our products bring to both pets and their human friends is truly heartwarming. It's not just about selling accessories; it's about enhancing shared experiences, creating memories, and being a small but meaningful part of the incredible journey between pets and their loving families.

It's important to us that people recognize the value of quality pet accessories that serve both style and practicality, contributing to the overall comfort and happiness of our beloved furry friends.

The duo firmly believes that style and design should never be compromised even when it comes to accessories for our beloved furry friends.



CHRISTMAS The LIST



COCO + MO

Create a beautiful Christmas keepsake with your pet's paw print, using the **Festive Paw Print Kit** from COCO + MO. The Kit contains everything you need to make this adorable Christmas Bauble.

Kits can be ordered from www.cocoandmo.co.za but do HURRY as orders close on the 9th of December 2023 and shipping will take place in the second week of December.

R345
EXCLUSIVE
5% OFF when you
use CODE
WELOVE23

THE SPANIEL PROJECT

This Christmas Hamper has something for the whole family. It includes two mugs for the "paw-rents" and a tote bag to hold your Christmas spoils. There are two toys for the pups to play with and 3 bandanas to ensure your pup is the envy of all on Christmas Day. Email thespanielproject@gmail.com to place your order by 16 December 2023.

R550

This price
includes
delivery



It is the time for giving, embracing traditions and celebrating what truly matters – friends, family & our pets of course. Spoil your loved ones with meaningful gifts and create lasting memories.



Dear Pet Co

www.dearpet.co.za

This box is filled with premium goodies for the discerning doggo. Bow Ties, Bandanas, Treats & Toys - all with a Christmas flavour. All the essentials in one Box, making this the perfect gift this Christmas.

PRE-ORDERS CLOSE 6 DECEMBER
R1 089.99

You can split the amount into 4x Interest free payments



Lewis FuGLY friENDs

www.3dogs.co.za

Christmas is only perfect with a Lewis' FuGLy fRieNdS or 3 in your dog or cat's Xmas stocking.

Email sophia@3dogs.co.za to order yours NOW! The elves at FuGLy Town are very busy - don't leave it too late! Orders close 10 December for delivery by Xmas.

FuGLy's come in different sizes
from R125





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ORDER via WhatsApp
063 236 4849

Ellen crochets the most adorable reindeer for Christmas.

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We love our dogs and they are constant providers of love & loyalty. The joy of spending your life with a dog has been captured in the brand new Dogs Edition of MONOPOLY.

Build your CANINE EMPIRE this holiday!

R692
AVAILABLE ONLINE ONLY



Long Dog www.longdog.co.za

If you are looking for the perfect gift for a Dachshund lover, then you need to head over to the Long Dog Online Shop. Mugs, Ice-cube trays, books, and so much more - they have Dachshund Merchandise for every taste.





Mimi & Munch

www.mimiandmunch.co.za

Get ready for some tail-wagging festivities. Bake Merry Pupcakes at home with the Holiday Edition Pupcake Premix from Mimi & Munch. You can choose from Red or Green Velvet, with adorable festive treats as decorations.

All you need to add to the premix is 2x Eggs, Peanut Butter, Banana & Yoghurt.



R85

*Bakes 8 -10 Pupcakes



COCO + MO

www.cocoandmo.co.za

These cute personalised Snack Sacks from COCO + MO are the perfect little stocking fillers for your doggy this Christmas. Available in RED or TURQUOISE. They each contain a delicious variety of Christmas-themed cookies and a Super Cute Festive Toy.



R225 each

Vondis

www.vondis.co.za

The Vondis Christmas Treat Box is the pawfect gift for your 4-legged friends and your family & friends who cherish their furry companion. There are 10 hidden Vouchers stashed in random boxes. The Treat Boxes are available instore at **PetShop Science** Nationwide.

R149 each



PET FRIENDLY

markets in the Western Cape

written by
Vicki Fox of K9-Adventures



With the Holiday Season upon us our Team looked at some Pet Friendly Markets. This is what Capt. Morgan & Cobalt had to say.

Freedom Weekend Market

Freedom Weekend Market is on the R301 Wemmershoek Road just outside Paarl. We took a drive out on a Sunday and were pleasantly surprised.

The market has live music every Saturday and Sunday from 12:00. There is loads of seating and it's 100% pet friendly.

Location:
R301 Wemmershoek Road just outside Paarl
Open: Saturday & Sunday 10:00 - 16:00

We loved browsing around inside for Christmas gift ideas.

If you don't see anything at the Market that tickles your tastebuds, pop into the fantastic restaurant right next door (also pet friendly).



Lourensford Market

Situated on the stunning Lourensford Wine Estate in Somerset West. This market is open on Friday Nights, Saturdays and Sundays.

They have a variety of stalls, live music and a great vibe. You are spoilt for choice on where to sit and enjoy the tasty treats you bought. Either grab a table at the market, in the gardens on the estate or by the fountain (big grass area) next to the market.

We saw loads of children having fun on the grass area while the parents were enjoying a picnic.

Location:
Lourensford Wine Estate
Somerset West
Open:
Friday 17:00 - 21:00
Saturday 11:00 - 16:00
Sunday 10:00 - 15:00

Under the Trees Market

Set in the Southern Suburbs of Cape Town, Constantia, this is a "Must Visit" Market.

I have never seen so many tables selling pet products. There was even a lady making cat toys. The first table that caught our attention as we arrived was PlumPets Book Store. I got the perfect Christmas gift for my little nephew and a book to read when we go camping next weekend.

After putting my purchases in the car, Cobalt and I started to browse through the rest of the market. From being offered Treat Samples by Omega Pets to Animal First Aid Kits. We ended our visit with some fresh baked croissants and Coffee.

Animal Stalls included:

Omega, PlumPets, Curious Snouts, Pawphoria, First Aid for Pets, Handmade Cat Toys & Manic Organic



Location:
1 Doordrift Road, Barbarossa, Constantia
Open: Sundays 10:00 - 15:00



Root 44

Root 44 is quite a large market, and can get very busy on weekends (especially during the holiday period).

Dogs are only allowed in the garden area (which is quite large), so make sure there is someone in your group who can either order for you or keep an eye on your pet while you order food as they are not allowed inside the building.

Location:
R44, Stellenbosch
Open: Saturday & Sunday 09:00 - 16:00

Elgin Railway Market

Elgin Railway Market is a bustling steampunk, art deco destination. It is only pet friendly outside. If you want to stop somewhere to eat we can highly recommend the Railway Market. There are some amazing stalls to browse through for Christmas and Birthday presents. If you want to spend time at the market we suggest not taking your furry friend with you or having someone that can reserve a table for you while taking care of your pet.

Location: Elgin, Grabouw
Open: Friday 16:00 - 20:30
Saturday & Sunday 09:00 - 16:00

Boschendal Friday Night Market

Walking through the gate the first thing you see is the historic oak trees, twinkling lights, live music, and lots of amazing food stands. There is definitely something for everyone.

Get there early if you want to sit on 1 of the comfortable bean bags, otherwise, there are lots of tables available at the restaurant and wine-tasting side.

We encountered a couple of dogs, all loving the fact that they can join their humans at the market. We ended up arriving too late to get a bean bag but managed to get a table instead. (Something to note, if you want to have some of their stunning wine, bring your own wine glasses, otherwise, you have to purchase glasses there).

Location: Boschendal, between Franschhoek & Stellenbosch
Open: Friday 17:00 - 21:00

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K-9 Adventures only lists pet friendly places and activities that they have personally verified as pet friendly.



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PET PRODUCTS

by Minette van den Bergh

west coast road trip



It is the end of the year, and everyone is loving the West Coast with its abundance of vitamin sea, sun, as well as family and dog-friendly eateries. There is no better time to share the favourite locations of

The Three G's – Griffon, Gabi, and Gilbert.

follow us on the
west coast this
holiday

Langebaan

marc's beach bar

With bright seaside umbrellas and colourful painted wooden benches you are guaranteed to be in a holiday mood. With none of the Club Mykonos restaurants being dog-friendly, this is the perfect spot just outside Club Mykonos. Their tagline 'food always tastes better by the sea' is so true.

Mykonos Access Road, Langebaan

022 634 0407

www.marcsbeachbar.co.za

kokomo beach bar & restaurant

One of the best location settings and pizza spots in Langebaan. The beach is literally not even a meter from the outside tables. You will be spoilt with some of the best sunsets on the West Coast. Be sure to include their permanent surfboard display in your photographs.

121 Main Street, Langebaan

022 772 1600

www.kokomolangebaan.co.za

Jacobsbaai o'driscoll's

What a fantastic team consisting of an Afrikaans husband and an Irish wife. We thoroughly enjoy their hospitality and preparation of food. He will braai your ordered meat out on the deck while engaging in conversation with you as she prepares fresh accompanying dishes in the kitchen. You might even be lucky enough to purchase their own freshly grown salad leaves to enjoy at your own leisure.

2 Titus Turn, Jacobsbaai

065 525 5868

[CLICK to visit their
FACEBOOK Page](#)



WINNER of
Weslander Koerant
**BEST Fish & Chips
Restaurant 2023**

Saldanha captain's cabin restaurant & pub

Centrally located in the main road and elevated with beautiful views from the deck. Most weekends guarantee a festive vibe with a lineup of live music artists. Being one of the few dog-friendly spots in the area that serve sushi, this is our go to place for sushi. The menu does however cover a variety of meals for the entire family.

20 Main Road, Saldanha

064 991 6181

[CLICK to visit their FACEBOOK Page](#)

the sandstone restaurant

A bit further down the road on the seaside, you will be greeted with great service and hospitality. The dog-friendly area is situated right next to the ocean, and I know it is questionable to eat a gourmet burger when sitting at the seaside but oh boy, they are so good! When available, their great weekly specials are fantastic value for money.

27 Main Road, Saldanha - 022 714 1574

[CLICK to visit their FACEBOOK Page](#)

Saint Helena Bay alegria restaurant



Be transported to Greece with your own tranquil and isolated beach. Tasty Portuguese and Mediterranean-flavoured seafood dishes will put a smile on everyone's face. You might even do what we do best and order a combination of starters, setting them in the middle of the table and doubling it up as a large platter with something of everything, from mussels to sardines and snails to calamari, you name it!

2 Sea Street, Slippery Bay

022 736 1393

www.alegriashb.co.za



Vredenburg

afsaal padstal

Look out for the dirt road turn-off and a signpost 'Trekoskraal'. A short distance down the dirt road you will find this unexpected little gem. The Sunday roast is a winner as are the savoury-filled pancakes too. Known for their home-made cheeses and bottled goodies, you are guaranteed to leave with a grocery bag of goodness.

Trekoskraal Road, Vredenburg
022 715 3096



Paternoster

the hobnobbery

Dogs are welcome inside! This is not only a coffee shop. There is so much more than just good food and coffee to indulge in and admire. The décor is quirky and fun, not to forget the gorgeous clothing and accessories and other surprises that are for sale. Service is always received with a smile. Our favourite is to share a gigantic gourmet sandwich and then to share a slice of either carrot or cheesecake afterwards.

62 St Augustine Rd, Paternoster
084 240 0630

CLICK to visit their FACEBOOK Page



weskus spens padstal

Home to the best, fresh, daily baked bread and pies on the West Coast for over two decades already, this farm stall is a worthwhile pitstop for a traveller or for meeting friends and family for lunch before furthering your road trip. The portions are generous, and your hunger will be satisfied for hours. Be sure to purchase extra loaves for the next day or three.

R27 Vredenburg - 072 350 5330
www.weskuspadstal.co.za

Velddrif

bokkomlaan

This will always be a favourite but before repeating myself, be sure to read the full 4-page spread of this historic road in the October edition of the magazine.

It is here that we are talking about the best pizza in Velddrif. Combining it with a beer-tasting tray from their own brewery, you will not be disappointed. If you are not that hungry then the starters are also a great option.

charlie's brewhouse



1 Marina Centre
Port Owen Drive, Port Owen
022 783 0448
www.charliesbrew.co.za

zeezicht family restaurant

Boasting that they have the best views in town, I do agree with them.

The Three G's love their complimentary biscuits and we always purchase extras for later at home. With limited outside tables, be sure to run and grab one upon your arrival, if still available. The beach is so close that you can build sandcastles while waiting for your food to arrive.

Garnaal Street, Laaiplek
061 607 5782

[CLICK to visit their FACEBOOK Page](#)

soverby lapa beach restaurant

Just what the doctor ordered if you are in dire need of a wide-open space and an abundance of fresh air. A popular and welcoming spot with a beautiful jetty that can take you right onto the beach for a walk and photographs. Bookings are recommended as private events are often hosted here.

Main Road, Dwarskersbos
083 303 3575
www.soverbylapa.co.za

Dwarskersbos

deli on main

Craving sweetness? This is your cake and gourmet milkshake stop. For those non-sweet toothers, there are more than enough alternative options available. A great spot to stock up on delicious deli items and fresh produce for the holiday. A recent addition to the menu is sushi on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays.

8a Main Road, Dwarskersbos
081 541 5574

[CLICK to visit their FACEBOOK Page](#)

Hopefield

oppiestoep

Do you enjoy sitting on a stoep with homemade goodness? Every Saturday, local foodies collaborate to offer breakfast, cake, and lunch. I was sadly told that Boni Appetite, with their well-known samosas, are only serving their deliciously fried pastries until the end of the year. They are closing shop after making over 35 000 samosas in just over one year! Come early as space is limited and be happy to share a table with a stranger or two.

33 Rivier Street, Hopefield

always call ahead

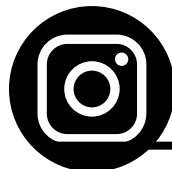
Dog-friendly locations mentioned at the time of writing have the right, without notice, to change their dog-friendly policies and I strongly recommend that an enquiry is made beforehand to eliminate any disappointment. The majority of locations have designated dog-friendly areas and seating outside. During the holiday season, bookings are recommended where possible.

kleine hopefield

Known to some as Plaasmol. This farm stall or should we call it 'farm mall', is filled with endless personality, quirkiness, and unusual finds. The gift and coffee shop sections are a treat and garden lovers will be filling their cars with plants from the nursery, kids will love the animal petting farm and photographers will love the fantastic photo opportunities.

Route 45 Hopefield to Vredenburg

www.kleinehopefield.co.za



Feel free to follow me on my Instagram **@minettevandenbergh** for some further suggestions as the majority of places I post are dog-friendly. The Three G's hardly ever stay home alone!

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www.pawsomeraw.com





Let's Eat!

pet friendly eateries in Jozi



Cafe at Homesuite

Nestled in suburban Rosebank, The Café at Home Suite Hotels is a hidden gem. A delightful surprise. From the friendly security guard to their resident rescue dog, Hazel (who will finish any meals your pooches don't), you will be greeted with warmth and happy smiles. The staff are all professional, friendly, and competent, and the food could have been served at any top-class restaurant.

Each meal was delicious, and the plating was spectacular. There is a great variety of human food options and a substantial dog friendly menu, including lamb, chicken, veg, and dessert options. You can choose to eat inside or enjoy your meal on the rooftop taking in the awesome views.

This quaint boutique hotel is trendy and up-market, and your pups can stay over with you. Convenient, centrally located, and tranquil. Every hotel should follow their example.

CLICK HERE AND VISIT
THEIR WEBSITE

DOG FRIENDLY
JOZI



The Local

Start your day off with a delicious breakfast at The Local in Huddle Park. They open at 7.30 am on weekends. The venue is spacious, making it the perfect place for any function.

The Local also offers jumping castles and a large jungle gym is under construction for the human kids. Plenty of space to enjoy themselves. There is plenty of free parking as well.

The menu was extensive, and the breakfast was fresh and wholesome, accompanied by great Cappuccino. The perfect family restaurant and sports bar. They are dog friendly inside and outside. Enjoy chilly mornings with your furbabies inside, with the sun streaming in.



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Non Slip Comfort



EXPLORING GIBA GORGE WITH AUSTRALIAN SHEPHERDS

written by
Carmen Oosthuizen



Discovering a dog-friendly hiking spot in KwaZulu-Natal can be challenging, but our excitement peaked when we learned about Giba Gorge Adventure Park through Facebook. Eager to head out on an adventure with our two Australian Shepherds, we set out at 5 am for the two-hour journey to the park. Upon reaching the boom gate, an entry fee of R40 per person granted us access to the Adventure Park, where we geared up for our hike.



Our destination was Macintosh Falls, known as the largest and most beautiful waterfall hike, offering a 10km trail that proved challenging for both humans and dogs. Adequate preparation is key for this route, but we later discovered an easier alternative. Despite the initial confusion regarding trail starting points, the friendly bar staff provided helpful directions and we headed off on our adventure.

The routes were very well-marked, which made it impossible to get lost. Synthetic grass-covered bins dotted the path, leading us through scenic single-track and dense bushy areas. We had no idea of the unexpected obstacles that awaited us. At one point we reached a wooden ladder, luckily I had a hiking companion who helped me with the dogs. Larger and nervous dogs will have difficulty getting to the top of the rocks. The next challenge was a rope-assisted rock climb, which added an element of difficulty. We pulled ourselves up, while the dogs found this challenge much easier and climbed up on their own. A narrow ascent over rocks took us alongside waterfalls and rivers, with wooden bridges with gaps presenting additional challenges, requiring the dogs to be carried.

Water sources along the route allowed our dogs to hydrate and cool off, although caution was necessary around stagnant water. After a 5 km climb, we reached the spectacular Macintosh Falls, a rewarding spot for a swim and a picnic. The dogs and humans enjoyed a refreshing swim. The scenery was magical and a great cool-down treat for all. Despite a conveniently placed trash bag, some visitors unfortunately left litter on the ground.

We expected to return along the same route but were surprised with a downhill path lacking the earlier obstacles.





While it offered a respite from climbing, the absence of single tracks and exposure to the heat, we had to make more stops to give the dogs water. This route is ideal for people who still want a good hike, but do not want the obstacles of the harder route.

Arriving starved at the park's restaurant, we were met with friendly and helpful wait staff. Suggestions for tasty pizza flavours were appreciated, and a bowl of water for the dogs was promptly refilled. The staff even replenished my water bottle upon request. With other dogs present, everyone adhered to the rule of keeping dogs on leashes and picking up after them, maintaining a clean and enjoyable environment. With plenty of bins nearby, you won't be stuck with stinky bags for long.

Reflecting on our experience, Giba Gorge Adventure Park proved to be a welcoming destination for all ages. The restaurant offered delicious food, and the staff demonstrated genuine friendliness. Besides the challenging Macintosh Falls hike, the park provides shorter, easier trails to smaller waterfalls, accommodating a variety of preferences. Additionally, mountain biking enthusiasts can explore numerous trails.

The park's true pet-friendliness was evident in their consideration of dogs. While the Macintosh Falls hike may not suit every dog or person, the availability of an obstacle-free alternative route ensures an enjoyable experience for everyone.

[Visit their Website](#)



4 dog friendly spots

CAPE TOWN

There is no better way to relax and unwind than spending those lazy summer days at some of the most idyllic places in and around Cape Town. The only thing that could enhance this experience to make it even more special and unforgettable, is to share it with your four-legged best friend. If you were wondering where to go with Fido this December holiday, look no further. Here are some of our favorite pawsome spots for the whole family!

HEY JOE BREWING COMPANY

Hey Joe Brewing Company is a Belgian-inspired, Abbey style brewery located on La Brasserie Farm 3km outside Franschhoek on the R45 Main Road. Their brewery's culture is expressed through their artisan style of beer brewing...they brew beer in a 1961 copper brewhouse imported from Belgium.

Hey Joe Brewery, is a destination brewery focused on family and fun, with a massive outdoor space and an amazing bar/dining area inside. You can enjoy the unique ambience of their restaurant and witness the brewhouse in action while savoring the signature beers. They have a delicious menu that is not only inspired by the Belgians but also incorporates their beers.

YES, they are dog friendly! You can explore the various outside seating areas, ideal for accommodating groups of all sizes, including families and furry friends. Take your doggies along and treat them to their specially crafted alcohol-free beer, Hond Bier, freshly brewed and bottled chicken-beef stock.

www.heyjoebrewery.com



DOG FRIENDLY
cape town



photo credit: @firewith_rugerandremi

WARWICK WINE ESTATE

Warwick Wine Estate, a picturesque estate nestled on the R44 outside Stellenbosch, is a premium South African winery and boasts a rich farming history dating back to 1771. Warwick offers guests exceptional wines, gourmet picnics and delectable platters in a tranquil, relaxed setting on the lawns or shade under the trees of their beautiful forest courtyard with a canopy of oak trees.

The picnic baskets consist of classic dishes with a contemporary African spin, designed to pair with their range of award-winning wines. The picnic lawn, picnic benches, or private picnic pods are fabulous. There are jungle gyms for the kids and even a "Fountain of Youth" to splash around in. Dogs are also very welcome on a leash, and they enjoy the picnic pods just as much as we do.

A welcome sign at Warwick: "Welcome Furry Friends. Please make sure your owners are leashed and trained to clean up after you. Woof for a waiter should you get thirsty - our drinks are on the house."

Bring your furry friends along and dream away the sizzling summer days on their lawn poofs, majestic Forest Courtyard, or hidden Picnic PODS.

www.warwickwine.com



CAFÉ FRENCHIE



Café Frenchie is a Coffee, Eatery and Wine Bar in an elegant, beautiful setting located in the Rembrandt Mall in Central Paarl where all doggies are welcome.

This authentic and unique eatery is inspired from a French appreciation of finer things and the love for the breed of the Frenchie dog, says owner Jaydee Joubert.

Café Frenchie is a bistro and pâtisserie with a beautiful ambiance, cozy atmosphere, stylish interior designs, good coffee, tasty food, delicious wine... AND best of all, your dog can join you at your table! They provide your dog with a bowl of water, a doggy biscuit, and a soft bean bag to sit on. "We love having them around and we are totally dog friendly!" You can have a wonderful time together and make some amazing memories with our furry friends around!

www.cafefrenchie.co.za



THE LAWNS

"Life's better on our Lawns!"



The Lawns at Roundhouse is cradled right at the foot of Table Mountain, set in a beautiful forest with epic ocean views and breathtaking sunset views over Camps Bay, Twelve Apostles, and Atlantic Ocean. The Lawns at Roundhouse is a relaxed all-day affair, with an array of outdoor spaces that take full advantage of this stunning mountainside location.

Come escape to The Lawns for the ultimate in Al fresco dining, be it delicious breakfasts, decadent brunches, lingering lunches, or meeting friends for drinks with spectacular views. And best of ALL...they are pet friendly!

The WHOLE family is welcome, so you can watch your fur kids and children play, while you sit back, relax, and enjoy the good life with a glass of wine. In summer, you will always find a big jumping castle on the lawn along with swings and a jungle gym for the kids to enjoy.

photo credit: @thelawns_ct

www.thelawnsct.com





All I want for
Christmas is ...
chew!

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this Christmas with
their favourite
WHIMZEES shape



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The Puppy School Essentials! >>>>



written by
Monique de Jager



TURN YOUR PUP INTO A PRO

It is fundamental to expose puppies to a range of positive experiences during the first few weeks of their lives, as this directly and significantly influences their brain development. Puppies that encounter numerous positive experiences develop a higher number of cognitive connections in their brain, and these connections provide lifelong benefits like enabling them to easily solve problems. The critical window period for a puppy to socialize and establish as many connections as possible closes around 16 weeks of age.



Embracing a world of opportunities

The world presents a magnitude of opportunities, therefore your puppy can and should be exposed to various stimuli from an early age. Failure to do so may lead to your puppy experiencing regular fear responses when encountering unfamiliar situations later, this can be detrimental to their overall well-being. Elevated cortisol (stress hormone) levels can lead to increased breathing, heart rate, muscle tension, and elevated blood glucose levels. These physiological responses may have damaging effects on the digestive, reproductive, or immune systems. Over time, this pattern of chronic stress can contribute to the development of anxiety and depression in your puppy. Dogs are social animals and experiencing the world around them releases happy hormones which makes your puppy feel good and boosts their confidence.



Meeting your puppy's needs

A virtuous puppy school ideally includes all 7 forms of enrichment in the curriculum.

Social enrichment - in the form of safe supervised play so that puppies develop bite inhibition, learn competitive skills, and dog body language (calming signals).

Visual enrichment - with mirrors or other interesting objects.

Auditory enrichment - sounds from the environment with controlled volume levels.

Tactile enrichment – provide different walking surfaces for example.

Olfactory enrichment – different smells like interesting safe plants.

Cognitive enrichment - new objects, problem-solving.

Food-based enrichment - sausage bobbing, food puzzles snuffle mats, etc.



Different training methods

Puppies are inherently driven by their survival instincts, making food a potent primary motivator for luring, shaping, and capturing desired behaviours during training.

Repetition is key in a dog's learning process, and continuous reinforcement is highly effective for teaching new skills. "Jackpotting" is a method of delivering a few treats one after the other immediately after your puppy has had a breakthrough with a challenging task. This brings home the message that they did something right!

Timing is crucial and rewards need to follow desired behaviors as quickly as possible to ensure that puppies understand what they are being rewarded for.

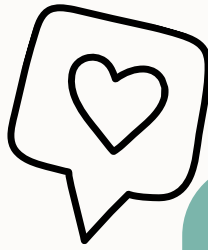
Reputable puppy schools also include information about how to fade lures, the difference between low and high-value treats – and when to use which.

Life skills

Puppies need to learn how to settle in a busy environment and how to calmly greet other pups. Face-to-face introductions are never a good idea, and we need to guide puppies on how to greet one another.



Basic obedience



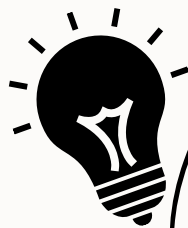
Puppy class sets the scene for basic obedience and ensures that you and your puppy have a meaningful relationship. If you have a great relationship with your puppy, future training will be fun and your puppy will be eager and willing to learn.

Zani Koen mentioned, ***“Attending puppy classes has been a crucial step in creating the “adventure” dog of my dreams. The socialization with other dogs, people (even children), and different environments from a young age has helped to turn Soda into a confident and optimistic adult dog”.***

Puppy classes will ensure your puppy will be ready and emotionally equipped to easily progress into dog sports and other disciplines with a solid foundation. .

Cooperative care

According to a study by the “From Forceful to fear free” publication, 51% of people said their pets dislike going to the vet. If your puppy is desensitized to being touched and experienced body handling from an early age, they will learn that they have a choice in the matter, and cooperation becomes voluntary. Forcefully handling a puppy creates fear and distrust in people.



Monique de Jager

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Training Tips

#1

Always have ***two different types of treats*** for class, one lower value for the beginning of class when they are very eager to eat the treats and a high-value treat for when they are less attentive and more satiated.

#2

Choose a ***reward marker*** word to be used for praise and consistently use that word when your pup performs the desired behaviour. A treat immediately follows the reward marker word.

#3

Rewards can be anything your pup enjoys; it does not always have to be food. You may ***use the environment to your advantage***, for example, sniffing rewards.

Always end training on a high note.

This will ensure that your puppy is excited and ready for the next round of training with you.

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LIFE SKILLS for Dogs

BY SASCHA ODAYAR
COAPE QUALIFIED ANIMAL
BEHAVIOURIST



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It is our hope that our dogs remain fit and healthy, but accidents do happen and teaching them a few life skills can reduce a lot of stress for them and for you.

Archie, our energetic, slightly chaotic, Mallinois cross dachshund had an accident in the garden recently. Partaking in one of his speedy jaunts, he ran too close to the wall and tore the skin off his leg. Once the 15cm size wound was repaired, the month-long recovery required a drastic change in his daily routine.

Here are some life skills Archie was taught as a pup that reduced the stress during the post-op healing stage.

WEARING A CONE

Archie's wound was on his thigh and easy for him to lick or chew at the stitches. A dog's mouth is full of bacteria and allowing them to lick the wound can cause infection and wound breakdown. Some dogs can become very stressed when wearing a cone and can refuse to eat, drink, walk, or lay down with it on. Unfortunately, Archie had to wear a cone, but thankfully he had seen one before and even tried one on for a fun training session, so wearing it wasn't a huge adjustment.

Dog cones are relatively inexpensive and it is a good idea to keep one at home just in case. Taking it out occasionally and feeding your dog treats around it can build up positive associations. You can even encourage your dog to push their head into the cone and reward whilst it lays loosely around their neck.

MUZZLE TRAINING

Muzzle training is a life skill all dogs could benefit from. Whilst your dog may be friendly, pain and fear during a traumatic event can cause a dog to react uncharacteristically. Whilst the vet will try and reduce pain with medication or sedation, it may still be present. For safety, the vet team may have to put one on.

ENSURE MUZZLE AND CONE TRAINING SESSIONS ARE SHORT AND FUN.

BODY HANDLING

Post-operative care may involve the owner changing bandages and cleaning or treating wounds. If your dog already dislikes being handled, their behaviour will only get worse when there is pain and discomfort involved.

Your dog must be comfortable with you feeling over their body, examining ears, eyes, and mouth.

If your dog needs repeat visits to the vet for procedures, ask them about medications to reduce stress that you can give at home before leaving for the appointment.

A CHANGE TO EXERCISE ROUTINES

Whilst it is good to have a regular walking routine with your dogs, we want the dog to be able to cope if that routine changes. Now and then, replace the daily walk with a calm activity or enrichment at home.

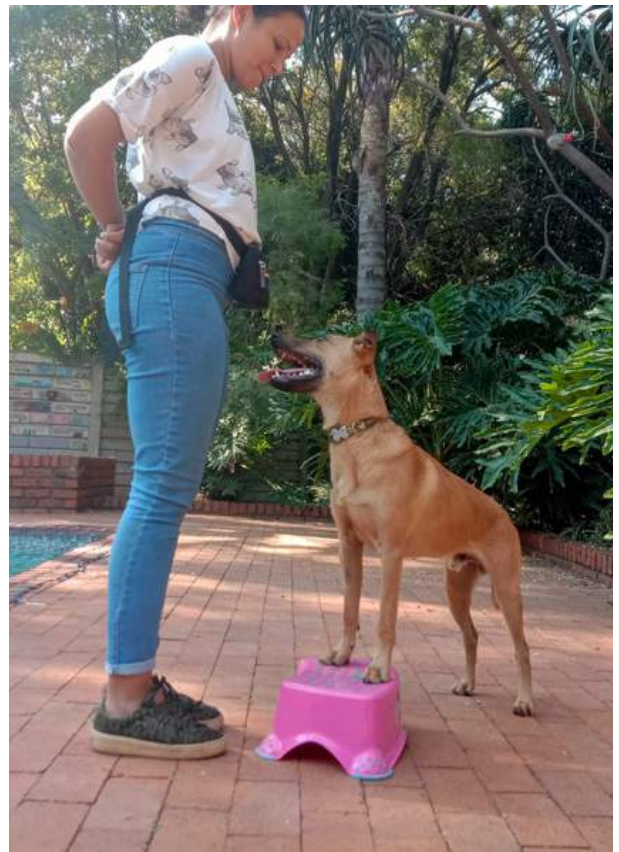
CONFINEMENT

Some post-op recovery requires a dog to be confined and restricted from any exercise other than toilet breaks. For the first couple of days, the dogs are often tired and painful, and keeping them rested is relatively easy. Once they are feeling better in themselves it is much harder to keep them calm. In some situations, a crate or confinement to a smaller area may be necessary. Crate or confinement training is ideal, before the time when it is necessary.

SEPARATION IN A MULTI-DOG HOUSEHOLD

To train the dogs to be comfortable with being separated, start with short play sessions on a one-to-one basis. The dogs should look forward to being with you and having individual attention. Build on the duration of separation over time. You can even separate them so they have their own space to eat a chew and let them back together when they have finished. Your dogs should begin to look forward to solo time, because good things always happen when they are separated.

All of these behaviours are easy to implement and are well worth it if it reduces problems during an already stressful time.



When our dogs are no longer able to have physical exercise, we will need to increase their mental stimulation to ensure they cope with their new restrictive lifestyle. In the next issue, we will share tips and tricks for mentally stimulating a confined or recovering dog.



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A Pet Owner's Guide to First Aid

Preparing for the Festive Season

Written By Sr Dalene Jansen Van Vuuren,
The Pet Vet Nurse

The holiday season is a time of joy and celebration for many, but it can also present unique challenges for pet owners. As we prepare to travel, welcome guests, decorate our homes, and partake in festive traditions, it's essential not to forget about our furry friends.

Pet first aid is a critical skill for all pet owners, and during the holiday season, being well-prepared for potential emergencies is even more important. In this article, we will explore the importance of pet first aid and I will offer tips on how to prepare for holiday season pet emergencies. Also keep an eye out for a Pet first aid course at your local veterinary practice.



The Significance of Pet First Aid

Just as first aid is vital for human health, pet first aid is crucial for our beloved four-legged companions. Whether you have a dog, cat, or other small pets, understanding how to administer basic first aid can mean the difference between life and death in an emergency situation. Always phone your veterinarian for your pet's specific emergency situation and what to do on route to the practice.



Create a Pet First Aid Kit

As part of your preparation for holiday season pet emergencies, assemble a well-stocked pet first aid kit. Ensure that it contains essential items such as bandages, gauze, adhesive tape, a pet thermometer, scissors, antiseptic wipes and ointment, tweezers, and a leash. Ask your veterinary practice or pet specialty store what medications to include for vomiting, diarrhea, pain and fever.

Having a first aid kit ready means you can respond promptly in an emergency.



Identify Emergency Contacts

In case of a pet emergency, know who to contact. Your primary care veterinarian should be your first point of contact. Additionally, keep the number of a local emergency veterinary clinic that is available 24 hours in your area, as well as the number for the **poison control hotline**:

0861-555-777

If you have a pet sitter make sure they know where to take your pet and make arrangements for them.

Holiday-Specific Pet Hazards



Toxic Foods

During the holidays, our homes are often filled with delicious and sometimes toxic foods for pets. Chocolate, raisins, grapes, and some sugar substitutes like xylitol can be deadly to dogs and cats. Ensure that holiday treats are kept out of your pet's reach and educate your guests about the dangers of feeding pets from the dinner table. Vomiting and diarrhea are very common so ask your vet about the best medication to add to your first aid kit that can help with dehydration and set their tummy.



Decorations

Holiday decorations can pose various risks to pets. Cats may be attracted to tinsel, which can cause intestinal blockages if ingested. Tree ornaments, especially those made of glass, can break and cause injuries. Candles can lead to burns or fires. To keep your pet safe, secure decorations, and consider using alternatives like pet-friendly ornaments.



Electrical Cords

String lights, extension cords, and other electrical decorations are common during the holidays. Pets may chew on these cords, risking electrical shock. Ensure cords are tucked away or protected to prevent your pet from coming into contact with them.



Noise and Stress

Holiday festivities often come with loud noises like fireworks and firecrackers. These can be incredibly stressful for pets. Ensure your pet

has a safe and quiet space to retreat to if they become anxious. If you know your pet suffers from anxiety, make sure to visit your vet ahead of time and get the relevant prescription medication.



Know the Basics

By attending a pet first aid course you will learn the fundamental principles of pet first aid:

CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation): Learn how to perform CPR on your pet. While it may seem daunting, it can save your pet's life in the event of cardiac arrest.

Choking: If your pet is choking, they may exhibit signs of distress, including pawing at the mouth and difficulty breathing. Understand how to help a choking pet, as they may accidentally swallow or choke on small holiday decorations, food, or toys. Please try to avoid bones as this is a common choking hazard in South Africa.

Wound Care: Learn how to clean and dress wounds to prevent infection.

Poisoning: If you suspect your pet has ingested a toxic substance, look for symptoms like vomiting, diarrhea, tremors, seizures, or unusual behavior. Know what to do if you suspect your pet has ingested something toxic. Always phone your vet immediately and get advice on whether to induce vomiting or to give something like activated charcoal on route to the vet.

Heat stroke: Signs of heatstroke include excessive panting, drooling, and weakness. Move your pet to a cooler area and provide water immediately, phone your veterinary clinic and on route put your pet in front of the air conditioning. December can be very hot so make sure that the temperature outside does not leave you in an emergency situation. Prevention is key and even on your regular walk, put your hands on the tar, if it is too hot to touch, it is too hot for your pet to walk on.

The holiday season is a time for joy, celebration, and creating cherished memories with loved ones, including our pets. However, it's important to remember that these festive times can also bring potential dangers and emergencies for our furry companions. Understanding pet first aid, creating a pet first aid kit, and being aware of holiday-specific hazards are essential steps in keeping your pet safe during this season.

As a responsible pet owner, you have the power to make the holidays enjoyable and safe for your pets. By staying informed and taking proactive measures, you can ensure that your beloved furry family members experience the season in a healthy and happy way. So, while you deck the halls and celebrate, don't forget to prioritize your pet's well-being, making this holiday season truly special for all members of your family.



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 look after your beloved pets.



SAVING LIVES CAN YOUR DOG BE A HERO?



A Guide to Canine Blood Donation

As pet owners, we always want the best for our furry companions, and sometimes that means helping other animals in need. One way to make a significant difference in the lives of our canine friends is by considering blood donation for dogs. In this article, we'll explore how canine blood donation works, the requirements for becoming a blood donor, and its impact on the pet that gives the gift of life.

Just like humans, dogs sometimes require blood transfusions to treat various medical conditions, such as trauma, surgery, or certain diseases.

Blood donation in dogs can be a lifesaving procedure, but it relies on the generosity of healthy, willing donors.



How it works

Selection of Donors

To be eligible as a blood donor, dogs must meet specific criteria. They should weigh more than 25 kilograms, be between 1 and 7 years old, fully vaccinated and dewormed, and exhibit good health and a calm temperament. Additionally, dogs that have never received a blood transfusion before are preferred donors.

Blood Collection

Blood donation typically involves taking about 450ml of blood (1 unit), which is approximately 10% of a dog's total blood volume. The procedure is quick and safe, often lasting 10-30 minutes, depending on the dog's size and the collection method used. Blood donors are sometimes placed under light sedation which is immediately reversed after the donation process.

Monitoring & Recovery

After donating blood, dogs are closely monitored to ensure they recover well. They may receive treats, pets, and plenty of love for their heroic act.

Future Donations

Healthy dogs can donate blood approximately every 8-12 weeks, making it a sustainable way to contribute to the well-being of other dogs.

Impact on the Donating Pet

Canine blood donation has minimal to no adverse effects on the donor dog when performed by experienced veterinarians. The amount of blood taken is carefully calculated to ensure the dog's safety and well-being. Dogs may experience a temporary drop in blood pressure during the donation process, but this is generally well-tolerated.

The donor dog's body naturally replenishes the lost blood over a short period. A few days of rest and some extra treats are usually all that's needed to ensure a full recovery. Many dogs continue to live healthy, active lives, making them eligible for future donations.

Can Any Breed Donate Blood?

Most dog breeds can become blood donors, provided they meet the specified criteria. The primary focus is on the dog's size, age, health, and temperament rather than their breed. However, certain breeds are more commonly seen as blood donors due to their size, such as Greyhounds, Great Danes, German Shepherds and Pitt Bulls, which tend to have compatible blood types for transfusions.

Where are Veterinary Blood Banks in South Africa

Onderstepoort Animal Blood Bank
(OABB) (Pretoria, Gauteng)

Valley Farm Animal Hospital
(Pretoria, Gauteng)

**Veterinary Anaesthesia Analgesia
and Critical Care Services Blood Bank**
(VAACCS) (Johannesburg, Gauteng)

Tygerberg Animal Hospital
(TAH) (Cape Town, Western Cape)

**Kimberley Veterinary Clinic
Blood Bank**

(Kimberley, Northern Cape)

White River Animal Blood Bank
(White River, Mpumalanga)

Animal Zone Blood Bank
(Tongaat, KZN)

All veterinary blood banks are always looking for new donor pets to join the teams of life savers. Please speak to your vet today, who will refer you to your nearest local Veterinary Blood Bank. Some of the larger veterinary clinics in South Africa have active blood banks. Other practises require donors on call. Regardless of the individual needs of your pet, veterinary blood banks can make the difference between life and death for pets nationwide.

Blood donation in dogs is a noble act that can save the lives of other canines in need. If your dog meets the eligibility criteria, consider discussing the possibility of becoming a blood donor with your veterinarian. By doing so, you can help your pet lead a fulfilling life while making a real difference in the lives of other dogs. Together, we can create a community of heroes that supports and cares for our beloved furry friends in their time of need.



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Season's Greetings
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10 reasons *older* people need pets

As the golden years gracefully approach, the question of companionship often takes center stage for many seniors. Loneliness, a potentially unwelcome companion, can lead to both emotional and physical challenges. Having a pet can have profound benefits for older individuals, examining how these furry companions contribute to overall well-being. From companionship to exercise and beyond, discover the ten reasons why older people find solace, joy, and purpose in the company of their beloved pets.

**IN COLLABORATION WITH
ELSA KRUGER**

1 *companionship*

a trusted ally in aging

Loneliness can be a daunting challenge as we age, impacting mental health and physical well-being. Pets, especially dogs, seamlessly integrate into our lives, offering constant companionship. Their unwavering availability and adaptable nature provide a source of comfort that can combat the effects of isolation.

2 *exercise*

a furry fitness companion

Regular physical exercise is essential at any age, and having a dog makes it a delightful part of daily life. The need for walks and playtime ensures that older pet owners stay active, fostering a healthier lifestyle. The companionship of a pet transforms exercise into an enjoyable and purposeful routine.

3 *stress reduction*

the calming presence

Studies show that older individuals with pets experience lower stress levels compared to those without. Whether it's the daily walks, the unconditional companionship, or the joy of a wagging tail, having a pet contributes to a more relaxed and stress-free life.



4 *having a routine*

structure and purpose

Caring for a pet, particularly a dog, introduces a sense of routine and responsibility. The daily tasks of feeding, grooming, and walks create a structured schedule, instilling purpose and motivation in the lives of older individuals. The pet's reliance becomes a positive motivator, encouraging a commitment to daily activities.

5 *getting out*

staying connected

Owning a pet, especially one requiring regular outdoor activity, facilitates staying connected to the world. From visits to the vet to grooming sessions and social activities, having a pet creates opportunities for engagement and interaction, preventing isolation.

6 *making new friends*

social bonds through pets

Pets serve as natural icebreakers, opening doors to new friendships. Shared activities for pet owners, such as communal walks or participation in charitable events, create a sense of community. The shared love for animals becomes a common ground for building connections.

7 *new interests*

exploring uncharted territories

Having a pet introduces older individuals to new interests and activities. Whether it's participating in community projects or volunteering at hospitals with therapy animals, pets open doors to fulfilling and purposeful engagements beyond the routine.

8 *protection*

security beyond size

Pets, particularly dogs, offer a sense of security. The presence of a barking dog deters potential threats, providing peace of mind for older individuals. The perception of protection, regardless of the pet's size, adds an extra layer of safety.

9 *taking care of something*

a mutual relationship

The desire to be useful and valued remains strong even after retirement. Caring for a pet fulfills this need, creating a mutual relationship where both the owner and the pet provide support, love, and companionship.

10 *investing in life*

commitment to continuity

At its core, having a pet in one's golden years symbolizes a commitment to ongoing involvement in life. This investment in another living being brings purpose, joy, and a sense of fulfillment, making it one of the most positive decisions as individuals embrace the later stages of life.

considerations before welcoming a pet

the pros & cons

Before adopting a pet in your golden years, it's essential to consider your adaptability to change, physical capabilities, and temperament. Assessing factors like the age of the pet, your financial readiness, and having a backup plan for emergencies are all crucial considerations.

financial planning

Owning a pet involves long term financial commitments, including veterinary bills, food, medical care, grooming, and toys. Organisations like *The Dachshund Haven* and their *Senior Savers Club*, offers financial support for veterinary care, ensuring financial constraints don't hinder the joy of pet companionship.

voluntary work opportunities

For those passionate about making a difference, voluntary work with therapy animals presents an enriching opportunity. Visits to retirement homes, frail care centers, and hospices with therapy animals provide comfort and support to those in need.

As we navigate the complexities of aging, the presence of a pet becomes more than a mere choice; it becomes a source of joy, purpose, and companionship.

The companionship of pets in retirement villages not only addresses the emotional needs of seniors but also contributes to their overall well-being. As South Africa's pet lovers consider their golden years, the prospect of sharing these moments with a furry friend becomes an enticing and beneficial choice.



To LEARN MORE about The Dachshund Haven's Senior Savers Club - [CLICK HERE](#)



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It's over... and I'm taking the dog! This might remind some of you of the movie Legally Blonde, but it's actually 'Legally a Nightmare!'

Pet-Nups

written by Maria Wein

Ensuring the Best for Your Furry Companion in Divorce or Separation

It's a tough reality to face, but many of us have experienced the end of a romantic relationship. What can make this situation even more unpleasant is having to go to court to dispute pet custody. Fortunately, in today's world, the concept of "pet-nups" or pet nuptial agreements has emerged as a practical solution to a prevalent issue in contemporary relationships. As pet ownership surged during the pandemic, it has become crucial to address the question of how to handle the fate of our cherished four-legged family members in cases of divorce or separation.

A Pet-Nup, short for pet nuptial agreement, functions much like a prenuptial agreement but pertains to the living arrangements of pets in the unfortunate event of a relationship breakdown. Currently, when a dispute arises regarding pets during a divorce, the only recourse is often costly litigation in court. The outcome can be uncertain and emotionally taxing. Pet-nups, however, offer a proactive approach to determining your pets' living arrangements in advance. They serve as a means of safeguarding the welfare of your pets and ensuring the best outcome for all parties involved.

Pet Custody Mediator Karis Nafte is a certified dog behavior consultant, founder of whokeepsthedog.com. She has extensive experience dating back to 1996 helping families and their pets across the globe. She is about to publish a book on her unique role where she facilitates constructive conversations between disputing parties with regards to the pets instead of resorting to expensive legal battles.

She came across this career after she noticed a pattern in dogs she evaluated, "I've come across many dogs who were having anxiety issues, behaviour issues, who were experiencing stress in various ways. And the cause of those behaviour problems was a bad divorce decision or an unfair custody decision in terms of the dog. I work with people that love their animals enough to want to do what's right for them, regardless of the outcome."

A Pet-Nups Purpose

Firstly, they provide a detailed plan for your pet's future in the event of a divorce. Beyond this, they act as a legal safeguard for your pet. While our pets are cherished members of our families, the legal system doesn't recognize them as such. In the eyes of the law, they are classified as property. Courts may not prioritize their welfare as they would for human children. Thus, pet-nups offer a way to ensure an amicable settlement regarding pet care is established before any potential disputes arise.

Will my Pet-Nup stand up in Court?

Although Nafte has never come across a pet-nup being used in court specifically in South Africa, she says they are a 'wise-decision', but not legally binding in terms of our law.

Nafte says, "The animals are viewed as personal property in court. They're not seen as children. So the person needs to prove ownership. The challenge with all legal things is that nothing is black and white. Some people will say, well, I paid for the dog. But then the other person might say, my name is on the vet records and the registration papers of the dog. So, therefore, the dog is mine, so even proving ownership is not as easy as people think."

Although pet-nuptial agreements are not legally binding documents in the strictest sense, they carry weight in court. A well-structured pet-nup that comprehensively outlines pet living and care arrangements will be considered when the court makes a decision. Without a pet-nup, the court may treat the pet as any other marital possession. In situations where couples are not legally married, cohabitation agreements may be used to address pet care.

What is in a Pet-Nup?

Nafte says going to a lawyer who will likely charge an hourly rate will set you back anywhere from R1,000 to R10,000. But there are online drafts for free that can be tailored to the unique needs of individuals and their pets. When drafting a pet-nup, consider including the following:

- Clarification of pet custody and ownership, as well as visitation rights
- Care arrangements should someone fall ill or pass away
- Decision-making authority for medical care
- Insurance responsibilities
- Ongoing veterinary expenses
- Maintenance, such as grooming or boarding
- Food provisions
- Other day-to-day care and breeding expenses
- Custody arrangements

Incorporating these elements ensures that the document is as close to a legally-binding agreement as possible, minimizing ambiguity and potential disputes.

Nafte highlights that in some instances, separations and divorces can turn acrimonious, leading to situations where individuals may contemplate euthanizing their pet or relinquishing them to a shelter out of a desire to prevent the other party from claiming a perceived victory.

"If animals end up in a shelter, then technically the animal becomes the property of that shelter. And then anyone who might potentially, you know, wanna get the animal, then has to go through the adoption process, which can be complicated and and is really something you wanna avoid," she says.



Pet Ownership, what does that mean in South Africa?

Legally, pets are considered assets, akin to personal property like cars or toasters. Typically, the individual who purchased the pet is recognized as its owner. In divorce, this legal ownership often supersedes the emotional bond. Exceptions may apply if there is clear evidence that the pet was a gift to the other party.

When children are involved, the court may consider the pet's living arrangements alongside the child's best interests. Children's emotional ties to pets hold significance, and the court will prioritize their welfare.

Nafte says that although South Africa doesn't recognize animals legally as sentient beings, it will be interesting in the future to see what happens with legislation as young adults are

opting to have pets rather than children.

She says, " Millennials and the Gen Zs who are getting married, are having pets rather than having babies. In America specifically sometimes up to 1/4 of the divorces that they work with involve a pet custody issue. So it is becoming a global concern for people because when people don't have Children, but they do have pets, the pets have the same emotional weight that a child does.

Nafte emphasizes the importance of prioritizing caution over regret, as ownership disputes can still arise. She explains that if, for instance, a husband originally gifted his wife a dog, reimbursing him for the dog's cost could potentially be interpreted as a transfer of ownership, further complicating the situation.

In more challenging scenarios, if the divorcing couple cannot reach an agreement on pet ownership, the court might consider selling the pet and dividing the proceeds. This is an extreme measure, usually used as a last resort.

In light of these possibilities, having a Pet-nup in place is highly recommended to protect your furry companions and make their future more certain and secure.

Lawyers that can help

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Schuld Inc Collaborative Practitioners in association with Who Keeps the Dog, Pet Mediation, offers petnup services to their clients anywhere in South Africa. This service includes behaviour consultation when necessary to ensure that the long term needs of the pets are handled in the best way possible.

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[LINK TO PET-NUP](#)

ABOUT KARIS

I am an animal behavior expert who provides pet custody mediation with the pet's well-being as the priority. A certified Dog Behavior Consultant & accredited Family Mediator, I bring more than 25 years experience as a dog behavior expert into my work in the pet custody area.



Karis Nafte
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ACCREDITED FAMILY MEDIATOR
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Photo Credit Tegan Smith Photography



Genetic Testing for Working Breeds



What are working dogs?

Working dogs are breeds that were originally bred to assist humans with a variety of tasks such as hunting, pulling sleds and herding cattle or sheep.

There are many different categories of working dogs including service dogs, therapy dogs, sniffer or detection dogs, police, military, search and rescue, herding, livestock, and guard dogs. The most commonly known being the service dog (guide dogs, mobility assistance and seizure dogs). Each of these categories perform vital roles that benefit society.

Why genetically test working dogs?

Breeding and selecting suitable candidates to be working dogs entails a long list of requirements from behavioural traits to physical ability. Genetic testing should be one such requirement. Genetic testing can provide vital information about a dog's health or their future health. Many of the working breed categories are filled with specific breeds due to the breed traits that make them ideal for the role. For example, police dogs are usually German

Shepherds, while guide dogs are usually Labrador Retrievers. Each breed, especially pure-bred dogs, is at risk of inheriting certain diseases. Many of these inherited diseases are late-onset and will only show symptoms later in life.

Should a guide dog be placed with an individual or placed in a specific role, one of the requirements is that the dog be as healthy as possible. Late-onset genetic diseases will show no symptoms until an animal has already been placed with an individual or in a specific role. However, if genetic testing is done before placement, preventative measures can be taken (if possible) to mitigate or prepare for the development of the disease. For example, Copper Storage Disease is a common inherited disease for Golden Retrievers, but environmental factors and diet can contribute to the development of the disease. Therefore, if tested before placement, the dog can still be placed but with a diet that will help prevent symptom development.

Genetic testing should always be done for working dogs to give organisations or individuals vital information about the health of the dog. This allows for no surprises later on in the dog's life.

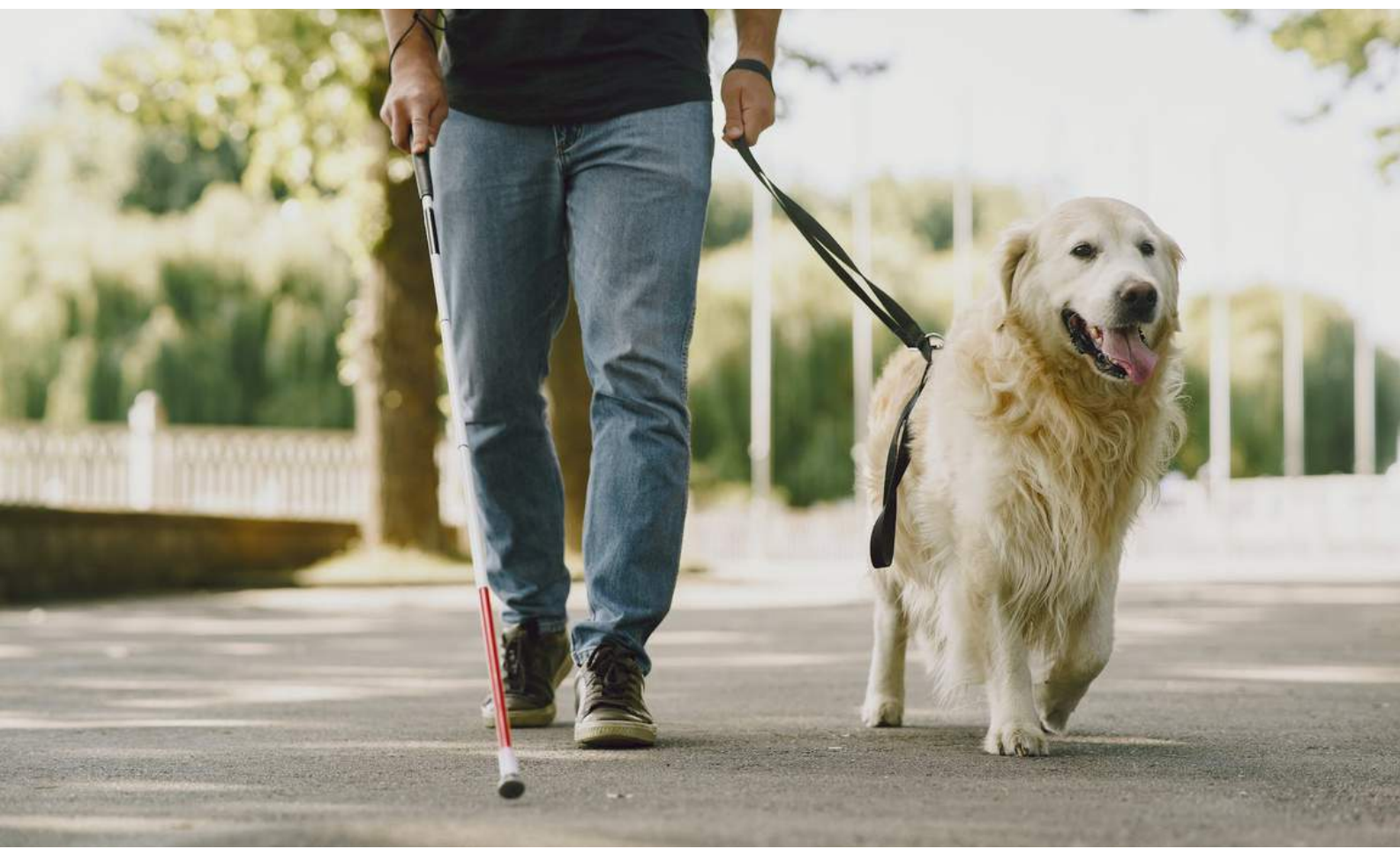
Where can I get genetic health tests done?

At ZooOmics we provide both health and colour testing as well as DNA profiles for both canine and feline. We utilise innovative technology for our mutation testing and provide you with certificates for all testing done, which can be submitted to registrars and breed societies.

Contact us at info@ZooOmics.co.za for any enquiries on sample collection, shipping of samples, sample processing and services offered. Alternatively visit our website at www.zoomomics.co.za to download our sample submission form.



www.zoomomics.co.za



Food is Medicine

It's all about your pet's microbiome

*Brought to you by Pawsome Raw in collaboration with Dr Morne Strydom
Medical Practitioner: Clinical Pharmacologist
MBChB, Bsc (MediSci), MPharmMed, PhD, AC Clin Pharm (SA)*

Today we live in a world that industrialized our food supply. Our food became highly processed, high in sugar, and low in fibre, which significantly altered our beneficial gut bacteria – the microbiome of the gut.

The micro-organisms of the microbiome play a vital role in many physiological functions – it controls harmful bacteria (pathogens), supports gut health and the immune system, produces vitamins and short chain fatty acids, to name just a few.

It is clear from ongoing research that the composition of microorganisms in the gut plays an important role in health and disease prevention. This is interesting, because your dog's gut wall houses 70- 80% of the cells that makes up their immune system. Therefore, any disruption caused to the gut microbiome will implicate a disruption of the immune system, which may have dreadful consequences.

Studies in humans have demonstrated an association between gut microorganisms and health conditions, including obesity, allergies, diabetes, chronic fatigue syndrome, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, autism, autoimmune diseases, mood disorder, cancer, and any more.



www.pawsomeraw.com

Many diseases outwardly unrelated are actually caused by an unhealthy gut microbiome. Likewise, studies done in dogs and cats suggest that many health issues often observed in today's pets, such as oral disease, gastrointestinal diseases, skin and urinary tract problems, and bacterial infections, are all closely linked to changes in the gut microbiome.

As seen in humans, the majority of health issues are caused by environmental causes, with the most prevalent being an inappropriate diet.

HOW DO I KEEP MY DOG'S MICROBIOME HEALTHY?

Any population in the world thrives when living conditions are favourable; food must be available, and the environment must be safe.

Your dog's microbiome population of microorganisms is not different in this aspect. The biggest threat to the microbiome is antibiotic use.

Antibiotics are "blind" and "trigger happy" and will destroy all bacteria, including the bad and good bacteria. Hence, antibiotics should always be prescribed and used in a justified and responsible manner. In the event of antibiotic usage, the pet owner should remember to implement "damage control measures" to reduce the amount of casualties caused to the microbiome by providing the pet with foods and supplements that nourish the microorganisms of the gut. For this purpose, the best option is to feed a nutritionally balanced, species appropriate, fresh food diet. A study conducted and published by Sandri et al. (2016) suggested that raw diets promote a more balanced growth of gut microorganism populations in conjunction with a positive change in healthy gut function.

Reference:

Sandri, Misa, et al. "Raw meat based diet influences faecal microbiome and end products of fermentation in healthy dogs." *BMC veterinary research* 13.1 (2016): 65.

WHAT SUPPLEMENTS MAY BE BENEFICIAL TO MY DOG'S MICROBIOME?

- Fermented vegetables added to your dog's food is an excellent way to feed its gut microbiome.
- Probiotic supplements may assist in restoring the gut microbiome after drug therapy or during stressful times. Goat milk kefir is an excellent natural choice loaded with both prebiotics and beneficial probiotic cultures which may be used on a regular basis.
- Digestive enzymes as a supplement, also very beneficial to promote healthy digestion. Good quality digestive enzymes for your dog should be animal-derived and can be found in raw green tripe and organs rich in digestive enzymes, like the pancreas.

Good health starts in the gut. We are what we eat, and what we feed in our lives will grow strong! Your gut is home to a "flower garden" of good and beneficial microorganisms. Remember to water and fertilize your "gut garden" to enable it to blossom in good health! Pawsome Raw is the perfect start to a good, healthy gut for your pet!



For more information on top grade, premium quality nutrition for pets, Contact **Pawsome Raw**. We have Petfood nutritionists that will assist you with advice on dealing with your pets' allergies.

EMAIL: orders@pawsomeraw.com

SPENCERS
tick & flea

**LOVE
YOUR PET
NATURALLY**



EMAIL: caroline@spencersnpp.co.za Tel: 082 658 8714

Are you concerned about the toxicity of the tick and flea products that you are using on your precious pet? Are you looking for a safe, scientifically proven non-toxic effective alternative?

SPENCERS Natural Pet Products have the perfect solution!

Owners are starting to become more selective regarding which tick and flea products they use on their pets. Unfortunately, due to the toxicity of some of the 'regular' products, there are more and more reports of serious side effects, which is of great concern. In fact, the FDA has put out warnings to be cautious when using certain products. There are some 'natural' alternatives, but many of them have not been scientifically tested, and therefore, one needs to be careful which products you use.

The good news is that **SPENCERS** range of natural tick and flea products can be used as an alternative, as they are the only scientifically

proven, natural tick and flea products in SA. They are non-toxic, formulated by vets, manufactured in a scientific laboratory under ISO standards, and have clinical dossiers to show the efficacy and safety of the products. These dossiers and ISO standard certificates are available on the website: www.spencersnpp.co.za

The products are available from selected retailers and the full range is available from Takealot and the Petworld online stores. For more information and the list of retailers, visit our website or any of our social media platforms.



The exclusive formulas and the best prime materials that **SPENCERS** use guarantee the stability, and shelf-life of all the products. They are pH-specific for each type of animal, not tested on captive animals, recyclable, and biodegradable. Some of the products have vegan status. These products are used worldwide, and therefore, one can rest assured that you are using a good, effective product that works!

The essential oils that form the active ingredients are extracted using high-quality processes, thus ensuring that the activity of the product is optimal.

The oils do not get into the bloodstream but are absorbed by the fatty layer of the skin. This is why they are much safer than many of the other products, as the active ingredient does not get to the organs, blood or nervous system. The three oils that are used include – **Neem, Geraniol and Lavender.**



Neem Oil has been used for centuries in India for medicinal purposes in humans and animals, and it has been tested in many scientific trials to prove its efficacy. Amongst the many benefits, the oil is known to repel insects including ticks, fleas, flies, mosquitoes, lice, and mites. It also is excellent for skin health and is used for animals with problem skins as it hydrates the skin and reduces redness and itching. The oil also has antiseptic and antibacterial properties.

Geraniol (Rose, Geranium, Citronella) and **Lavender oil** also have anti-insect properties and the aroma forms a barrier around the pet to prevent the insect from getting to the animal. Lavender also has a calming effect on the animals.

THE RANGE INCLUDES:

Spot on drops, collars, sprays, waterless & regular shampoos.

These products are concentrated, so a little goes a long way, which means that they are cost effective.

Unlike other natural tick & flea products on the market, they also smell fantastic, and this aroma is long lasting.

With regards to natural products, it is preferable to 'layer the products'. In other words, you can use the drops (last 30 days) or collars (last three months) and add the spray to use when going walking in an area where there are ticks & fleas.

CUSTOMER REVIEW

"Sadly, my dog has had fits from using the tick and flea tablet that I used for him. I really needed to find an alternative, and luckily heard about the Spencers products. It is such a relief to know that these drops are non-toxic, and I know that they are properly researched. He has had no ticks or fleas since I started using the spot-on drops. Highly recommended."

love them naturally



INSECT PREVENTION SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN



Neem Oil • Geraniol Oil • Lavender Oil

www.spencersnpp.co.za



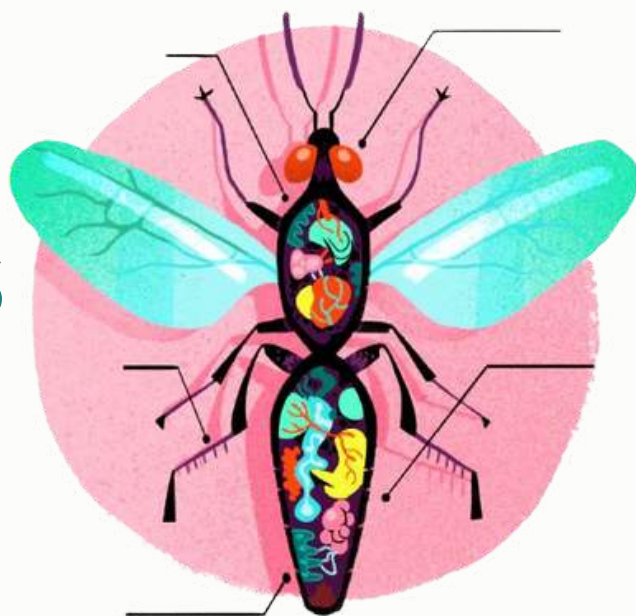
Tiny Wonders, Healthier Lives

The Secret to Dogs Wellbeing

In recent years, an increase in the prevalence of various health issues in dogs such as skin and gut sensitivities, joint problems, and cancer has been observed. Research has suggested a correlation between these health problems and the ingredients commonly found in conventional dog foods, often filled with allergens, artificial additives and low quality proteins and ingredients (Knight et al., 2023).

As the link between nutrition and wellness has emerged, pet owners have increasingly sought solutions to address these issues, causing a groundbreaking shift in the pet food industry. Among these innovations, insect-based dog food has gained a lot of attention for its remarkable nutritional (and environmental) benefits.

aiko



a nutritional wonder

One of the key ingredients in these novel dog food formulations is black soldier fly larvae, renowned for its exceptional nutritional profile (Lu et al., 2022). They boast an **impressive protein** content, a vital component for the **muscle development, energy, and overall well-being** of our furry friends. What sets them apart is not just the quantity but the quality of protein, containing all ten essential amino acids that dogs need for optimal health (Danieli et al., 2019).



Moreover, black soldier fly larvae are **rich in healthy fats, including omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids** (Ewald et al., 2020). These fats play an important role in promoting **cognitive function and supporting joint health**. For pet owners concerned about **food allergies**, black soldier fly larvae provide a **hypoallergenic protein** source, making it an excellent choice for dogs with sensitivities such as skin and gut issues.

They are also **rich in vital nutrients** such as calcium, iron, and B-vitamins, promoting optimal **bone health and a shiny coat**. This makes insect-based dog food an ideal choice for pet owners looking to ensure their dogs receive a balanced and complete diet.

a natural & sustainable solution

However, the benefit of these tiny flies extends beyond their exceptional nutritional profile to being a far more sustainable solution than meat-based alternatives. You may wonder what this has to do with your dog? Well here it comes: Global meat production is a significant contributor to the world's greenhouse gas emissions. In fact it

contributes as much as 25%. And unfortunately our furry friends are not so innocent, they consume up to 20% of their country's meat and fish each year (Okin, 2017).

And this is where insect-based dog food comes in! Black soldier fly larvae are remarkably efficient in converting feed into protein (Siddiqui et al., 2022), requiring significantly **fewer resources such as land (50x less), water (20x less), and feed compared to conventional livestock**. They also emit **100x less CO2** than livestock farming and do not emit any nitrous oxide or methane (Buitrago et al., 2021). The reduction in the ecological pawprint associated with insect farming makes it a responsible choice for the conscientious dogs (and their owners).

aiko - nourishing dogs, nurturing the planet

If you are keen to give this innovative food a try for your own pooch, look no further! Meet **aiko**, a new brand leading the insect-based dog food movement in South Africa.

aiko sets itself apart by incorporating black soldier fly larvae along with a thoughtfully selected blend of nutrient-rich ingredients. For example, local grown rooibos and kelp algae have been added for their calming, and anti-inflammatory properties (Lee et al., 2013).



Additionally, vegetables like sweet potatoes, carrots, and lentils are combined with fruits such as apples and a variety of other **wholesome, nutrient-dense** components (e.g. chia seeds).

aiko is also committed to sourcing all ingredients and producing the food **locally**. Formulated in collaboration with a **renowned animal nutritionist** and **veterinarians**, **aiko**'s number one priority is the health and longevity of our beloved pets. The brand's dedication to quality is underscored by **ongoing scientific studies in Germany**, demonstrating **promising results** regarding the positive impact of **aiko** on the well-being of our beloved companions.

aiko - redefining nutrition

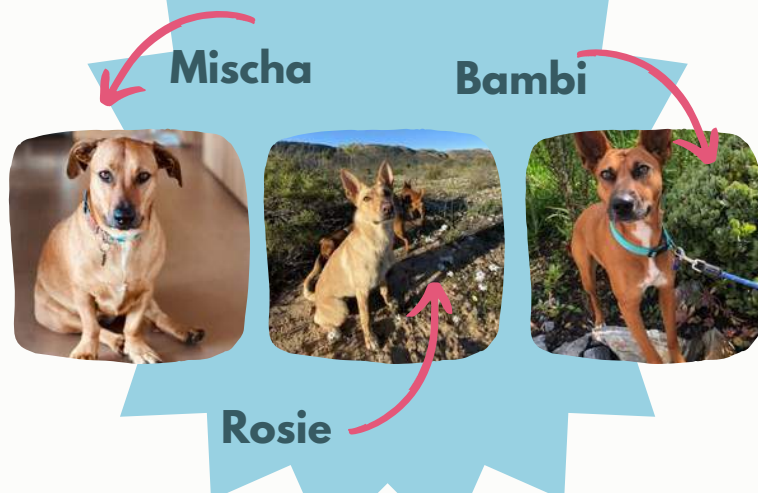
In conclusion, **aiko** stands as a testament to the evolution of our dog's nutrition, offering a **sustainable and nutritionally superior** option for pet owners. By harnessing the nutritional power of black soldier fly larvae and combining it with locally sourced ingredients, **aiko** delivers a product that not only promotes the well-being of dogs but also aligns with the growing demand for environmentally conscious choices.

As we have become more aware of the health needs of our best friends and the urgency of creating a sustainable future for all, **aiko** is one of the pioneers, revolutionizing the pet food landscape. For pet owners seeking a **premium, scientifically backed, and locally produced option**, **aiko** represents a great choice. It combines innovation, nutrition, and environmental responsibility—all for the benefit of our four-legged best friends.

and who is behind aiko?

Born out of a shared concern for the well-being of their own dogs (Misha, Bambi and Rosie), **aiko** was founded by three friends (Nora, Natalie and Christina), living in South Africa. Faced with a lack of healthy, delicious, and sustainable options on the market, they took matters into their own hands, creating a wholesome and nutritious food for their own furry friends. Their work is driven by a continuous commitment to enhance the well-being of all dogs, offering them a diet that is not only delicious but also mindful of their health and the environment.

the taste testers - someone has to do the hard work.



If you want to give **aiko** a try, you can find them on www.aikoplanet.com or in an Absolute Pets store near you.

If you have any questions, would like to get a free sample or just say hi, you can do so via hello@aikopetfoods.com



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WRITTEN BY MARIA WEIN

ANIMAL SANCTUARIES

HOW TO IDENTIFY A LEGITIMATE ANIMAL SANCTUARY

For those who have a deep concern for animals and wish to support rescue efforts, animal sanctuaries can be a compassionate alternative to exploitative captive facilities. The term "sanctuary" traditionally signifies a haven or a protective refuge.

Regrettably, there are instances where certain entities, particularly those self-identifying as sanctuaries, misuse this label for purposes contrary to its true meaning: some unethical roadside zoos and breeding facilities have started labeling themselves as "sanctuaries" or "rescues" to attract customers, even claiming to contribute to species conservation.

To avoid falling victim to these deceptive tactics, you can follow a few straightforward pointers to determine whether a facility genuinely supports animals or is exploiting them. You can often find answers to these questions by examining the facility's website and social media profiles before planning a visit.

In South Africa, big cats and elephants are the most commonly exploited animals in facilities claiming to be "sanctuaries."

FREEDOM TO MOVE AND ENCLOSURE HABITAT

Depending on the species-specific needs, animals should have sufficient horizontal and vertical space for exploration, roaming, climbing, and foraging. Legitimate sanctuaries do not take their animals on the road for public display but provide them with a comfortable and stimulating environment with minimal human interference.

Reputable sanctuaries strive to replicate the natural habitats of their animals. Social animals should have suitable partners for companionship and emotional stimulation. Be wary of cramped enclosures with concrete floors or enclosures with worn pacing paths.

ENRICHMENT!

Habitats should provide opportunities for both physical and psychological

stimulation, like climbing structures for chimpanzees, bathing areas for tigers, and spacious fields for grazing animals. The purpose of enrichment is to facilitate natural behaviors rather than merely creating a picturesque scene for visitors.

CUB PETTING OR TOUCHING OF ANY KIND?

Reputable sanctuaries housing wild or exotic animals (such as big cats, elephants, primates, and wolves) do not permit any hands-on interactions, including posing for photos. Such interactions disrupt and distress animals and pose risks to both animals and visitors.

Animals should not be treated as props. Read it again. Reputable sanctuaries should be treated like retirement villages for animals.

DOES THE FACILITY BREED?

Legitimate sanctuaries refrain from breeding. They understand that breeding contributes to the problem they aim to solve. It takes up valuable sanctuary space that could be used for rescued animals and depletes limited resources needed to rescue others in need. You also have to ask what they are breeding for and where are those animals ending up.

WHERE DID THE ANIMALS COME FROM?

Many animals are discarded by private owners or come from circuses, roadside zoos, laboratories, or other exploitative industries. True sanctuaries offer animals a permanent home until the end of their lives, except in rare circumstances where it benefits the animal. They do not engage in animal trading, borrowing, or lending. Staff at genuine sanctuaries are often eager to share individual stories, shedding light on the harmful industries affecting these animals.

WHO SUPPORTS THEM?

One of the well-respected accrediting bodies for animal sanctuaries is the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS). GFAS may conduct an on-site visit to assess a sanctuary's compliance with their standards - which are rigorous. Most accredited sanctuaries do not breed or sell animals and provide rescued exotic animals with peaceful, spacious, and natural habitats among their own species. In terms of South Africa, unfortunately, there are no accrediting bodies.

Remember to trust your instincts. If you suspect that a facility may mistreat animals for profit, ask more questions. Is the animal's housing subpar? Are they stuck in small concrete or dirt-floored cages and no meaningful enrichment?

If you are already on-site, express your concerns, request a refund, and leave. Report them to your nearest SPCA. A genuine sanctuary prioritizes the needs and desires of its residents over the interests of paying gawking visitors, ensuring a lifetime of excellent care.

Supporting unscrupulous sanctuaries with ticket sales, funds neglect and cruelty, and no visit is worth the lifelong suffering endured by animals stripped of their dignity and natural behaviors.

THE FIVE FREEDOMS

Certainly, the 5 Freedoms are essential principles that guide the humane treatment of animals in various environments, including sanctuaries:

Freedom from Hunger and Thirst: Animals in sanctuaries should always have access to clean, fresh water and a nutritionally appropriate diet that meets their dietary needs, ensuring they are healthy and energized.

Freedom from Discomfort: Animals should be provided with comfortable living conditions that protect them from adverse weather conditions (such as excessive heat, cold, or rain). They should also have access to clean and appropriate shelter.

Freedom from Pain, Injury, or Disease: Sanctuaries have a duty to ensure the physical well-being of animals under their care. This includes providing prompt and proper veterinary care to prevent and treat illness or injury, as well as implementing measures to minimize risks.

Freedom to Express Normal Behavior: Animals should have the space, resources, and opportunities to engage in natural behaviors specific to their species. This may include foraging, socializing, grooming, exploring, or playing.

Freedom from Fear and Distress: Animals should not be subjected to unnecessary stress or fear. Sanctuaries should create an environment that minimizes anxiety-inducing factors and promotes the psychological well-being of animals. This includes avoiding loud noises, aggressive handling, or other distressing stimuli.

By adhering to these 5 Freedoms, sanctuaries ensure that the animals in their care enjoy a high quality of life, free from unnecessary suffering and in line with principles of animal welfare and ethical treatment.

info@bananimaltrading.org
Report any concerns to Smaragda Louw at BAN ANIMAL TRADING



HAPPILY *fur-ever after*

The Story of Mushu, the Pittie-Mix

There is nothing that warms our hearts more than seeing a TEARS rescue pet experience its well-deserved SECOND CHANCE and be adopted into a loving family that knowingly takes on the challenge of a dog that was once broken in body, heart, and spirit and demonstrates what it means to be loved unconditionally.

When Pittbull-X Mushu came to **TEARS** as a 4-month old puppy, he had experienced a lifetime of pain and torturous treatment by his litter mates. His body was covered in horrific wounds from repeated attacks from his siblings, which were left untreated by his owners, before he was surrendered to **TEARS**.

His journey from rescue, treatment, rehabilitation and rehoming took four months, until he was adopted by his pet parent, Saya.



Saya shares this story:

"Given the number of people who sadly return adopted animals due to their own incapacities, the team at **TEARS** went to great lengths to ensure that we knew what we were in for by adopting a power-breed that had experienced significant trauma from an early age. Just like adopting any other child, we were committed for the duration of his journey to trusting humans again. No amount of "bad" behaviour would change the fact that we were now his legal parents/custodians, or that we were fully committed to loving him through it all.

Despite the risks, Mushu turned out to be the kindest, gentlest, and most loving animal. While he continues to exhibit his trauma triggers which include loud noises, the hose, broom, or the shoe of a man coming too close to him, it's still an amazing feat that he's not more emotionally scarred considering what he survived.

The first time we saw him wag his tail was his first day at the dog park. He ran full speed towards the other dogs, screeching to a halt a meter before reaching them. The first time we heard his voice was during one of his little dreams. When he's not giving the ridgebacks a run for their money, his best friends are the puppies and senior dogs, where he exhibits a gentleness that's unmatched.

We struggled to go into certain community spaces initially, as many would see a white "pitty" with his big pirate scars and either leave or ask us to go elsewhere. So we decided to dress him up before any outing. Painted gold nails, bowties, flower crowns, and decorative festive hair dye were among his classic outfits.

Today, Mushu is somewhat famous and always brings a smile to everyone he meets. Due to popular demand, he even has his own Tiktok account! We train him every day and he's learnt over 30 verbal commands. He gets sunblock and coconut oil massages for his scars, while Dad cooks up the best bone broth and parboiled carrots. And the best news of all: we recently decided to expand our little family with a rescue cat from **TEARS**. The pair have fallen in love.



We cannot thank **TEARS** enough for all they've done. They face hardships every day and, much like Mushu, still somehow approach every animal with a bottomless outpouring of love and care. They go above and beyond to holistically ensure every rescue animal has the best second chance at a happily-ever-after.

TEARS Team, Helene, Kira, Luke... Your child is safe with us now. We can't thank you enough for being his first real loving home. We won't let you down!"

Love,

*Saya, Daddy,
Mushu & Whisper
x x x x*



Media contact

Odette Visser
TEARS Marketing & Events Coordinator
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Email: events@tears.org.za

www.tears.org.za



TEARS is a pro-life, non-profit organisation established in 1999 (registered in terms of Section 18A of the Income Tax Act) whose core aim is to rescue, treat, rehabilitate, reunite and rehome lost, abandoned, abused, and neglected companion animals and to educate pet owners and the youth living in the under-resourced communities within which we operate.

We strive to meet the needs of the low-income communities in the Southern Peninsula by providing:

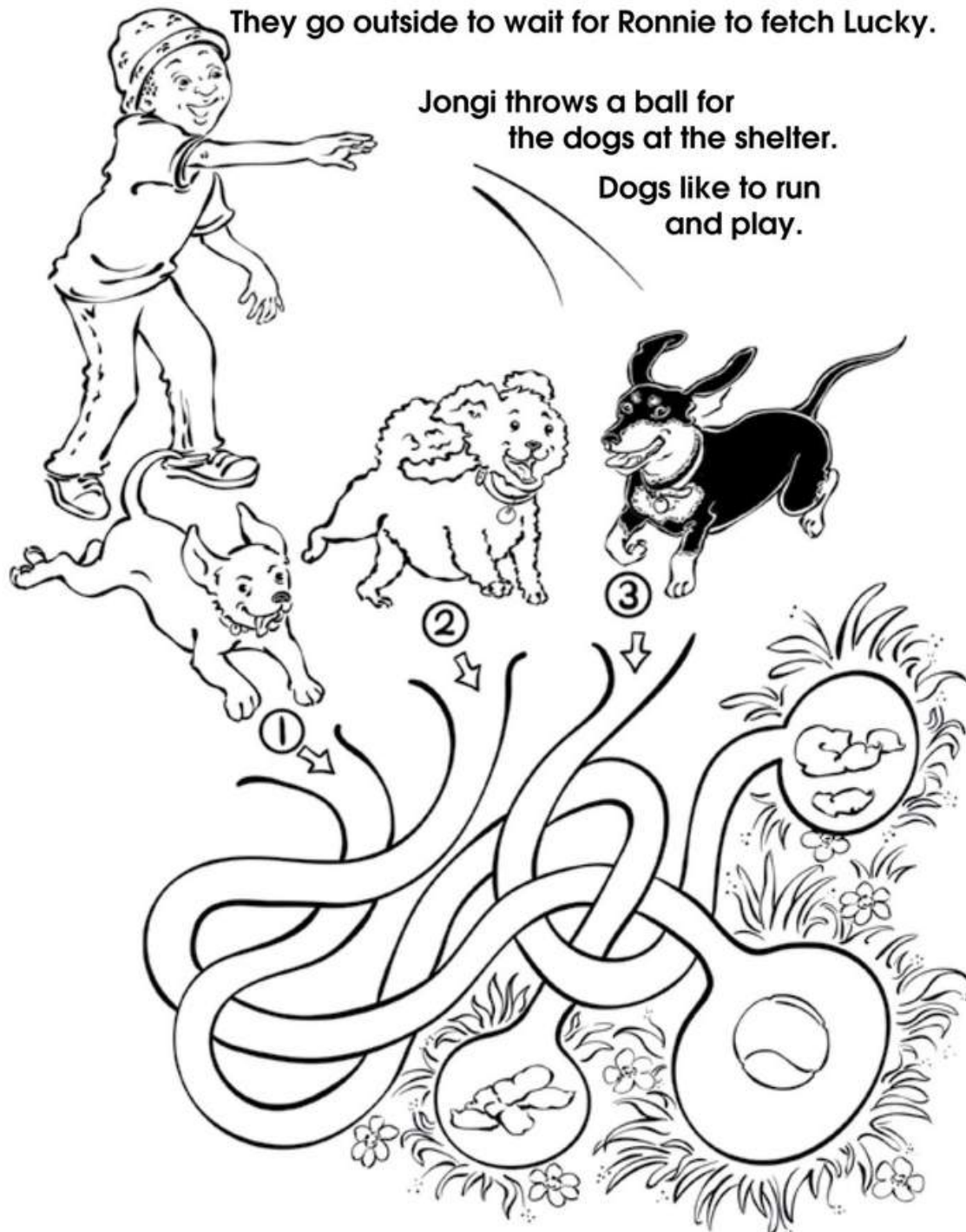
- free sterilisations and subsidised medical support that includes vaccinations, deworming, and parasite control
- access to two **TEARS** mobile clinics that offer primary healthcare and pet care support.



for the kids



WWW.HERO-IN-MY-HOOD.CO.ZA



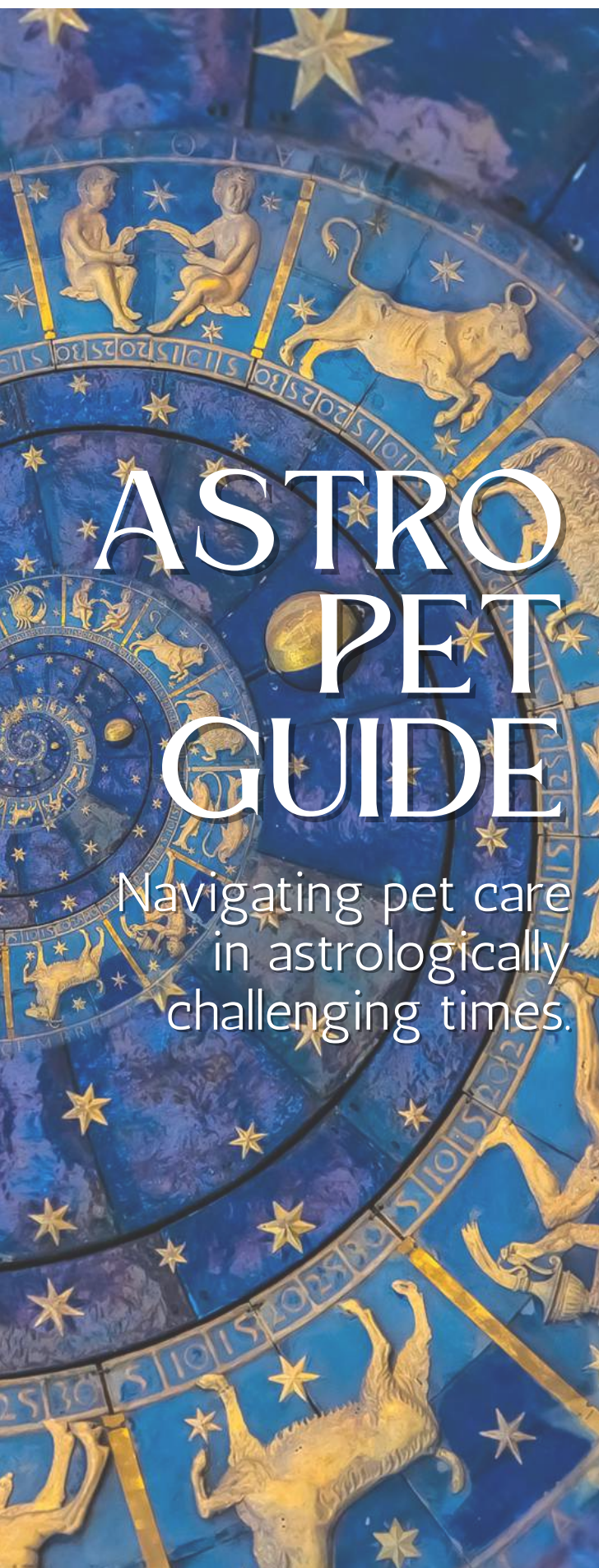
Follow the paths to help the dogs get some exercise.

Who finds the ball, and what do the others find ...?

Lucky's
activity book

Meet young Jongi!





After a rather intense October and November with eclipses, heavy energy, and global turbulence, most of us are hoping for a peaceful and calm end to the year. It's also a time when our interest in the future is likely at its peak, so the astrological view has broadened a bit this time.

The lunar and solar eclipses in November, coinciding with the Sun in Scorpio, make the end of the year full of troubles and worries, almost unbearable for some. Prominent oppositions between planets in Scorpio and Taurus, dividing the sky for most of November, cut off everything old and comfy, paving the way for something new, unpredictable, and sometimes challenging to fit into the existing frame of reference.

In many ways, these energies will prevail for most of December as planets continue their work, removing the coziness of the past and shaping the reality for the future.

These energies are challenging for some, and they may manifest in our bodies as nerve and muscle ailments, limb and head accidents, and incidents involving cars and machinery.

Our pets are not exempt from the above, as they often mirror their owners. Additionally, their own natal charts may be affected by sky energies negatively, although this is always individual.

Ideally, if you plan to deworm, vaccinate, or spay your pet, it should be done by December 12th to avoid any adverse events or complications. The best days for grooming are the 2nd to 8th, 11th to 14th, and 20th to 22nd.

Mercury goes retrograde from December 13th to January 1st. During this period, many of us will revisit our career choices or assess our progress, avoiding making any serious decisions. For many, it will be a time to make serious decisions about relationships—be it with friends, family, colleagues, or partners. This is a time to analyze and observe, list and weigh pros and cons, and take lessons from past decisions.

It's best to avoid any surgeries or treatments that can be postponed. Instead, focus on observing pets, especially those born in December and January. Older pets, in particular, may develop a sudden onset of arthritis or other bone-related diseases, kidney issues, or skin problems.

Another wise approach during this Mercury retrograde is to impose restrictions on spending. This shouldn't be a problem, given the current economic outlook.

On Christmas day, the sky will contribute to numerous miscommunications, misrepresentations, and misconceptions. The worst part is that many of us will feel compelled to voice our opinions or defend our points of view. Christmas was never the best day for such discussions, and this time around, it would be literally the worst, especially if celebrating merrily.

Accidents, including those involving cars, boats, and horses, are literally waiting to happen this Christmas. Therefore, prioritize safety during travel or sports involving the mentioned activities.

January begins with Mercury in a stationary state, so it's essential to double-check your emails, be careful with your words, and keep a close eye on your pets in the first days of 2024.

Grooming is recommended on the 8th–10th, 16th, 17th, 19th, 20th, and 27th–31st. For immunizations and deworming, consider the 3rd–5th, 8th–10th, and 19th–22nd.

January is expected to be much calmer than the last quarter of 2023. However, 2024 will continue to bring significant changes worldwide, reshaping financial systems and politics.

It's crucial to note that the above recommendations primarily pertain to planned and preventative procedures. In case of any sudden acute health conditions, seeking urgent veterinary assistance remains paramount.



ZooOmics™, the animal genetics division of inqaba biotec™ (est. 2002) has been dedicated to providing accurate genetic tests and exceptional client service for over a decade to sub-Saharan Africa.

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ZooOmics offers over 85 Canine genetic tests.

Testing is done with the Gold Standard, DNA sequencing.

HEALTH TESTS:

Degenerative Myelopathy (SOD1)
Cystinuria
Pyruvate Kinase Deficiency (PKLR)
Centronuclear Myopathy (BIN1) (PTPLA)
Copper Storage Disease (ATP7B)
Exercise Induced Collapse (NEI)
Progressive Retinal Atrophy (PRCD)
Goniodysgenesis & Glaucoma (OLFML3)
Primary Open Angle Glaucoma (ADAMTS10)
Primary Lens Luxation (ADAMTS17)
Heritable cataracts (HSF4)
Canine Multifocal Retinopathy 1 (BEST1)
Achromatopsia (CNGB3)
Photoreceptor dysplasia (PDC)
Collie Eye Anomaly (CEA)
Multiple drug resistance (MDR1)
Imerslund-Gräsbeck Syndrome (IGS)
Trapped Neutrophil Syndrome (TNS)
Neuronal Ceroid Lipofuscinosis (CLN5)
Cerebellar Ataxia (ARSG)
Neonatal cerebellar cortical degeneration NCCD (SPTBN2)
Hyperuricosuria (HUU) (SLC2A9))

Malignant Hyperthermia (MFSD12)
Juvenile Laryngeal Paralysis & Polyneuropathy (JLPP)
Leukoencephalomyelopathy LEMP (NAPEPLD)
X-linked myotubular myopathy (MTM1)
Neuroaxonal Dystrophy (VPS11) (PLA2G6)
SeSAME-EAST Ataxia (KCNJ10)
Neuronal Ceroid Lipofuscinosis (1TRP1)
Novell Cerebellar Cortical Degeneration (SNX14)
Neural Hypomyelination (FNIP2)
Spinal Dysraphism (NKX2-8)
Congenital Myotonia (CIC1)
Late onset Spinocerebellar Ataxia (CAPN1)
Spinocerebellar Ataxia (KCNJ10)
L2-Hydroxyglutaric Aciduria (L2HGA)
Familiar Nephropathy (FN)
Myoclonic Epilepsy (DIRAS1)
Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Cardiomyopathy (STRN)
Dilated Cardiomyopathy (PDK4)
Hereditary Nasal Parakeratosis (SUV39H2)
Ichthyosis (PNPLA1)
Musladin Leuke Syndrome (ADAMTSL2)
Lupus Erythematosus (DPF2)
Lethal Acrodermatitis (LAD) MKLN1

Polycystic Kidney Disease (BTPKD)
Phosphofructokinase (PFK)
Factor VII deficiency (FVII)
von Willebrand's Disease Type I
Haemophilia B (Factor IX)
Cleft Palate (DXL6), (ADAMTS20)
Raine Syndrome (FAM20C)
Fucosidosis (FUCA1)
Sensory Neuropathy (FAM134B)

COLOUR INHERITANCE

A Locus (ASIP: c.244 G>T; c.248G>A; c.286C>T; SINE)
B Locus (TYRP1: c.121T>A; c.991C>T; c.1033delCCT; c.555T>G)
Cocoa (HPS3: c.2420G>A)
D Locus (MLPH: c.-22G>A; c.705G>C)
Hair length (FGF5: c.284G>T)
E Locus (MC1R: c.799A>G; c.914C>T)
I Locus (MFSD12: c.151C>T)
K Locus (CBD103: delGGA)
S Locus (MITF: c.478 C>T)
M locus (Merle)

OTHER:

DNA Profiling
Parentage
Breed Ancestry
(For mixed breeds only –
Cannot test if a dog is purebred).

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