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Traveling to Baja with Pets

Tips and Guidelines from The Humane Society of Tijuana and Loving Arms Animal rescue
By Rowan Mayfair of the Baja Times

Thousands of people are traveling to Baja every year, and many bring along their beloved family pets. For most of these visitors, many questions, such as "what kind of papers do I need to return to the US with my pet?" or where "do I find a veterinarian in an emergency" go unanswered.

Two leading organizations, the Humane Society of Tijuana and Loving Arms Animal Rescue of Chula Vista, have co-coordinated to provide answers to these many questions.

To take or not to take? On vacation, of course! That is the question most owners deliberate on when going on that quick little Baja vacation. Many owners just can't enjoy their trip-just thinking about their little pet being left at home.

If you, a pet owner, decide to take Fido along on your next Baja vacation, Suzana of Loving Arms Animal Rescue of Chula Vista has some information for you.

TEN MUST-DO SUGGESTIONS

1- Proper I.D.:

Make sure that you have proper ID on your pet. You can easily make a quick tag from a vending machine in any major pet store. Make sure the tag has current information, including the number of the phone where you will be staying and your cell phone number. The tag should have your name and phone number and mention a reward if found. There should also be a second tag left with the local hotel or campground that you are staying at. If your dog does escape, a local contact is beneficial. A big plus is a micro-chip. These aren't used in Mexico, but if the lost pet is rescued by an individual or humane group, the micro-chip will help them find the US owner. Loving Arms was actually able to re-unite a dog lost in Baja to its American owner using the dog's micro-chip.

2- Current Vaccinations:

Update your dog's vaccinations with DHLPPC and Bordatella and rabies shots. US customs will require a rabies shot to bring your pet back into the US.

3- Parasite Control:

On the day you leave, apply a fresh dose of flea control, either the Front Line (fleas and ticks) or the new Advantage Multi-dog, which has an extra ingredient that will control Mange and mites (in soil or sand) and roundworms (soil and sand) that your pet could contact on the trip.

Ticks and mites compete with fleas this year for nuisance parasites. While your pet is romping on the beach or going on trail hikes, you want to be sure it has the fullest protecting. Bring a flea comb and check your dog every day for ticks. Bring along a small bottle of flea and tick's shampoo. To remove a tic, just dab a bit of the shampoo on a tissue, put it on the tic, than remove it a minute later. Tics love ears, between the toes, paws and neck of the dog.

4- Food and water:

To avoid tummy upsets, Suzana advices pet owners to only use bottled water. Bring it along for a short trip, or purchase bottled water at any of the many bottled water stores found everywhere in Baja. Since many dog food brands found in the US are scarce in Baja, Suzana advises bringing your own food along.

5- Collars and Leashes:

Suzanna recommends the Martindale collar, available at major pet stores. This collar will not slip over the dog's head. This type of collar is very comfortable to the dog, and they cannot escape. It's perfect for small breeds too; they are very good escape artists. Don't forget a sweater or a jacket, Baja nights can have chilly nights or overcast days. Always keep your pet on a leash.

6- Safety tips:

Never leave your pet in a car unattended! Don't run into a store and leave your pet in a car. The pet can be stolen in just the little bit of time it takes for you to buy a soda or a candy bar. Bring your dog with you.

7- Safe Transportation:

Never leave your pets in an open vehicle. Suzanna suggests a metal cage kennel, secured to the truck with cable. Plastic kennels can become too hot in the summer months. Always keep plenty of fresh water for your pet and never leave your dog unattended in a parked car, especially on day.

8- Hire a pet sitter!:

Suzanna recommends hiring a pet sitter when planning an evening out on the town or a day of shopping. Inquire at your hotel or campground for a reliable person.

For more info contact:

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