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Can I Go Too?

by
Kimo

As told to
Peter Smolens

Hi there, down here, at your feet! You know me, the one who wakes you every morning for my morning walk. I'm the best alarm clock you ever had. I hear you talking about summer vacation. Great! Where are we going this year? Across the country? Maybe to Europe? What's this? Your saying no, it's too much trouble to take the dog on a long distance trip.

I see your looking in the "Yellow Pages" under "kennels". After calling a few places, you found that the price for not taking me is quite high. So, how about taking me along. I'm not that much trouble if we do some planning before we go.

During the Trip

If we're going by train or airplane, call ahead to check on the ground rules they have set up for dogs. Normally they require me to stay in a commercial pet carrier while we travel with them.

I don't really mind these carriers, but I'll be separated from you. To make me more secure, put my favorite towel or cushion in the carrier. It has your sent on it. That will let me know your still around. Also put a plastic or leather chew toy for me to play with during the trip. That will take my mind off being alone.

We'll need to get to the train station or airport early to check me in. This will also help me get use to my new surroundings. As an extra precaution, you might get something from the vet to calm me down while I'm on the train or plane. Remember, I'm just as excited about going on this vacation as the rest of the family.

If we're going by car, we'll have to work things out by our self. I won't cause a problem if we both follow some easy, but important rules

While on the road there are a few things I'll need. Just like your children I get thirsty, hungry,

and need a little security. Water is most important to me. It gets hot in the car and being underneath all this fur is no picnic. Bring my water dish with you in the car. I may feel like having a drink of water only when you stop the car. On the other hand, I might want a drink while were on the road. Is that ok? Just pour a little water in my dish. If I drink it all, you can pour me some more. Use a towel under my dish because I tend to drool.

Try to feed me at my normal times, just as you would if I was at home. This will help keep my tummy calm. Between meals it might be nice to give me a chewy biscuit while were ridding. I'll try to be neat, but you know how messy I can be.

I tend to shed my fur in the summertime so please bring along my favorite blanket or towel. I don't shed all over the car. The blanket or towel will also make me feel more at home when I look out and see the land moving by.

On the road you'll probably want to stop and get something to eat. That's fine with me, but why don't you get it to go. Then we can all eat together. If you do go into a restaurant, ask the management if I can come in too. If I can't come inside, see about getting a window seat so that I can see you. You might try eating in shifts, so that someone could sit with me. This way I know that your still around.

Please don't leave me in the car with the windows open just a crack. I've heard the stories about animals and hot cars. The lack of air can be fatal to me. The sun can heat up the inside of the car and I could roast!

Once You've Arrived

You're at the motel now. I hope you called ahead to see what arrangements the hotel has for dogs. If I can't stay with you, the hotel may have arrangements with a local kennel where I can stay during this part of the trip. If you ask, some places will let me stay in your room. You might have to leave a deposit in case I make a mistake. Check with the management on the local ground rules for me. Some managers would rather have us dogs than some children and they will tell you so.

If you leave me in the motel room I might bark and whine because I'm scared of being alone. So, before you go, leave some things around to reassure me that you're coming back. You might not know it but your clothes have your sent on them. Leave a good supply of food and water along with my favorite towel or cushion. This will also help me feel more secure. It also might be a good idea to take me out for a walk just before you leave and as soon as you get back. I want you to get your deposit back as much as you do.

When we stay with friends or relatives, remember to have some considerations for them. They might not enjoy the company of animals the way you do. They, in fact, might be fearful about having me as a guest. Remember to tell them about me when asking. Let them know about my

habits and charms.

Think not only of them, but of their pets too. My brothers and sisters sometimes don't take to kindly to intruders invading their territory.

Once we are there try to put my food and water in the same place as at home. I tend to get excited about being new surroundings so don't let me get overly friendly. I don't want to accidentally break things.

I know that we're going to have a great time and visit beautiful and interesting places together. As you can see, with a little planning from you, I'm not that much trouble to take along. The most important rule to remember is to make me feel secure, like I was at home when were traveling. By doing so you make me feel more like a family member. Which, in a way I am!

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