

# Tips for traveling with four-legged family members

By Janet Fullwood, Sacramento Bee

As Americans set out on their summer getaways, millions grapple with the same question: What to do with the dog?

Last fall's flap over Mitt Romney's Irish setter traveling in a crate atop the family station wagon raised awareness of how not to travel with a pet, but it also made a point: Dogs are part of the family. And increasingly, they're going on vacation with us.

A recent survey by Destination Analysts and DogTrekker.com found that 41 percent of leisure travelers who own dogs have traveled with a canine co-pilot in the past two years. Many more said they would do so if it weren't for confusion over dog-friendly policies, frustration over exorbitant fees and difficulty finding things to do with four-legged family members at the destination.

No bones about it, travel with tail-waggers, like travel with young children, has its challenges – getting Rowdy to settle down in new environments, for one. As I've learned in my role as editor of the website that commissioned the dog-travel survey, plotting a successful trip takes more than just punching a destination into your GPS and jumping into the car with your four-legged friend.

Research and advance planning are key.

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