

Pampered pooch on Tahoe weekend getaway



AJ on top of the boulders at the vista point in Van Sickle Bi-State Park. Photos/Kathryn Reed

By AJ Rothschild-Reed

STATELINE – Mommy is letting some strange guy take my bed. I’m not sure about this.

Suddenly there’s a knock on the door. I must protect my person. Oh, but wait, what do we have here? Some other guy has my bed and mommy seems to be paying for it. That seems strange.

Wow, look at that view. The window comes down low enough that I can see Lake Tahoe to my left. And there’s a big stage. I might have to check that out, pretend like I’m a star. There looks like a lot of exploring to be had beyond these four

walls.

But these four walls aren't too shabby, either. Harveys is pretty cool with providing me snacks, matching bowls, a placemat of sorts and a nifty pouch full of poopy bags. This is better than at home. (Bet mommy the editor strikes that part out.) And that king-size bed. You know who is going to be lounging there when my peeps take off.

Harveys, for two years, has had 12 rooms designated for dogs. Stefan Humer, hotel manager, says special cleaning supplies are used, housekeeping receives extra training and rooms are vacuumed daily. Two dogs per room are allowed, with a 50-pound limit per dog.

Wow, mommy isn't immediately sitting in front of the stupid computer. The leash is out – always a good sign. She tells me we are going to explore Van Sickle Bi-State Park. But I'm a little worried. Ken the bellhop said to watch out for coyotes. Then a guy in the parking lot says to beware of the homeless camp.

(We didn't see either.)

Just get a whiff of that. Oh, never mind, but you are missing out. If you two-leggeds could smell what we four-leggeds smell, you would want to pee on everything, too. Sure it's pretty – but the smells, really, that's the best part of a hike.

Mommy can't stop taking pictures from the vista point that was only about a half mile in from the trailhead. She's babbling on about how pretty this would be at sunset. I can't believe she just wants to sit on these boulders – how boring. They don't smell.

We're both getting hungry, but I overhear a conversation between the mummies that means I have to wait. We head back out the way we came in and never once see another person.

Pretty cool to have the country's only bi-state park all to ourselves.

But our solitude is quickly gone as we walk through the bustling Heavenly Village. We sit at a table at Base Camp Pizza waiting for the other mommy to arrive. The waiter brings three waters. I'm liking this kind of service. Talk about smells. There are crumbs all over the place from messy patrons sitting outside. I love it.

I see some of my own kind at other tables spread out between the two outdoor areas. We do our secret acknowledgement that our peeps don't know about.

Mommy is clearly feeling guilty about not having fed me because I never get people food from the table. This pizza crust is pretty darn tasty. I'm going to put that on my list of people food to beg for.

After a good night's sleep it's time to head for the special area Harveys has outside for me to do my business.

My mommies say they are off to watch some horse race. Whatever. I'm part greyhound; they see me run all the time. But I'm not allowed to go.

At check in I saw mommy sign a waiver that said I would have to leave if I created a disturbance, went into the gaming area, lounged by the pool or went to one of the casino's restaurants.

The hotel manager said some unruly dogs have been shown the door. Kennels are an option at Harrah's Lake Tahoe for \$10/day. Harveys charges \$75/night for a dog.

Today we are going on another excursion that the bellhop recommended – Nevada Beach. Mommy likes the idea of not having to get in the Jeep all weekend.

The brochure provided by the hotel suggests outdoor play at

Hawley Grade, Fallen Leaf Lake, Kiva Beach and Tallac Historic Site. These all require getting in a vehicle.

Lots of BS'ing here. That's butt sniffing in our language. It's flat, and apparently pretty, according to mommy lingo. I just know there is a lake at the end. Mommies perch themselves in the sand as I figure out how to tame these waves.

Later in the afternoon mommy takes me for a walk around outside. I ask about that stage I could see from the window. Mommy lets me get on stage. Pretty cool. I can hear the applause now. Just call me princess.

Dagnabit. Mommy interrupts my fantasy. It's time to go back to the room.

I'm not too sure about escalators, but the elevators seem like some form of space travel.

The next morning the three of us head off to find breakfast. Well, I ate before we left. Still, I'm wondering what new people food I might indulge in.

We sit outside Driftwood Cafe. No table service, but they allow mommies to get food to go so the three of us can dine together. I'm not getting a scrap. What's up with this? I am the reason we are on this mini trip. Why isn't it all about me?

I guess we better get back and check out. But I could get used to this lifestyle of living on the 14th floor with a view of Lake Tahoe.

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