

pets!

by **ARCHANA RAM**

pets!

photography by **BECCA BATISTA**

pets!

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A woman in a white long-sleeved shirt and black pants is walking a large brown dog on a dirt path along a cliffside. The path is bordered by green vegetation on the left and a sandy area on the right. In the background, there are several houses with red roofs and palm trees on a cliff overlooking the ocean. The sky is filled with dramatic, colorful clouds in shades of orange, yellow, and purple, indicating a sunset or sunrise. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

**AMERICA'S FINEST CITY? FOR OUR
PETS, THAT DEFINITELY RINGS TRUE.**

Restaurants make treats for them, they have their own beaches and parks, and don't even get us started on the perks they get at local hotels. We're rounding up everything you want, need to know, and got to have to live your best San Diego life with your pet by your side.

Sunset Cliffs Natural Park



THE DOG DAYS OF SAN DIEGO

Every dog has its day—some days they want to splash in the water, other days nothing feels better than a roll in the grass. Here are two itinerary ideas that maximize the outdoor fun and those long summer days, no matter Fido's preference.



If your dog loves the water

1

A day of full-on activities calls for caffeine. Grab a cuppa at **Lofty Coffee Little Italy**, which has a sizeable dog-friendly patio and a breakfast menu of avocado toast and egg dishes, plus dog treats at the register.

2

Walk a quarter mile west to bayside **Waterfront Park**. There's plenty of space to stroll, and your dog will love sniffing those marine aromas.

3

Drive seven miles south to **Coronado's North Beach Dog Run** (below), ideally in the late morning, since the afternoon heat can be a scorcher on their paws. Beyond epic views of the Hotel del Coronado and Point Loma, there are fairly gentle waves, free litter bags, and a handy hosing station so you don't bring the beach back into your car.

4

Nothing caps a beach day like tacos and burritos. Make your way back north 8.5 miles to **El Indio** in Mission Hills, known for their paprika-spiced tortilla chips. Rather than sitting at the busy picnic tables by the parking lot, walk a couple doors down to their quieter, lesser-known (and dog-friendly!) patio decked in bougainvillea and Spanish tile.

5

Drive five miles west to **Sunset Cliffs Natural Park** to catch golden hour, an optimal time for selfies with your sun-kissed pooch. The bluff-top dirt paths make for an easy walk after a busy day. Before it's too late, find yourself a lookout point to watch the sunset. You've earned it.



For more dog-friendly dining, head to sdmag.com/dogfriendly

If your dog loves the park



1 Start the day with a late breakfast of chicken-sausage-and-egg sandwiches and kids' meals at **The Crack Shack Encinitas** (above). The eatery welcomes dogs throughout the indoor-outdoor space and often has housemade dog treats at the register.

2 A mile away, **Maggie Houlihan Memorial Dog Park** (right) is a gold standard. The clean, spacious romp zone next to Encinitas Community Park has separate gated areas for small and large dogs, plus cute design details like paw prints along a walkway. Note that the park is largely unshaded and is closed Thursdays from 1 to 3 p.m.

3 Head five miles south to **Viewpoint Brewing Co.**, the Del Mar brewpub that overlooks San Dieguito Lagoon. They have a menu of gourmet burgers and shareables like bone marrow with bacon marmalade, plus a spacious patio with porch swings, cornhole, and a ladder toss game. When Fido needs a bathroom break, follow the lagoon-side path to take care of business.

4 Grab some food and drink supplies—like sandwiches from **Mendocino Farms** at the nearby Del Mar Highlands Town Center or tacos from Roberto's near Torrey Pines—because you're headed to a picnic.

5 Settle in for a picnic at **Kate O. Sessions Memorial Park** (above), which has sweeping views of the city and bay. You'll see dogs off-leash, but be aware that this is not technically a dog park—parks and recreation officials have been known to give tickets. Keep your pup on a leash and follow the paved paths for walks, but head back to your blanket for the sunset. You've earned it.





HIGHER TEMPERATURES

“Feel the ground with your hands. If it’s too hot for your palm, it’s too hot for their foot pads,” Ferenstein says. Brachycephalic breeds—think bulldogs and pugs—are particularly susceptible to heat, given their short or flattened breathing passages. “Once your dog shows signs [of heat stroke]—vomiting, coughing, bloodshot eyes, red gums—go to a vet immediately, because they may need IV fluid therapy.” Last January, California passed a law allowing citizens to break into a car if there’s an animal inside whose safety might be in jeopardy.



RATTLESNAKES

Spring and summer bring these venomous snakes out on and near trails, particularly in the morning and at sunset. Avoidance training is a popular preventive measure. Companies like Natural Solutions, which hosts classes around the West Coast, familiarize dogs with the sight, sound, and smell of a muzzled or caged rattlesnake. Upon nearing the snake, the dog receives low-level (not harmful) stimulation via electric collar, and Pavlovian conditioning teaches them to associate a rattlesnake with a negative experience. You can also get your pooch a rattlesnake vaccine, or antivenin. “It doesn’t make them immune, but some studies are being worked on that the vaccine means less time in the hospital and a lower mortality rate,” Ferenstein says. And if they’re bit? “You don’t want to tourniquet limbs or suck out venom. Take them to a vet to administer fluids and see if there are clotting issues or signs of the venom. Baby rattlesnakes can be more dangerous. They’ll sometimes inject a lot of venom, whereas adult rattlesnakes may offer dry bites.”



DANGER ZONE

Summer is here, and so are potential threats to your pets. Dr. Mitch Ferenstein, veterinarian and owner of San Diego Bay Animal Hospital, tells us how to tackle the most common hazards.



DOG PARKS

“Be cautious at dog parks as summer heats up. There’s a lot of activity in leash-free areas and dog attacks go up significantly,” Ferenstein says. If there’s a scuffle between two dogs, it’s often difficult to see a wound until later, when it may already be infected. If you catch a wound early enough, you might be able to get by with just antibiotics, but always consult your vet to be certain.



FOXTAILS

Common in the western US, these grassy plants have barbed seeds that can burrow into your pet’s ears or nose, and even pierce the skin. The result can range from irritation to serious infections that require surgery and antibiotics. “Fiesta Island has a ton of them,” Ferenstein says. “After a walk or hike, make sure to comb out their fur. If your dog comes back sneezing repetitively or has a bloody nose, those could be a sign. We probably do two to three surgeries a week removing foxtails. I’ve even seen foxtails enter through eyeballs.”



COYOTES

This canine is usually scared of medium- to large-size dogs, preying on small cats and dogs instead. But they’re no longer found only in isolated forests and mountain regions. “Coyotes are becoming increasingly common in developed areas, even in canyons next to developed communities like South Park, because they’re running out of food sources in their own habitats,” Ferenstein says. “They’re good at adapting to urban areas.” Coyotes can jump high fences, so don’t leave your pets outside unattended. Walk them on a short leash, but stay alert: Coyotes have been known to attack leashed pets as well. One solution is the CoyoteVest: made by a local, family-owned company, it’s adorned with protective spikes that also create the illusion of bigger size.



WILDFIRES

Make sure your animal wears identification tags and that they’re microchipped, because pets will often run away when flames start. “Post on your windows how many animals are in the house so the firemen know there are pets to look for, and keep it updated,” says Ferenstein. In the event you need to evacuate, keep an emergency kit handy, with your pet’s food, water, medications, and vaccination records, and litter for your cat. Also, keep a note of any hotels that will accept pets in case you’re displaced longer than expected. Last year, many VCA Animal Hospitals offered free pet boarding to families affected by the wildfires.



ANIMAL HOUSE
 Dogs are just the start. Three San Diegans take us into their homes, backyards, and chicken coops to show off their menageries.

The Salz-Smiths

HUMANS: Michelle, her husband, Jake, and their six-year-old son, Oliver
ANIMALS: Six chickens, two dogs, and one mini pig

"We've always loved animals," says Michelle Salz-Smith. "I grew up in the country outside St. Louis, and my husband was born and raised in Del Mar. He grew up with snakes, ducks, rabbits, dogs, birds, and a tortoise named Tortuga." In their Del Mar home, they began with chickens (Ramona, Rita, Pearl, Fern, Hazel, Almeda, and the late Ruby) from various San Diego coops before adopting Dio from El Cajon's Barking Lot dog rescue and Otto, a Hurricane Harvey puppy from Helen Woodward Animal Center, both of them mixed breeds. Two-year-old Jeff, a Juliana mini

pig, came from SoCal Mini Pigs, a cage-free breeder in Norco. "The chickens could care less about the pig or dogs, but one of them didn't lay eggs for a week after the puppy chased her," she says. Their yard has a treehouse turned chicken coop, while the other animals usually hang on the couch. "As fat as he is, Jeff can get up there." Living within the city limits, there are rules—yes to chickens, no to roosters, and a cap on the number of hens—but as Michelle explains, "I ply my neighbors with eggs, and they're just fine with the chickens." 🐾

ROBERT BENSON



The Parkers

HUMANS: Tasha, her husband, Paul, and their roommates, Dara and Jesse
ANIMALS: One bearded dragon lizard and one dog

"I've always been a fan of lizards. When I was little I'd catch them in my grandparents' backyard and make them little houses out of old Folgers cans. I'd keep them for a day, then free them," says Tasha Parker, a salon owner by day and bartender by night. After she and her husband married, they got Boney, a Staffordshire bull terrier, from a breeder, and their lizard from a family who couldn't keep her anymore. "You can thank my husband for Shakira's name," she says. "Her first name was Dr. Shakalu and we didn't


like it, so he decided on Shakira, because he has a crush on her and they sound enough alike." Enter their City Heights home and you're likely to find Shakira sunbathing outside, while Boney, now 11, usually relaxes at home or joins Tasha at bars (he's in it for the air-conditioning). The two pets don't play with each other, but that's not to say Boney isn't intrigued. "I'm sure Boney wouldn't mind getting in on some of Shakira's salad and mealworms!" As for more animals? "We plan on rescuing a tortoise once we fence in our front yard." 🐾

ROBERT BENSON


PET TECH

Want your dog tracked?
 Your cat's activity monitored?
 There's an app—or website
 or device—for that.

TAILIO

 This La Jolla-based company launched a smart monitor that sits under a litter box and connects to your home Wi-Fi, **measuring everything from your cat's weight to its waste output.** It then calculates metrics that could help manage an existing problem or raise a red flag for new issues like renal failure, diabetes, and obesity. Cats don't need to wear anything, and Tailio can distinguish between different cats using the same box. \$199; tailio.com

WHISTLE 3 GPS PET TRACKER

 This waterproof device attaches to your pet's collar and combines GPS and cellular technology to **identify their location at all times.** If Fido jumps the fence into your neighbor's yard, you'll know. You can also monitor their exercise—a helpful tool for older, overweight animals—and get alerts if your animal exits preset "safe zones." Like a cell phone, you'll need a subscription plan (from \$7 per month), and the device is recommended for pets weighing eight pounds and over. \$80 (additional for plan); whistle.com

PETCHATZ

 This device lets you **remotely "video conference" with your pet,** dispense treats, and monitor movements—your pet can even call you. A light on the device alerts your pet that you're available for a chat, they press an illuminated button, and bingo, they just became the smartest animal on the block. Some training is required to teach your animal that being near the device is a positive experience. \$380; petchatz.com



TRAVELER'S BEST FRIEND

Living in San Diego may qualify as a permanent vacation, but why not take it to the next level for the whole family with a pet-friendly staycation? Here are eight places where they'll get the royal treatment—doggy bag included.*

Hotel del Coronado

Canines and felines receive water bowls, beds, crates, and floor mats upon arrival, and you can order them treats made of chicken or peanut butter with wheat-free oatmeal and dates via room service or at Spreckels Sweets & Treats. You can also ring up a groomer, pet-sitter, or veterinarian. Coronado Dog Beach is less than a mile away, and The Del hosts Yappy Hour every Sunday from 4 to 5 p.m. Dogs can lap up complimentary Evian and organic gourmet dog treats, while owners sip dog-themed cocktails, like the Greyhound.

FEE: \$125 per night for Hotel Del; \$200 per night for Beach Village at The Del

FINE PRINT: Maximum of two pets per room, and each must be 40 pounds or less. They don't accommodate pit bulls, pit bull mixes, Dobermans, Rottweilers, chows, or chow mixes.
hoteldel.com

La Valencia

The hotel's Very Important Pet Package includes a leash and jeweled bag dispenser, water dish, dog bed, and Do Not Disturb Dog door hanger, plus nightly turndown with treats for both dog and owner. You can tack on à la carte options like doggie yoga, canine massages, and surf lessons for you and your pup.

FEE: \$350 per night (or \$50 per night without the package)

FINE PRINT: No breed or weight restrictions.
lavalencia.com



La Valencia



According to a 2017 survey by pet service platform Rover, 78% of dog owners would include their pup in family vacations.

Rancho Valencia

Upon check-in, dog guests receive a sampling of treats, "clean up after your doggie" bags, and a plush bed. Their Doggie Dining Menu spans shepherd's pie, Rin Tin Tin tartare, scrambled eggs with potatoes, and for those pups watching their figures, steamed rice and veggies.

FEE: \$75 one-time, non-refundable cleaning fee due at time of reservation

FINE PRINT: Pets must weigh 40 pounds or less.
ranchovalencia.com



Rancho Valencia

Catamaran Resort Hotel & Spa

Every Evans Hotels property (Catamaran, The Lodge at Torrey Pines, and Bahia) is dog friendly, but Catamaran hosts a Yappy Hour at Moray's restaurant every Tuesday from 3 to 7 p.m., when owners are invited to bring their dogs and enjoy drink and food specials on the patio.

FEE: \$75 per stay

FINE PRINT: Individual pooches must weigh 50 pounds or less; two dogs must weigh less than 75 total. They don't accommodate pit bulls or Rottweilers.

catamaranresort.com

ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

Get Your Furry Fix

Maybe you don't have the bandwidth for full-time pet ownership or your landlord won't allow a furry friend. Fear not—these organizations will get you up close and personal with dogs, horses, potbellied pigs, and more.

The San Diego House Rabbit Society

This nonprofit rescue based in Kearny Mesa is seeking volunteers for clerical work, but if you want one-on-bun time, train with the staff to be a pro-bono groomer. Duties include combing, brushing, cutting nails, and gently cleaning scent glands. They also run Bunny Yoga—the next sessions are July 27 and August 31—a 50-minute vinyasa flow while adoptable bunnies scamper between the mats. Classes are \$25, with proceeds benefiting the rescue. sandiegorabbits.org



We tried it!
Bunny Yoga
sdmag.com/bunnyyoga

PAWS Workshops

Advanced Veterinary Care of San Elijo hosts quarterly events for kids age 7–18, with topics ranging from taking and reading X-rays to understanding the nuances of different species. Their next session (\$40) on August 8 is an interactive experience with exotic reptiles, birds, and rodents. sanelijovet.com

Ride Above Disability Therapeutic Riding Center

Part of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, the center leads recreational riding lessons for children and adults with special needs to teach verbal communication, core strength, balance, coordination, and socialization. Volunteers can assist in lessons, feed horses, and clean stalls. Those with riding experience can exercise them before lessons. radtrc.org



Grazin Pig Acres

This Ramona animal rescue and sanctuary has horses and one sheep, but the focus is their 95 potbellied and mini pigs, with cheeky names like Mia Hamm and Kevin Bacon. Married owners Martin and Nancy Koontz do the bulk of the maintenance and care, but they need volunteers to help with basic husbandry, like feeding, cleaning, and yes, poop scooping. grazinpigacres.org

San Diego Humane Society's Animal Rescue Reserve

Launched in May 1971, this team of staff and volunteers helps care for animals during wildfires, floods, and other natural disasters before reuniting them with their owners. Training is extensive, spanning over 5,000 hours a year for the whole team, and about 60 members are ready to respond at all times. Past calls of duty saw them rescuing a horse trapped in a pool and a dog stuck down a well; they also evacuated and secured animals during last year's Lilac Fire. sdhumane.org

BUNNY: JENNY SIEGWARD

A STAR IS BORN
(ON INSTAGRAM)

Living in San Diego, we're in the presence of major celebrities—celebrity pets, that is. Check out these local animals with big-time followings.



TUCKER

@thetuckerdoodle
34.3K FOLLOWERS

Tucker is all about spreading the love with his hashtag, #ASmileforFatherTuck, a nod to Dad, Kevin Childre, a US Navy commander who died in 2015 following a bicycle accident. A bench is dedicated to Childre, or "Father Tuck," at Nate's Point Dog Park in Balboa Park.



LUNIA

@lifewithlunia
15.2K FOLLOWERS

Follow along with this 17-year-old Holsteiner mare as she canters, snacks on horse-friendly cookies, and takes in the sunset with her owner, Andie Whisler, who runs a blog about horseback riding at lifewithlunia.com.

WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH CBD FOR PETS?

The passing of Proposition 64, which legalized marijuana use for Californians 21 and older, hasn't just opened doors to more human consumption—some pets are riding the green wave, too.

Pet stores and dispensaries have seen an influx of cannabis-infused biscuits, tinctures, and oils claiming that the medicinal benefits of cannabidiol (CBD), one of the plant's non-psychoactive compounds, can alleviate separation anxiety and cancer-related symptoms in animals as well. Cordial Organics, a local e-commerce line of CBD skin care and wellness products, sells a Calm for Pets oil made with whole flower medicinal grade hemp. Cordial co-founder Desi McKinnon adds a few drops into food for her six-year-old Chihuahua mix.

"Now Zeke doesn't shake and cry when left alone or with someone new,"

she says. "He's chill and in his body. Otherwise he's a trembling mess."

But if you ask veterinarians for an opinion, they'll likely have little to say. The California Veterinary Medical Board, though it doesn't yet have a formal position on the matter, cautions that vets "are in violation of California law if they are incorporating cannabis into their practices," since Prop 64 does not specifically allow it.

"It's the wild west right now in terms of CBD in animals," says Dr. Brian Evans of Coastal Animal Hospital in Encinitas. "There's great potential, but we're not allowed to talk about it. Because it's a Schedule I drug, very few controlled studies have been formed to figure out the right doses and what is and isn't good for animals."

Dr. Evans warns against giving dogs THC, the plant's psychoactive compound. "I've seen zero side effects from too much CBD, but I have seen side effects from dogs getting too much THC. They can get very sick. I saw a little Chihuahua with a whopping dose of THC come in with seizures." Even the highest-CBD cannabis plant strains can't eliminate the presence of THC entirely—by definition, "whole flower" CBD products still contain a small percentage of it—so for pet owners interested in trying this therapy, products made with pure CBD oil are most likely a safer bet.

The lack of FDA regulation didn't stop Bankers Hill resident Candice

Johnson from trying cannabis on Abraham Lincoln, her 8-year-old Lhasa apso mix who, two years ago, began sleeping more than usual, getting sore from previously easy walks, and scratching his tail, groin, and legs to the point of bleeding. Using her experience as a healer who had seen "miracles" using CBD tinctures on adult and pediatric patients, she went to Urban Leaf dispensary to see whether it would

produce the same results for her pup. She wound up with a THCA-CBD oil (THCA is a similar non-psychoactive compound that's said to have anti-inflammatory and neuroprotective effects).

"They knew right away and showed me their pet line," she says. "I also knew what I wanted, from dosing children. 'If a child weighs this much, this is how much

you start at.' I did mention it to my vet once—he didn't sound so sold on it. But I started Abraham in mid-January. By February I had my puppy back. The light's back in his eyes. The itching gone. I haven't seen him limp since late February. I take him on walks and walks and walks. On the weekends we don't stop." 🐾

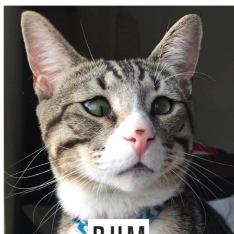
"It's the wild west right now in terms of CBD in animals. There's great potential, but we're not allowed to talk about it."



MAGGYVER

@ macgyverlizard
186K FOLLOWERS

Watch a dog-size lizard eat hard-boiled eggs, wear themed pajamas, and snuggle with his owner. Most of the 'grams are videos, so you can see him slither around in action.



BUM

@ worried_cat_aka_bum
16.8K FOLLOWERS

The handle refers to Bum's unintentional anxious expression, a result of being cross-eyed since birth. Adopted from San Diego Humane Society, he's often pictured with his feline brother and two canine siblings.



MAGGIE & ORBIT

@ maggielovesorbit
108K FOLLOWERS

These stylish Boston terriers, who have snagged social media partnerships with Bai drinks and Kimpton Hotels among other brands, are jet-setters, having logged stays in Big Sur, Santa Barbara, and more.