



DOGGIE By Hannon Deutsch

STYLE These Pampered Pooches Lead A Ruff Life

BELLA OF THE BALL:
This Calendar Girl
Travels In Style.

A dog's life is certainly not what it used to be, and the economic figures back this up: Americans spend close to \$40 billion a year on their pets.

AS THE MORNING RAYS BEGIN TO FILTER through the bedroom window, Bella meanders away from her Mosaic bed and heads toward the kitchen for a quick drink. Instinct brings her in contact with Murano glass that contains two-parts hydrogen, one-part oxygen.

Thirst quenched, she heads back to the bedroom where a black satin cocktail dress awaits. No wardrobe malfunctions keeps the Cadillac limo on time for the photo shoot. That's the good news, because Bella has a tendency to become distracted easily.

Once in transit, she passes time by snacking on treats (minus the fillers) that will restore function to her cells mitochondria. She simply has to look her best for the red carpet. A brief detoxifying massage

would have done wonders to rejuvenate the senses, but there is no time to deviate from course.

Upon her arrival at Worth Avenue, she is greeted with a warm reception as camera bulbs pop with each stride. An antique Mercedes-Benz dripping in shocking pink complements the sash on her head. The atmosphere is conducive for a quality pictorial; now it's up to Bella to show and prove.

Did we mention that Bella is a dog?

The scene painted before you can easily be torn from the pages of a celebrity's life – or a fiction novel at that. As it so happens, the esoteric world of high fashion is not solely meant for mammals of the two-legged version.



Bella, a 5-year-old Yorkshire Terrier from Palm Beach, is Miss April in “America’s Top Dog Model” 2009 calendar. Created by Boca Raton resident Jo Jo Harder, the theme for the third annual calendar contest was ‘travel and style.’ Bella beat out hundreds of canines, all of which had to be professionally photographed and dressed in haute couture in order to enter this popular, national competition.

The Ritz-Carlton caters to its upper-crust pet clientele by providing four-poster beds draped in Italian fabrics, gift-bags, meaty treats and specially formulated sun care products.

A dog’s life is certainly not what it used to be, and the economic figures back this up: Americans spend close to \$40 billion a year on their pets, according to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association.



South Florida is home to myriad specialty outfits all dedicated to pampering “furbabies.” From upscale salons and high-end boutiques to organic foods, luxury hotels and veterinarian procedures – there is no shortage of choices for baby boomers, single professionals, couples without children or anyone with an empty nest.

“No animal can have too much love and attention,” says Bella’s owner, Rutilia Poli Sandri Burck. “She is like a little human being.”

Humans have been pampering their pets for centuries. While mummification may be slightly outdated (we now opt for cryogenic freezing), the Egyptians could not suffocate the innate response to hold felines in high regard – and preserve their spirit once the physical moved on. These days, our tastes have evolved. And we’re not talking about soothing butter balm for dry noses or mere aromatherapy to cultivate the senses. Try Chanel pearls for lavish parties (\$500), a Hermès collar and leash set (\$1,200), magnetic resonance imaging (\$1,500 a scan) and bespoke furniture (\$2,700).



NO LEASH REQUIRED:
The Fur Seasons Offers Limousine Service And First-Class Accommodations To Its Four-Legged Chentele. (Above, Below Left, Below Right)



The Fur Seasons Resort for Pets offers beloved dogs and cats all the luxuries of home: A comfy bed, throw rug and furniture; some rooms include a television and garden view. For an additional charge, Fifi can be picked up by private limousine and enjoy spa treatments such as facials and massages.

Accumulating travel rewards points for a \$20,000 doggie birthday party is not unheard of. Nor are the six-figure trusts that frequent the language of some wills (Leona Helmsley’s Maltese, Trouble, was left \$12 million). As of today, 38 states plus the District of Columbia have passed laws allowing owners to arrange trusts for their pets.

includes pet-sized, four-poster beds draped in Italian fabrics, a welcome letter, gift bag, meaty treats and specially formulated sun care products. “We noticed an increase in the number of guests who travel with pets,” says Jenni Greenspan, spokesperson for the hotel. “We listen to our guests when they speak to us. It only seemed fitting to create a program dedicated to our four-legged friends.”

Traveling with one’s beloved pooch has become, dare we say, almost commonplace. The Ritz-Carlton South Beach offers a Pampered Pooch package to animals 35 pounds and under that

And because when the master’s away the pet must play, The Fur Seasons Resort for Pets offers beloved dogs and cats all the comforts of





HELLO PRINCESS:
Doggie birthday parties
are all the rage in Boca.

home: A comfy bed, throw rug and furniture; some rooms include a television and garden view. For an additional charge, Fifi can be picked up by private limousine and enjoy spa treatments such as facials and massages.

When it comes to spoiling pets, Waggs to Riches provides a palette of inspiration for those who demand the very best. Located on Atlantic Avenue in Delray Beach, the 2,300-square-foot retailer not only sells adorable puppies and classic merchandise but also entertains a grooming department and in-house kennel. From high-end pet carriers to rubber toys Fluffy can't destroy, everything one needs is available under one, impeccably maintained roof. As an added bonus, tourists who stay nearby may leave their dogs with owner Kim Curler while they shop, grab a bite to eat or head to the beach. It's about satisfying the customer and complementing their lifestyle at the same time, explains Curler. "People gravitate to what they like."

Accumulating travel rewards points for a \$20,000 doggie birthday party is not unheard of. Nor are the six-figure trusts that frequent the language of some wills.

On the other side of town, Lap of Luxury with Karen also caters to discriminating tastes. "People want the best of the best," says owner Karen Grossman. Grossman's clientele certainly does. Inside, curved glass panels allow pet owners to scrutinize every aspect of the grooming process; owners also may peruse high-end offerings such as cashmere hand-knit sweaters, silk party dresses, crystallized Swarovski-studded collars and leather dog carriers with mesh ventilation. The store also carries retro T-shirts and a Japanese couture line.

Looking to purchase a pooch? Located in the Reserve Shopping Center is Palm Beach Puppies, which specializes in small designer breeds such as the Yorkshire Terrier, Maltese, Shih Tzu and Lhasa Apso. According to owner Alan Garson, healthier smaller breeds are more popular than larger pure breeds. "Breeders are downsizing puppies," he states. "That wasn't the trend a few years back."

Speaking of trends, Bark-Mitzvahs are all the rage amongst doting dog owners of the Jewish faith. About 70 dogs were invited to the most recent Bark-Mitzvah held outside of Three Dog Bakery, located at The Shops at Boca Center. For \$12, (a portion of which went to charity), canine guests were treated to bone-shaped cake, bags filled with menorah biscuits and satin yarmulkes that fit over their doggie ears. Rabbi Loring Frank was even on hand to perform a *chai* maintenance blessing and hand out certificates to conclude the rite of passage. "Bark-Mitzvahs have been around for a few



BOW WOW:
Shopping Is A Pleasure For Pet Owners At Lap Of Luxury (Above, Below Left) And Waggs To Riches (Below Middle, Below Right)



decades,” Rabbi Frank admits. “They are quite popular.”

Three Dog Bakery, which is part of a Missouri-based national chain, is renowned for using natural, human-grade ingredients. Owners Jeff Edelson and his wife Robyn serve their canine clientele organic meat, vegan snacks, carob chip cookies and puppermint patties. You won’t find added sugar, salt, preservatives or bi-products; here ingredients such as peanut butter and low-fat buttermilk yogurt are the norm. Treats for cats and even horses can be found on the shelves.

Nutrition is of a prime concern to pet owners. “People always want fresh-baked treats,” Jeff Edelson says. Case in point: “A client of mine buys \$500 worth of treats for five dogs and three cats,” he says. Also jumping on the nutritional bandwagon is Bark Vineyards, a premium, FDA-approved au-jus and gravy. Dogs love the taste of the gravy’s human-grade ingredients while consumers appreciate clever names like Pinot Leasheo, Barkundy and White Sniff-n-Tail.

Yes, we do so enjoy spoiling our furbabies. Daphne Simone is one puppy that is not immune to life’s luxuries. When this 2-year-old American Cocker Spaniel is not jet-setting to East Hampton (adorned in a fashionable, five-strand pearl choker), Daphne can be found at the salon working up a \$150 grooming tab. Represented by All Tame Animals in New York (yes, there are agents for

“America’s Top Dog Model” calendar contest and will grace its 2009 cover. Her prize? A handmade Swarovski crystal crown, black velvet leash and collar set and a red leather carrying case (for her pet parents).

Before Daphne was officially crowned on Worth Avenue, she joined her fellow calendar model Bella inside the climate-controlled

The esoteric world of high fashion is not solely meant for mammals of the two-legged version.

animals), Daphne participated in her first runway show last August during New York City’s Pet Fashion Week. Owners Jeremy Wiesen and Cynthia Witter watched proudly as Daphne modeled a silver leather motorcycle jacket complete with iPod and hot pink alligator collar.

Daphne has to look her best at all times because she never knows when publicity may come barking. After all, Daphne is a celebrity; she recently was named “Most Elegant Dog” at the

limousine. Daphne and Bella were preoccupied with tail wagging and impatient gestures as their cold noses fogged a small section of the rear glass window. Quite frankly, it doesn’t take much to satisfy those belonging to the canine species – a bowl of water, two cups of dry food and a walk or two usually does the trick. But just because one can survive on life’s basic necessities doesn’t mean one has to.

“She’s like a family member,” Witter says. “I think we can learn a lot from dogs.” ○