



## Negotiate Your Way Into a Pet-Friendly Pad During the Dog Days of Summer

### Rent.com Explores Pet-Friendly Cities for Fido and Whiskers

**Santa Monica, Calif., August 3, 2009** – With more than 163 million pets in the U.S.\*<sup>1</sup>, it's not surprising that rental policies barring pets can be a deal breaker for many renters. In order to help the surge of potential renters during these dog days of summer, Rent.com, the nation's #1 Internet listing site (ILS) in the rental housing industry, provides access to more than 20,095 pet-friendly pads. In addition to free and robust search tools that allow users to narrow results by location, price, amenities and even pet policy, Rent.com's Peggy Abkemeier also provides five tips on how to negotiate a rental agreement on behalf of your furry friends.

#### Landlords Mark Their Territory

With vacancy rates up and effective rents down, it's a renter's market out there. This means prospective renters may now be able to negotiate for preferred amenities such as pet-friendly policies more than ever before. Although 80 percent of Rent.com's apartment communities with 50 units or more accept cats and/or dogs, that dream apartment near the dog park may not be listed as pet-friendly. However, with a few expert negotiating tricks, renters may find that a landlord's bark is bigger than his or her bite!

- **Two Paws Up:** Many landlords with stringent no-pet policies have dealt with irresponsible pet owners in the past. Providing a glowing recommendation from your existing landlord and neighbors about your pet's behavior can help your cause.
- **Validate with Vaccinations:** Communicate your pet's health by providing a certified letter from your veterinarian explaining that your pet is up to date on the necessary vaccinations and treatments. Proving that your pet is healthy can diffuse a landlord's concerns about other tenants' wellbeing.
- **Dogs Do Whisper:** Written proof that your dog has completed an obedience training course is a must. Dogs can talk to each other through the walls and you don't want to keep your neighbors awake at night.
- **Ensure Success:** Going the extra step to ensure your rental insurance supports pet damage can be a huge relief to landlords. Providing assurance that you'll cover any potential pet-related damages can help your landlord rest easy.
- **Interspecies Interview:** Make plans to meet with the landlord for a consultation, and bring your furry friend along. Quite often, landlords will be willing to bend the rules if they meet your pet and approve of your furry friend in person.

#### Top 10 Pet-Friendly Cities

With a plethora of rental properties to choose from, where should your search for the perfect pet-friendly pad begin? Rent.com lists the nation's friendliest pet cities:

1. **New York City's** Central Park is simply pet heaven, with its winding trails and fenced-in dog parks. If asphalt is more appealing, walk your pet along the Brooklyn Bridge. New York is also one of the few cities where pet daycares can be found in nearly every neighborhood!

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<sup>1</sup> American Pet Products Manufacturers Association (APPMA) 2007-2008 National Pet Owners Survey

2. **Chicago** provides canine cruises across the famed Navy Pier, as well as pet-welcoming patio restaurants throughout the city. Chicago is also home to an assortment of pet resorts and boarding kennels.
3. **Boston** invites pets to tour the harbor by boat, as long as their pet owners come along! Walk your dog along the Freedom Trail to explore the many historical sites that this city has to offer. Leashed dogs and felines are even welcome on the subway.
4. **Houston** is home to a variety of pet-friendly hotels and restaurants that span throughout the city. Barnaby's Café is a local favorite, where wait staff provide a cardboard dog bowl to keep your pooch hydrated morning, noon and night.
5. **San Francisco** boasts plenty of pet-friendly dining in addition to off-leash beaches and outdoor areas. Pets are even welcome to ride in the cable cars or walk alongside their owners across the Golden Gate Bridge!
6. **Austin** offers the Zilker Botanical Gardens and Congress Street Bats as top-rated pooch attractions, in addition to outdoor cafes and off-leash parks.
7. **Washington, D.C. and suburb Alexandria, Va.,** offer a selection of pet-friendly restaurants in addition to an array of outdoor parks.
8. **Portland** is home to the famously pet-friendly Lucky Labrador restaurant chain, in addition to the well-known Rose Gardens and Saturday Outdoor Market. Several pet boutiques have recently emerged in the city, including Portland Pooch and Cat's Meow.
9. **Charleston** offers tours throughout the historic city, including day tours to Boone Hall and Magnolia Plantations, as well as nightly ghost tours. All pets welcome.
10. **Ann Arbor** invites pets for outdoor fun from dog-friendly canoeing, farms and gardens such as the Nichols Arboretum, a 123-acre botanical garden at the University of Michigan.

#### **About Rent.com**

[Rent.com](http://Rent.com) is the nation's #1 Internet listing site (ILS) in the rental housing industry enabling renters to find a residential rental property online using a free robust search tool. Rent.com has the most online traffic and the largest inventory of contracted property listings. As the only national ILS with a pay per lease business model, Rent.com allows property managers to cost-effectively fill their vacancies.

Prospective renters can search the site's detailed property listings, including contact information, pricing, photos, floor plans, and virtual tours. With the ability to directly contact property managers, finding the rental housing of your dreams is as easy as 1-2-3.

In addition to providing renters free access to detailed property listings and robust search tools, Rent.com rewards renters with a \$100 prepaid Visa® debit card if they: (1) find their property using the Rent.com website, (2) tell the property owner or manager they found their rental home using Rent.com, and (3) report to Rent.com signing a lease with a property that participates in the \$100 Reward Program. Rent.com is dedicated to giving renters a convenient way to find the perfect place to live.

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