

## Welcome to Kenya

Moving to Kenya truly encompasses the African experience many expats dream of: great weather, large gardens and house help. The ideal place to have a pet!

### THINK before you adopt/buy a pet

BUT...a pet can live 10 to 15 years! Are you able to provide a pet with a home for life? Unfortunately, there is an increasing trend amongst expats who simply abandon their cats and dogs in the yard once they leave Kenya. Sometimes this is due to genuine unforeseen circumstances, but often because of lack of planning, *inconvenience* or considerable costs to export the pet. So, before you commit to buying/adopting a pet please consider the following:

#### 1. Transporting a pet abroad: Costs

Transporting your pet is expensive and the bigger your pet, the higher the costs! Costs differ depending on:

- Distance to the next country
- Whether your pet can travel as 'luggage' or as 'cargo'
- Crate size and weight of pet
- Shipper's handling costs

You must also ensure your pet:

- Is allowed into your next country of residence

- Has been micro-chipped
- Has full/up to date vaccinations
- Has had a Rabies antibody titer test (ask your vet)
- Has an IATA approved Travel Crate
- Has relevant Export/Import Permits

The costs can amount to many hundreds of dollars per pet! ***If you can't afford it: simply don't get a pet, adopt an older animal that you can care for until the end of its life, or help foster from shelters.***

#### 2. Living space in your next home

A Boerboel may look stunning in your Nairobi garden but can't fit in a Singapore apartment! Not sure about the future abode? ***Adopt a small pet which can fit anywhere.***

#### 3. Time to care for your pet

Will you have staff and ample garden space in the next residence? If working full time and no staff to help you, would you have time for the pet? Consider that nightly walks in -15 C winter weather are less appealing than in Nairobi's mild climate! ***So THINK: size, type, age, hair length, etc. in relation to the time and space you may have at the next posting.***

Leaving behind a pet you have adopted as a family member, because he will be inconvenient is cruel. By passing on an animal after a few years, you ask someone

else to solve your problem. Ultimately, he may end up being euthanized, because he is inconvenient for the next owner as well. The KSPCA is full of such sad cases.



#### Taking your pet with you

There are various organizations in Nairobi that are able to assist with your pet's move from paper work to transport.

#### Unforeseen circumstances: I can't take my pet with me- what do I do?

- Start to **look for a new home ideally 6 months** before you go. Email friends, post at vet clinics and 'Adopt a Dog Nairobi'.
- **Interview people thoroughly.** Make sure they are serious and that they will be able to provide the same level of care you did.
- **Neuter/spay your pet** so it can never be used in puppy /kitten mills. **Beware of (online) buyers** who pretend to be potential pet owners, or **brokers who source pets on behalf of others.**

- At times, **arrangements fall through** just before leaving the country, with often disastrous consequences for the pet. Try to have a backup adoption option.
- **DO NOT give your pet to your house staff.** They may have taken care of him whilst you were around, but don't have the money to continue the same level of care once you have gone. Often your pet will be abandoned, neglected or worse-abused.

***A sad, true Story***

*An expat gave his German Sheppard to his cook, who took the dog upcountry to his farm. The dog ate a chicken and then spent 10 years on a chain. When he was finally brought to a concerned dog person, the dog was found to be so depressed that it had to be put to sleep.*

- **Leaving your pet in the yard 'hoping for the best'** is ultimately a death sentence for the pet. Your pet- Your responsibility!



*Abandoned lap dog, found eating garbage*

- Keep in mind that **animals are upset** when their owners leave them behind. Many animals here (especially dogs) get new owners every 2-3 years. Treating animals like hand-me-downs may cause anxiety and changes in character. Find an owner who can keep your pet until he dies of old age.
- The KSPCA and TNR TRUST are not **FALL BACKS** to drop your unwanted pet off when you leave! **Take responsibility and make a proper plan** – if you are unable to plan ahead then please don't adopt a pet!



*Golden Retriever found running on a highway. She was never claimed.*

**For more information:**

**TNR Trust Nairobi**

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***"ONCE READ; PASS IT ON!"***



**"Community health through animal welfare"**



**EXPATS and PETS:**

**Think before you get a pet!**