

Going To The Dogs

Forget about Lassie coming home. He and Timmy are leaving for vacation thanks to Flughund Reisen, the first European canine travel agency. Located in Stuttgart, Germany, Flughund Reisen designs holidays for dogs and their owners.

Regine Winter first got the idea to open the specialized agency in 1998 while running a conventional travel agency. Winter, who frequently brought one of her Belgian Shepherd dogs to work with her, began receiving many inquiries from travelers about dog-related holidays. Recognizing that no one had *collared* this market yet, she walked away from her long-time job as travel agent and embarked on a six-month journey throughout Europe, searching for holiday homes, hotels and bed & breakfasts that would be ideal for people traveling with their dogs.

Since that time, Winter has catalogued nearly one thousand destinations in 10 European countries, many of which she and her dog have personally enjoyed. Each destination has been judged on a variety of criteria that includes: the ease with which travelers and their four-legged companions can take long walks, adequate space to accommodate large dogs and owners traveling with more than one dog, swimming opportunities for canines, dog training facilities located in the area, and, of course, the assurance that dogs are not only tolerated but also welcome at these selected destinations. From an Austrian hotel that has a doggie cinema featuring Lassie films to a French hotel that has a canine restaurant complete with dog sitters, some sites are particularly dog-friendly.

