

WELOVEPETS

SOUTH AFRICA

GREYTON

THE THREE G'S EXPLORE
THIS GENEROUS TOWN

THE ULTIMATE
LIST OF TRAVEL
ESSENTIALS

DECORATING
FOR YOUR SOUND
SENSITIVE DOG

DEAR REACTIVE
DOG OWNER

THE CHALLENGES
OF LIVING WITH A
REACTIVE DOG

HELP!

MY DOG IS
GRIEVING



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FROM THE EDITOR

On 24 March, just after 10pm our beautiful boy, Mtassa-Tassa left this world and crossed over the Rainbow Bridge. He was in his favourite spot in the office and I held him until the end. He was my Goofball and always by my side. My hubby would laugh and say to friends: "If I need to find Antonette, I just have to look for Mtassa."

The hardest part of being a pet parent is saying goodbye. People who do not have pets as companions will not understand the profound loss felt. I think it's because our fur companions give us unconditional love and accept us for the flawed humans that we are, that we feel their loss so intensely. That, and the fact that they just light us up from the inside out.

Recently too many of our fur friends have crossed the Rainbow Bridge too early and I want to dedicate this April 2024 Issue to the souls that have left us. To the humans who are left behind - Your grief is valid and real.

Never to be forgotten ... 

Antonette
EDITOR & DOG MOM



MTASSA-TASSA ANGEL FOREVER
Photo Credit: *Julia Alles*

R from our Readers



Avo & Martin

19 Years Old & still a Wizz with the soccer ball!

Avo got his name because his owner, Martin, loved eating Avo's at the time he got the little JRT. At almost 19 years old now, Avo still plays soccer like Messi and can dribble like a champ.

Three years ago Avo went deaf and he and his owner learned to communicate through hand signals and smelling. When the little rocket arrives home, he bounds up the stairs like a 7-year old. It probably helps that his female companion Leah, helps keep a spring in his step.

There is a special bond between Avo and owner, Martin, and the four-foot never leaves his sight, accompanying Martin to work, where Avo would sleep under the desk.

Avo took his security duties very seriously and would jump out the second floor bedroom window, onto the roof and bark at anyone he deemed an intruder. They lived on the second floor, above the work premises. One night Avo got out through the gate that was left open. For 4 days Martin searched. On the 4th night, Martin marked the gate (like a good dog) and left it slightly open. That night Avo returned. A bit dusty and bruised - but safe at home, and have never left Martin's side again.

FOLLOW Dreams DO Come True!

When Lise started volunteering at Change for the Better Foundation, she never thought that one day she will have her own rescue. Her first foster was a Golden Retriever cross puppy. In the same year, Lise started her dog sitting business. Over the years Lise continued to help at various rescue groups and by 2021 her business had grown nicely and she was ready for her own fur-ever after partner.

Lilo, from Grace Animal Sanctuary caught Lise's eye and she put the wheels in motion. Towards the end of July 2021 Lilo came to spend the weekend and on 1 August, Lilo became Lila.

It was clear that Lila came from an abusive past. She was abandoned with 4 other dogs at a daycare. When the owners didn't return for her in a month, Lila entered the system at Grace Animal Sanctuary. Since being adopted by Lise, the little fluff ball has grown in confidence. She now loves her outdoor activities and daycare friends. She often visits the Sanctuary and has celebrity status when she's there.

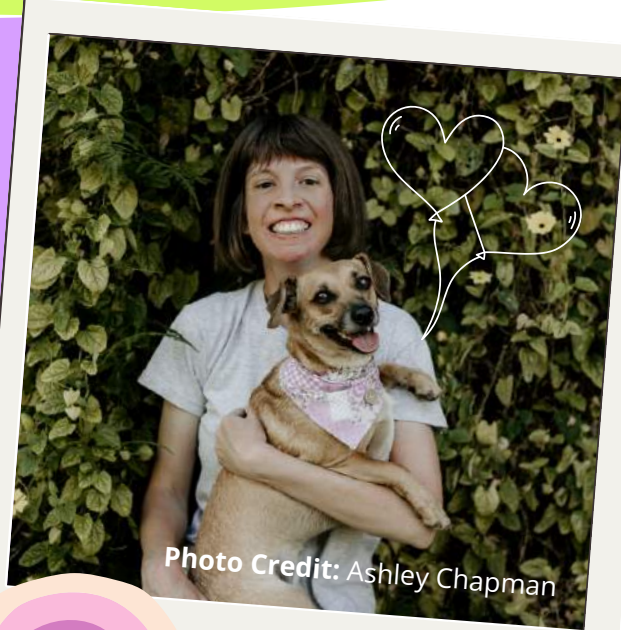


Photo Credit: Ashley Chapman

Lila & Lise

Handwritten signature





Nala & Veronica



 FOLLOW

For the love of Nala

During 2020 Veronica hit a low with debilitating depression. A dear friend suggested that she combine her love for her dogs, Nala and Mufasa with something that will keep her mind busy.

Nala & Me were born out of Veronica's love for her 4 pooches and her passion for baking. She started baking wheat-free biscuits and they were an instant hit. Not only with her 2 taste-testers but with like-minded pet owners looking for healthier options to treat their pets.

In 2021 Veronica introduced the Bully Chow range - inspired by her boy, Mufasa. These are single ingredient dehydrated meaty treats. It's been such a success, that the biscuits slowly disappeared from the menu. The Bully Chow range includes duck, venison, chicken, beef, lamb and seafood. There are also food toppers and bone broths. To say there is "something for every taste" - is an understatement.

Veronica loves what she does. She enjoys watching dogs and cats around South Africa enjoy her treats and food toppers. It is wonderful to see that so many other pet parents prefer giving their pets healthy treats.



The April feature is sponsored by



Share your "Tail" & You could Feature in our Next Issue



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SPOT- LIGHT

Salted Dogs Pet &
Pet Parent Clothing

salted dögs



In a world where the unconditional love of our furry companions knows no bounds, one entrepreneur has dared to encapsulate this special relationship in a unique and fashionable way.

Retha Kok is the visionary mind behind Salted Dogs, a small business that celebrates the invaluable bond between pet parents and their beloved pups.

“Yes, it's ok to be obsessed with your dog!”

Retha's background deeply rooted in animal science and her business acumen, working with renowned names in the pet industry, together with her passion for art, fashion and above all the profound connection between humans and their canine companions, lead to the creation of a brand that resonates with pet lovers on a profound level.

What sets Salted Dogs Apart?

It's not just its innovative product range but also its strong commitment to the local community. Every product is meticulously designed, sourced, and handmade in South Africa, contributing to job creation and economic empowerment during challenging times. The business is not just about selling products; it's about spreading joy, laughter, and a sense of belonging among passionate pet parents who find solace in the company of their four-legged friends.

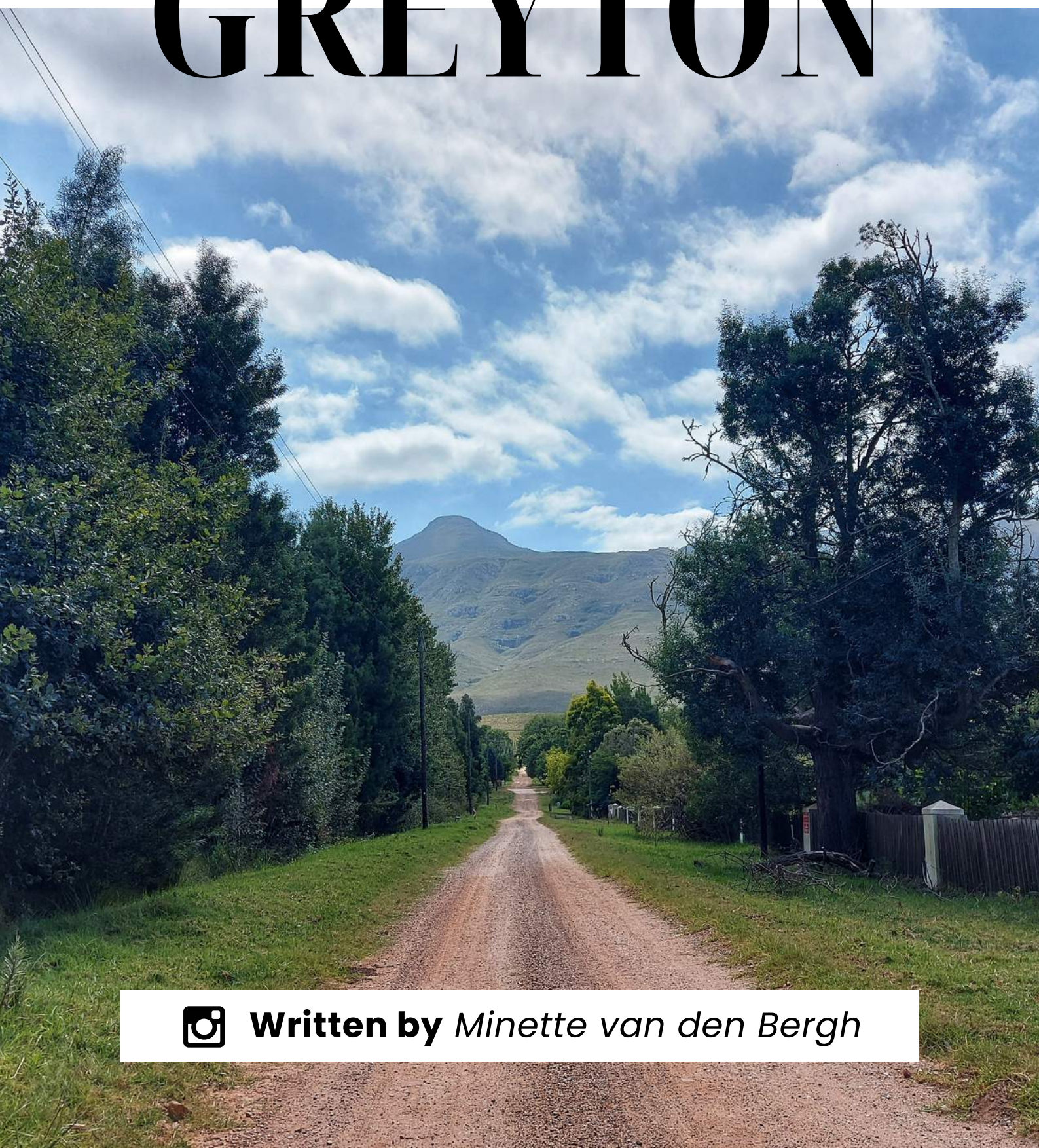
Top Tip

To aspiring pet entrepreneurs, Retha offers invaluable advice gleaned from years of experience and dedication to her craft. Emphasizing the importance of uniqueness, innovation, and quality, she highlights the necessity of understanding customer needs and staying true to one's intuition. The journey of entrepreneurship is paved with challenges, but with perseverance, continuous learning, and a positive mindset, success is not just a possibility—it's a reality waiting to be embraced.



— The Gorgeous **Three G's** —
in generous

GREYTON



Written by *Minette van den Bergh*

I have always known Greyton for its good nature, good coffee, good food, and good art galleries but it was only on this recent visit that I realised it is known for good people as well.

Did you know that there are three animal sanctuaries in this small village?

Meeting Nicola Vernon, the founder of the *Greyton Farm Animal Sanctuary* in their newly opened *Art of Compassion Gallery*, instantly warmed my animal obsessed – and art appreciation – heart. This is a beautiful gallery space where the proceeds from artworks sold are split between the artist and the sanctuary. Some artists even offer the full proceeds to the sanctuary. Sadly, I was not able to visit their farm as I could not go anywhere without the Three G's and taking them to a farm would have had some dramatic moments for the approximately 200 farm animals. Their website is a wonderful read with a detailed overview of the great work they do. It is with big embarrassment that Griffon lifted his leg in the gallery, but Nicola assured me that she saw it as a sign of love.

www.greytonfarmsanctuary.org

Ears Donkey Sanctuary is known for their rescue, rehabilitation, and medical care for equines, including the education of equine owners. I was reading in their March newsletter that they had 22 new patients in January / February 2024. Be prepared to have your tissues ready for some tears when you hear the story about how they came about in 2010. I was again not able to visit the farm but their charity shop in the middle of town was a delightful find. I love their 'adopt a donkey' program where, for a small monthly contribution, you can sponsor a donkey. You will get an adoption certificate that contains a photo of your donkey with your name. It is such a wonderful gift idea.

www.greytondonkeysanctuary.co.za



Gaws – Greyton Animal Welfare Society – with their tagline 'We help to improve the lives of dogs, cats and other animals in Greyton and surrounds' are so much more than an animal shelter. Their involvement, education, and support in the local communities are truly remarkable. They sterilised 47 animals in just one day during their February Sterilisation Drive and prior to this, an additional 46. All, with the help of volunteers and sponsors. They often host Community Clinics in specific areas where they encourage pet parents to bring their pets for treatments, treats, inoculations, and deworming. I love their beautiful, upbeat and bright 'Human of the Month' social media posts where they express their appreciation and thanks for a specific individual for their contribution.

[GAWS Facebook Page](#)



If it is your first visit to the village then you will notice a fair number of leash-free dogs that walk the streets. I love the explanation that was given to me by a very passionate volunteer of GAWS: "... family members of the town looked after by the people of the town...we are one big family from cows, horses, and dogs to not forget the cats..."

Greyton is also the village known for roaming horses, mares and foals. Passing them was such a treat for the Three G's. I am convinced young Gilbert fell in love with these 'Great Danes'. Griffon, being the senior sniffer, was fascinated with the smell of their dung. Gabi, as only she will be when leashed and passing another non-leashed dog, had a few

barking moments. I was however not worried about their safety as we kept a safe distance, made sure they were leashed and remained respectful.



Another unexpected find is some handmade feline appreciation road signs. I have included a photograph of one of them but no hints on where to find this. You will need to walk the streets and keep your eyes open for this photo opportunity.

For humans walking the streets with their fur-kids, there are no excuses to not get rid of any unexpected doggy-do surprises. You will find a unique, beautiful garbage bin every few meters away. **The Greyton Art Bin Project** is yet another fantastic community project. A local business will sponsor a bin from where it is then beautifully wrapped with a vinyl image of a local artist's artwork. The top of the bin displays the sponsor's details and at the bottom of the beautiful artwork the name of the artist is displayed.

The Nature Reserve is unfortunately not dog-friendly, but we enjoyed more than enough walks with the Three G's in the town. They loved running down the gravel roads, sniffing the lush plants, crossing the low water bridges, and having a quick dip in the small streams and bigger rivers.

Our lodging at **Mouse House Greyton** is in an excellent location on a beautiful gravel road with an easy, quick walk to the main road but still away from the hustle and bustle. Dating back to 1890, this thatched-roof cottage is a historic gem. It is fully enclosed with space for fur-kids to explore, sniff, and just be dogs. The garden is lush, peaceful, and private. Just a friendly reminder to keep all dogs off the furniture. The doggo treats and human treats are unexpected and a welcoming touch. Everything about this cottage is comfortable, well thought out, and well equipped. Do not be fooled by the name! We enjoyed ample space!

The well-known Saturday morning **Greyton Village Market** has been going for many years. Visiting is one of the best ways to get to know some of the locals, to stock up on some fresh produce, meet GAWS volunteers at their stall, and support local arts, and crafts. I am convinced that this is where the saying "every man and his dog" got its origins as it is literally just this.

There is definitely no shortage of dog-friendly coffee shops, cafés, eateries, and restaurants. The majority have their dog-friendly areas situated on the outside under big trees overlooking the streets that are filled with charm, character, and beauty. Due to the fact that we were there for 2 nights only, it was impossible to visit all but here are the ones we frequented.



The Hub & Spoke is only a few meters away from the market and wow they have good coffee. I am sure they have great food too, but we sadly did not stay for food. The Three G's thought they were in Schnauzer Heaven as the owners have four of their own! Within seconds there were seven leash-free Schnauzers running in the beautiful garden. Pity the patrons at the table next to us left their two at home as the more the merrier. It could have been similar to the Sunday Schnauzer walks that happen once a month in the bigger cities. We loved chatting to the owners about their move from Cape Town to this beautiful town, the history of their incredible spot and their love for Schnauzers.

Oak & Vigne has been there since my first visit to this village approximately 18 years ago. I was told by a local that they allow dogs inside. I never confirmed it with them as we were more than happy to sit on their relaxed stoep for a cold beer and a light lunch with a few acorns falling from the trees next to us.

1854 Restaurant was our Saturday evening dinner spot, and it was such a good choice. Thank-you to our accommodation host for the recommendation. The live music from a local band was warm and inviting on this rainy evening. The comfort food was tasty and generous in size.

4U Gifts & Cafe for Sunday lunch had my other half commenting that he has always thought he can make a really good pork belly, but he is clearly missing something as this was the best pork belly he has ever had. I opted for the green curry which was also delicious. It was all beautifully presented.

Old Potter's Inn and Brewhouse, situated in an 1830 heritage building, was a great stop for our last meal and an early Sunday supper just before the 8 o'clock loadshedding slot, also bearing in mind that not many places are open on a Sunday evening. The service was friendly, and we loved the pizza.

Aaaah, our time in this special village was definitely too short and we cannot wait to return!



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DOG FRIENDLY *Cape Town*



The Pink Lady

Cape Town's Iconic Pink Lady is Offering the Ultimate Spoil for Humans and Dogs alike.

by **VICKI FOX**

From training to become a member of K9SARA to getting ready for his date, Cobalt had a very eventful day.

We picked up Coco and her chaperone (Jeanine) at 14:00. Cobalt and Coco were both dressed for the occasion, Coco in a funky little denim dress and Cobalt with his bowtie and matching top hat. Upon arriving at the Mount Nelson, we were welcomed in the foyer and escorted to our table on the Terrace. Our very friendly waiter came and introduced himself, poured some bubbly before going to fetch Cobalt and Coco 2 lush dog beds from Chommies, 2 water bowls filled with not just any water but bottled water. Once the dogs were sorted, our waiter explained how the High Tea works. The High tea

comes out in 4 sections. First, we will be receiving our Savoury tray, followed by a basket of Scones, then comes the sweet stuff and if we still have space left over, we can explore the Cake Table.

Out came our first selection consisting of Finger Sandwiches (the cucumber was our favourite) and a selection of savoury treats from Smoked Salmon, Confit Duck to Rare roasted beef. While our waiter explained what we were getting the Dog's waiter came out with their first course which was Beef Consommé jelly, rare roast beef and marrow. Coco's bowl did not even reach the ground before she started enjoying her meal. Cobalt at least gave me a few seconds for a photo (but refused to stop glaring at me for taking so long).

While enjoying our savoury snacks and bubbles, we looked at the very extensive tea menu. I decided on the Black Rooibos Vanilla flavoured tea, but after asking our waiter for his opinion he called the tea sommelier, Craig Cupido. Craig has a real passion for tea, after explaining what kind of tea I like (Black Rooibos no sugar), he immediately recommended 3 tea's that I would enjoy. I went with his first choice which was a African Pride Honeybush flavoured with marula and caramel. Craig recommended a Pu-erh Royal 2009 for Jeanine who wanted something completely different to any normal tea. He also insisted that we try a Green Rooibos that he explained is like no green tea we have ever experienced. After we received our tea he took us through the tasting experience. The Green tea had such a great unique taste it is something I would be able to drink the whole day hot or cold over a couple of ice cubes.



Next came the basket of Home-Made Scones with Vanilla cream, Strawberry Jam, Cheese and Clotted Cream. The doggies received the most artistic meal next, Home-Made Meat Loaf and savoury rice. Coco could not believe her eyes, dogs getting a second meal. Cobalt decided he does not like the garnish and very quickly picked it off and put it to the side before enjoying his meal. After the Scones both Humans and Doggies were comfortably full, enjoying the fantastic background classical music and wondering if some of the sun loungers on the lawn are available.

Next (not yet lastly) came the sweet selection which was 4 levels of different home-made cakes, brownies, choux bun and yoghurt slice. The doggies each received 3 home made peanut butter biscuits. We had to wake them up for this because they have both passed out on their posh beds.

Jeanine and I could hardly move after the sweet selection, but Craig told us about the most amazing cheesecake, so we had



to go have a look at the cake selection inside. Everything looked mouth watering and if I had more space, I would have loved to try the delicate red velvet cake and chocolate cake but only managed to squeeze in some award winning cheesecake.

Every time a waiter came to our table the dog's started thinking it is for them. They very quickly picked up on the pattern. Taking them to a normal restaurant after this spoil is going to be a challenge. I don't think Cobalt will be posing anymore if he doesn't get treats.

The entire High Tea experience takes a minimum of 2 hours. If you plan on visiting the Mount Nelson, put at least 2,5 hours aside for it, and don't plan a long drive home afterwards.

Now that we had finished eating, we decided to take a stroll through the magnificent garden with the dogs, before driving home. The garden is amazing, we did not spend enough time enjoying the beautiful peaceful garden and need to come back again soon just to admire it. We walked down to the tennis court, admiring the trees along the way and then to the Oasis pool on the other side. We were very tempted to phone the men at home and say we are renting a room for the night, everything was very tranquil, there was even a family of Egyptian geese enjoying the heated pool.

We made our way back to reception to thank our waiter and Craig the tea sommelier for making this the most amazing experience, before driving home.

Once in the car Cobalt and Coco could hardly keep their eyes open but were so scared they were going to miss out on something exciting. Jeanine and I both agreed this was one of the most amazing spoils and we strongly recommend Mount Nelson, both humans and dogs were spoilt beyond our wildest dreams.

76 Orange Street, Gardens, Cape Town, 8001

021 483 1000

VISIT THEIR WEBSITE

http://



INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE PINK LADY

In 1918, Aldo Renata Tagliavia wished to mark the end of the First World War in a memorable way. He discovered that pink was symbolic of peace, and painted the hotel in that colour to welcome home returning soldiers. The Mount Nelson has remained pink ever since, and even has its own Pantone shade.

- The Oasis Pool is one of the largest heated pools in South Africa.
- Mount Nelson is home to South Africa's first expert-trained tea sommelier. Head Sommelier Craig Cupido is passionate about tea and has an abiding appreciation of this time-honoured tradition.

*In the June Issue -
High Tea at the
12 Apostels*



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Pet Friendly Magaliesburg

STONEHILL - The views are amazing and the breakfast fantastic.

An amazing dog friendly venue, and a firm favourite. It is definitely the place to go for a short break, to get away from all the hustle and bustle. Just an hours drive out of Johannesburg, great for a peaceful, relaxed weekend.

Individually fenced chalets, with enough space between cottages to remain completely private. We have stayed in various chalets on our numerous visits and they are all fully equipped with everything you need as well as a private patio, fully fenced (small dog secured) garden, braai area and splash pool with a pool cover, and an outside shower. The units have aircons and king size beds.

There are well maintained walking paths where our little ones are able to run off-lead, which they absolutely loved. There is ample space to run around and explore with spectacular views that are soul soothing. The super friendly ponies, come to visit daily, make sure you take some apples and carrots to feed them.

Caroline and Mark are very welcoming hosts and Bukhosi is very knowledgeable and accommodating. If you are looking for peace, tranquillity and some quality time, Stone Hill is the place to do it. Close to JHB but yet you feel so far away.

If you are just looking for an outing with your furbabies an hour out of Joburg? Every Saturday, Sunday and public holidays Stone Hill, offer a large buffet breakfast at their lapa. Start your morning with a 5km hike where your dogs can run unleashed. There is a small ravine area where they can paddle and get muddy.



The buffet breakfast with the most delicious home baked farm bread, everything on the buffet was fresh and the flapjacks are amazing!

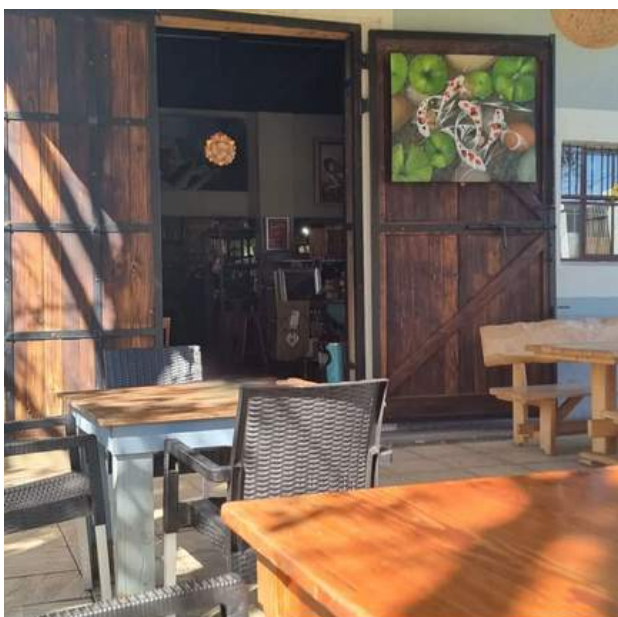


Call Caroline to book 082 447 6893 or info@stone-hill.co.za



APOLLO'S BOUNTY - An eclectic, fun and funky restaurant.

Pop in to Apollo's Bounty while in Magaliesburg, it is an eclectic, fun and funky restaurant. Including a fresh goods store, a unique gift shop, live performances, a boutique nursery and a divine menu. Apollo's has a little something for everyone. Indoor and outdoor seating is available and doggies are welcome. They can even choose meals from their own menu. The food is well presented, well priced and the portions are a decent size. The fresh artisanal bread is divine.



WOODLAND GARDENS LODGE - An oasis in the middle of the Highveld.

Still in Magaliesburg. Picture 6 cosy chalets nestled amongst the trees. Guests to Woodland Gardens lodge can take their pick from the different cottages on offer, whether it's a romantic cottage or a gorgeous family size holiday cottage. Each cottage is equipped to ensure that guests have a convenient and comfortable stay.

Enjoy garden and forest walks. There is an observation deck with a mountain view, and a rock swimming pool with decks, seating, and shade. Woodland Gardens has private, secluded, romantic chalets for couples, as well as small group or family accommodation, with a very special private garden and forest energy that supports anyone requiring time out and a need to de-stress and get back on track with their dreams and goals!

An oasis in the middle of the Highveld. The wooden chalets include fireplaces, verandas, with fully equipped indoor and outdoor cooking facilities. They offer massage services at your chalet, for your own convenience.

Their pet friendly units are well fenced even for little furry friends. So if you want to break from the city, Woodland Gardens Private Lodge is your place!



**Call to book 082 873 2736 or
info@woodlandgardens.co.za**

Dog Friendly *beaches* Helderberg's Heroes

Exploring some of
the Dog Friendly
Beaches of
Gordon's Bay
and Strand

written by *Shaun van Wyk*



It's said Gordon's Bay is a lot like a baby, if it's not windy it's wet. Contrary to how true this statement may be (it can get windy but there are many stunning days throughout the year), Gordon's Bay is a town that is oft overlooked, and that's a real shame. If you rush through to find your way to the picturesque Clarens Drive or even by on the N2 to climb Sir Lowry's Pass you'll miss out on beautiful sunsets and vistas, terrific restaurants, a must-visit pre-loved bookstore(!) and some awesome beaches too.

What very few people know, though, is that a few of the beaches Gordon's Bay, and its neighbour Strand, has to offer are dog friendly. ***Our dogs approve!***

Although difficult to pinpoint, we're hoping this guide will do just that, guide you to the perfect stretches of sand where your furry friend who tagged along on one of your family holidays can run after their favourite ball or splash about in the cool waves of the Atlantic Ocean. Take note though, some stretches of beach do require your dog be on a leash.

Fractions - Gordon's Bay Beach

Not all of Gordon's Bay Beach is dog friendly. The part that isn't stretches from the parking lot to the end nearest to the harbour. The part that is fit for Fido and friends is in the opposite direction. However, the dog friendly parts are split into two rather unequal halves by the sand dune rehabilitation located near Hendon Park. The first half is rather small but is still worth visiting, especially if your pooch enjoys being off leash chasing a ball as it hops along the sand or splashing about in the shallow surf of the Atlantic Ocean.

The second part is the larger of the two unequal halves. To get there is rather easy and requires a short drive until Harbour Island. Find a parking and stroll towards the beach with your furry friends in tow. But there's a small catch; for a short section of the beach the dogs must be leashed up, but they are allowed to be free just after up until the dunes near Hendon Park. Here they can run about freely and even take a dip, which they most definitely will do.

Something noteworthy: several of the restaurants that are found in Harbour Island are dog-friendly and most of Beach Road can be walked safely on a paved walkway, plus several establishments on this road are also dog friendly. After some play or a lengthy walk your dogs can sleep it off wherever you decide to sit down and have something to drink. ***Win-win!***



Strand

As you drive out of Gordon's Bay towards Strand you should turn onto Beach Road until you spot the ocean. Here you can park wherever you like as the whole section of the beach up until the parking area near the Strand public pool is dog friendly. What's more, the beach stretches all the way to Harmony Park in the direction of Gordon's Bay, the humans only beach. This stretch of sand and otherworldly rocky outcrops is a pleasure to walk but be aware that the tide within False Bay tends to bring a lot of rubbish to these shores. We spotted several sharp shards of glass embedded in the sand too so it's best to walk towards the public pool instead. This part of the beach has soft sand and some excellent spots to swim. You could even get your toes wet during their splashing about.

The Promenade

Strand's promenade is worth mentioning as it is a real pleasure walking here with your dogs. Not only can they walk comfortably on the wall to watch the sea (who wouldn't?), but this paved path is especially frequented by those who enjoy getting kitted out in their running gear for a morning or evening jog with their besties trotting along beside them.

For those looking to enjoy a stroll, the promenade is the perfect place to walk along with your furry friend. They'll be able to catch up on the latest canine gossip as they sniff the different surfaces, and you can partake in a Strand classic, the ice-cream cone. Trust me, everyone'll love every moment. When visiting, be sure to take in a spectacular sunset as well. Worth it!



No Dogs Allowed

Even though a few beaches around Helderberg are not dog friendly, as mentioned previously, the need to bring up Bikini Beach and the remaining stretch of Gordon's Bay Beach is rather important. Several websites on Google are incorrect when they say that Bikini Beach is one of the beaches that is dog friendly. The same applies to Kogel Beach, found just a few kilometres outside Gordon's Bay on Clarens Drive. The quintessential restaurant found nearby is the perfect "pitstop" for the weary and not-weary-at-all traveller though; they welcome all furry friends!

When visiting the Helderberg area you will be able to visit all these beaches, and more. Be sure to pack a bowl, some fresh water, a few towels, and your furry friends. They'll have as much fun as you do.

When in doubt if a beach is dog friendly, please check in with Gordon's Bay Tourism first.



Email: gordonsbaytourism.travel@gmail.com





DOGGY HIGH TEA

The President Hotel in Cape Town will, once again, host its popular Doggy High Tea on Saturday, 13 April 2024, from 2pm to 4pm. The high tea is usually offered in the summer months so this will be the last one until its revival from October. Tail-wagging excitement awaits both pooches and their parents as they gather for an afternoon of delicious treats and beautiful views of the Atlantic Ocean.

Bring your precious pooch for a high tea with pet-friendly treats while you indulge in locally inspired afternoon delights.

To secure your spot at this exclusive event, bookings can be made via WhatsApp at 071 368 9529 or by email at bookings@presidenthotel.co.za. For more information, visit www.presidenthotel.co.za.

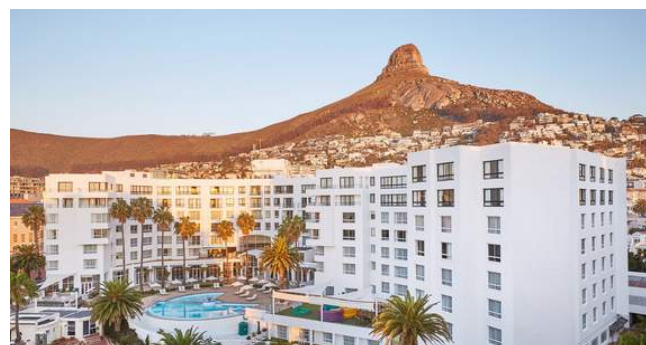
The President Hotel's famous Doggy High Tea returns by popular demand

Pamper your furry companion with an afternoon spread specially crafted for them, at R225 per pooch, which includes a welcome drink of bone broth. The menu features canine delights, including meatloaf, beef frikkadel, sweet pawtato fritters, irresistible doggy donuts, pupcakes, popcorn and more.

For the human companions, indulge in your own treats at R250 per parent, including a welcome drink. The menu features coronation chicken finger sandwiches, quiches, vol-au-vents, blinis, frangipani tarts, profiteroles, macarons and more.

Set against the backdrop of Lion's Head, with gorgeous ocean views, The President Hotel offers the perfect setting for a memorable afternoon. Guests can enjoy the great vibe while their furry friends mingle and enjoy the company of fellow pups.

Guests can also spoil their pooch and treat them to a stay at the pet-friendly hotel where the room will include doggy beds, bowls and a pet-friendly menu.



Interior *design* TIPS

for sensitive dogs
written by *Michelle Murray*



in the HOME

Just like humans, some dogs are more sensitive to various external factors. They all have their little quirks, strengths and weaknesses. And, just as with our human children we need to find out how to best deal with what is at hand. Our environments have a direct effect on our psychi and emotions as it does with our pets. Here are some ideas to help adjust the environment of your home to suit and help your sensitive four legged soul.

Our homes can be noisy and busy places at times. For a sound sensitive or more skittish dog, this can cause anxiety and extreme restlessness. Try find a space in the home that can become a safe space for pup. Most doggies like a nice quiet place to retreat and this is even more the case for sensitive doggy souls.

If you have the budget, time and inclination then there are some cool and creative ways to turn this space into a wonderful and fun (yet chilled) space for your pet.

Under the stairs can be turned into pups very own abode with all his personal belongings! There are many ways to achieve this.

The simplest, easiest and most cost effective way is to place the pet bed or basket under the stairs. It's quick and easy and can be decorated with some art and toys.

Another way is to give your fur friend his very own 'apartment' – a home away from home, you may say!

Making use of space in a cupboard in the kitchen or scullery can create a very cosy and inviting retreat. Otherwise a quiet little recess or nook somewhere around the house will still provide a calm and happy space for your dog.

A dome pet bed or a small teepee works very well too in cases where there are no nooks or corners to turn into a safe space.



the magic of MUSIC

Music is a wonderful tool to use for sensitive dogs. While it might seem odd to suggest music for sound sensitive doggies, it goes a long way in calming them down. Sound sensitive or sound reactive dogs' hearing is both their weakness and their strength.

Listen to your choice of music often while you are all together at home. Your dog will quickly associate the music with you. If there are a lot of people walking in the streets, above or next door neighbours making a noise, a thunderstorm, etc. you can play your music to help hide the ambient and not so ambient external noise which will alleviate the anxiety your dog may feel. If you have created a little safe space for them somewhere try incorporate a blue tooth speaker somewhere that you can use to play some tunes!



... *easy ACCESS*

As the mom of a skittish, sound sensitive dog we have found that we need to ensure there is easy access into the house from outside. If a loud or sharp sound scares your dog while they are exploring the garden, they may feel the need to bolt inside quickly. If it's not possible to leave a door open completely then a doggy door or Lock latch are fantastic options to allow them easy access to their safe space.



OUTSIDE spaces

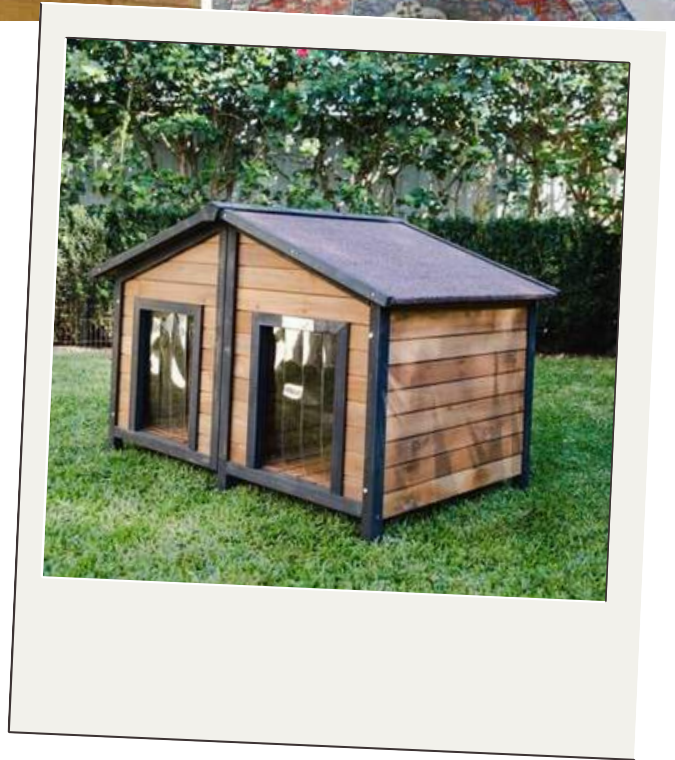
Outside spaces need to be kind and cosy too for our four-legged friends. Exercise plays a vital role in helping your dog release some nervous energy. If noise is a major concern on walks, try walking at quiet times of the day or take pup in the car to a less busy place that allows them to get those endorphins going without causing them any further stress.

If walks are not an option at all (and even if they are) make your garden space one that stimulates your fur babe. Play is exercise and as mentioned, exercise releases calming hormones for your dog. Try eliminate anything from the garden décor that may make a massive noise during play – that may be rather counterproductive!

A clean, comfortable and safe kennel placed in a shady area is also a great way to help pup feel comfier outside. If water has a calming effect on your pet, think about adding a small plastic pool somewhere for them to have a dip and relax every now and then.

Above all else always remember physical touch is so important to many animals. When they are a little more anxious or skittish, they often just need a reassuring (or lots of reassuring) rubs and cuddles. If it's at all possible, for someone they trust to be home for most of the day this will reduce the chance of the anxiety building up over the time they are alone

Besides... studies have shown, hugging our pets reduces anxiety in us too.



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written by *Monique de Jager*

Dear Reactive Dog Owner,

I empathise deeply with the challenges you face as the owner of a reactive dog. It pains me to know that you've encountered blame, criticism, and even hostility from others due to your dog's challenges. The journey of managing a reactive dog is fraught with difficulties, and it's disheartening to know that you've had to endure the added stress of judgment and misunderstanding. Apart from the emotional aspect, engaging these "trainers" and "behaviourists" also involves a financial and time investment diverting resources that could have been directed toward actual improvements.

Living with a reactive dog undoubtedly takes a toll on the entire family, and it's essential to acknowledge the impact it can have on your well-being. The stress and anxiety you experience can make it challenging to effectively communicate with your dog and navigate training sessions. Before taking action, it's crucial to prioritise your emotional health and find ways to manage your stress levels.

The Unregulated Landscape

One of the unfortunate realities of the dog training and behavior industry is its lack of regulation, allowing individuals with varying levels of knowledge and experience to position themselves as "trainers" or "behaviorists." This lack of oversight can lead to conflicting advice and misinformation, further complicating your efforts to help your dog.

The outdated notion of dominance theory, rooted in observations of captive wolves from the 1960s, has been widely discredited, sadly many of these individuals still believe in these methods. Dogs are not wolves, and coercive methods based on alpha theory can lead to fear, anxiety, and even aggression in our canines. Punitive techniques, such as alpha rolls or punishment for growling, only serve to escalate fear and undermine the trust between you and your dog. Growling is a natural part of a dog's communication. If a dog becomes accustomed to being punished for this form of expression, they may skip warning signals altogether and resort to biting instead.

Growling is a natural part of a dog's communication.



Identifying Triggers and Root Causes

Aside from inherent genetic tendencies, a female dog undergoing stress during pregnancy may impair her puppy's ability to handle stressful situations later in life. Additionally, environmental factors can also play a significant role in the development of reactivity. Neglect, abandonment, rehoming, abuse (mental and physical), severe prolonged boredom, and the inability to express natural motor patterns may all be contributing factors.

Single-event learning occurs when a traumatizing incident happens, and the dog generalizes this experience to other situations, causing fear in similar future scenarios. For instance, imagine your dog is in the park and gets attacked by a small black dog. As a result, your dog might generalize the fear to **a) all small dogs, b) all black dogs, or c) all parks with a similar appearance.**

The Stress Response

To address reactivity effectively, it's important to understand what it entails. Reactivity in dogs is characterized by heightened emotional arousal in response to specific stimuli the dog perceives as negative. This can manifest in behaviors such as staring, excessive barking, trembling, lunging, and growling. When a dog experiences stress, it triggers the fight or flight response, prioritizing immediate survival needs over other bodily functions. Prolonged stress or being in this stressed state too frequently can have adverse effects on gut health, reproduction, growth, and other vital processes.

A stressor can result in **cortisol levels rising to 207% of the normal levels** and the recovery time to return to normal (or what is considered normal for that individual dog) is dog dependant. Reactive behaviors are often misunderstood as aggression, leading to unwarranted judgments and stigma. I need to emphasize that the determination of whether a particular stimulus is negative to the dog, should not be made by the trainer or handler; rather, it's the dog's perspective that matters.

When a dog has multiple triggers, which is often the case, it can be beneficial to begin exposure training with the easiest trigger at a level where the dog can cope with the stressor. In other words, start with the stressor that elicits the mildest reaction from your dog. At the beginning of the training process, it is recommended to establish a continuous consistent schedule of reinforcement, meaning that each time your dog succeeds or shows no reaction to stimuli, they should be appropriately rewarded. The advantage of positive reinforcement methods is that you can't emotionally harm the dog by possibly rewarding them too frequently or at the wrong moments. While not getting the specifics right, it may take longer to see results, or you may experience a lack of results altogether. This underscores the importance of seeking assistance from a qualified trainer or behaviorist rather than trying to manage on your own.

On the contrary, employing aversive methods could lead to escalated behaviors, fractured trust, or a dog that is emotionally harmed, withdrawn, or prone to aggression.

Being mindful of trigger stacking can also guide you on this journey. For instance, if your dog experiences a series of stressors such as hearing a startling noise in the distance (a low-level stressor), then seeing a cat on the fence a few minutes later (a mild stressor), followed by a car ride to the vet (another mid-level stressor), and finally encountering a child at the vet (another mid-level stressor), your dog may react more explosively than usual towards the child. This phenomenon, known as trigger stacking, can often leave us puzzled about our dog's sudden reaction, especially when it seems disproportionate to the trigger at hand. Frequently, we may not fully recognize the low-to-mid-level triggers because our dog might not have visibly reacted, or we might have overlooked signs of their discomfort. Some handlers might not even know what these signs look like.

Progression

Once behaviour modification has been successful with that specific low-level trigger, then you can progress to addressing more challenging stressors. If a dog is having difficulty with a certain aspect and reacts strongly, it indicates that it's too challenging for them. In such cases, it's necessary to adjust the training strategy by either training from a greater distance or simplifying the stressor. For example, if your dog fears loud noises, you could start by playing softer sounds and gradually increase the volume as they become more comfortable.

Management plays a significant factor in most situations. Some areas enforce strict leash regulations, making it advisable to opt for such locations to prevent potential encounters with off-leash dogs that could unsettle your dog. Moreover, it's never advisable to introduce leashed dogs to off-leash dogs, as it inhibits the leashed dogs' natural behaviors, leading to feelings of restriction or frustration, which may escalate into negative interactions. Many pet owners notice that their dogs are less reactive off-leash compared to on-leash situations for this very reason. Off-leash freedom grants them more control over the situation. However, this also comes with its own set of risks, such as the possibility of your dog getting startled and running into traffic.

Part 2 will appear in the JUNE issue.



Monique de Jager

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Thank You to the Reactive Dog Owners who contributed by completing the questionnaire.



HELP!

My dog is grieving,
what do I do?

written by *Maria Wein*

Deciphering the emotions behind those seemingly sorrowful gazes can be challenging, as our beloved canine companions cannot articulate their feelings to us. Despite their inability to vocalize happiness or sadness, perceptive pet owners discern their pets' emotions through behaviour cues. It's widely recognized that dogs experience a range of emotions, including happiness, sadness, possessiveness, and fear. They can also exhibit signs of anger and nervousness. And yes, they do grieve, underscoring the depth of their emotional capacity.

What are the signs of mourning?

When a dog experiences the loss of a companion, whether it's another animal or a human, they undergo a grieving process and react to the changes in their life. Behaviourist **Chantal Karyta** says, *'Grief can be seen similar as to how we experience it; depression, loss of appetite, lethargy, being quieter around the house. Look out for the differences in your dog's behaviour as to what they were before – for example loneliness, sadness or being extra clingy.'*

What does the research say?

The Companion Animal Mourning Project, conducted in 1996 by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), offered valuable insights into the grieving process of dogs. The survey showed:

- 36% of dogs showed a decreased appetite following the loss of a canine companion. Approximately 11% of dogs refused to eat altogether.
- Many dogs exhibited increased sleeping patterns, while some experienced insomnia. Certain dogs changed their sleeping area within the house.
- Around 63% of dogs displayed alterations in their vocal patterns; some became more vocal, while others became quieter following the loss of a human companion.
- Surviving dogs often exhibited heightened affection towards their owners and became 'more clingy'.

The study, which analysed a range of behavioural patterns, concluded that 66% of dogs experienced four or more changes in behaviour indicative of grief after the loss of a family pet. These findings underscore the emotional depth and complexity of the canine grieving process, highlighting the importance of recognizing and addressing the needs of grieving dogs.

There are sceptics that argue that dogs don't truly grieve and attribute their behavioural shifts to disruptions in their daily routine caused by the absence of a central figure in their life. In essence, they suggest that the dog is distressed because their usual schedule has been disrupted. For instance, with the loss of a companion dog, the surviving dog may miss the interaction and playtime they shared. Similarly, in the case of losing a human companion, changes in feeding and walking schedules may occur as a new caregiver assumes responsibility.

Since dogs may not comprehend death as a permanent concept, they might wait expectantly, believing that the deceased individual will return. Others propose that the dog's reaction could be influenced by the grief exhibited by the humans in the household as they cope with the loss of a family member.

Are there any steps I can take before to minimize mourning?

Well, yes there are! You can start before any death has occurred says **Karyta**, *“Some pets have had an older dog around their whole life – like a security blanket, and when that dog is gone, it’s extremely difficult for them. In other words, sometimes they bond more to the other dog/s or human/s than to the owner. To prevent this, establish a strong bond with your dog/s as individuals. For example, spend individual time with each, away from the other owner or other dog/s. Have a strong bond from the beginning. That way they learn to be ‘okay’ with that other dog/human not being there. It’s a skill that needs to be taught while that other dog/human is still alive.”*

She says further, *“Dogs need to have enrichment at home – provide chewing, licking, sniffing activities – to get dopamine and serotonin flowing through their bodies.” This should be something taught as a basic standard of care for any pet, but when it comes to grieving specifically she says, “If they’re bored they carry on grieving more. They need distractions. So make the activities super easy, and have very high value rewards.”*



Suggested Steps

When a dog is mourning the loss of another dog, it's important to provide them with support and understanding. Here are some tips to help a grieving dog:

Maintain Routine

Dogs thrive on routine, so try to keep their schedule as normal as possible. This can provide them with a sense of stability during a difficult time.

Provide Comfort

Spend extra time with your grieving dog, offering them affection and reassurance. Physical touch, such as gentle petting and cuddling, can be soothing for them. **Karyta** says, *“Spend real quality time with them, put down the phone and - give them all the cuddles. It’s good for the human too.”* You can ignore inappropriate behaviour like excessive vocalization or howling and instead reward quiet behaviour with praise or affection. Avoid giving treats to quiet them, as this reinforces the unwanted behaviour. Instead, redirect their attention with a walk or a game.

Encourage distractions & exercise

Regular exercise can help alleviate stress and anxiety in dogs. Take your grieving dog for walks or engage in playtime activities to keep them active and stimulated. Offer your dog toys, puzzles, or interactive games to help distract them from their grief and keep their mind occupied.

Karyta says, *“Try and prevent the grieving process as much as possible. Make a point of doing fun things. Things your dog likes to do with you – think of the things that makes them excited. Take them into nature to sniff to decompress. Take them to places where they can enjoy themselves and be a dog. Don’t force them to do anything, but we want to give them ‘feel good’ chemicals.”*

If your dog enjoys company, invite friends over who will interact with them. This variety in human interaction can help stimulate their interest and provide companionship.



Allow them to grieve

Just like humans, dogs need time to process their emotions and mourn the loss of a companion. Allow your dog to express their grief in their own way, whether it's through whining, pacing, or seeking solitude. **Karyta** suggests, *"If you're putting your other dog to sleep, let the other dog/s be around to see what is going on. Otherwise, you leave with the dog, come back and the other dog has no understanding of what has happened and may wait for that dog to return."*

Several behaviourists suggest that you shouldn't call attention to the name of the dog or person who has passed. They suggest not using their name as that can confuse the dog, however, no studies have really been done on this.



Seek support & monitor their health

If you're struggling to help your dog cope with the loss, don't hesitate to seek support from a veterinarian, animal behaviourist, or support group specializing in pet bereavement. **Karyta** says, *"If their grief is extreme, speak to your vet about behaviour medications to help with grief for a short period of time."*

Keep an eye on your dog's physical and emotional well-being during the mourning period. If you notice any concerning changes in their behaviour or appetite.

Should I consider getting another dog?

If appropriate and after an appropriate grieving period, you might consider introducing another dog into the household to provide companionship for your grieving dog. However, make sure to introduce them gradually and monitor their interactions closely. Introducing a new pet, as they transition could add additional stress.

Establishing a new social structure in the home following the loss of a family member is crucial for everyone's well-being, particularly for dogs. While people have external sources of social interaction, dogs rely heavily on their immediate family for companionship and support during times of grief. By providing extra attention, understanding, and patience, you can help your dog navigate through their grieving process with comfort and support. Dogs operate within a much narrower social structure, bounded by the confines of their home, yard, and neighbourhood walking paths. Their daily interactions revolve around immediate family members and other pets within the household. Thus, when a member of this tightly-knit unit is absent, it leaves a significant void in the dog's life, requiring support to navigate through the loss.

Closing thoughts

Remember that every dog is unique, so it's essential to observe your dog's individual needs and adjust your approach accordingly. With time, patience, and understanding, most dogs can overcome their grief and adapt to life without their companion.

As time passes, both the pet and the pet owner will gradually heal. While the pain of loss may never completely vanish, it becomes more bearable with time. Fond memories of the departed loved one begin to replace sorrow, fostering a sense of comfort and acceptance. Furthermore, the relationship between the surviving pet and their human companion may

evolve into something even more profound as they adapt to their new reality.

Together, they establish a new way of life, fostering a bond that transcends the pain of loss and embraces the beauty of companionship and resilience.

Chantal Karyta

*is the owner of CK9 Dog Training and a member of the **Association of Pet Dog Trainers**, the **COAPE Association of Pet Behaviourists and Trainers**, the **Professional Pet Guild** and is a supporting member of the **International Association of Animal Behaviour Counsellors**.*

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BEHAVIOUR CHANGES

WHEN YOUR DOG IS IN SEASON



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Research in recent years has raised questions over whether dogs should be neutered or spayed at six months as previously recommended or whether it is better to wait until later in life. This change means more dog owners will experience female dogs coming into season.

BY SASCHA ODAYAR
COAPE QUALIFIED ANIMAL
BEHAVIOURIST

For some owners, this is a new experience with many not realising the potential behaviour challenges that can develop as a result of the change in hormones.

A dog comes into season approximately every six months, otherwise known as the fertile period when a female dog can become pregnant. The first season usually happens from 6 months of age onwards. Smaller dogs typically have their first season earlier than large/giant breeds.



There are four stages in a dog's oestrous cycle

Proestrus

Approximately 9 days

This is when bleeding starts. The dog is producing the hormones and pheromones to attract a male. However, during this time, is not accepting of a male if he tries to mate with her.

Oestrus

Approximately 9 days

The discharge becomes lighter in colour and the flow reduces. During this stage, ovulation occurs. She will now accept a male.

Diestrus

Approximately 45 days

The dog is no longer fertile and the outward symptoms, such as bleeding and a swollen vulva, start to disappear.

Anoestrus

The period between each season

The dog is not fertile and will not attract a male.

During these first three stages, there are significant changes in hormone levels, particularly progesterone. When not in season the female's progesterone level is typically <1 ng/ml but by the Diestrus stage it can continue to rise to 40–90 ng/ml regardless of whether or not they have been impregnated. This level abruptly falls back to the baseline of <1 ng/ml when they reach Anoestrus.

Regardless of whether a dog is mated or not, their body produces the same hormones as if they were. The hormones that are produced during the heat cycle help keep them and their offspring safe.

This surge in progesterone often triggers a behaviour change. Some noticeable changes may include, urinating more than usual, reduced appetite, lethargy and becoming clingy to their owner. A significant change that is typically seen and can be the most problematic is aggressive behaviour.

Dogs that are usually placid can become less tolerant. This can be problematic in a multi-dog household. The in-season female could have a doggy companion that they usually enjoy playing with, but their behaviour suddenly changes and they growl snap or bark in their presence.

She needs to protect herself from other dogs, so can be intolerant of them being close by. She may not want to share her space, food or toys. Resource guarding may be seen in dogs that never usually show these types of behaviour or can intensify in dogs who have exhibited this behaviour in the past. There can be some aggression over resources between the human and the dog too. A dog may become possessive over toys, bones, etc.

HOW TO NAVIGATE THESE CHANGES?



MANAGEMENT IS KEY!

Management is vital during this period to reduce the likelihood of negative interactions with people and other dogs.

During Proestrus, the female dog produces pheromones that will attract males. This means unwanted attention in the home or out on walks. Being approached can cause the female to display defensive aggression. During this time it is advisable to stop walking in areas with other dogs, especially if they are off lead. Keep your dog on a leash and if that is not possible, suspend walks and increase activities, training and enrichment at home.

The hormonal changes are temporary, however, 65 days can seem like a long time if you have a multi-dog household and there are tensions as a result.

Without management, there may be altercations with other dogs that sour relationships. Even after the hormone levels have returned to normal, the damage has already been done and the bond between them negatively impacted.

Start by removing any toys or chews that your dog could potentially guard. If your dog guards communal areas or people, separation may be necessary to allow the in-season dog to relax without fear of the other dogs approaching.

Unfortunately, in some cases, negative interactions do occur between dogs that cohabit. Wait until the 65 days have passed before trying to repair the relationship. The female dog needs space. Attempting to repair a relationship by forcing interactions, will only result in worsening the relationship.

Being aware and implementing management strategies before a problem develops will ensure continued harmony in the household. Prevention of incidents over those two months is much easier than trying to repair negatively impacted relationships.

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Burmese & Siamese Cat Coat Colour



Cats are known for their captivating fur colours and patterns - but have you ever wondered what causes these unique variations in their furry coats? It all comes down to colour genetics - the science of inheritance that includes the complex interactions that produce a variety of coats in several species and breeds. Understanding the underlying mechanisms behind colour genetics can help both breeders and cat owners select animals for certain coat colours and patterns, without compromising the health of our feline friends.

One of the loci (a small DNA segment where a particular genetic marker is located in a DNA sequence) in the TYR-gene that results in unique coat colouration in cats is the C-locus - also referred to as the albino series locus. The TYR-gene codes for the enzyme Tyrosinase, which is essential for melanin production. Mutations discovered in the C-locus of this gene control the production of Tyrosinase and are associated with temperature-dependent colouring and albinism. The traits associated with the gene are:

C (full colour) > cb (Burmese) = cs (Siamese) > c (albino)

The mutations c.679G>T and c.901G>A are associated with Burmese and Siamese colourations respectively, resulting in forms of incomplete albinism. Another mutation, one that is deleted, c.937delC, leads to full albinism. These traits follow an autosomal recessive pattern, requiring two copies of the mutant allele to manifest phenotypically (we can see the physical characteristics).

The Burmese and Siamese colour concentration alleles are responsible for controlling the production of Tyrosinase.

These are known as colour-point alleles, as they play a crucial role in the variation of pigment in cat hair and skin surface colour. This form of pigmentation is temperature-dependent; therefore, the kittens are born with uniform colouring (as they would have been exposed to a constant temperature in the womb) and exhibit a change in colouring as they get older. As the temperature of the skin's surface increases, such as in the back and belly, there is inhibition of tyrosinase production; therefore, no pigment is formed. When the temperature cools in places like the nose, tail, paws, and ears, the pigmentation then occurs, and results in unique markings on the cats' fur.

The mutation that results in the cs -allele in Siamese cats will cause a decrease in coat pigmentation. Therefore, individuals with the cs/cs genotype (the genetic code) will show a reduced amount of colouring and production of markings. Their genotype will also result in these cats having blue eyes.

The cb-allele in Burmese cats is a result of mutation c. 679G>T, which partially decreases the intensity of the pigmentation. Burmese cats do exhibit lighter colouring and show temperature-dependent markings; however, the cats' body colour will only be slightly



lighter than the markings themselves. Individuals with the cb/cb genotype will be diluted to the sepia-brown colouring and will have amber- or yellow-coloured eyes.

A double carrier feline (cb/cs) will have mink colouration and markings. In essence, these cats will be intermediate in colour. These cats are referred to as Tonkinese, however, they will not breed true, therefore there is no specific Tonkinese breed.

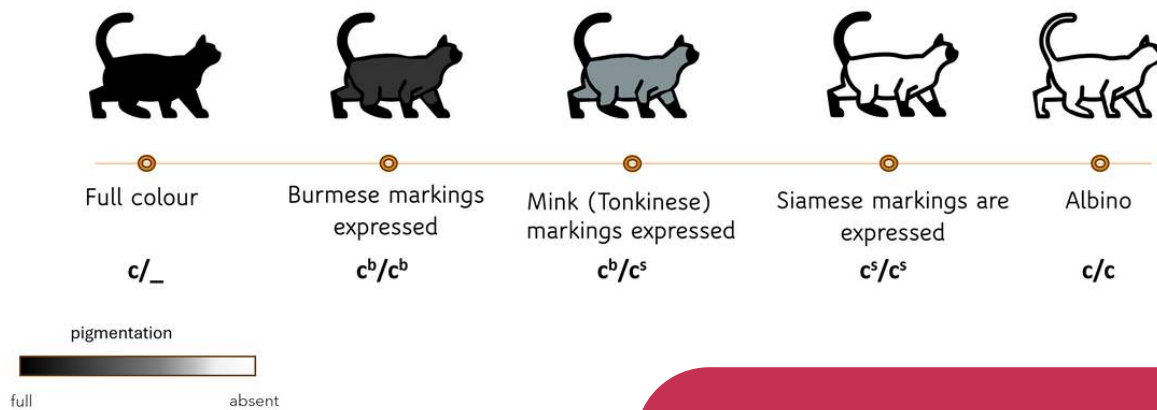
Cats with the c/c genotype will result in an

Albino cat. Albinism, a genetic condition resulting in the absence of pigmentation, manifests in many species and presents both challenges and unique characteristics. Albino cats require special care due to their sensitivity to light and increased susceptibility to health issues. Their lack of melanin exposes them to sun damage and potential blindness. Additionally, immune system weaknesses and occasional clumsiness are common among albino cats. Vigilant care and regular veterinary check-ups are essential to ensure their well-being.



COLOUR-POINT ALLELES

C (full colour) > c^b (Burmese) = c^s (Siamese) > c (albino)



Exploring the genetics of cat coat colours helps us shed light on the mechanisms behind the colouring and its implications for feline health. By understanding these genetic factors, we can better care for our feline companions. Through genetic health testing, we can also identify potential health issues and take necessary steps to prevent them early on.

Where can I get genetic health tests done?

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Supports Bone Health

Rich in calcium and phosphorus, quail eggs support strong bones and teeth, crucial for your pet's overall structure and strength.

NUTRITIONAL COMPOSITION OF QUAIL EGGS

Understanding what quail eggs bring to the table can help pet owners make informed decisions about their pet's diet. Here's a quick glance at their nutritional profile per 100 grams:

- Calories: Approximately 158 kcal
- Protein: About 13.1 g
- Total Fat: Around 11 g, with a balanced mix of saturated, monounsaturated, and polyunsaturated fats
- Cholesterol: Approximately 844 mg – moderation is key
- Carbohydrates: Minimal, at 0.4 g
- Rich in vitamins and minerals, including Vitamin A, D, E, B-complex, calcium, iron, phosphorus, potassium, and selenium

PRACTICAL FEEDING ADVICE

Incorporating quail eggs into your pet's diet should be done thoughtfully. Start with small amounts to ensure your pet digests them well. For small pets, one quail egg every other day may suffice, while larger breeds can enjoy up to two.

Always consult with your veterinarian, especially if your pet has specific health conditions or dietary needs.

CONCLUSION

Quail eggs offer a unique blend of nutrition and convenience, making them an excellent supplement to your pet's diet. By integrating these tiny nutritional titans, you're not just adhering to the whims of a canine egg thief but embracing a tradition rooted in health and well-being. Before making any changes to your pet's diet, a conversation with your vet can ensure that you're providing the best care for your furry friend.

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PANCREATITIS IN DOGS

What is Pancreatitis?

As devoted pet owners, we often strive to provide our furry companions with the best care possible. However, despite our best efforts, our beloved dogs can still fall victim to various health issues, one of which is pancreatitis. Pancreatitis is a condition that affects dogs of all breeds and ages, and it's crucial for pet owners to recognise its symptoms and understand how to manage it effectively. In this article, **Dr. Falon Olfen** from **Value Veterinary Clinic** sheds light on pancreatitis in dogs and offers insights into its symptoms, causes, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention.

Pancreatitis is the inflammation of the pancreas, an organ responsible for producing digestive enzymes and insulin. In dogs, this condition can range from mild to severe and is characterised by the inappropriate activation of these enzymes within the pancreas itself, leading to self-digestion of the organ.



Signs & Symptoms

Recognising the signs of pancreatitis in dogs is crucial for early intervention.

Symptoms may include vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, loss of appetite, abdominal pain, and a hunched posture. In severe cases, pancreatitis can lead to organ failure, shock, and even death. It's essential to seek veterinary attention if you observe any of these symptoms in your furry friend.

Diagnosing Pancreatitis

If you suspect that your dog may be suffering from pancreatitis, prompt veterinary care is essential. Dr. Falon Olfsen from Value Veterinary Clinic emphasizes the importance of seeking professional help to diagnose and manage the condition effectively. "Early detection and intervention are key to improving outcomes and reducing the risk of complications associated with pancreatitis," says Dr. Olfsen.

Diagnosing pancreatitis typically involves a combination of clinical evaluation, blood tests to assess pancreatic enzyme levels, imaging studies such as ultrasound or radiography, and in some cases, more advanced diagnostic techniques like abdominal ultrasound or MRI.

Causes of Pancreatitis

Understanding the potential triggers for pancreatitis is essential for prevention. Common causes include:

Dietary Indiscretions

Dogs are notorious for scavenging, and the consumption of fatty foods, table scraps, or spoiled items can lead to pancreatitis. As responsible pet owners, it's crucial to monitor their diet and avoid feeding them high-fat foods.

Obesity

Overweight dogs are more prone to developing pancreatitis. Maintaining a healthy weight through proper nutrition and regular exercise is key to preventing this condition.

Certain Medications

Some medications, such as certain antibiotics and steroids, may contribute to pancreatitis. Always inform your veterinarian about any medications your dog is taking.

Underlying Conditions

Dogs with pre-existing conditions like diabetes or hypothyroidism may be at a higher risk for pancreatitis. Regular veterinary check-ups can help manage these conditions and reduce the risk.

Genetics

Certain breeds, such as Miniature Schnauzers and Cocker Spaniels, may have a genetic predisposition to pancreatitis. Understanding your dog's breed-specific health risks can aid in proactive care.

Treatment for Pancreatitis

Treatment for pancreatitis focuses on providing supportive care to alleviate symptoms, rest the pancreas, and prevent complications. This may include fluid therapy to address dehydration, pain management, anti-nausea medications, and nutritional support. In severe cases, hospitalisation and intensive care may be necessary.

Preventative Measures

Preventing pancreatitis in dogs involves adopting a proactive approach to their health and well-being. Dr. Olfson recommends several strategies to minimise the risk of pancreatitis:

- ♥ **Monitor Weight:** Keep your dog at a healthy weight to reduce the risk of obesity, a significant predisposing factor for pancreatitis. Regular exercise and portion control are key components of weight management.
- ♥ **Limit Medications:** Use medications only as prescribed by your veterinarian and avoid unnecessary medications that may increase the risk of pancreatitis.
- ♥ **Manage Underlying Conditions:** If your dog has underlying health issues such as diabetes or hyperlipidemia, work closely with your veterinarian to manage these conditions effectively and minimise the risk of pancreatitis.
- ♥ **Regular Veterinary Check-ups:** Schedule routine wellness exams for your dog to monitor their health and catch any potential issues early on.

- ♥ **Maintain a Healthy Diet:** Feed your dog a balanced diet that is appropriate for their age, breed, and activity level. Avoid feeding table scraps or high-fat foods, as these can trigger pancreatitis.

By staying vigilant and taking proactive measures to promote your dog's health, you can help reduce their risk of developing pancreatitis and ensure they lead a happy, healthy life. Remember, your veterinarian is your best ally in safeguarding your pet's well-being, so don't hesitate to reach out if you have any concerns or questions regarding pancreatitis or any other health issue affecting your furry friend.



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Dangerous Delights

Common Toxins for Pets - Handling Toxin Exposure



Written By *Sr Dalene Jansen Van Vuuren,
The Pet Vet Nurse*

As pet owners, one of our primary responsibilities is to ensure the safety and well-being of our beloved pets. However, despite our best efforts, accidents can happen, and our pets may find themselves exposed to toxins. Whether it's a curious nibble on a forbidden treat or an inadvertent ingestion of a hazardous substance, knowing how to handle the situation can be crucial in safeguarding your pet's health. In my Pet First Aid Talks this is the most interesting topic, so we'll explore how to handle your pet when exposed to toxins, with a focus on two common culprits: chocolate and xylitol.

Understanding the Dangers: Chocolate and Theobromine

Chocolate is a delectable indulgence for humans, but for our canine friends, it can be downright dangerous. The culprit behind chocolate's toxicity to dogs is theobromine, a stimulant compound found in cocoa beans. Theobromine belongs to a class of chemicals called methylxanthines, which are similar to caffeine and can have stimulating effects on the nervous system.

The darker the chocolate, the higher the theobromine content, making dark chocolate and cocoa powder especially hazardous to dogs. Milk chocolate contains less theobromine, while white chocolate contains very little, but even small amounts of any type of chocolate can pose a risk to your pet's health



Recognizing the Symptoms of Chocolate Toxicity

If your pet has ingested chocolate, it's essential to be vigilant for signs of toxicity. Symptoms of chocolate poisoning in dogs can include:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Increased thirst
- Panting
- Restlessness
- Elevated heart rate
- Tremors or seizures
- In severe cases, chocolate toxicity can lead to coma or death.

Beware of Xylitol: A Hidden Danger in Everyday Items

In addition to chocolate, another common toxin that pet owners should be aware of is xylitol. This artificial sweetener is often found in sugar-free gum, candies, baked goods, toothpaste, and other products ([list of products containing Xylitol](#)). While harmless to humans, xylitol can be highly toxic to dogs.

When a dog ingests xylitol, it can lead to a rapid release of insulin, causing a dangerous drop in blood sugar levels (hypoglycemia). In severe cases, xylitol ingestion can also cause liver damage and failure, which can be fatal if not treated promptly.



Responding to Chocolate Toxicity

If you suspect your pet has consumed chocolate, it's crucial to act quickly. Here's what you should do:

→ **Assess the Situation:**

Determine the amount and type of chocolate ingested, as well as your pet's size and weight. This information will help your vet assess the potential risk to your pet's health.

→ **Contact Your Veterinarian:**

Call your veterinarian immediately and provide them with details about the situation. They can offer guidance on whether your pet needs to be seen right away or if home care is sufficient.

→ **Monitor Your Pet:**

Keep a close eye on your pet for any signs of chocolate toxicity. If symptoms develop, contact your veterinarian or an emergency animal clinic right away.

→ **Follow Veterinary Advice:**

If your pet requires treatment, follow your veterinarian's recommendations closely. Treatment may include inducing vomiting, administering activated charcoal to absorb the toxins, intravenous fluids to support hydration, and monitoring for any complications.

Recognizing the Symptoms of Xylitol Poisoning

Symptoms of xylitol poisoning in dogs can develop rapidly and may include:

- Vomiting
- Weakness or lethargy
- Difficulty walking or standing (looks disorientated)
- Tremors or seizures
- Collapse or coma

If you suspect your pet has ingested xylitol, seek veterinary care immediately, even if they are not showing symptoms. Prompt treatment is essential to prevent serious complications.

Preventing Toxin Exposure

While accidents can happen, there are steps you can take to reduce the risk of your pet being exposed to toxins:

Know which products in and around your house are harmful to pets, I love sharing and referring the American Poison Control Centre's information, as this is the most current and up to date list available and relevant for South Africa ([Room by Room toxins](#)).

→ **Pet-Proof Your Home:**

Keep chocolate, xylitol-containing products, and other hazardous substances out of your pet's reach. Store them securely in cabinets or on high shelves.

→ **Be Cautious with Treats:**

Avoid giving your pet human food, especially items that may contain chocolate or xylitol. Stick to pet-safe treats and foods recommended by your veterinarian.

→ **Read Labels Carefully:**

Check the ingredients of any products you bring into your home to ensure they are safe for pets. Keep in mind that xylitol can be found in unexpected items like peanut butter and vitamins.

→ **Educate Others:**

Make sure friends, family members, and visitors (especially children) are aware of the dangers of chocolate and xylitol to pets. Ask them not to offer your pet any food without your permission.

By staying informed and taking precautions, you can help keep your pet safe from common toxins like chocolate and xylitol. Remember, in case of emergency, always contact your veterinarian or the animal poison control HOTLINE on 0861 555 777 for guidance and assistance. Your quick actions could make all the difference in saving your pet's life.

Visit my website: www.PetVetNurse.co.za or Follow Pet Vet Nurse on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) for a Pet First Aid Course in your region as well as great tips to look after your beloved pets.



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Bitework

Part 2

written by *Maria Wein*

What kind of dog
can do this?

Any dog can bite, and a variety of breeds enjoy the benefits of this work. When speaking to trainers who train civil bitework, they are looking for the puppies that naturally display aggression. They work with certain breeders whose dogs have been genetically selected, developed and tested for sale to the operational environment. The 'buyer' will put in the work but they do not take the risk of developing a dog who cannot do the job.

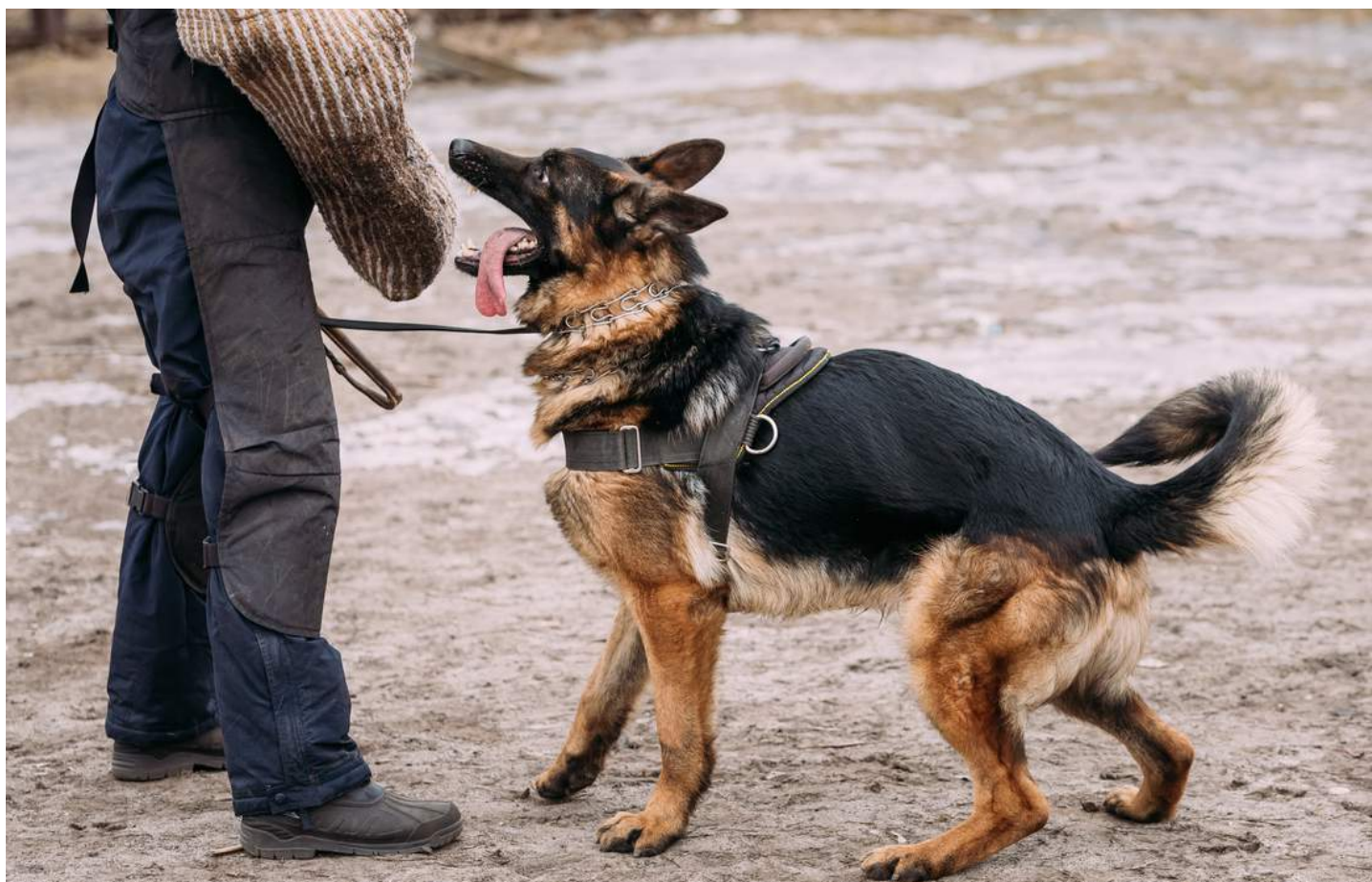
However, not all dogs are suitable in terms of their inherent natures. For example, there are handlers and trainers who mistake a "fear biter," as a suitable candidate for manwork. This is a defensive dog that resorts to biting out of fear rather than confidence. Fear biters require specialized behavioral assistance and should not be exposed to the overstimulation that bitework can provide, as they could turn on their owners or other dogs. Therefore, it is essential for the trainer to assess the dog's nature and prioritize the dog's best interests when determining its suitability for participation in such activities.



Successful participation in bitework can indeed involve a variety of breeds. However, it's crucial to emphasize that power breeds like German Shepherds, Malinois, Dutch Shepherds, Pitbulls, and Rottweilers are often chosen for this discipline due to their genetic predisposition for biting.

Biting can stimulate the release of endorphins, offering relaxation to certain breeds as it expresses their genetically inherent behavior. When considering a puppy for bitework, it's essential to consult with an ethical breeder who understands your requirements and can provide a well-balanced, confident puppy that can handle the demands of this discipline.

These breeds have been selectively bred for their biting abilities, which is why lineage and breeding play a significant role. By training them to bite, we activate the genetic predisposition and encourage the desired behavior. However, if this training is initiated too early or executed incorrectly, it can lead to confusion in the dog, resulting in an unsafe animal that doesn't grasp what is expected of it.



Time & Maturity

Patience is paramount when training a dog for bitework. If your dog encounters challenges in biting under pressure or releasing on command, it's crucial to communicate openly with your trainer. Some dogs may require more time to mature and practice in less stimulating environments to build their confidence and proficiency. And then of course, there are some dogs that may never be able to handle the pressure - and in all fairness to the dog, shouldn't continue with manwork. As an owner, you need to be your dog's biggest advocate.

The well-being of the dog, encompassing their physical, mental, and emotional needs, should always take precedence. Rushing the training process or pushing a dog

too quickly can lead to anxiety and frantic behavior, which is counterproductive. A considerate and measured approach, focused on the dog's development and comfort, is essential for their success and overall welfare.

Before you start

Before delving into bitework, your dog should have a solid foundation in basic obedience commands like heel, down, recall, stay and release. These commands should be mastered in various environments, and your dog should be able to maintain focus and control both on and off leash, responding solely to verbal commands. These foundational skills serve as the building blocks upon which you and your trainer can further develop your dog's abilities in bitework. It's really important to set up a communication structure between you and your dog that will continue to be consistent throughout their training.

Trainers

It's essential to attend sessions with a couple of different trainers and be vigilant for red flags. Watch out for punitive or harsh training methods and assess whether the trainer takes into consideration your dog's stress levels and individual needs. If you ever feel uncomfortable or uncertain, it's perfectly acceptable to explore other options. Your decision should be based on your dog's comfort and the trainer's ability to provide individualized attention and tailored guidance rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Choosing the right trainer and training style is a personal decision, and it's crucial to prioritize your dog's best interests throughout the process. Additionally, it's important to be honest about your own capabilities in handling a dog involved in bitework. Researching the instructor's experience, knowledge, and training methods is vital. Some trainers may use German-style methods, while others may employ positive reinforcement. Unfortunately, the lack of standardized rules and a governing body in South Africa can result in unqualified individuals entering the industry. Be cautious of slick marketing that makes unrealistic promises about your dog's abilities. It's essential to stay informed and prioritize your dog's well-being when selecting a trainer for bitework.

A well-rounded bitework dog should possess a sense of balance, confidence, and security. While they excel in their bitework training, they should also maintain their role as a well-mannered companion and valued family member. Bitework, when approached correctly, equips them with the ability to step up and protect when necessary. Ultimately, the goal should be to enjoy the journey with your dog, have fun together, and appreciate the training process. A harmonious bond and a fulfilling partnership with your dog should always be at the forefront of any training discipline, including bitework.

Missed Part 1?

Get the February Issue from the website:
www.welovepetssa.co.za/magazine

Disclaimer: This article is not intended to encourage pet owners to do bitework with their pet dogs. Anyone considering the sport, need to ensure they have done their due diligence and ensure the safety of their dog at all times.

Photo Credit: *Bart Fokkens*

MZIMKULU

VULTURE HIDE



Southern Drakensberg Launched in aid of Endangered Vulture Conservation.

A much-needed addition to the Southern Drakensberg region, the Mzimkulu Vulture Hide launched to the public on 19 February 2024. Created to support endangered Vulture conservation through a Vulture Safe Feeding Zone, the hide is a hub of activity and a bird-lover's paradise.

Located in the heart of the southern Drakensberg, the Mzimkulu Vulture Hide is fitted with one-way glass designed for clear photography and allows up to six guests to comfortably view and photograph endangered Vultures, as well other birds, for a good cause. Exquisite mountainous backdrops, comfortable seating, darkened windows and a few electrical plug points for recharging camera batteries and phones, make for an enjoyable experience. The Hide is also equipped with educational material to ensure visitors leave having learned more about conservation and wildlife in the region.

A COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP

The Mzimkulu Vulture Hide forms part of Wildlife ACT's Southern Drakensberg Conservation Project and has been made possible by a collaborative effort between Wildlife ACT and Riverlea Farm. The primary objective of this initiative is to provide the Southern Drakensberg with a sustainable safe feeding site for vultures. Important partners include Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, Project Vulture, Drakensberg Conservation Initiative, Bearded Vulture Recovery Programme and the Endangered Wildlife Trust. The creation of the hide has been made possible by Invicta Wildlife, CHEP, and European Outdoor Conservation Association. The support of local Underberg farms have also been crucial to making this important Vulture Safe Feeding Site possible.

Photo Credit: *Patrick Rüegg*



THE IMPORTANCE OF VULTURE CONSERVATION IN THE REGION

Vultures are nature’s cleanup crew, scavenging and disposing of animal remains that could otherwise become breeding grounds for disease. By swiftly recycling organic matter, Vultures help prevent the spread of illnesses that could affect both humans and animals.

Despite their importance, Vulture numbers across Africa are in rapid decline and their range numbers have decreased by up to 70%. Of the six Vulture species that occur in South Africa, all are either Vulnerable, Endangered, or Critically Endangered. Despite being critical to our ecosystems, Vulture numbers are in serious decline, with only 50 to 100 breeding pairs of Bearded Vulture in South Africa and Lesotho and about 4,500 breeding pairs of Cape Vulture left in South Africa.



THE IMPORTANCE OF VULTURE SAFE FEEDING SITES

Vulture safe feeding sites or vulture restaurants are areas where uncontaminated carcasses are intentionally placed to provide a safe and sustainable supplementary food source for vultures, to help ensure their survival and contribute to the ecological balance.

The Southern Drakensberg is a stronghold location for two of South Africa’s cliff nesting species of vulture, namely the Bearded Vulture and Cape Vulture. As such, it is essential for conservation initiatives to be spearheaded in this region, aimed at preserving and protecting this crucial population of endangered birds.



The implementation of a vulture safe feeding zone is one such initiative that has started strongly with vital support from the Drakensberg Conservation Initiative and Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife in collaboration with Wildlife ACT and Riverlea Farm; as the essential input of local farmers and landowners.

Vulture feeding sites may also incorporate hides, allowing photographers and conservation enthusiasts to have a close-up view of these incredible birds and other animals that frequent the sites. In addition to increasing public awareness about the challenges faced by vultures, these hides serve an important role in ecotourism, with the potential to generate revenue to sustain vulture conservation initiatives. This is the hope for the Mzimkulu Vulture Hide.

Photo Credit: *Bart Fokkens*



THE HIDE IS NOT PET FRIENDLY.
 For more information and bookings enquiries:
www.saveourvultures.com / vulture@wildlifeact.com

A CRUCIAL STRONGHOLD FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S CLIFF NESTING VULTURES

The Mzimkulu Vulture Hide is located 8KMs from Underberg, in KwaZulu-Natal's Southern Drakensberg. The hide location rests on the foot of the Maloti-Drakensberg Park, which is a World Heritage Site is one of the five largest protected areas in South Africa – providing one of the last strongholds for several threatened and endangered species.

The Maloti-Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site is renowned for its spectacular natural landscape, importance as a haven for many threatened and endemic species, and for its wealth of rock paintings made by the San people over a period of 4,000 years. The Heritage Site covers an area of 249,313 ha making it the largest Protected Area complex along the Great Escarpment of Southern Africa. Extending along most of KwaZulu-Natal's south-western border with Lesotho, the property provides a vital refuge for more than 250 endemic plant species and their associated fauna.

It also holds almost all of the remaining subalpine and alpine vegetation in the KwaZulu-Natal province, including extensive high altitude wetlands. The uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park has

been identified as an Important Bird Area, and forms a critical part of the Lesotho Highlands Endemic Bird Area.

HOW TO BOOK

Kindly note it is essential to book at least 48 hours in advance before visiting the Mzimkulu Vulture Hide. Bookings can be made via email: vulture@wildlifeact.com or through the website on www.saveourvultures.com. The entrance fee for four hours is R300 per person, R150 for children 16 and under (*kindly note that children under 6 cannot be accommodated at the hide). It is possible to book the Hide exclusively for the day for R1500.

The Hide can accommodate a maximum of six visitors at a time. Bookings may be limited to reduce disturbance to the Vulture Safe Feeding Site, so bookings should be made well in advance to avoid disappointment. Visitors are asked to be respectful of the space at all times by keeping volumes to a minimum to prevent disturbing the birds.

The funds raised through visitor bookings are used to keep the Vulture Safe Feeding Site and Hide operational.

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To BURY or not to BURY

written by
Carolyn Dudgeon

Monday the 31st of May 2021 is a day I will never forget. Standing at our local vet with my 3 year old cat in my arms and the world spinning around my head. He had bound through the window 20 minutes before, shouting with his loud meow as if to say "Hello Mom, I'm home!" like he always did, and then he died, right next to me, after having a sudden and fatal heart attack. I remember not knowing what to do. I remember needing someone to tell me what I was supposed to do next.

I remember the words "bury or cremate" being repeated to me by our vet so I could make a decision and they could close their practice for the day. I remember being told burial is cheaper (we did not have medical aid), it is dignified, don't worry, they'd take care of it all.

Do I wish they'd explained it to me properly and honestly?

I do with all my heart.

I remember being so distraught that while my cat, my baby, was being taken out of my arms - I didn't even know what was happening, but I knew I had to make a decision and I had to make one quickly.

Can you make him not dead?

I don't want to make this decision. I don't know what to do!

They could not help me any more than giving me my two options and impatient sighs... this isn't the first death they have dealt with like it was mine.

Ok fine, I would like for you to bury him... and that was a decision I have lived to regret every day.





My Ninja was buried, I didn't know until a few months later that that in fact meant that his beautiful body would be dumped on a landfill with household and other garbage. Until this day, I close my eyes and I see my boys lifeless, ginger body lying on a heap - alone and undignified - I didn't know better. How could I? I trusted my vet during the worst moment of my life and I made a mistake that I can never turn back.

But now that I know the meaning of burial as defined in many policies means "dispose of" - the thought of a hole being dug for my boy, sand filled over his body while he became one with the earth - that was just a lovely thought, but it could not have been further from reality - it is my duty to let other parents know too.

Fast forward 3 years, and I was invited to visit a top company's crematorium. Was I nervous? Absolutely. Was I morbidly fascinated in the ins and outs - you bet I was. Did my curiosity break my heart - completely. Would I choose to "bury" the rest of my pets when they eventually cross the rainbow bridge? Never.

For those who have never been to a crematorium, upon reaching the facility it looks like any other industrial facility. It is spotless. Sterile. Quiet. One can feel the pain but also the peace that allows pet parents to know that this is in fact the final, dignified end for their precious furkids. Though the sadness I felt is difficult to explain, it could only be felt in the pit of my stomach, slowly crawling out of my throat making me ready to climb a mountain and scream "for the love of everything good - sterilise your pets, microchip them so if they are lost they can be returned to you!!".

The crematorium is also the final resting place for many strays taken to shelters who can afford to give these poor sick or

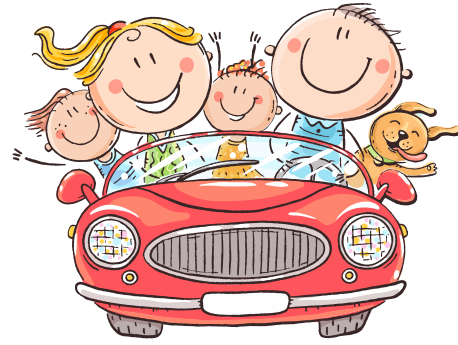
unwanted animals dignity for the first time in their lives, albeit the end of their lives. Not all shelters can afford the luxury of cremation which means many animals, like my Ninja, still find themselves on landfills - it is not ok. It is not ok for the environment, it is not ok for the health of communities surrounding these dumps and it is not ok for an animal, a living being soul, to have to have such an undignified end. It is not ok that so many private vets don't explain this to shocked and grief struck pet parents who want the best for their kids - but don't know what the best is. Like me on the day I stood with my dead child in my arms.

The reason for this article is because I know I am not the first pet parent to stand in the reception of a vet practice - scared, heartbroken and confused - I am here to tell you, burial is not the way. Cremation is expensive yes, there are many medical aids who will have the cost cover as part of their plan. There are plans like **Identipet Protect** who will not only help you find your pet when it is lost, they will help you register your pet (microchips are useless unless registered with your information) and they will also help you through their partnership with **Legacy Pet Cremation** to ensure that your furchild has a different ending to mine. These are often things we don't think about until we have no other option, but it is important to have a plan in place and to know with no doubt where your pet will end up.

How can YOU help? Support the "kill shelters" - they have the worst jobs on earth, to have to end the suffering of so many and to have to decide to let go the unwanted - help them help these pets have dignity for the first and only time in their lives. And tell your friends - pet parents deserve to know where their babies are going as our babies all deserve dignity in death.

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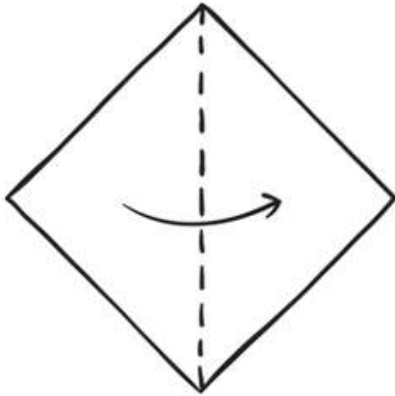
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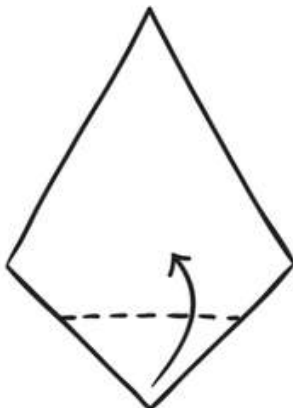
1. fold a square of paper in half



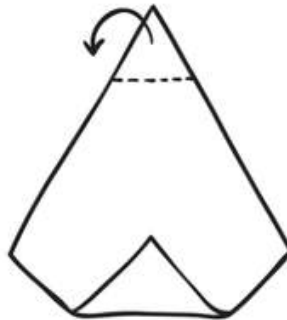
2. fold the side in on the dotted line, do the same at the back



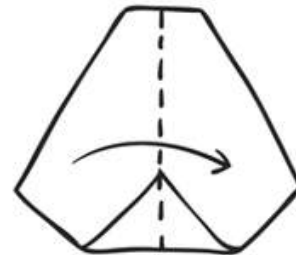
3. open up the paper with the folded in sides at the back



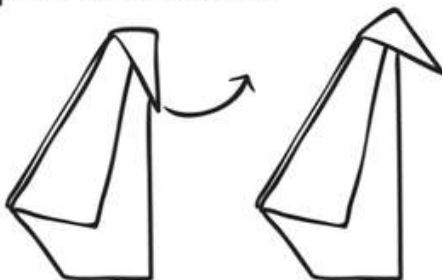
4. you now have a kite shape, fold the bottom point up on the dotted line



5. fold the top point back on the dotted line

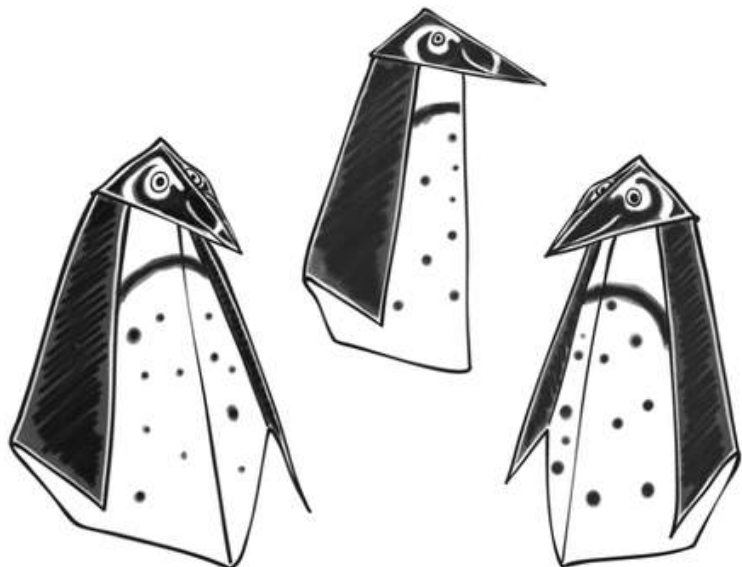


6. fold the paper in half up the middle



7. now lift up the head

African Penguin fact
A group of penguins on land is called a 'waddle' of penguins!



8. make a few friends and draw on some feathers and faces!

ASTROLOGICAL NEW YEAR

Prepare yourselves as we venture into the final phase of global transition, marking the most intriguing period of 2024.

With the New Moon in Pisces on March 10th signaling the end of one cycle and the dawn of another, the Sun grants us a grace period for reflection before entering Aries on March 20th, heralding the astrological New Year. Many have undergone profound shifts, experiencing quantum leaps, déjàvu moments, and sudden epiphanies regarding their life paths and purposes.

The astrological New Year, commencing with Aries, signifies not just the onset of spring (in the Northern Hemisphere) but also fresh beginnings, heightened energy, and the birth of fiery attributes like action and transformation. Embracing this spirit, the New Moon in Aries on April 8th propels us into a realm of unpredictability and new possibilities.

However, with Venus and Mercury also traversing Aries in April, expect communication and decision-making to be impulsive and emotionally charged. Given Mercury's retrograde until April 26th, it would be wise to refrain from major commitments, property purchases, or signing long-term contracts during this period.

Mid-April brings the conjunction of Jupiter and Uranus in Taurus, catalysing transformations within financial systems, including the realm of cryptocurrency. As history illustrates, such shifts always happen through crisis, necessitating readiness to adapt.

Potential repercussions include status loss, asset fluctuations, and reputational challenges for some, while we also may witness the fall of prominent figures in finance, royal families, and entertainment.

But just like a burned forest grows new grass, a growing number of individuals awoken to the realities of our societal structures, fostering a collective shift in mindset. The longstanding system faces tremors of collapse after being in place for centuries, so world needs a comeback to basics after feeding the corporate greed. Honesty, integrity, working with nature and applying critical thinking will always help the society going forward.

This transformation period is prompting individuals to reassess their goals, partnerships, and aspirations and many will choose to walk away from their usual cubicles towards their dreams and different future.

ASTRO PET GUIDE

Even our furry companions warrant attention, particularly with Mercury retrograding in Aries in April. It's advisable to avoid introducing new pets to the household and exercise caution with existing ones, as the risk of accidents, particularly to the head and limbs, heightens for both humans and animals.

Furthermore, elective surgeries and new inoculations are best postponed until May, with favourable dates falling between the 7th and 9th, as well as the 14th and 16th to 18th.

Grooming is best to be done 1-4, 9-12, 17-20, 25-30th April; 1, 7-10, 14-18, 24, 27-29th May.

It's crucial to note that the above recommendations primarily pertain to planned and preventative procedures. In case of any sudden acute health conditions, seeking urgent veterinary assistance remains paramount.

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