



# Seniors opt to take pets

**A**USTRALIA is a nation of pet lovers, with about 63 per cent of households owning some type of pet.

Now it appears seniors are boosting the market for pet-friendly holiday destinations.

A Newspoll report has shown that the older the traveller, the more likely they are to take their pet.

There's every reason for older people to take their pets with them, according to Dr Lisa Wood from the University of Western Australia.

Australian and international research has shown that owning pets can help improve a person's mental and physical

health, reduce the effects of stress and encourage social interaction.

Self-confessed grey nomad Alan Wood takes Bonnie, his seven-year-old kelpie, with him everywhere.

"She is a great travel companion and is happy to fit in with whatever plans I make," he said.

"She enjoys the beach as much as I do and it just wouldn't be a holiday without her."

The Petcare Information and Advisory Service agrees it can be beneficial for pets and people to holiday together – particularly if it is for a long period.

"Pets provide companionship and are a way of getting to meet

other people," service spokesperson Susie Chaseling said.

"In the past it was common for cats and dogs to be sent to boarding kennels when the family went away on holiday.

"Now people are recognising that pets adapt well to travel and there are many more options for people to take their pets on holiday."

Some holiday destinations, such as Port Macquarie in NSW, make a point of welcoming animals.

For information about pet-friendly accommodation in Greater Port Macquarie phone the Visitor Information Centre on 1300-303-155.

## Fact File

**IF YOU'RE** travelling with your pet, the Petcare Information and Advisory Service has these tips:

- Make sure your pet is wearing identification. A mobile number on your pet's tag is a good option.
- Take a portable bowl, your pet's favourite toys or blankets for familiarity and a supply of special treats.

■ Take a harness or carrier box to secure your pet within the vehicle.

■ Some cats enjoy travel, but they should always be confined when travelling to avoid any mishaps.

■ Dogs love the open air from a moving car's window, but it can be unsafe.

■ Take a simple pet first-aid kit

containing bandages, antiseptic cream, tweezers (to remove foreign objects from fur) and travel medication.

Useful websites include:

- [www.l-pet.com.au](http://www.l-pet.com.au)
- [www.drkatrina.com.au](http://www.drkatrina.com.au)
- [www.thegreynomads.com.au](http://www.thegreynomads.com.au)
- [www.petsplayground.com.au](http://www.petsplayground.com.au)



**DOG BEACH –**  
 Port Macquarie beaches are great places to romp with your dog.