



Belle Meade Mansion with horses



Night skyline with the Cumberland

Nashville, Tennessee

A Pet Lover's Guide To Music City USA

Every year, ten and a half million visitors travel through Nashville enjoying the sights and sounds of Music City. Of course, this figure only represents the two-legged tourist count. The Visitors & Convention Bureau doesn't actually keep track of the four-legged visitors who "hightail" it here annually to sightsee along with their humans.

While Nashville is famous for its stargazing possibilities (yes, Garth Brooks does eat at Pancake Pantry when he's in town), not everyone who comes to town carries a guitar or dreams of their name in lights. Some just carry their suitcases and leashes, knowing Nashville is a friendly, easy-going city where sophistication and charm blend with a down-home mix, and where—to borrow a phrase—every dog can have its day. Visitors who bring pets to Nashville are frequently surprised by the astonishing amount of things to do.

Nashville is often referred to as a "big small town." The description fits. It is a major center for country music, of course, but it is an explosion of other cultural attractions as well. For instance, you might tour RCA's historic Studio B, take in a Broadway musical at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center, visit the restored Ryman Auditorium where the real "Nashville Cats" used to play each weekend on the Grand Ole Opry. You might get a short history lesson at the Tennessee State Capitol (built in 1859), and then stop for a snack at Planet Hollywood or the Hard Rock Café. You may

choose to tour the Hermitage, home of President Andrew Jackson, then float down the Cumberland River from Opryland on the General Jackson Showboat and stroll through Cheekwood's botanical gardens before heading inside to see the latest art exhibit. Don't forget to tour historic Belle Meade Mansion, found in the heart of one of Nashville's toniest neighborhoods. If that's not enough, there's also the Bicentennial Mall, the Nashville Zoo at Grassmere, and the Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum—one of the city's most popular tourist destinations.



Loews Vanderbilt Plaza

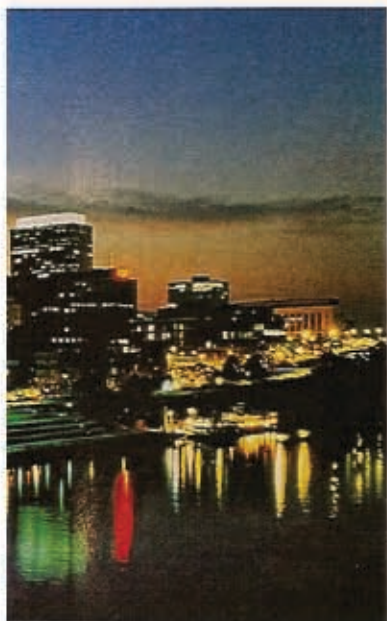
You can dine in four-star restaurants or catch the blue plate special at one of the city's popular "meat'n'threes," catch up-and-coming singers/songwriters in the round at Bluebird Café, gawk at country celebrities along Music Row (while your pooch checks out RCA's canine mascot 'Nipper'), or take a whirl on the Tennessee Fox Trot Carousel, created by renowned sculptor Red Grooms. (Why not turn the tables for the ultimate revenge: one of the colorful carved

characters you can ride on this whimsical merry-go-round is a flea!) Sports fans lucky enough to find tickets for the always sold-out games can cheer on the Tennessee Titans at Adelphia Coliseum, or catch "fang fever" with Nashville's own NHL hockey team, the Predators.

Now that your day is filled with sightseeing possibilities, what about Fido's and Fluffy's agenda of activities? Don't worry, there's

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plenty to fill up their memory scrapbooks as well. From upscale accommodations to doggie day-care, pet boutiques to spa salons, agility training to outdoor recreation, your four-pawed pals will have a field day too. With just a bit of advance planning, both you and your pet can enjoy a doggone good time in Music City.

One of Nashville's best-kept secrets is Warner Park, a 2,700-acre recreational area on the west side of town which offers miles of

stunning nature trails, picnic areas and sections of paved roads where no vehicular traffic is permitted. Pack a picnic lunch, hike a trail, glimpse a deer, stop to chat with other dog owners and view the city from one of the scenic overlooks. Then drop by the new Warner Park Nature Center where a friendly park ranger just may pull out a handful of doggie biscuits for Fido's enjoyment. Radnor Lake is another 'off-limits-to-cars' wildlife preserve, but it is in the very heart of Nashville. Dogs aren't permitted on the trail loop that circles the lake itself, but the view from the road is almost as nice.

You won't want to miss a leashed stroll through Centennial Park (directly across from Vanderbilt University), featuring the world's only full-scale reproduction of the Parthenon. Inside stands a 42-foot sculpture of Athena. Outside, Rover can chase a ball, watch you feed ducks on the lake or join you for a swing. In warm weather, bring a blanket, sit out under the stars and enjoy a Shakespearean production at the Centennial Park Bandshell. Dogs are welcome, though stuffing a few treats in your pocket to keep them quiet through the third act would probably be a pretty good plan.

Riverfront Park, at the downtown end of Broadway, offers more adventure for your canine companion. Situated on the banks of the Cumberland River, this restored outdoor area offers an up-close-and-personal view of the Nashville skyline from its grassy banks. Adelphia Coliseum is across the way, as is Fort Nashborough—a reconstructed pioneer settlement depicting Nashville's earliest history. The shops and historic landmarks of Second Avenue are just blocks away, and in warm weather months, Riverfront Park is the site for an all-star lineup of free outdoor concerts and festivals.

No pet's visit to Nashville would be complete without a stop

by a pair of unique stores just a few doors apart in the Green Hills Mall: the Dog Store and the Cat Shoppe, both featuring a wide selection of gifts for you and your four-legged friends. Your canine or kitty can shop for jewelry, accessories, toys and treats, and maybe even "collar" a souvenir or two for friends back home. Afterwards, you can both relax at 'Fido' in Hillsboro Village. Once a popular pet shop, now a coffee bar/restaurant, Fido honors its heritage by boasting a menu of dog-monikered drinks. Tables and chairs on the sidewalk let you and Rover bond over a cup of cappuccino and a Milk Bone.

Wondering where to stay? Nashville has a growing list of pet-friendly hotels, motels and B&B's. Three of the most popular are the Regal Maxwell House, home of world-famous Maxwell House Coffee; Loews Vanderbilt Plaza, just minutes from Music Row; and century-old Union Station, a tourist landmark and now an historic Wyndham hotel property. Enter Union Station's elegant lobby under an ornate 128-foot stained glass skylight and step back in time to the post-Victorian era when this building served as a thriving L&N Railroad passenger hub.

These hotels not only welcome pets, they pamper them. Loews provides its canine and feline friends with special goodie baskets at check-in and caters to picky pet palates with a vet-approved room-service menu in case you decide to dine in together. By the way, don't be surprised if you rub elbows in the lobby with VIP's. A "Take Your Pet To Work Day" promotion at Loews Vanderbilt Plaza brought out Tennessee Governor Don Sundquist and his two dogs for a "Bark Breakfast," co-sponsored by the Nashville Humane Association.

Since pets are discouraged from some tourist attractions, make reservations at one of the city's excellent doggie day-care facilities where Rover and Roverette can meet new friends, trade shaggy dog stories and romp in supervised areas while you are off seeing the town. Miss Kitty's Bed and Bath features full-service spa and grooming services (painted nails, anyone?), a well-stocked doggie deli and gift shop, and even a fashion boutique. At Sir Theodore's Villas & Day Spa across town, pets luxuriate in their own mahogany mini-castles, enjoy hydro-massage treatments, watch bedtime movies such as "Lassie," and doze to the sounds of piped-in music. Newest to join the ranks of park-n'-barks is Pup Scouts, situated in a warehouse large enough to feature indoor agility and obedience classes. If you



River Front Park

really want to give your dog a workout, Leaps & Bounds Agility will rent its field by the hour and book a private lesson.

So, if you're looking for an ideal, pet-friendly destination, Nashville could be the place. Besides, who knows? Your bloodhound's howl or cat's meow might turn out to be the hot new sound some big record executive is looking for. Your pet just might be a star!