

Pamper your pet at these Sound Shore venues

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If you own a pet in the Lower Hudson Valley, admit it, your four-legged friend is likely pretty pampered. From dog walkers to kennel services to grooming salons that offer pet massages, dozens of local pet businesses are clawing for your attention.

A peek at some close to home, and some tips on how to upgrade the life of your precious:

Pawlished Pets

What it offers: There are plenty of pet salons in the area, but now there's no need to go through the hassle of stopping your pet from squirming on a salon table, thanks to Pawlished Pets, a mobile grooming service in New Rochelle.

Why do it: Owner Danielle St. Louis hops into her van and spiffies up clients' pets in the comfort of their own homes. "The dogs respond to it well because it's quiet and one-on-one," she said. "I have a lot of people I meet on their lunch breaks and days off. It ends up working really well because a lot of people have crazy schedules."

What it costs: A typical all-inclusive grooming package costs between \$75 and \$85. The package includes nail clippings, ear cleanings, hand washing, cutting and drying, and teeth cleaning.

Details: Pawlished Pets caters to customers all over the lower Westchester County area. 914-803-2903. www.pawlishedpetsny.com.

Shampooch Dog Salon & Spa

What it does: This salon goes above and beyond just grooming your pet and offers several spa and aromatherapy packages.

Why do it: Come on, you know your pet deserves it. Once in a while it doesn't hurt to shell out a few extra dollars to go all out for your favorite furry friend.

Don't have time to go to the salon? No worries; they'll come to you, too.

What it costs: For around \$90, you can get an all-inclusive grooming and spa package that includes a haircut, wash and blow dry, fresh facial scrub, nail and paw treatment, and aromatherapy body spray.

Details: Shampooch Dog Salon & Spa, 390 Palmer Ave., Mamaroneck. 914-698-2468. www.shampoochdogsalon.com.

Pet Pantry Warehouse

What it offers: A simpler way to pamper your pet is with a few treats. These pet food shops in Larchmont and Rye have an extensive array of items to choose from.

Why do it: Some of the treats available at many grocery stores might not be the healthiest options for your animal. "We try to stay with the good quality foods," said Jon Foster, the Rye branch's store manager. "We go with people that are good companies and pay attention to the ingredients that go into the food."

What it costs: The store offers a wide range of treats, ranging from \$3.50 to \$12.99 for higher-end freeze dried meats.

Details: Pet Pantry Warehouse: Larchmont, 2444 Boston Post Road, 914-833-3444. Rye, 259 Purchase St. 914-967-0444. www.ppwpet.com.

For Pets Sake

What she offers: Need someone to walk your dog during the day? Jenny Tatusko runs For Pets Sake, a dog-walking and sitting service that caters to residents in Pelham, New Rochelle, Mamaroneck and Larchmont.

Why do it: It's an affordable way to take care of your pet, especially if he needs to be walked multiple times a day. "The summer is our craziest time," Tatusko said. "We were all running around like crazy because it was so busy. But it's great to be able to take care of pets during these busy times so families can enjoy themselves during the holidays."

What it costs: \$20 a visit weekdays; \$25 weekends.

Details: For Pets Sake is based in New Rochelle. 914-576-0430

Rye Country Boarding Kennels

What it offers: Whether it be for a weekend getaway or a longer family vacation, this place in Rye will see to it that your pet has an equally good time.

Why do it: It's a family-run business that's been around for more than 40 years, and your dog will actually have fun here. He'll get to romp outside twice a day in a private dog run, and get groomed before you bring him home.

"Generally people drop off their pets here for vacations," said Sammy D. Edwards, whose family runs the kennel. "Some people are fortunate to have a couple of weeks for a vacation and some people have long weekends so it varies."

What it costs: Pet owners can drop off their furry loved ones for about \$20 to \$30 a night depending on the animal's size.

The rates are flat for any period of time.

Details: 21 Nursery Lane, Rye. 914-967-4577. www.ryecountryboardingkennels.com.

Home Alone?

Your pet might be playful and friendly around you, but how do you make sure the animal acts the same way in the hands of someone else while you're away?

Eric Albert, a certified dog trainer and owner of Best in Show Dog Training in New Rochelle, recommends having the sitter come over at least once before you leave to get acquainted with the pet.

"My dog acts the same regardless of who comes in," Albert said. "When I greet somebody at the door, he watches my reaction and knows this is a friendly person."

"Have the sitter come over and get adjusted," he said. "That way your pet won't overreact and realize the person belongs here."

Leaving detailed instructions on how to take care of your pet always helps. When he goes on vacation, Albert said he leaves about 10 pages of instructions for his pet sitter, explaining in extensive detail what his animal likes.

Nobody likes leaving his or her pet alone during the day, but someone's got to earn the money to keep them in kibble. Some veterinarian's tips on how to keep your dog or cat happy when you're not home:

For dogs:

- * Leave on a radio or television.
- * Keep chew toys and rawhides available.
- * Consider a doggie day-care facility, if not for every day, then a couple of times a week. Or hire a dog walker.
- * Purchase treat-filled orbs the dog must work at to get the goodies inside.

For cats:

- * Keep window shades open; they like to view the world.
- * Leave toys around the house.
- * For overweight cats, hide treats so felines have to move around to hunt for them.
- * Consider a companion cat.

Help the homeless

Not all animals live the pampered life. In fact, hundreds in the area are waiting for homes and receive care, thanks only to the many volunteers and staff at local animal shelters and rescue groups. If you can't adopt a pet, consider donating food, blankets or toys, or spend time taking shelter animals on walks.

* New Rochelle Humane Society, 70 Portman Road. 914-632-2925. www.newrochellehumanesociety.org. If you can't adopt a pet, consider fostering one until a permanent home can be found.

* Pet Rescue of Larchmont. Pet Rescue is not a shelter, but a small group of volunteers who fosters dogs and cats until they are adopted. Some animals come from owners who are no longer able to care for them; others are taken from local shelters; and others come from the streets. Costs range from \$45 to \$60 to get a pet spayed or neutered. 914-834-6955. www.NY-PetRescue.org.

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Abstract (Document Summary)

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