



Domaine Summum is a rustic, pet-friendly resort near Mont-Tremblant. Guests are allowed to bring two dogs for free, and pay just \$35 per night for any more dogs. *DOMAINE SUMMUM*

Here’s the scoop on Fanny’s top five pet hotels

Rochelle Lash is taking a one-week hiatus. In her absence, Fanny, a golden retriever and occasional travel companion, has filed this column on her favourite resorts with perks for pooches.

FANNY
SPECIAL TO MONTREAL GAZETTE

I'm a party girl: The Essex Resort and Spa, just north of Burlington, Vt., has a Bone Appetit year-round special and also is holding its annual Top Dog Weekend from Nov. 13 to 15, with get-togethers and group activities. The weekend kicks off with a cocktail reception of canine treats and drink specials on Vermont beer and wine. For dinner, we'll have a room-service spread with such choices as steak sandwiches or poached salmon for owners and farm-to-Fanny cuisine like turkey meat loaf and salmon cakes. Our two-legged owners will have a cooking class where they will learn to prepare doggie delicacies — biscuits of bacon and flaxseed or peanut butter and egg. I'm drooling already. On Saturday, we'll be hiking in the Vermont woods and skinny-dipping at a local lake. My hair and nails will be a mess, but the Top Dog festivities wrap up with a Pet-A-Cure, so I can pamper my paws and comb my coat before going back to the city. The Essex is a country-style getaway with a full-service spa, two restaurants, a fitness centre, the Cook Academy, indoor and outdoor swimming pools and tennis. Golf and the Essex Shops

and Cinema are across the street.

Princess Fanny: A little further south, Topnotch Resort in Stowe treats dogs like royalty. This is a luxurious resort for the well-bred Westminster-Westminster crowd, where I can strut my Fur-Saché fashions and my Sniff-Any jewelled collar. Topnotch concierge Carol Crawford writes welcome notes to doggie divas and can set up the ultimate treat: a paws-itively divine Rover Reiki massage in my luxurious guest room. The resort was rebuilt two years ago with country contemporary rooms, the Roost bistro and the Flannel dining room, in addition to the existing world-class Spa at Topnotch and the Tennis and Equestrian Centers. For two-legged guests, the new Topnotch Experience Center features Pilates in the forest, introductory climbing and, for children, guided river walks. And the autumn Adventure Series, available through Nov. 15 (except for certain weekends), includes a two-hour bike tour, one 50-minute massage, one fitness class per day and a nightly micro-brew.

Going to the dogs: True equality flourishes at the season's end when Fanny and friends rule the swimming pools at mutt-minded resorts in Maine. Canines are Very Important Pets at the 101-year-old Colony Hotel in Kennebunkport, which is so pet-friendly it has even held a summer seaside wedding, Holy Mutt-rimony.



Guest columnist Fanny dishes about her favourite pooch-pampering hotels. *COURTESY OF GRIFFITHS FAMILY*

Dog-Lovers' Weekend (Oct. 30 to Nov. 1) will be a sociable jamboree with dog yoga, agility demos, first aid training, a canine costume party, art shows and the raucous Doggie Dip, when it's all canines into the pool. The gorgeous Inn by the Sea on the Atlantic Ocean, south of Portland, takes canine coddling to the next level by fostering rescue dogs. Best of all, during the last two weeks of October, the beach-front pool is closed to people and open to pets. Inn by the Sea is a five-bone resort with suites and townhouses, a comprehensive spa and a cool dining scene. It loans L.L. Bean doggie blankets and — here's a tasty twist — dogs can join their owners in the fireplace lounge for drinks, supper and canine canapés of Meat Roaf. **Into the wild:** Domaine Summum, a dog-centric rustic resort just south of Tremblant, is one of my

favourite getaways for ruffin' it — playing fetch at the lake, racing through the woods and relaxing at nighttime bonfires. Domaine Summum knows everything about dogs and their needs. Birgit Schultz and Shell Spillenaar breed Bernese mountain dogs and operate supremely pet-friendly lodging, plus a doggie Spaw with a new indoor play area and the Wouf B&B boarding kennels. Summum's Dog Café serves chili and beer for people and treats for their canine friends. The Bed and Biscuits boarding package for canines features treats, evening tuck-in, music and night lights to keep us relaxed. It's like camp, with À La Bark options such as dog-sitters. When owners and their best friends stay in Summum's lodges, everyone is invited to Yappy Hour at the main house, with bar proceeds going to the SPCA. *Rochelle@rochellelash.com* *twitter.com/rochellelash*

IF YOU GO:
More pet hotels at: Pets Can Stay, 800-574-3121, petscanstay.com; and 877-411-FIDO (3436), bringfido.com.
Essex Resort and Spa, Essex, Vt.: 800-727-4295, essexresortspa.com; Top Dog Weekend, Nov. 13 to 15, \$499 US for two nights, two people and one dog. Regular autumn rates start at \$199 US for two, including indoor and outdoor pools, access to spa, fitness centre.
Topnotch Resort, Stowe, Vt.: 800-451-8686, topnotchresort.com; starting at \$275 US (fourth night free at certain times), including indoor and outdoor pools and whirlpools, morning stretch, local shuttle; two- and three-bedroom townhouses available. Adventure Package starts at approximately \$240 US, p.p., per night, on a two-night stay.
Colony Hotel, Kennebunkport, Maine: 800-552-2363, 207-967-3331, colonymaine.com; open May through Nov. 1; starts at \$189 US, including buffet breakfast, 18-hole putting green, most Dog-Lover's Weekend activities.
Inn by the Sea, Cape Elizabeth (Portland area), Maine: 800-888-4287, innbythesea.com; starting at \$299 US, including spa facilities, pool beach, dog amenities.
Domaine Summum, Mont-Tremblant: 819-681-7539, domainesummum.com; starts at \$220 for two in main lodge or \$275 for two in cottages, including small craft, trails; two dogs can stay for free; \$35 per visit for each extra dog. Catering for people is available.

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