First Time Lodging Your Pet *or* If It's Been a While

Remember your first time spending the night away from your parents at a new place? Maybe you stayed at a summer camp lodge or a choir trip hotel. Were you nervous? Excited? Thankfully, your parents were able to explain to you where you were going and when you would see them again. Pets, however, don't have this insight and reassurance. They only know they're at a new place with new people and they have no idea when they'll see you again. Barkaritaville Pet Resort is proud to provide a warm and welcoming "home away from home" experience with our pet lodging, but even the nicest new home can cause uncertainty simply because it's unknown. Preparing your pets (and you) for their first overnight lodging experience—or if it's been a while—helps ensure they have the best experience possible while away and once they return home.

What to do (and not do) before lodging your pet

Limit contact with other dogs before your dog's stay with us. If you have an upcoming lodging reservation, we ask that you not take your dog to a dog park, another pet care facility, or anywhere dogs come in contact with each other. We have no way of knowing if all the other dogs your dog may have encountered prior to staying with us have been properly vaccinated. Further, it's important to remember that other dogs can be infectious before exhibiting symptoms.

Don't change your pet's food just before lodging. Transitioning your pet's food can take time and cause vomiting, gas, and diarrhea even in the most familiar surroundings. Changing food close to their lodging stay can exacerbate tummy troubles. Avoiding a food change is especially crucial for first time lodgers. To help keep tummies happy and regular, we highly recommend pet parents bring their usual food and/or treats labeled and prepackaged per feeding in individual zip-lock bags.

Bring in your pet for a Meet & Greet. If time permits, we encourage pet parents to bring in their dog for a Meet & Greet at our resort before their first time lodging with us. This provides an opportunity to become accustomed to our staff and to sniff and explore a new environment. Barkaritaville Pet Resort recognizes and promotes the benefits of human interaction and customized daily activities during your pet's stay—it's not just about where they're sleeping while you're away. We want your pet healthy *and happy.*

Stick with one pet care facility for services. If you anticipate lodging your pet again, please keep in mind that the more they visit us, the more comfortable they will be here. Our doggie daycare, grooming, and training (San Antonio location) all offer opportunities for your precious pet to spend quality time at their home away from home. Moreover, switching back and forth between multiple facilities can put all pets at risk of illness carried from other facilities.

What to expect when your pet comes home from lodging

Your pet may eat or drink more than usual. It's not uncommon for your pet to come home from lodging and eat or drink more than usual. This should settle down in a day or so once any anxiety calms and they settle back into their normal environment. Again, the more opportunities your pet has to visit Barkaritaville, the better their overall response to a lodging stay.

Your dog may have temporary colitis. When your dog first comes home from lodging they are probably very excited to be back home in their normal environment. One of the side effects of this excitement can be colitis—lining of the colon becomes inflamed resulting in loose bowel movements. This is usually temporary and normal bowel movements should return in a day or so.

Your dog may exhibit a personality change. Depending on their personality, your dog may be particularly clingy or you may get the silent treatment for a day or two. Whether thrilled to see you again or not happy you went on an adventure without them, either way it's normal behavior after a first lodging experience. Just give them a few days to settle back into their normal routine.

Different pets respond differently to lodging

How a pet responds to their first lodging experience—or if it's been a while—varies from pet to pet. Existing health conditions, age, psychological states, and individual personalities can impact their reaction. If you have a nervous dog or one that is normally anxious when you're away, their symptoms may vary in severity. Some of us two-leggeds unpack and get back to normal as soon as we return from a trip away. Others of us step around a still-packed suitcase for a few days (or more)—give your pets a few days to emotionally unpack their lodging experience.