



Some Spare No Expense To Pamper Pets

Pet Spas Offers 'Pawdicures,' Facials

Darlene Dunn, Staff writer

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You will never catch Hallie Gelb giving her 1-year-old Maltese dog tap water in his bowl. Gelb believes that Riley deserves the best – he gets purified water.

“You don’t realize how many bad things are in the water,” she said.

Gelb also said she cooks all of Riley’s food.

“We use food from grocery stores, so why shouldn’t he?” she said. “He’s not a dog to me. He is my son. His diet is so important to his health and longevity.”

Gelb, 25, of Beachwood, Ohio, is part of a growing number of pet owners who shower their pets with clothing, spa products, beds, jewelry. “He has a full line of clothing – drawers upon drawers of clothing,” Gelb said.

“He gets groomed every three weeks, and I brush him for a half-hour every day.”

Additionally, Gelb orders handmade bows for Riley from Laine Limited, which is located in Philadelphia. She pays about \$7 for a pair.

“They are all handmade and they are starched, so you can use them over and over again,” Gelb said.

Doggie Spa

Riley also attends doggie daycare at the recently opened Barkley Pet Hotel and Spa.

“It’s a Ritz-Carlton style hotel for pets,” said Gelb. “You walk in and say, This is not a place for pets.’ It’s luxurious. It’s absolutely beautiful. It’s amazing.”

The facility falls in line with how Gelb believes her Riley should be treated.

“Riley is absolutely the king – what can I say?” she said.

Lap Of Luxury

The Barkley, in Orange Village, Ohio, provides soothing music and comfortable bedding in Canine Quarters, as well as cat condominiums and a tropical fish tank in Kitty City.

Howard Perlmutter, the owner, knows that many pet owners want the best for their pets. He kept this in mind when developing the plan for the pet hotel.

It offers petite suites designed for puppies and small breeds; standard suites that are 24-square feet and include lambskin

bedding; Barkley Park suites, which feature natural garden views and include sounds of trickling water and in-suite televisions; and executive poolside suites. A petite suite or standard suite costs \$29 a night. The Barkley Park Suite goes for \$49 a night, and the executive poolside suite is \$65.

While staying at the hotel, pets can also visit the grooming salon for aromatherapy bath, a bubble bath pawdicure, a facial or a coat-brightening treatment, Perlmutter said. A pawdicure runs \$15, while a whitening treatment costs \$10.

Bringing The Spa Home

Not all pet owners take their dogs to facilities like the Barkley. Some provide a spa-like treatment at home.

Kim Prewitt uses Happytails Canine Spa products on her Shi-Tzu in the six weeks between her \$40 grooming appointments.

“The Fur Butter is like an exfoliate for dogs. Diamond loves it,” Prewitt said.

Kevin Fisher, the company’s owner, said, “Fur butter is an ultra-rich deep-conditioning cream that you apply right after washing the dog. You massage it in for a few minutes and, of course, all dogs and most humans love a good massage.”

Fur butter is \$19.

Diamond also has several pieces of clothing, such as a T-shirt with the word “Security,” a pink sweater and a pink faux-leather jacket, Prewitt said. She also has a personalized collar that says, “Miss D.”

Her jeweled collar ran \$40. Prewitt said the jacket was \$25 and her T-shirts and sweaters usually run about \$25 each.

“I have gotten to the point that I like to buy something for Diamond when I buy something for myself or for my daughter,” Prewitt said.

Bling-Bling

Amanda Sealover has two dogs and a cat, and she likes for all of them to have “a little bling.”

About a year ago, she wanted a charmed necklace for her long-haired Chihuahua, but said she couldn’t justify spending \$300 on one. Instead, she bought Swarovski crystals and pearls and made one.

“People where oohing and ahing at the dog park,” Sealover said. “So I started making necklaces for friends’ dogs.”

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Before long, Sealover had set up a web-based business, Sugar – A Pet Boutique, selling pearls and bling-bling necklaces for dogs of all sizes, ranging from \$20 and up, based on collar size.

Share The Wealth

“There is a need for it,” Sealover said. “People want to share their wealth with their pets.”

Catherine Nowak, owner of The Diva Dog in Colorado, knows all too well how pet owners want to spend money on their pets. She offers designer-inspired beds and toys, such as the Chewell No. 5 toy – \$12.95 – as well as the Sniffany and Co. and Furcedes dog beds, which cost about \$349 for a small bed and \$400 for a large.

She also offers high-end items from Paris Hilton’s dog clothing line and Juicy Couture. The high-end dog clothing starts at about \$60 and runs to hundreds of dollars.

Nowak said she once got a call from a customer who wanted to spend \$2,000 for an entire pet wardrobe.

She said that pet owner believed that their pet deserved the absolute best.

Pampering In Stages

Nowak also said pet owners fall in different stages of pet pampering.

An entry-level pet owner that pampers will buy a T-shirt or a diamond-studded dog collar. After the owner becomes more comfortable spending money, they move to the next stage.

She said that’s when the human realizes that there is “an ugly dog bed in the corner of their nicely-decorated home, and they need a chic dog bed” to complete the look.

After reaching that level, there is no turning back. Regular toys will just not do, she said. Instead, there is a need for martini glasses and Jimmy Chews shoes.

“If you are going to have squeaky toys lying around your house, they should be fabulous,” she said.

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- Tuesday – Some Families Can’t Handle Pets
- Wednesday – Your Pet Can Lead You To Love
- Thursday – Some Pet Owners Spare No Expense
- Friday – Best Movies For Pet Lovers

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- Investing In A Happy Dog
- Cut Doggone Vet Bills
- Do-It-Yourself Pet Beds
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