

HOW TO BE A PET SITTING TRAVELER

Part II of III

Jump forward a couple years to the present and I am a member of five house-sitting sites. Three are country specific: **HouseSittersAmerica.com**, **HousesittersCanada.com** and **HouseSittersUK.com** and two have international listings: **Housecarers.com** and **TrustedHousesitters.com**. Another I've used is **MindMyHouse.com**. (NOTE: look at the article *House Sitting Sites I Use* for links to these.) There are others, some for specific countries, but until I want to go there, I'm not going to pay for the memberships which range from \$20 to \$119 per year. Housecarers.com originally helped sitters find paid jobs but it and the others are now just an even swap: a free place to stay in exchange for pet sitting and caring for the house. They expect traveling singles, couples and even families to apply for gigs. If you are looking for paid gigs, check out Rover.com and Care.com locally.

Since 2009 and by the end of 2019, I will have pet sit sixty-three times in twelve states for forty-six different homeowners. And I've done one in England and two in Australia. The first in Australia was for 22 head of cattle, 2 horses, 5 sheep, 3 chickens, 3 dogs and a lot of yard to care for. In all that's sixty-six times for forty-nine homeowners.

But it's not just the pet sitting I go for. While in Australia for 52 days and pet sitting for 37, I went snorkeling twice, canyoning, rented a bicycle in Brisbane, did a Segway tour in Airlie Beach, went to the Australia Zoo, Bondi Beach, movies, shopping and out for drinks and dining. The second homeowner added me to her car insurance, so I became very relaxed driving on the left even though I admit to walking to the wrong side of the car a few times (DDAOM: double dumb ass on me).

Some pet sits are more like fillers between bigger trips. Having just done a transatlantic cruise and a week in Germany with my sister in April 2018, I needed to be back in So Cal for my eldest granddaughter's high school graduation but had time to kill. So instead of wearing out my welcome at my daughter's house or paying for a hotel or hostel somewhere, I was in a lovely home in Bryan, TX playing with three miniature Dachshunds, getting lots of doggie kisses and had access to WiFi, cable TV and even the lady's car (thanks Tami!).

To Be Continued...