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BOW WOW TURNS TO WOW WOW AS KEY WEST RESORT NOW WELCOMES DOGS

As Part of its Transformation, the New Westin Key West Resort & Marina Becomes Pet Friendly

Pampers Pooches with New Dog Beds and Amenities



KEY WEST, FLORIDA (August 1, 2006): Sleeping dogs coming to Key West finally have a place to lie... Now that the newly transformed **Westin Key West Resort & Marina** has adopted Starwood's pet-friendly program. Guests of the acclaimed resort are now welcomed to bring their favorite four-legged friends, as the property will even pamper pooches with luxurious "Heavenly" dog beds and special resort amenities.

"We are thrilled to bring this great program to Key West as part of our transformation into The Westin Key West Resort & Marina," said Diane Schmidt, general manager of the resort. "Our guests are some of the destination's most discriminating travelers and are passionate about their pets. We look forward to welcoming them along with their special travel companions, and delivering outstanding experiences to every member of the family – from two legs to four."

Every Dog has its Duvet

Starwood has spent millions of dollars to make its hotel beds the best in the business as evident in the highly acclaimed ten-layer Westin Heavenly Beds®. As part of its new ***Starwood LTD (Love that Dog)*** program, the company introduced new luscious, comfy beds for its four-legged guests. Starwood's new dog beds are custom-designed oversized pet pillows by Eloise Pet Accessories, a doggie line described as "where style and fashion meet man's best friend." Eloise's pet accessories are favorites of celebrities including Daryl Hannah, Dyan Cannon and Deborah Messing. Each brand worked with Eloise to design dog beds that mirror their hotels' human beds and guest room design. Westin's dog bed features a miniature Heavenly Bed duvet.

Besides the beds, the Westin will also offer food and water bowls and temporary I.D. tags with hotel contact information. In addition, a traveling tip card will be provided to all guests traveling with their dogs upon check-in, thanks to a partnership with The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). Other amenities include plush doggie robes, leashes and collars at some Westin hotels.

Who Let the Dogs Inn?

So why is Starwood catering to canines? With 62 million dog owners in the U.S. and 29 million who hit the road with their dogs in tow according to the Travel Industry Association of America, dog owners are a market niche that's been underserved by the travel industry. Most upscale and luxury hotel chains have varied pet policies meaning some hotels welcome dogs while others do not. Starwood is changing that.

According to a new study of 400 dog owners commissioned by Starwood, 76% said they would be more loyal to a hotel chain that accepted dogs, even when they weren't traveling with their pet. And when they learn that some of the world's most celebrated hotel brands are rolling out the red carpet for pooches, they'll likely be surprised – 82% said they did not believe most upscale hotels allowed dogs, and 48% said that if they did, it was reluctantly. In fact, 16% even admitted to smuggling their dog into hotels that banned dogs!

Located on the waterfront adjacent to Mallory Square and one block from fabled Duval Street, **The Westin Key West Resort & Marina** is one of the Conch Republic's top destination resorts. The property offers 178 deluxe guestrooms and suites, over 16,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor function space, multiple dining options, tropical outdoor pool, a 40-slip marina with a complete range of watersports, and a nightly Sunset Celebration on the Westin Pier. In addition, the property operates one of the country's largest private ports, welcoming cruise ships to the destination daily. The property has been the only full-service Key West Resort to receive the AAA *Four-Diamond* rating for the past eight years. For reservations or more information, please call 1-866-837-4250 or click to www.westin.com/keywest.