



# The Barkley Pet Hotel & Day Spa

The Sky's the Limit

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By Kathy Hosler



In today's world, pets are no longer just pets, they are members of the family. So it's only natural that when the family takes a vacation, their pets also get to enjoy some fun and pampering

The sky's the limit when it comes to providing customized services and activities for the guests who stay at or visit The Barkley Pet Hotel & Day Spa. The Barkley opened its flagship facility in 2003. It is located in Cleveland, Ohio, the hometown of Howard Perlmutter, the founder, CEO, and President. The Barkley takes pet hospitality to a new level by putting all of their services under one roof; boarding, daycare, grooming, training, veterinary services, boutique shopping, etc.



Pet owners loved this one-stop concept to care for all of their pet's needs, and soon plans were in the works for a second facility. It is located in West Lake Village just outside of Los Angeles, California. The newest location quickly became the 'hot spot' of LA's pet lovers. The LA facility is 50,000 sq. ft. That's three times the size of the Cleveland facility and it has a VCA (Veterinary Centers of America) animal hospital attached to it.

The Barkley has 24 hour supervised care. Their number one goal is the health and safety of the pets. The Barkley was founded on the concept of utilizing technology to keep pet owners as close to their pets as possible when they have to be away.



"When a pet checks into The Barkley, it's almost like checking a family member into assisted living," says Mr. Perlmutter. "They have all their needs cared for. They are fed, entertained with fun activities, and they and their living area are kept clean."

"Everything that we do at The Barkley is based on research," Mr. Perlmutter continues. "We offer accommodations that range from basic, simple rooms all the way up to extreme luxury suites. The leisure suites are custom designed with glass doors and are sound controlled to reduce stress. Our Barkley Park suites are in a park-like setting with artificial turf, flowers, plants, and fountains. There are also pool side suites that surround the indoor pool in the Cleveland facility. Each suite has personal webcams that broadcast 24 hours a day, a flat screen TV, and leather furniture."

Every guest is considered a Barkley VIP and receives the same exceptional standard of care no matter where they stay; in a basic room or an upscale suite. In the LA facility, there is a replica of Rodeo Drive. The dogs can choose from luxurious storefront suites like Sniffany's, Kate Spayed, Neiman Barkus, and Yves St. Bernard on Hollywood Boulevard.

The guests at Kitty City stay in custom designed multi-level 'kittycondos'. They have everything a curious kitty could want—an enormous salt water fish tank, bird watching, cat nip, toys, and trees for climbing.

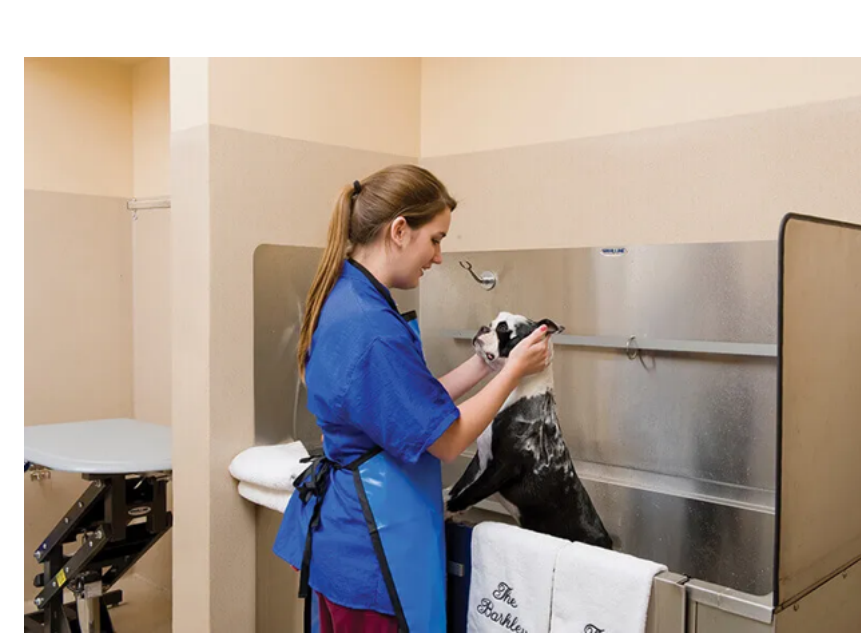


Air purification is a really big deal at The Barkley. Every room is isolated from the others and has its own air system. Air is exchanged at least six times an hour. In Kitty city, each cat condo has its own reverse ventilation system where fresh air is piped into the main room, enters each cat condo, and then it is pumped out through a plenum in the roof of the building. That insures that each cat enclosure is viral free. You also don't smell litter box odor because the air is removed from the facility.

Pet guests at the resort don't just sit in their room. Every pet that comes in selects activity lifestyle options to fit their interests – anything from surfing lessons to soothing massages. And, they hold lots of birthday parties, 'bark-mitzvahs', and 'mutt-ramonies'.

There are activities to suit every pet's lifestyle; night time tuck-ins and bedtime stories, pool parties, ice cream socials, and more. And, if they want a little snack, pets can hop into the limo and go through the neighborhood McDonald's drive thru.

The Barkley also offers cage-free day camp. There is lots of play equipment in the indoor/outdoor setting. They have plenty of shade structures and water misters to keep the dogs cool. Dogs can come for the day and overnight guests can also attend day camp. Pet training is available through The Barkley Academy. They offer group, individual, or stay and train obedience classes. Their grooming salon and spa is all about natural, organic, and environmentally friendly products. They offer everything from basic grooms to the celebrity package of mud masks, massages, pawdicures, and more.



"Safety is paramount at The Barkley," continues Mr. Perlmutter. "All the hallways are extra wide. When the pets are walked, the staff member walks toward the center of the hallway and the dogs walk close to the wall. That way they always have two people between dogs. We have 8 to 10 foot high buried fencing along the entire perimeter. And, we have antimicrobial K9 grass inside and out."

"Our website and social media are the most integral part of our marketing campaign," says Mr. Perlmutter. "When people are looking for a specific service, you want them to be able to find you. So we pay a lot of attention to search engine optimization, making sure that our website and all our social media is mobile friendly."



"We have found that about 70 percent of our customers are mobile, using iPhones and iPads—devices that are not computers. We have simplified our website, www.thebarkleypethotel.com, to be easy to navigate," he continues. "And, social media is huge with us. Our clients follow on Twitter and Facebook to see what is happening with the pets, and they love our YouTube videos."

One of the most important contributors to the success of The Barkley is its staff.

"Our staff sets us apart from our competitors," says Mr. Perlmutter. "Our buildings are great, but they are just brick and mortar. It's really what you do and how you do it that matters. Our staff is incredible! Everyone goes through a very extensive formalized training program before they begin anywhere in our system. Our procedures and protocols are very strict on how we do things, and there are written tests and practical exams for every area."

The Barkley staff also goes through emergency preparedness training for flood, earthquake, and fire safety.

The Barkley Pet Hotel and Spa has some pretty far-reaching expansion plans. They will soon open two new locations in Mumbai, India. These net zero facilities are designed to be so energy efficient that they will be self-sustaining.

The Barkley-Worli which is now under construction, is part of a huge building complex and will be 200 meters (that's a whopping 656 feet) above the earth when it is finished. That's proof positive that the sky really is the limit for The Barkley Pet Hotel & Day Spa!

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