

## Dog destinations in the Cortlandt-Peekskill area

Going to the dogs can have an entirely different meaning in the Yorktown-Peekskill-Cortlandt area. There's going to the dog park, going to the dog-friendly restaurants, and going to the dog-accommodating bed and breakfast.

As such, a dog's life, one might assume, is anything but boring. What better way to while away a dog's day than with an afternoon of taking in the sights and smells of Croton Point Park? Want to relax with your pooch after a busy day? You can do so on the dog-specific portion of The Boathouse's patio in Ossining. A steak or swordfish filet for you, a bowl of cool water for your canine companion.

According to The [Humane Society](#) of the United States, there are about 77.5 million owned dogs in the United States, and 39 percent of the households in the country own at least one dog. With a status in some cases seemingly on par with children, there are few limits on what you can experience with your dog now that the weather is warming. Just remember to have a leash on or handy, pick up after them and, if Fido isn't playing well with others, come back another day.

### Parks

With an abundance of green space, the Yorktown-Cortlandt area is packed with acreage where you and your dog can roam. In most cases, Rover should be on a leash. Trails at the Teatown Lake Reservation in Yorktown beckon, as do those in the Montrose Point State Forest or the riverside spaces in the county's Croton park. Hudson Highlands [Gateway](#) Park in Cortlandt will gladly spread its scenic vistas before you and Spot.

But, if you're looking for a spot where Sparky can run sans leash, head to one of the municipal dog parks. In Cortlandt, the town's dog park can be found within Sprout Brook Park. Inside the fence are tennis-court-sized areas where big dogs and little dogs can cavort without fear of offending other park-goers or getting in trouble with their dissimilarly sized brethren. (Most dog parks segregate by size.) Fire hydrants, ramps and doghouses provide fun focal points for the canines.

Peekskill has a similar set-up, although with less accoutrements. The Peekskill park is near Beecher Park. Michael Sellers and several other volunteers worked with the city to open the dog park, which became available to Peekskill's pooches on Oct. 31. The park, Sellers said, gives the dogs, including his Maggie, a border collie mix, "a place to run." It's also a place for owners to socialize. He's the director of publications for New York-Presbyterian Hospital.

"The dog park was the place where we met some of our best friends," he said, referring to his time as a Manhattan resident before moving to Westchester.

Susan Hallett, a [paralegal](#), said the Peekskill park is the perfect place for her dachshund, Herkie, to be safe off leash.

"It's very difficult for the dogs to socialize and get exercise on the leash," she said.

The Ossining dog park can be found in Cedar Lane Town Park. Lights permit romping until 9 p.m. Alan Hochman often takes Chief, his 118-pound Leonburger, there. "In general, the dogs have complete freedom," Hochman said.

## Restaurants and lodging

Want to eat out with your dog? The trick is to find a restaurant with outdoor dining and see if it allows dogs. The Boathouse's patio does. Another place is the Sunset House in Peekskill. "Labrador retrievers, **purse** dogs, a 250-pound dog" often visit the restaurant, said bar manager Kerri Fitzgerald, who couldn't recall the big dog's breed.

"Outside in our backyard, people bring them all the time," said Fitzgerald, adding that a water bowl is available for your pet's use.

Dogs — and their owners — are welcome to spend the night at the Alexander Hamilton House, a bed and breakfast in Croton. The **business** opened in 1982 and would accept dogs "with a wink," owner Barbara Notarius said. The downturn in the economy, she said, pushed her to advertise the service. Two of the eight rooms are dog-friendly and have water and food dishes waiting.

"I think there's a real, crying need for this," Notarius said. "People are very proud and attached to their dogs."

Dog owners should bring their pet's preferred **bedding** and can use a provided crate should they want to go out to dinner and leave their canine companion alone. Plastic bags are also provided.

"We tell people we don't want to come out on our lawn and find a present," she said.

### Where to take Fido

- Croton Point Park, 1A Croton Point Ave., Croton, 914-862-5290
- Teatown Lake Reservation, 1600 Spring Valley Road, Yorktown, 914-762-2912
- Montrose Point State Forest, Kings Ferry Road, Montrose
- Hudson Highlands Gateway Park, Sprout Brook Road, Cortlandt
- Cortlandt dog park, in Sprout Brook Park, Sprout Brook Road
- Ossining dog park, in Cedar Lane Park, 235 Cedar Lane
- Peekskill dog park, 1795 Main St.
- The Boathouse restaurant, 46 Westerly Road, Ossining, 914-923-6466
- Sunset House, 137 N. Water Street, Peekskill, 914-734-4192