

Is it write to have dogs in the diner

Phyllis Humby- July 2019

Dogs rule. Anyone who is on Facebook knows that. Cute cuddly furry therapy to counteract the hostilities of everyday life. Dogs go everywhere with us. They are part of the family. No argument there. But here's the thing. We can't leave our pets in the car when it's warm, but we have to stop for a bite to eat. Should dogs be allowed in restaurants?

Okay, I hear some of you object because of allergies. No problem. The establishments would have that covered. Instead of the backintheday Smoking or Non-smoking, it would be With Dog or Without Dog? And then the host would escort you through the doggy section to get to the no doggy section. As I recall, that's how it worked.

In conversation, one fellow said his pet should be allowed inside. After all, Fifi is small. And well-behaved, he added. Aha! That's the key. Or is it? Are only the subservient allowed? People take kids to restaurants. Come on, we've all sat next to wee ones who fussed, cried, and screamed their way through the entire meal. Three-year-olds ran around tables while you sat there with wing sauce dripping from your chin watching staff carrying trays of hot food veer around them.

Maybe we could begin by allowing dogs to accompany their owners to open-air patios. Say a pet papa is returning home from the doggy park with Penny and wants to stop at Cathy's Coffee and Croissants Café for a cappuccino. Hey, what's the problem with that? There isn't one. Patrons would ooh and aah over the Goldendoodle resting its head on the owner's knee the same as they'd cootchy coo a baby in the high chair. Cute is cute, people.

But if we allow the big dogs to be on the patio, we have to allow those yappy little ankle biters too. While dining, you'd have to keep an eye on the pointy-nosed little nippers. I suppose it would be discrimination if we said no dogs under twenty pounds and no children under eight years of age. Am I right?

And how about banning dogs that are taller than the café tables? No matter how good your pet is, it takes only a second for a long tongue to lick the cream cheese off someone's bagel on the way past.

And what if the worst happens while you're enjoying your spaghetti and meatballs. Uh oh... Sir? Your dog just... Excuse me, waiter, could I move to another table? It could happen. It happens to babies. Otherwise, why have change tables in the washroom. Sure it happens.

Eateries would insist on proper etiquette. Little signs that remind pet owners not to toss food on the floor for Fido. I'm not sure why that annoys me so much but even in my own home, it's happened. I don't care how well your dog licks up the food, don't do it again. Geesh!

If we give pet parents an inch, they might take a mile... Insist that their pooch sit on the booth seat beside them... Feed them from a fork. Maybe everyone is okay with that. After all, we do it for babies. And they slobber, too.

Now I've talked myself into quite a quandary. At first, I was all for it. Love dogs. They would simply sit next to their master looking sweet and everything, but now Rover is at the freaking table chowing down on a steak sandwich. And next to them, babies are shoving food into their mouths with their hands and dropping gooey pieces all over the floor. Of course, the dogs would be all over that. Clean it right up.

That's it! The next time I go out to eat, it'll be in the Adults Only section instead of the Family area. And, furthermore, make that the Patio over the Petio. Bon Appétit.