



Animal Welfare.
Worldwide.

DCMT Travel Advice for Tourists

The dog and cat meat trade sees an estimated 10 million dogs and several million cats captured, transported, beaten and killed each year across Southeast Asia. Many of the animals used to supply the trade are stolen family pets or stray animals collected from the streets and rural villages. After being transported in cramped cages across long distances, often lasting days, these dogs and cats are killed by drowning, blowtorching, or electrocution.

FOUR PAWS aims to protect the millions of tourists that visit Southeast Asia, by working with the international tourism sector to raise awareness of the trade and protect travellers from harm.

Staying safe around street dogs

Stray dogs can be friendly, especially in tourist areas – being open to human contact and often receiving food and attention from visitors – but this is not always the case. FOUR PAWS would not recommend that stray animals are fed and that travellers maintain a safe distance, as some stray dogs have had little contact with humans and can be scared if approached. They may bark or aggressively defend themselves or their young, their food or their territory.

Stray dogs are also vulnerable to numerous health problems and due to a lack of preventive medical care, many dogs will have fleas, ticks, and other parasites, and some may also carry diseases including rabies. Rabid animals may behave strangely or seem unusually tame, and some may not show any signs that they are infected.

Rabies is a very serious infection endemic throughout Southeast Asia that is usually caught from the bite or scratch of an infected animal, most often a dog. If you are travelling to an area of Southeast Asia that is highlighted by your government as rabies prevalent, travellers should take care, and if they travelling to rural areas, they may want to receive the series of rabies vaccinations before they travel.

How to avoid dog and cat meat

Travellers often seek new experiences whilst abroad but should be aware that some food items can present a health risk and have negative impacts on the local community. Dog and cat meat is such an example, whereby travellers to some parts of **Cambodia, Indonesia and Vietnam** may witness the transportation, sale and consumption of dogs and cats and, due to the poor animal welfare associated with the trade, be at risk of diseases such as rabies.

Please inform your guests on how to avoid dog and cat meat:

In **Indonesia**, avoid food items referred to as “B2” or “RW”.

In **Vietnam**, avoid food items referred to as “thịt chó”, “thịt mèo” or “thịt cay” (cat meat). “Chó hấp” (steamed dog meat), “rựa mặn” (dog meat with galingal, shrimp sauce, fermented rice), and “chó nướng” (baked dog meat).

In **Cambodia** avoid food items referred to as “Special meat – “សាច់ពិសេស”, which is usually dog meat. This includes “ការីសាច់ឆ្កែ” (dog meat curry); “សាច់អាំង” (BBQ dog meat) and “ស៊ុបស្រូវគ្រឿង” (sour soup with dog meat).

FOUR PAWS would welcome information on the transportation, sale and consumption of dogs and cats and would like to ask tourism businesses to relay any concerns received. A note of caution, these animals are often highly stressed, in poor health, and may bite or scratch if approached. Travellers should follow FOUR PAWS advice to stay safe around street dogs and cats.



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5 TIPS FOR YOUR SAFETY

1. Never run away.

Running away can trigger a dog's hunting instinct, which tells them to chase you. It's better to walk away slowly to avoid triggering that instinct. If you're on a bicycle or motorbike, slow to a halt and wait for the dog to leave.

2. Avoid confronting a pack.

Dogs are pack animals and tend to stay in groups, where they can protect each other. If you are out walking and spot a group of dogs, it's advisable not to go near. Dogs are territorial animals, and if they feel threatened, they could confront you. Be especially careful at night: in the dark you may not be able to see all the dogs around you.

If you do happen to wander into a pack, stay calm and move away slowly. Don't make any sudden movements, shout or run. Keep your arms close to your body.

3. Avoid sending dominance signals to dogs.

Dogs are very good at reading our body language and some types of human behaviour will be perceived as threatening; these include staring at them, yelling, waving arms about and walking directly towards them. Avoid these behaviours and try sending calming signals such as yawning, avoiding eye contact and standing sideways to the dog.

4. Ask locals for help.

If you feel threatened by dogs in the street or around a temple, you could try calling to a local for assistance. Many of the dogs will be regulars in the area and are likely to respond better to someone they know (such as a monk or caregiver).

5. As a last resort...

While we strongly recommend keeping calm and behaving in a non-confrontational way, if you feel very threatened, you could crouch down and *pretend* to pick up a rock. But don't actually throw anything at the dog! Sometimes, pretending to pick something up can make a dog run away (a sad reflection of the regular abuse that many stray dogs suffer at human hands).

Worst case scenario

If you do find yourself in a situation where you are attacked by dogs, try to fend them off with a backpack or stick. If you end up on the ground, protect your head and vital organs. Lie down and curl up in a ball, using your arms to cover your head. Then try to keep still, even though this may be difficult. The dogs are more likely to lose interest in you if you stay calm. Once the dogs have moved away, slowly get up and leave. Get yourself to a safe place and visit a hospital as soon as possible.

What you can do to help stray animals

Local animal rescue organisations rely on donations to help with the sterilisation of stray animals, set up feeding stations and rescue, rehabilitate and return injured strays. If you see an animal in need of medical attention, where possible you should contact a local animal welfare organisation or a veterinarian. Please see below a list of FOUR PAWS partners that accept reports and emergency cases of stray animals requiring medical attention. If the area you are travelling to is not covered in the list, we recommend you google your local area's nearest animal rescue centre.

If you wish to report animals in need, contact a local animal welfare organisation:

FOUR PAWS
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Vienna

phone: +43-1-545 50 20-0
e-mail: office@four-paws.org
www.four-paws.org



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- Southwest Thailand (Koh Lanta, Krabi, Ao Nang) - Lanta Animal Welfare: info@lantaanimalwelfare.com (non-urgent) or (+66) 084-304-4331 (urgent)
- Bali, Indonesia – BAWA: (+62) 811-389-004 (WhatsApp) or (+62) 812-384-0133 (call)
- Jakarta, Indonesia – JAAN: jaan_adopt@yahoo.com
- Da Nang, Vietnam - Paws International Vet Clinic Danang: (+84) 339-325-563
- Cambodia - Animal Rescue Cambodia: (+85) 512-340-114