

DON'T FRET PET

THE BAGS may be packed and the car loaded, but for some holiday-makers it can take as little as a doleful look to shelve their plans. The prospect of the family pet pining away can be enough to ruin any holiday – a dilemma Sydney pet-lover Jenny Pratt faced when she moved from Melbourne two years ago and left her support base of minders behind.

After quickly exhausting the supply of new friends willing to look after her Rhodesian ridge-back, her answer was to set up Don't Fret Pet – an animal billeting service, introducing pampered pets to surrogate families. For about \$16 a night (dogs) and \$10 (cats), the former software designer matches a pet's temperament, exercise needs and sleeping habits with a bank of about 60 animal-loving minders, guaranteeing the pleasures of home. Pets are treated as family members, walked, fed and patted, according to the wishes of their owners.

With more than 200 clients since opening late last year, Pratt plans to extend her service to Melbourne and has started on her next venture – day care for dogs.

"It may sound over-protective to some people", she explains, "but not to a pet lover."

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