

<https://mallorcamatters.com/tag/christina-kastin/>

Month: September 2016

Pet Pioneer



I'm in a field with about twenty dogs, and my friend who is a dog walker and thankfully in charge of them. It's a bit crazy, there are big dogs and little dogs and in between dogs. There's pedigrees and mixtures, and licky dogs and barky dogs. They are very excited because I'm new to them, and they all want to say hello. I'm here because I want to take some photos of a pioneer, Christina Kastin. The pack of dogs all love her, when she sits down on the bench to pose for a photo they all obediently gaze at her, they love her and she clearly loves them back.

You may not of heard of Christina yet, but she's about to do something quite special for dogs and their owners in Europe. Christina has been quietly championing the rights of dogs on the island since 2007 when she first decided to convince every single council in Majorca to make some green spaces accessible to dogs. From this nugget of a big idea has come a much, much bigger idea: this November she intends to fly dogs and their owners from Sweden, Germany, France and the UK to visit Majorca on dog friendly holidays, and not only that, she intends to have as many dogs as possible travelling in the cabins of the aircrafts with their owners. When she pulls it off it will make history, spark a debate about pet travel, and revolutionise the tourism industry. But let her tell you in her own words....



"My name is Christina Kastin and I'm the founder of Harmony Travels. I was born and raised in Gothenburg in Sweden. I have lived in Spain since 1989 and for the last 15 years I have lived in Majorca. I was the owner and partner of several businesses. but in 2006 I came to a turning point in my life so I took six months off to find out what I really wanted to do and that's how my mission and my business Harmony Travels came about.

"Just like many dog owners I love being by and in the sea and in natural environments, and walking in the woods. However in Majorca this is a problem as we only have a few green areas in the local community which we can "legally" access. So my "mission" started in 2007 to increase access for dogs to green areas in Majorca. Basically you were not allowed to take your dog anywhere and where you were allowed they would always have to be on the lead. They authorities had forbidden dogs to be in any green zones, but they did not want them on the street either, so where should they be? The laws are contradictory because on one hand they say we must take care of our animals, and not make them anti social, but on the other hand they are not allowed to be anywhere, so how will they then learn how to be sociable with other dogs and people? Dogs were not allowed on the beaches either, even though they love the sand and water and suffer during the intense summer heat as we do.



"I decided that I was not going to let "them" ignore us, dog owners, any more: something needed to be done and I was going to do something about it. I decided I was going to see the local politicians. As I started writing down my ideas in preparation for meeting my local mayor of the time, Sr. Carlos Delgado, I realised that my idea would be perfect to promote the winter tourism season here. As I kept on writing my ideas were flowing and suddenly I had a whole project on my hands. I wanted to create a place where people could come and relax in and bring their dogs if they wished. I decided I wanted to promote an awareness so that tourists and their dogs could come to this island and enjoy it all and connect with us residents and our dogs in a perfect harmony. The end result would be a better understanding between people and animals and respect for the land. I first presented my ideas on June 5th 2007, which I later found out was "Environmental Day", a good omen I hoped!

"I wanted to make a difference to the island I live on: for me, for the residents and our pets, for the tourists that come here, and above all protect the land from being exploited."

And so began several years of campaigning and meeting with local councils, promoting the idea and changing minds for the good of dogs and their owners here in Majorca. All of it unpaid work which Christina undertook with great enthusiasm.

"It hasn't been easy but my motto is, if you want something, go for it and let nothing (or no one) stop you! So here we are, nine years later: many, and more are due, municipalities have made great changes; dogs can now access several beach areas during the whole winter, we have five all year round areas for them to go and swim in and in Palma we have seven buses admitting dogs. There are

also more dog parks and more positive changes on the way. So dear dog owners the future is looking bright!" You can find details of all of the accessible areas by visiting her website <http://www.guide4dogs.com> and clicking on VILLAGES.



But now dear reader, and I hope keen dog lover, Christina's new big idea needs your backing and support. She is planning four separate trips from Germany, France, Sweden and the UK in late October and November all arriving in Majorca and staying in a pet friendly hotel and taking part in excursions and activities which will include dogs and people. She is looking for sponsors and for people who would like to take part in her first ever weeklong event. After so many years of working for the dog owners she's hoping that now she will be able to find support from them.

" I now need their help. With all the work done so far I feel the time has come to promote our amazingly beautiful island as a dog friendly destination, during our winter season, which is not very wintery at all but more like a great, and mostly, sunny spring".

Personally I can see many ways a business could get involved with this project as well as individuals with their pets as I can imagine there will be an enormous amount of press coverage from international media. Christina's vision, passion and determination have so far resulted in many changes on the island, and this next step is a big one but certainly one that she can do. She's already met with airlines, and secured a pet friendly hotel in the Arta area and developed a lovely weeklong itinerary for the holiday.

So let's see if YOU are the one who can help me by answering the below questions:

- Do you live in Sweden, France, Germany or England?
- Is your dog calm and good with other dogs?
- Do you want to travel, during November, to Majorca (in the cabin) with your dog (up to 30kg)?
- Do you want to be make history?
- Do you want to help to make changes for yourself and other pet owners?

If you answered "Yes" to the questions above you might end up being one of the very first pet owners to fly with its pet in a chartered plane only for dog owners and their pets, the first one in the world! There are obviously a limited numbers of dogs and people on the plane so it will be a first come first served system, if you are interested and want to find out more information about this trip please send her an e-mail to: christina@guide4dogs.com

You can visit <http://www.guide4dogs.com> for more information.

Share this:

- [Facebook 85](#)