

RANCH & COAST

San Diego's Luxury Lifestyle Magazine

March 2009



Readers' Choice
Best of 2008

Plus Editors' Picks & Celebrity Guest Favorites

\$3.95US



Letter From The Editor

Trying to expedite your breakfast by mixing a jelly donut and your coffee in the blender because, hey, it all ends up in the same place anyway — not the best morning pick-me-up. Ignoring the oil light on your dashboard until belts and pistons explode all over the I-5 because you don't trust mechanics and will take a look at it yourself when you get a chance (even though you know as much about cars as a bachelor does about *The Wiggles*) — not the best money-saving strategy. Believing that the cat will not figure out how to get on top of the refrigerator and knock over that new ceramic beer stein as he has no reason to be up there in the first place — definitely not the best cat owner.

Thankfully, everything in this issue of *Ranch & Coast* is only the best. The best food, the best organizations, the best destinations, the best people, the best hotels, the best places to buy a new stein (honestly, why did he need to be up there!). And it's all chosen by you: the readers. In this third year of offering our Readers' Poll, we are pleased to see a wealth of new names and organizations, as well as some old favorites. For an even more in-depth view of some of the winners, check out our new video content on our Web site at www.ranchandcoast.com.

Like last year, we asked a handful of local notables to give us their top picks for our Guest Favorites section. This year Dave Rickards, Chrissy Russo, Maria Hunt, Tony Hawk, Maggie Bobileff, and Brian Malarkey share their opinions of what's hot in the city. Some of their answers may make you laugh, and some may surprise you.

Of course, we couldn't keep our mouths shut during such a fun issue. You can find all of our personal favorites in the Editors' Picks section (which, just to clarify, had no bearing on the outcome of the Readers' Poll...ok, maybe I was a little swayed by the "best-mechanic-who-won't-call-you-an-idiot-when-you-tell-him-you-saw-the-engine-light-was-on-but-didn't-think-it-mattered" category).

So dig in and discover the best of what San Diego has to offer. Who knows, maybe you've been craving sushi but didn't know where to go; maybe your last massage left you in knots and you're looking for a relaxing change; maybe your dog needs a new sweater. Like that coffee/donut shake, it all ended up in the same place — the pages of our Readers' Choice Best Of 2008 issue.

Ryan Thomas
executive editor



**Best Pet Groomer:
Dog In Suds**

When readers want to spoil their pooches, they head to Dog In Suds in Encinitas. Family-owned for over 15 years, the grooming gurus at this animal oasis are all school-trained with an eye for style. This is not your average get-them-in-and-get-them-out establishment; time and care goes into each pet, ensuring healthy pelts free of snags, perfectly cut nails, and clean ears. When the grooming is over, purchase Fido one of the Dog In Suds' new outfits to match that new haircut. "We take pride in making the pets look their best," says owner Denise Dudek. "Whether we are grooming a new puppy or an aging pet we have the patience and skill to make them look beautiful. We listen to our customers and try our hardest to give them what they want." Because of the demand for Dog In Suds groomers, reservations are sometimes required. (760/943-0653) — Ryan Thomas



The Dog In Suds Team

**Best Pet Store: Muttropolis
(Runner-Up: Dexter's Deli)**

First opening in 2002 in Solana Beach, Muttropolis remains the preeminent pet store for discerning pet owners.



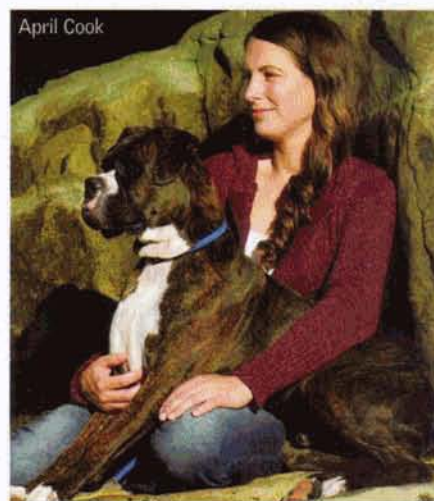
Stocking everything from kitty houses to doggie sweaters, the brand has bloomed over the years, and others locations reside in La Jolla, Newport Beach, Boulder, and Tucson. A percentage of all sales is donated to local shelters and rescue groups. "We want to build a community," says co-owner Janet McCulley, "so that when you enter the store, you feel that same connection as when you go to a dog park."

(888/MUTTS-99, www.muttropolis.com) — Alicia Garcia

**Best Dog Sitting/Walking Service: Dogs On The Run
(Runner-Up: Pets in Paradise)**

It's hard to tell which is worse: remaining ignorant of what your dog does all day, or knowing precisely what went down. A small part of the mystery — and damage — can be dispelled by Dogs on the Run, who is happy to stop in and visit with your four-legged family member while you're away.

Owner and president April Cook says she does her best to match a sitter to your pet's needs. "We have something for everybody. If somebody tells me that they have a very active dog and they want running services, then I'm going to send over a runner." And despite the name, Dogs on the Run doesn't discriminate against cats. If you need someone to come over and be completely ignored while you're at work, they can do that too. (877/858-8738, www.dogsontherun.com) — Paul Stuart



April Cook

**Best Dog Park:
Del Mar Dog Beach**

(Runner-Up: Ocean Beach Dog Beach)

Locals may call it North Beach, but ask any dog owner in the area and they'll tell you it is undoubtedly for the dogs, and as such remains affectionately nicknamed Dog Beach. On any given day a host of pooches can be seen chasing tennis balls, running in the surf, or simply engaging in friendly game of canine tag. Stop by with your pooch and see all the fun for yourself at Camino Del Mar just south of Via De La Valle. (But take note: dogs are only allowed off-leash from September 15 to June 15.) — Ryan Thomas



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