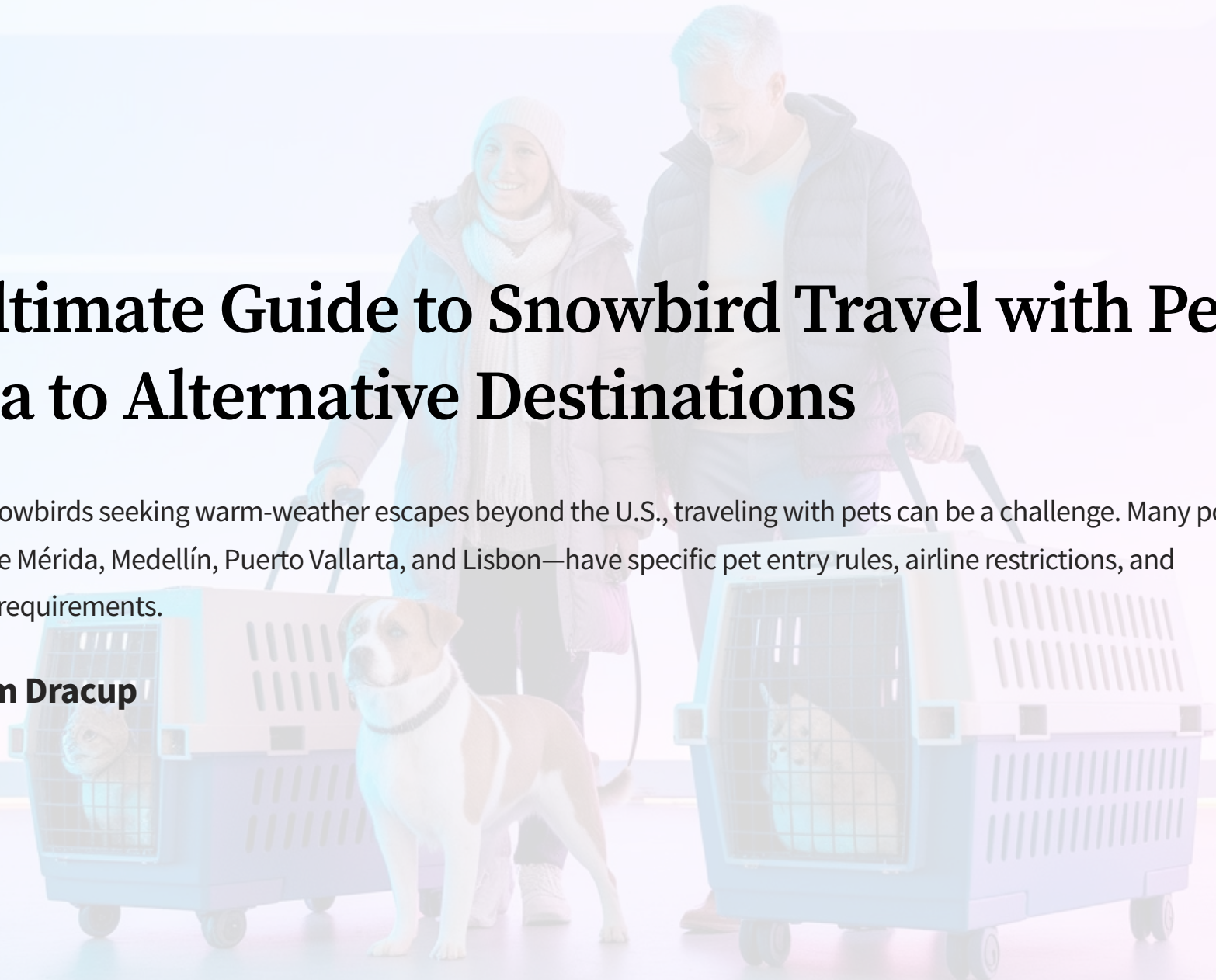


# The Ultimate Guide to Snowbird Travel with Pets: Canada to Alternative Destinations

For Canadian snowbirds seeking warm-weather escapes beyond the U.S., traveling with pets can be a challenge. Many popular alternatives—like Mérida, Medellín, Puerto Vallarta, and Lisbon—have specific pet entry rules, airline restrictions, and documentation requirements.



by **Kymm Dracup**




# Guide Overview and Pet Entry Rules

This guide covers:

- Pet entry rules for top snowbird destinations
- Required vaccinations & paperwork
- Pet-friendly airlines & approximate costs
- Tips for stress-free travel with cats & medium-sized dogs

## Can You Bring Pets to These Snowbird Destinations?

### Mexico (Mérida, Puerto Vallarta)


Allowed?  Yes

Requirements:

- Health Certificate (signed by a vet within 10 days of travel)
- Rabies Vaccination (at least 30 days before entry)
- No quarantine if paperwork is correct

Airlines: Air Canada, Aeroméxico (~ 100 – 100–300 CAD per pet)

### Medellín, Colombia


Allowed?  Yes

Requirements:

- Import Permit (issued by Colombian Agricultural Institute)
- Rabies & Distemper Vaccines (up to date)
- Vet Health Certificate (within 10 days)


Airlines: Avianca, WestJet (~ 200 – 200–400 CAD)

### Varadero, Cuba

Allowed?  No (Strict bans on foreign pets)

# More Snowbird Destinations for Pet Travel

## Punta Cana, Dominican Republic


Allowed?  Yes (but difficult)

Requirements:

- Rabies Titer Test (blood test proving immunity)
- Health Certificate (must be notarized)
- Possible quarantine (varies by case)

Airlines: Air Transat, Sunwing (~ 250 – 250–500 CAD)

## Costa Rica (San Jose, Guanacaste)


Allowed?  Yes (very pet-friendly!)

Requirements:

- Rabies Vaccine (at least 30 days old)
- Health Certificate (within 14 days)
- No quarantine if vaccinated

Airlines: Air Canada, WestJet (~ 150 – 150–350 CAD)

## Panama City, Panama

Allowed?  Yes


Requirements:

- Rabies & Leishmaniasis Vaccines (mandatory)
- ISO Microchip (required for entry)
- Health Certificate (within 10 days)

Airlines: Copa Airlines (~ 200 – 200–450 CAD)

# European Snowbird Destinations

## Portugal (Lisbon, Algarve)

Allowed?  Yes (EU Pet Passport required)

Requirements:

- EU Pet Passport (or equivalent paperwork)
- Rabies Vaccine (at least 21 days before entry)
- ISO Microchip (mandatory)

Airlines: TAP Portugal (~ 300 – 300–600 CAD)

## Málaga, Spain

Allowed?  Yes (similar to Portugal)

Requirements:

- EU Pet Passport (or USDA-endorsed health cert)
- Rabies Vaccine (valid for entry)
- ISO Microchip (required)

Airlines: Air Europa, Lufthansa (~ 350 – 350–700 CAD)

# Pet Travel Checklist

For Cats & Medium Dogs

## Pre-Trip Vet Visit (4-6 Weeks Before Travel)

- Rabies vaccination (mandatory for most countries)
- Other vaccines (distemper, parvovirus, etc.)
- Microchip (ISO 15-digit standard)
- Health certificate (signed by an accredited vet)

## Airline Pet Policies

- In-Cabin: Small pets (under 8kg) in carriers (50 – 50–150 CAD)
- Checked Baggage: Medium dogs in IATA-approved crates (~ 200 – 200–500 CAD)
- Cargo: Large dogs (expensive, ~ 500 – 500–1,200 CAD)

## Travel Day Tips

- Book direct flights (less stress, fewer delays)
- Limit food/water before flight (reduce accidents)
- Bring a familiar blanket/toy (calms anxiety)

# Estimated Costs for Pet Travel

Expense	Approximate Cost (CAD)
Vet Health Certificate	100 – 100–200
Rabies Titer Test (if required)	150 – 150–300
Airline Fee (In-Cabin)	50 – 50–150
Airline Fee (Checked/Cargo)	200 – 200–1,200
Pet Carrier/Crate	50 – 50–300
Import Permit (if needed)	50 – 50–200
Total Estimated Cost	400 – 400–2,000+

# Final Tips for Snowbirds Traveling with Pets



## **Start paperwork early**

Some tests take weeks to process



## **Pack extra food & meds**

Some brands unavailable abroad



## **Choose pet-friendly accommodations**

Airbnb filters help find suitable options



## **Check return requirements**

Canada has re-entry rules too!



# Need Help?

## 📞 Pet Travel Agencies:

- PetRelocation (global pet transport)
- Worldwide Animal Travel (specializes in int'l moves)

## 🌐 Government Links:

- Canada's Pet Import Rules
- USDA APHIS (for int'l paperwork)



Safe Travels! With the right prep, your furry friend can join your snowbird adventure hassle-free. 🐕 ✈️ 🌴

Would you like a downloadable PDF checklist for easy reference? Let me know!