



Pet Tips 'n' Tales

by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

Editor's note: Due to a contributor scheduling conflict, Pets Tips n' Tales is a re-reun from 2015.

"I owned my first store when I was 17-years-old," said industrious entrepreneur Darren, "and since 1983 I've developed and manufactured cosmetics and pet products.

I supplied the products to other stores, and one of my best clients, 'Woofles and Meowz', is located in one of Vancouver, BC's busiest tourist areas, on Granville Island.

When the owner mentioned that his store was for sale, I made 'no bones' about buying it — and bought it three days later. No one would complain if I brought my dog to work, so buying it was a 'no brainer'. I could earn money, spend time with my dog and make other pet lovers and their dogs happy.

Customers were happy to see my dog — especially tourists, because many hadn't seen their pets in awhile and they were missing happy-tail-wagging-welcomes.

The store also introduced me to a business and life partner! One day a friend arrived, with his friend, Cameron, and on the seventh anniversary of our first date, Cameron and I were married."

After owning the pet shop for six years, they sold it because Darren was 'itching' to promote his own soap creations. So he and Cameron opened the "Soap Gallery," which is also located on Granville Island.

"I enjoy the freedom of creating specialty items," said Darren, "like our realistic Sprinkle Chocolate Donuts, Pineapple-Kiwi Cheesecake and Cherry Coconut Cake soaps".

Not kidding! Darren artistically designs life size soaps that look more 'real' than gourmet cakes and food! His delicious looking creations nourish the skin and are pleasing to the eye, err, appetite, but don't eat them! If you do, it is like washing your mouth out with soap... and you'll froth with foam like a rabid dog!

"We discovered that selling soap products," said Darren, "is easier than selling pet products! Not everyone has a pet, but every-

one uses soap! Our natural-gentle formulas are different than 'normal' store soaps because they are pH balanced for human skin and pets' more alkaline skin. For pets, we add essential/fragrance oils as flea and tick inhibitors, then pour them into adorable multi-colored paw-print soap bars!"

"We have soap making demonstrations/classes and our soaps have been sold to tourists from almost every country," said Cameron. "You might say that our products are 'cleaning up' the world!"

Yes! As a tourist, I bought gifts for the family and cats' baths for soft skin and clean fur!

"We enjoy having our pets at work," adds Cameron, "and enjoy it too! They are 'little' social creatures. Most working people have to leave their beloved pets home alone, all day, but ours are constant company. As good as our products are, many people walk in the store not to see us but to visit with our dogs!"

Yes! So true! Their two itty-bitty-Teacup Yorkies, Pippi, seven-years-old, and Riley, five-years-old, are customer magnets that instantly attracted me at their West Vancouver farmer's market location! I noticed the windup-furry-toy looking dogs, all four pounds of them, THEN the soaps, and purchased several colorful-handmade Canadian people and pet products.

"Cameron and I are advocates of pet rescue organizations," said Darren. "Each dog breed has certain traits and our two wee rescues are perfect. They charm us and our customers.

Don't buy animals from pet stores which contributes to the horrific puppy and kitten mill situations. Instead adopt deserving pets from rescue shelters.

It is a mistake to assume that older rescued pets are damaged; not trainable or must be allowed to act out or keep a learned bad behavior. Renaming them releases them from their past life experiences, so that they can gracefully move into their new life with you. As a dog trainer, I learned that dogs

quickly relearn a new name — especially when food and treats are involved.

Pippi and Riley are pure joy and 'usually' obedient pets that keep us laughing and guessing. They are not allowed to sleep on the bed but 'every' morning I wake up to a four-pound furry creature tranquilly resting on his back - on my pillow. Riley casually rolls his black button eyes in my direction, and has an adorable quizzical look that seem to ask, "What?! Is there a problem?"

We treat our dogs the way we want to be treated - with the utmost of respect. They feel safe, secure, happy, and are well adjusted members of our family. They are trained with positive influences, not carried around all the time, not allowed to act out of fear or indecision, and fed a healthy diet. It took almost no time to have our two little rescues become smart, funny, and well socialized. Pippi and Riley' gift is their charm. They will never be guard dogs, but we wish they could be trained to make our morning coffee!"

TIPS

"When a cat plays with an organic wool catnip toy, it keeps its teeth clean!" teaches creator Darren.

*** Yes! Bought some catnip balls gifts for our spoiled kitties, who held down the fort at home! (Thankfully they left their live baby possum pets outside while we are on holiday!)

If you can't be a Vancouver tourist, purchase natural soaps from vendors in your area.

Tell us your FUR-tastic pet tale or helpful pet tips.
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Cameron and Darren hold their Toy Yorkie soapy-sales staff and international tourist attractions, Pippi and Riley.

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NATIONAL SAVE YOUR SMILE WEEK

Oral Health Habits to Maintain a Beautiful Smile

With beach season in full swing, many men and women are trying to put their best body forward to appeal to others. However, according to a February 2009 survey from the American Dental Association and Crest(R) and Oral B(R) the smile outranks eyes, hair and the body as the most attractive physical feature on a person. Therefore, taking care of your teeth and smile is essential.

Men and women differ when it comes to taking care of their teeth and gums. A nationwide survey of 1,000 Americans ages 18 and older found 86 percent of women brush their teeth twice or more a day, yet only 66 percent of men do so.

The survey also found that women say they change their toothbrush or power toothbrush head every 3 to 4 months on average, yet men hang on to theirs an average of 5 months. The ADA recommends replacing toothbrushes every 3 to 4 months or when the bristles become frayed since frayed and worn bristles decrease cleaning effectiveness.

Most people need to do a better job of flossing their

teeth. Only half of those surveyed (49 percent) say they floss their teeth once a day or more often. And 1 out of 3 people surveyed think a little blood in the sink after brushing their teeth is normal, yet it's not -- it could



Forget hair, eyes and body ... a recent survey found that people consider the smile the most attractive feature in a person.

signal gum disease or another health problem.

Oral health is an important part of overall health. Regular dental check-ups are important not only to diagnose and treat gum disease and tooth decay, but also because some diseases or medical conditions, such as oral cancer, have symptoms that can appear in the mouth.

Growing research indicates there may be an association between oral health and serious health conditions such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes, underscoring the importance of good oral hygiene habits.

"We need to constantly get the word out how important it is to stay on top of your oral health," says Dr. Ada Cooper, an ADA consumer advisor and practicing dentist in New York City. "Brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, flossing daily, eating a balanced diet, and visiting your dentist regularly can help keep your smile healthy."

For more information on oral health, visit the American Dental Association's Web site at: www.ada.org.

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