



POOCH POWER

CLEVER, **CUDDLY AND CUTE**...POOCHES RULE CELEBRITIES' LIVES AND ARE OFTEN SPOTTED LOOKING JUST AS GLAMOROUS AS THEIR OWNERS. **AMEL OSMAN** SHARES HER OWN EXPERIENCE OF FINDING THE PERFECT PUP, TUCKER, AND GIVES THE LOWDOWN OF OWNING A **DOG IN DOHA**.

I

was never much of an animal lover growing up. There are countless pictures in family albums of me as a little girl during day trips to London Zoo with my tear stained face twisted in horror as I grasp my parents' hands. When I phoned my mom to announce that I was getting a puppy she was shocked and reminded me of the time I ran out of the house when she came home with a kitten on my 16th birthday.

Two weeks after moving to Doha, I met Benjy, the three year old maltese-yorkie mix that belonged to the nail technician I would visit weekly. He was the most obedient, cuddly bundle of white fur I had ever met and when he showed me his array of exciting tricks I fell in love with him and that was it, I was going to get a dog and nothing was going to stand in my way.

For weeks I scoured websites, classifieds and shelters for a Yorkshire terrier, as this was the only dog I felt suited my busy lifestyle, susceptibility to allergies and small apartment. My efforts were in vain, as it seemed this type of dog just was not available in Qatar. Enter Europuppy. I spoke to Eddie at Europuppy and discussed my requirements. He sent me many pictures of gorgeous pups that could be with me in just a few weeks. Patient and understanding he did not once rush my decision. It was especially nice to see pictures of the puppy's sire and dam as it gives you a clear idea of what your puppy will look like in a few weeks as the tiniest of puppies can grow into the largest of dogs very quickly. A quick browse on qatar.europuppy.com offers a wealth of information on different breeds and temperaments and the excellent recommendations by all their customers really took out all the stress, worry and doubt of purchasing a pooch online.

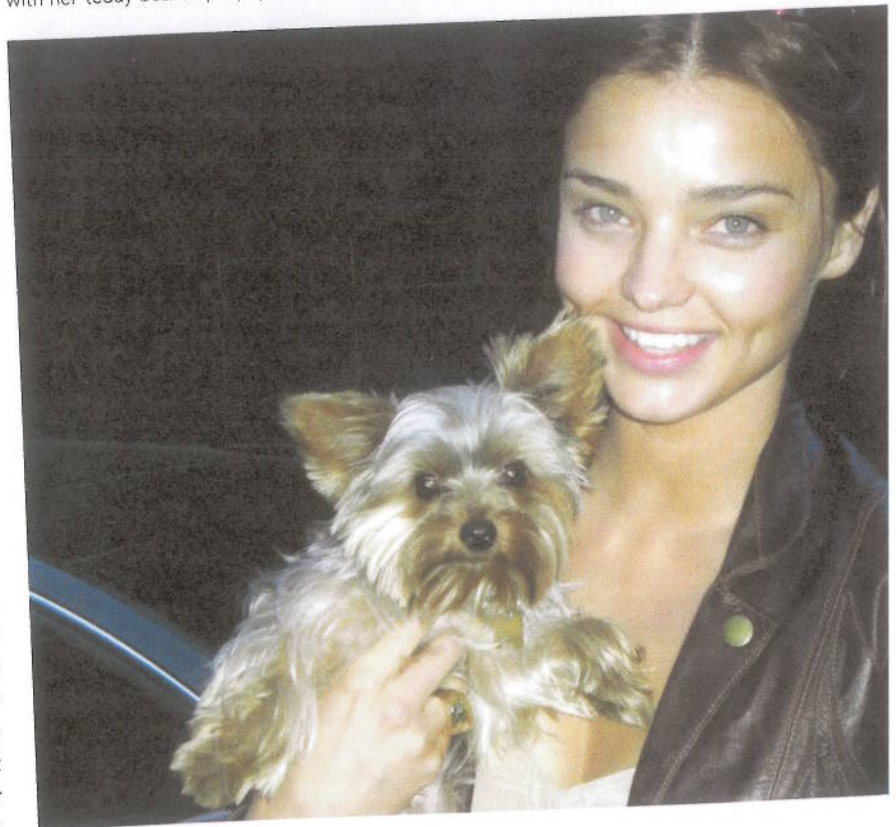
My decision to invite Tucker into my life was an impulsive one, and the biggest commitment I have made to date. I was responsible for an



Gossip Girl star, Blake Lively, enjoying a coffee break with her teddy bearesque pup



Never one for doing things low key, Paris her entourage of four pups!



Ozzy model, Miranda Kerr, and her Yorkshire terrier - both glowing

animal that relied on me for everything from his daily meals to his hygiene and wellbeing. I have always been very absent minded, impulsive and disorganised. Since Tucker entered my life I am much calmer, responsible and grounded.

Thanks to his twice daily walks more active outside the gym walks, we have made many runs some even wait eagerly by the door to greet Tucker every evening.



Mischa Barton and puppy looking windswept and mighty cute



Check out Britney Spears mini me, don't you love the matching collar and earrings!



Ashley Tisdale looking sporty with her bundle of adorable fluff

local celebrity and would be missed by all if we moved.

Another option is to contact Dogs in Doha. Birgit Marquerithe and her team work tirelessly to rescue and re-home dogs as I recently witnessed at one of their open adoption days. This is a fantastic opportunity for people to come and have a look at rescued, abandoned or simply new born puppies looking for a loving home. It is not the dog's age, breed or even look that captivates a new owner, but it is the chemistry felt between the two that determines the match so it is really worth going to an open day and seeing who you click with! For dogs currently up for adoption and upcoming event log onto www.dogsindoha.weebly.com.

Time

If you work long hours you should consider dogs that are happy to be left on their own, are easily housetrained, and do not require much exercise such as Pomeranians or Shitzus. Some dogs require extensive daily grooming and if you are unable to maintain this you should consider a low maintenance breed.

Also remember that if you are to housebreak a puppy this could take weeks, if not months so patience and mops need to be at the ready. If you are working you will need to take a few days of work initially to help your puppy settle into their new environment as they cannot be left alone for the first few days.

Cost

Purchasing a dog is not a one off expense. Vet bills can be very costly so you must budget for



Wow, Rihanna's little cutey looks incredibly like a stuffed toy!

unexpected bills that could run into thousands of riyals. The cost of regular grooming sessions start at QR150 and Stephanie at Jazi Pets offers personalised grooming services to keep your little darlings looking their best. You can contact Stephanie on 55030523. Jazi pets also offers a boarding facility with the daily charge including pet food and a bath on the day you collect your pet. There is nothing better than cuddling your clean and fluffy pup after weeks apart. If you travel a lot as many Qatar residents do, remember that if there is no one to take care of your pet while you are away, you will have to book a kennel months in advance especially during busy times such as Eid, Ramadan, or school holidays.

Health (both yours and your pet's!)

Having suffered allergies for many years to consider carefully and research extensively before choosing a dog. A Yorkshire terrier is perfect for me as they are one of only hypoallergenic dogs that do not shed and I can cuddle comfortably without fear of me erupting in hives and having my clothes covered in fur!

Anyone who walks the streets of Doha will notice that a dog being walked is not a frequent sight. There are of course plenty of dog owners here, you only have to visit a local dog park to see the large number of people with their dogs, varying from the tiniest of toys to the giant of Danes. It is very important that when you are out walking your dog that you respect local customs and traditions. As anywhere in the world, you must pick up any mess your dog makes, tie it securely into a plastic bag, and dispose of it in a bin. Avoid walking dogs in public places and keep your dog on a tight leash, as they often people on the roads onto their way. Daily prayers and a dog touching them with their clothes would mean they would be unable to attend.

Commitment

Owning a dog is a lifelong commitment. You will receive endless rewards that you reap every day. Whether you come home to kisses or a delectable pair of Louboutins depends on the time you have invested in training your puppy as well as choosing the right breed for you, so make sure you do your research and you will have a happy and happy life with your pet.