

# Your Guide to Guide Dogs

CHRISTOPHER JOUBERT

Stellenbosch is home to some of the goodest and hardest working boys and girls out there. We’ve all been baffled at how these boys and girls resist the urge to chase the hundreds of squirrels that crawl around the town.

So how do they do it? How do guide dogs manage to resist the temptation of chasing squirrels and getting pats from the hundreds of dog-lovers on campus? How should students treat these furry friends? Welcome to *Die Matie*’s guide on guide dog etiquette.

Loandrie Potgieter, who uses and owns a guide dog, provided her insights on the process these dogs go through before becoming guide dogs.

Every guide dog you’ve seen on campus has been through a thorough process to ensure that they are properly trained and competent enough to guide a visually impaired human around campus.

Firstly, a carefully bred puppy is raised by a family for one year. This family follows strict rules to ensure that the puppy is socialised and well behaved and won’t be tempted to chase squirrels.

After one year, the pup goes to formal guide dog training for six months.

Then, the dog gets matched up with someone to guide. Once someone is matched with a guide dog, they must complete four weeks of training together.

Guide dogs choose to become guides. Guide dog programs determine whether a dog is unwilling or uncommitted to the career



**YOU CAN LOOK, BUT YOU CAN'T TOUCH** Guide and therapy dogs are hard-working animals that need to be respected regardless of how cute they look. Photo: Jonathan Rees

and if this is the case, the dogs live a happy domestic life instead. If they are committed, they then go on to graduate and enjoy their careers.

Potgieter spoke of some of the ways her guide dog helps her daily. These dogs will do far more than sit or fetch. Commands range from left, right, find the curb or, after one day of training together, leading Potgieter to room 223 in the BA building after being told “223”.

According to Potgieter, one of the golden rules of guide dog

etiquette is to never feed a guide dog. “The way to their hearts is truly through their tummies and they profess loyalty to whoever feeds them,” she says. Therefore, it should only be the owner who feeds the dog.

It is important to ask before trying to pat a guide dog. The dogs are at work while their harnesses are on and must not be distracted. Furthermore, it’s rude to ignore the owner, so say hello to them first.

The last piece of etiquette in this guide, is that when a guide dog ap-

proaches you without their owner, it means their owner is in trouble and you should follow the dog to help.

Potgieter says that Stellenbosch University has a positive attitude towards guide dogs.

“[The University] acknowledges the value they [guide dogs] add to disabled students lives,” said Potgieter.

However, she says that this view is not always shared in “the rest of society”, with access to some buildings and restaurants being denied to guide dogs.

## KAMPUS QUOTES

- “Some say I must try highlighting, but I get distracted by the pretty colours.”  
– *Student who struggles with studying*
- “I’d rather be hungry than sober.”  
– *Bohemian regular*
- “I look like a raisin and a bellybutton at the same time.”  
– *Exhausted postgrad student*
- “Listen, I’m not going to sleep with you, I just want to be held.”  
– *Student experiencing a rough week*
- “I’m so mad I put makeup on for this.”  
– *Disappointed dater*
- “It feels like Aphrodite is giving me a back rub.”  
– *A very intoxicated student*
- “This semester is like Vegas Rachel and Ross - a lot is happening, but nothing makes sense.”  
– *Friends fanatic*
- “My Uber driver tried to motivate me, but went for ‘you could be the first white president post-apartheid.’”  
– *Future Helen Zille*
- “I always need to pee.”  
– *Nervous student*

# Rocking the Daisies: sh\*t or lit?

**Kesia Abrahams** asked students in the aftermath of the Rocking the Daisies weekend if the event was really worth it



**Kira Anthony,**  
BCom (Management Sciences)

“MY first Rocking the Daisies experience was definitely one to be remembered. It was worth every cent spent. I can say that the best moments of my life were created at this event. The music, food, crowd and atmosphere was on par throughout the entire event. It is definitely a must.”



**Erin Walls,**  
BA (Language and Culture)

“I was really upset when two of the biggest artists pulled out which I think contributed to a lot of the ticket price, well that’s my opinion. They didn’t make an effort to replace them and only told us that Giggs was not coming the night before, but otherwise, I thought the acts were amazing.”



**Ehren Jacobs,**  
BCom (Management Accounting)

“THE camaraderie between all, appreciating the different musical genres and cultures, made it a fantastic experience for me. I’ll definitely encourage the event for anyone open to seeing what the best of local and international music can deliver. It, being my third RTD, I still experience the same fun.”



**Genevieve Rousseau,**  
BA (Law)

“I found that last year was a lot more fun, because this year was about half the amount of people as last year so it wasn’t as much of a vibe as last year, but getting into lines and stuff was really cool. The acts were kinda irritating, because the very popular acts started very late.”



**Alexander Brand,**  
BA (Human Resource Management)

“IT was a very fun experience and there was a lot of cool stuff that happened, the silent disco especially was a really cool experience. The acts were incredible. The one disappointing thing for me was that the local acts felt more prepared and in to it than the international acts because of their reputation.”