



Press release

Media Relations

Tel +39.02.4826.3250
Fax +39.02.4826.3614
ufficiostampa@autogrill.com
www.autogrill.com

At Secchia Ovest, on the A1 near Modena, Autogrill opens the first area equipped for travelling pets to have break: green areas to stretch their paws, running water and kennels in the shade

Summer 2003. How to face the journey to your holiday destination with a dog or cat on board? Speaking on the subject, among others, are Paolo Manzi, Chairman of ENPA, and the animal expert Giorgio Celli interviewed at the opening of the first Autogrill space devoted to pets

Milan, 30th July 2003 - At the Autogrill of Secchia Ovest, on the A1 Milan-Bologna motorway Aldo Papa, Managing Director of Autogrill Italia, cuts the ribbon of the first Fido Park together with Antonello Deiola of Cucciamica, Paolo Manzi, Chairman of Enpa (National Animal Protection Body) and Giorgio Celli, the animal expert who has a wealth of knowledge about pets' behavior and needs. Around them are print, radio and TV journalists. And, as guests of honor, the dogs themselves who accompanied the organizers and the invited guests to the inauguration and were the first to try out the enjoyment zone - with space to "stretch their paws" halfway through a long journey, fresh running water, a rolling lawn or a soft resting place - and all the guaranteed comfort offered by Cucciamica, where from the first of August their "colleagues" can wait for their owners to come back from the Autogrill bar or restaurant.

Inside Fido Park owners can walk with their dogs on a lead and make use of the disposable spade and glove dispenser, or leave them in the shade in kennels made by Cucciamica, thermally insulated to ensure an ideal temperature, equipped with a disposal system to eliminate all organic waste, and sterilized with disinfectants and specific inert germ killers. The space can house up to 10 dogs at any one time, and an innovative spray hygiene system enables the disinfecting of the area before each guest enters.

The first three areas equipped for dog stopovers (besides Secchia, Montefeltro Est and La Macchia Est - the latter two will open in coming days) were chosen for the trial stage which will end on 30 September and was launched by Autogrill with the aim of assessing the level of demand and the ability of the company to offer an excellent service to dogs and their owners. Estimates suggest 6.8 million dogs kept as pets, but there is no reliable data on how many of them accompany their owners on holiday (or more generally on the road).

"It is important that during the journey animals have the chance of a pleasant stop which puts them in the best condition to continue their journey," explained Giorgio Celli, animal expert and European parliamentarian. "Dogs, in particular, need to move, to stretch their legs, after a long time in the car, and the special kennels which have been set up in the service area will let them enjoy a nap in



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hygienically sound conditions. If areas such as this became more common and hotels that accept animals sprang up too, families who love their animals could undertake journeys and holidays with greater serenity.”

The Autogrill at Secchia Ovest, the first equipped with a Fido Park, is the end result of a much broader restructuring project which required investment of 4.5 million euros. On an overall surface area of around 3,000 square meters there is space for an Acafé bar-cafe, a Spizzico outlet, a 350 seater Ciao restaurant, and a Market with a wide assortment of regional specialties.

“This project,” said Aldo Papa, Managing Director of Autogrill Italia, “is also part of a series of initiatives that Autogrill is putting together to meet the needs of travelers, above all in the hottest summer months: from the new Acafé bar with its exclusive self-named blend that produces an outstanding espresso to the new vegetarian sandwich Ischia, from the new range of brioches for breakfast to the best typical regional produce in Italy that is offered in Autogrills in collaboration with local producers”.

Note on the Autogrill Group

Autogrill is an Italian multinational which in over 25 years’ history has gained worldwide leadership in its sector: restaurant services and the sale of consumer goods and articles for journeys along motorways, in airports and in train stations. In Italy its network consists of 450 outlets: 351 on main roads and motorways, others in airports, railway stations and shopping and public centers.

The company is controlled by Edizione Holding, the Benetton family’s financial holding, which owns 57.09% of equity. Autogrill operates in 15 countries with around 4,400 sales outlets, spread over 900 locations. It employs 40,000 people, around 10,000 of them in Italy. In 2002 it reported revenues of 3,315.8 million euros.

Cucciamica

Cucciamica is a service and a patented and registered trademark of LDM in Florence (www.cucciamica.it).