



## Love the skin they're in

[www.gorgeousguineas.com](http://www.gorgeousguineas.com)

### Happy Holidays?

When holiday time comes around and you are away enjoying yourselves, do spare a thought for your piggies. How much does your Pig Sitter actually know about guineas in general and yours in particular? If there was an emergency, would they know what to do, or would they even notice that your guinea wasn't very well? Have you left contact details in case of emergency? Guineaes are very good at hiding illnesses and if your Pig Sitter doesn't know what is "normal" behaviour for each guinea, how do they know if there is something wrong?

**Daily routine:** what is your guineas' daily routine? What are they used to eating (fresh food, dried food, hay etc) and how often? What type of bedding and hay are they used to? If they live in a flat and aren't used to going out on the grass, let your Pig Sitter know. One guinea we know wasn't used to going out on the grass. Sadly the person looking after him left him out the grass for a couple of hours and he ended up with bloat from eating too much grass: ( Luckily the guinea survived because he was taken to the Vet very quickly, but it is a situation that could easily have been avoided. Impacted boars often need daily attention - is your Pig Sitter willing to do this smelly job?!

**Environment:** Always check out the facilities on offer – are your guineas going to be kept warm and dry in the winter and cool in the summer? Are the cages big enough? Minimum recommended size is 4' x 2' for two guineas. Does your Pig Sitter know what the signs of Heatstroke are and what to do about them? Sadly we've already heard of two guineas that died of heatstroke this summer during a run of hot weather.

**Vets:** do you have a guinea-competent Vet that you trust to look after your guinea in your absence? If your guinea isn't being looked after in your own home, will your Pig Sitter be able to take them to the Vet of your choice, and what instructions have you left for paying the invoice? Who has the final say if your guinea needs and urgent operation or to be helped on its way?

**Poorly piggies:** if you have a poorly piggy that needs extra care such as syringe feeding because of dental problems, would your Pig Sitter know what to do? Could they syringe feed your guinea and get enough food into them to keep them going if they couldn't eat enough for themselves? Would they be able to flush and clean out an abscess? Does your Pig Sitter know the difference between Lice, Mites and Fungal skin problems and what to do if your guinea has any of these problems when you are away? If your guinea is on medication, does your Pig Sitter know how to give it to them and understand what needs to be given and when?

**Death:** have you thought about what you would do if one of your guineas died on their holiday? Sadly, it does happen. Would your Pig Sitter know to show the body of the dead guinea to their friend(s) before removing it? Then what would you like done with the body? Options include cremation which can be arranged via your Vet, burial in your garden (if they are being looked after at home), or burial in a Pig Pot. What is a Pig Pot? It is a lovely big pot that is as individual as your guinea. Choose a nice pot, bury your guinea and plant a special flower, bush or something else that is as individual as your guinea so you have something lovely to remember them by.

**Advice offered in this article is no substitute for good Veterinary diagnosis and care. Your Pig Sitter has a legal obligation to take your guinea to a Vet if it is showing signs of illness.**