

Petra du Toit Biography

Petra is a 2003 graduate of the Pretoria Technikon with a diploma in Advanced Canine Behavior and is South Africa's first Certified Professional Dog Trainer – Knowledge Assessed, through the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers. She has attended numerous workshops and seminars about positive dog training methods, as well as studied a wide range of books and videos on this subject. She is a professional member of SABCAP (South African Board for Companion Animal Professionals), as well as of the Pet Professional Guild, and member of the ABC SA (Animal Behavior Consultants South Africa).

Petra's training philosophy is based on building a relationship between owners and their pet dogs, with the emphasis on education pet owners in understanding the needs and emotions of their dogs. Her classes are designed to assist owners on an individual basis with their potential problems and she offers personalised advice for each client. Apart from high quality puppy socialization and basic obedience classes, she offers a concept that is very new in South Africa. Once she is satisfied that a dog is well socialised and has basic obedience skills, he may join the supervised play classes. Here, the school has off leash play sessions with many different breeds and sizes, under the careful supervision of Petra and her assistant trainers. The owners are further coached in doggie language, can practice more obedience skills and generally just have fun with other like minded owners.

When not coaching and instructing at her training school, Petra enjoys therapy dog visits with her Russian Black Terrier Aleks and Golden Retriever Kimba, at hospitals, old age homes, and schools for disabled children.

Petra's latest endeavour is training a Diabetic Alert Dog for a 4-year old child, and she is part of the process of founding a non-profit organisation that specialises in training service dogs for various purposes.

Certified qualifications obtained:

- Basic Animal Behaviour (Dogs and Cats) November 2001 – Diploma Pretoria Technikon
- Advanced Animal Behaviour (Dogs) (Cum Laude) November 2003 – Diploma PTA Technikon
- Super Pup Trainer Qualification December 2011 – Shannon McKay
- Pet First Aid & CPR August 2012 – Sheilagh O'Sullivan
- Dog Training Basics (Foundation Skills) December 2012 – Myra Fourwinds
- Working with Aggressive Dog Cases (May 2013) – Trish King
- 6-Week Group Class for Dog Trainers (May 2013) – Rachel Friedman
- Understanding Canine Behavior (Sep 2013) – Barbara Handelman
- Certification ADT (Jul 2014) – International College of Canine Studies
- Certification as CPDT-KA (Sep 2015) – Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainer

Seminars attended:

- 1-day TTouch seminar with Jodi Frediani (Windhoek 2000)
- 5-day training seminar with Fanie Vermeulen (Windhoek 2001)
- 1-day training with K9 police unit instructors from Germany (Windhoek 2002)
- 2-day behaviour seminar with Ray Coppinger (Johannesburg 2008)
- 3-day training seminar with Dr Ian Dunbar (Johannesburg 2008)
- 1-day seminar with Martin Rütter (Germany 2009)