

Name _____ Date _____

Hotel Chain Ends Fish-Rental Program With PETA's Help

After PETA contacted boutique hotelier Kimpton Hotel & Restaurant Group, LLC, the chain agreed to end its fish-rental program, in which live fish were delivered to guests' rooms upon request. PETA gave the company information about fish sensitivity and requirements and explained that the goldfish and guppies used for rentals suffered when confined to small bowls and shuttled from one stressful environment to another.



Kimpton Hotels and PETA worked together to place the more than 200 fish in permanent adoptive homes. This was presumably a welcome change for the fish, who are far more intelligent than many people give them credit for. For example, fish converse with one another through a range of low-frequency sounds to communicate courtship, alarm, or submission. They can recognize themselves and other fish, eavesdrop on conversations between other fish, and even tend a garden, just like humans. They're social animals who **languish** in small tanks. A behavioral ecologist at the University of Bern in Switzerland, said, "Fish have some of the most complex social systems known."

And fish can of course feel pain. They have a complex nervous system (which interprets pain signals) and react to painful stimuli the way all animals do—their breathing rate increases, their muscles contract, and they try to escape. Dr. Donald Broom, former scientific adviser to the British government, states that anatomically, physiologically, and biologically, the nervous system in fish is virtually the same as in mammals.

While ordinarily, PETA would never **advocate** putting any fish in a tank, these fish—who would have continued to suffer as they were carted from hotel room to hotel room—are now swimming, jumping, and diving their way around their new spacious tanks, which are full of plants, clean water, and loads of **stimulation** to keep them content.

“As a pet-friendly hospitality company, we decided to discontinue the Guppy Love program,” said a Kimpton spokesperson. “We look forward to continuing to welcome pets of all shapes and sizes to our hotels.”

PETA Executive Vice President Tracy Reiman added, “Scientists have proved that fish become depressed from a lack of space, stimulation, and adequate **enrichment**, just as humans do. PETA applauds Kimpton for making the kind decision to discontinue this program.”

PETA asks anyone who is considering acquiring fish to adopt instead of supporting the pet trade and to do research beforehand into providing fish with the extensive care they need and deserve.

You can help put a stop to the commercial “pet” trade by never supporting companies that put profit before the well-being of animals. Fish are at their happiest and healthiest when free to swim in their natural habitats. Reputable local rescue groups and shelters often have fish who need new homes. If you already have aquatic animals, make sure they have a sizable amount of water, appropriate climate control and filtration, regular aquarium cleaning, and ample psychological enrichment. You can also make their lives more pleasant by providing them with an environment that’s as much like their natural habitat as possible. To learn more about fish and how to care for them, visit **PETA.org/CaringForFish**, and share this information with others who have fish.

Vocabulary: Hotel Chain Ends Fish-Rental Program With PETA's Help

Using contextual evidence from the passage, define the **bolded** terms in your own words.

languish

advocate

stimulation

enrichment

Comprehension Questions: Hotel Chain Ends Fish-Rental Program With PETA's Help

1. How did the fish suffer in the hotel's fish-rental program?

2. What similarities do fish share with humans?

3. How do all animals, including fish, respond to painful stimuli?

4. Do you think it's ethical to buy fish and other living beings from stores? Explain your answer. What can people interested in caring for fish do instead?

Answer Sheet: Hotel Chain Ends Fish-Rental Program With PETA's Help

1. How did the fish suffer in the hotel's fish-rental program?

Answer: They were confined to small bowls and transferred to and from various locations in the hotel, which caused them stress. (Literal)

2. What similarities do fish share with humans?

Answer: Like humans, fish live complex social lives. They communicate with one another, listen in on each other's conversations, and even garden. They can also feel pain. (Literal)

3. How do all animals, including fish, respond to painful stimuli?

Answer: When fish and all other animals encounter painful stimuli, their breathing rate increases, their muscles contract, and they try to escape. (Literal)

4. Do you think it's ethical to buy fish and other living beings from stores? Explain your answer. What can people interested in caring for fish do instead?

Possible answer: Fish are at their happiest and healthiest when they have the freedom to swim in their natural habitats. Even under ideal circumstances, aquariums cannot mimic life in the wild. Stores prioritize sales over the safety and well-being of animals, so their needs are rarely met. Instead of buying fish from stores, people can adopt them from a reputable animal shelter and learn how to care for them properly. (Evaluative)