



Wool Beach, the cool place for a sea dog

By BRUCE JOHNSTON IN ROME

MILLIONS of Italians braved traffic jams yesterday on their traditional exodus to the seaside. But not all were headed for traditional beaches.

A new trend is for people to take their dogs to specialised resorts known as *bau* (wool) beaches. There,

instead of being kept cooped up in the car, dogs are able to swim and frolic in the water and are given their own umbrellas, showers and meals in restaurants.

Launched four years ago, the fad has taken off and resorts like the one above at Maccarese, north of Rome, are opening around the country. At

the first wool beach, at Fregene, a fashionable resort near Rome, up to 80 dogs gather on an average sunny day. There is even a resident pet psychiatrist to calm dogs unable to relax and fit in. Guide books to *bau* beaches are being published and resorts specialising in *miao* beaches for cats promise to be the next rage.