



# ASSOCIATION OF SUGAR GLIDER VETERINARIANS™

## **The Real Cost of Owning a Sugar Glider**

Hi, my name is Dr. David Brust, and I've been a practicing exotic veterinarian for the last 25 years. I'm the author of "Sugar Gliders: A Complete Veterinary Care Guide" – and I'm also the president of the Association of Sugar Glider Veterinarians.

The purpose of this video series is to cut through all the internet misinformation out there, and teach owners like you the best - veterinary-approved - ways to raise and care for sugar gliders.

Now, just to make sure we're all on the same page here, sugar gliders are also commonly known as "sugar bears" and "honey gliders" – and with that in mind, the goal of this video is to give you the real facts how much it should cost to buy – and own – these little guys as pets.

In the last few years, sugar gliders have become extremely popular companion pets, and since they don't breed very quickly, they are getting harder and harder to find. Right now, you should expect to pay somewhere between \$200-\$400 for a baby that is guaranteed to be between 8-12 weeks old – and is certified by a vet to be healthy.

Now, just like with any other pet, if you look hard enough you might be able to find what I call "discount" gliders - that sometimes go for as little as \$100-\$150 – but my professional advice is to stay away from animals like this. We talk about this a lot more on another video about things to look for when purchasing a sugar glider – but for now, just make sure not to fall for any deal that sounds too good to be true. That especially means don't buy an animal off the internet - or from a so-called glider "rescue". Instead, it's always best to meet the people you are buying from in person – and make sure they have a valid federal USDA license. Again, you can see more about this on another video in this series, so be sure to check it out if you are in the middle of shopping for a glider.  
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Now, assuming that buying a sugar glider – or two or three - is within your budget, the good news is that they are honestly one of the most affordable "companion" pets a person can ever own.

Now, being a Vet who works with these little guys every day, I'm well aware that a lot of internet websites out there like to claim that feeding and taking care of sugar gliders is very complicated and expensive – but it's just not true. I personally have four of these little guys as my own personal pets – and I can tell you for a fact that once you buy the animal itself, there really aren't a lot of other hidden expenses. All in all, assuming there

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aren't any accidents or health emergencies that would make you come to an office like mine – it typically only costs around \$10 per month – per animal - to care for a sugar glider – and that makes them one of the cheapest pets out there.

The biggest argument as to why some people like to say they are so expensive is because of the complicated, homemade diets they insist on using. Now, we cover this topic extensively in another video about proper nutrition, but the bottom line is that there is simply no need whatsoever to feed these little guys “exotic” things like live insects and other expensive concoctions that take hours to prepare. Just like there are great pellet foods for dogs and cats - there are a handful of excellent pellet foods out there that are made just for sugar gliders. Not only are these diets more balanced and consistently more nutritional than the homemade internet diets – but they are also a heck of a lot cheaper.

Now like I said, I've been a practicing exotic Vet for over 25 years now, and some people will just never be convinced that you can feed a sugar glider and keep it healthy for only about \$10/month. That's fine, and just like feeding any other pet – you are certainly free to spend however much you want on them every month. All I'm telling you is that the inexpensive – nutritious – diet we've laid out for you in another video on proper nutrition is more than fine.

Having said all that, about the only other thing you need to plan for with sugar gliders – like any other pet – is the occasional Vet bill. Now, fortunately these little guys are a lot less expensive in this area than a lot of other pets - especially cats & dogs. One reason for this is because they don't require any shots or “ongoing” vet care to treat heartworms or prevent other diseases. In fact, assuming your gliders don't accidentally get sick or hurt, about the only thing you should do is just take them in to your Vet once or twice a year for a quick annual “check up”.

Fortunately, sugar gliders really aren't prone to many of the same kinds of illnesses that can affect a lot of other pets – and since they don't need to be bathed or groomed - overall they are actually one of the “lowest-maintenance” companion-type pets that a person can own. Again, not only do I work with these animals professionally every day, but I also have four of them as my own personal pets – so when it comes to expenses - that's pretty much the bottom line. ☺

Again, if you are considering getting sugar gliders, the best advice I can give you is to research all the videos in this series, and then make the decision that you feel is best for your family. ☺

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