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# Cuisine *de* Critters



By Phil Tripp



The longest ears recorded on a rabbit\* was in Kansas in 2003 at the American Rabbit Breeders Association National Show. An English Lop called Nipper's Geronimo, a resident of California had his ears measured and in a complete span they measured a whopping 79cms.

\*Source: The Guinness Books of World Records

**E**ach issue we have presented nutritional information and recipes for dogs, cats, birds and even horses or rabbits. We get sent a lot of recipes for treats, discover them in the books we read and share them with readers.

Now that we have a new puppy in the house, we have gone back to boiling up large quantities of dog soup, baking puppy treats and rediscovering our mojo in our menus. Since we get a lot of requests for our hit foods, rather than explore a nutritional aspect of feeding pets in this column, we'll share our best Cuisine de Critter Culinary Chart Toppers.

## Dog Soup

Back when we started this magazine, this was the first recipe. It's an additive to kibbles to moisten them as well as giving a great range of nutrients, vitamins, minerals, greens and roughage. It can take many forms but it is, in essence, a combination of fresh vegetables, liquids, beans and grains and other ingredients, taking care not to use bones, fish, dairy products, rancid oils or other highly spoilable products. You can add fruit in limited amounts but avoid onions, acidic fruit in any quantity or citrus peels. Apples are fine as are bananas and pears. Generally, the more vegie the soup, the better but added items your dog likes can't help but enhance the mix. Notice we use no salt or spices.

### Ingredients

- 4-8 liters water (but feel free to add V8, a small amount of fruit juice or non-meat, non milk liquids)
- A colander full of rinsed deep green leafy vegetables such as bok choy, carrot tops, spinach, brussel sprouts, broccoli, beans, peas, etc but avoid beet greens as they are high in oxalic acid and be light on any cabbage which seems to produce flatulence.
- Root vegetables—perhaps a few carrots, sweet potatoes or kumera cut in cubes
- Yellow-orange vegetables—a couple of cups of pumpkin or squash
- A cup of a grain—brown rice, barley, oatmeal, cous cous...
- A cup of a legume—dried beans or lentils or even better, fresh sprouted legumes
- Optional—1/4 cup olive oil, flaxseed or other good nut/vegetable oil (avoid macadamia oil)
- Optional—one head of garlic but no onions or onion greens
- Optional—a half cup of bran
- Optional—a quarter cup of wheat grass juice or spirulina juice.

Preparation is simple. Fill large soup pot 2/3rds full with water and bring to boil. First add any grains or beans and return to boil. Let simmer covered 20 minutes or so, then add root vegetables (and garlic if used) to simmer covered for another 20 minutes. Add water to keep level above solids and then add green vegetables and any other ingredients and simmer for a maximum of 20 minutes.

Let cool and refrigerate, to use half over one week perhaps every other day, freezing the rest in individual containers (or ziplock bags) for later use, thawing in a microwave and serving warm but not hot.

## Just for the Birds—Sally Blanchard's Famous 'Glop' Recipe

When I first started researching what was best for the avian flock I maintained, I came across the wonderful Sally Blanchard of the fabulous Companion Parrot Quarterly magazine out of the US who also maintains an informative website with heaps of information on diet, behaviour and socialization. This is her famous recipe from the site at <http://www.companionparrot.com/articles.htm>

The following recipe feeds my 4 parrots of various sizes and appetites for their morning meal. 'Glop' also makes a great handweaning food to finger feed your bappy.

- 1 small jar of baby food carrots, sweet potatoes, or winter squash (I use Earth's Best because it is organic - they also have high vitamin A vegetable varieties with chicken and turkey. I occasionally use apricot, peach, or papaya baby food. But avoid baby foods with high sugar content) You can also use baked yams, winter squash or cooked, mashed carrots.
- 3 slices of coarse whole-grain crumbled toast. (I vary the bread but use the healthiest bread I can find without sugar.)
- 2-4 Tablespoons of nonfat plain yogurt.
- Optional: 1/8 cup high quality handfeeding formula or a sprinkle of a spirulina or wheat grass type supplement.



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Put in a large bowl and mash together until toast is saturated with baby food and yogurt and everything is evenly mixed. Consistency can be changed according to your parrot's preference. Mine like the toast chunky and the mixture thick - about the consistency of turkey dressing. 'Glop' is ready to feed - it doesn't have to be cooked.

It can also be frozen. I place it in plastic ziplock bags, flatten them and score them with the dull side of a knife or spoon to make easily broken off cubes. This makes it easy to snap off a piece, place it in a bowl to be thawed and fed as part of a meal.

We laughed when we got the book by Micki Voisard, "Becoming The Chef Your Dog Thinks You Are" but it had terrific recipes including this one.

## Scent Hound Meatloaf

- 1 - 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 10oz. box of frozen chopped spinach or ½ cup freshly chopped spinach (or you can use grated zucchini or yellow squash)
- 1 garlic clove (optional) or 1 cup grated fresh carrots
- 2 cups fresh bread crumbs or 1 cup rolled oats
- 2 pounds ground beef ( or chicken, turkey or chopped beef)
- 1 egg

Blend all ingredients. Shape into a rounded oval and place in a ovenproof dish. Bake 30 minutes at 180 degrees. Cool. Serve with rice or just as is. Adding cottage cheese and chopped parsley is an option. Smile when serving because you know your dog will love it and be healthier for it!

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The cat equivalent book would have to be 'Real Food For Cats: 50 Vet Approved Recipes to Please The Feline Gastronomer' by Patti Delmonte available easily on Amazon.com for US\$9.70 when I checked (normally US\$12.95) plus shipping.

Aside from bizarre names for some foods and treats—Gizzard Goulash, Kitty Fondue, Tabby Tuna Popsicles –it also has special prescription recipes for allergies, reducing, kidney intolerance and restricted minerals as well as tandem recipes that both cat and people can eat together. This is one of the easy treats that features in the book.

## Meow-Va-Lous Mackerel Munchies

- ½ cup canned mackerel
- 1 egg beaten
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- 1 teaspoon brewers yeast

Preheat oven to 180 degrees C.

Mix all ingredients in a medium sized bowl using a fork.

Form mix into balls about the size of marbles and drop on greased cookie sheet about an inch apart.

Bake for 7-9 minutes or until balls are golden and crispy.

Cool before serving. Store extra treats in an airtight container in the fridge or freeze.

## Horse Muffins

Horses love sweets but have a propensity for cavities so it's best not to use sugar. Here's an equine snack that's healthy and tasty with molasses—the blacker the better.

- 1 ½ cups bran
- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¾ cup skimmed milk
- ½ cup molasses
- 2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 1 egg, beaten

Stir together bran, flour, soda, and baking powder. Mix together milk, molasses, oil and egg. Mix wet ingredients into dry ingredients. Bake in greased or paper lined muffin tins at 200 degrees for 15 minutes.

Add shredded carrots, apples, raisins or spices.

## Bunny Bites (can be frozen)

While rabbits require a diet that is high in fibre and low in protein—including pellets, fresh hay and fresh vegetables, treats can be given very sparingly. Avoid high carbohydrates and never feed human snack foods. No salt, no sugar.





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- ½ cup plain, unsugared, unflavoured yoghurt
- ¼ cup crushed or minced dried fruits (banana chips, apricots, raisins, pears, apples, pineapples or berries ) but not ones that are preserved with sulfur dioxide
- 1/8 cup (raw, unsalted) nut pieces crushed
- 2 Tablespoons shredded carrot
- 2 Tablespoons minced parsley
- 2 Tablespoons minced broccoli or broccolini
- 2 Tablespoons bran
- 1 Teaspoon Spirulina (optional)

Combine ingredients in bowl, let sit for one hour for solid ingredients to absorb moisture from yoghurt. Form into small (string bean sized) rolls and bake in ungreased non-stick pan at 150 degrees for ten minutes. Let cool and put in zip lock bags to freeze.

Well, that wraps up our column for this issue. In our May edition, we'll be creating canine and cat comfort food for winter months.



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