



Photos by Animax

Dog Paw-dy!

By Lisa Treen with photography by Animax

Dog Paw-dy

Summer is the time of year when traditionally, we celebrate all sorts of festivities. The daylight hours are longer, we've more leisure time and it's an ideal time to think about getting some of your doggy mates together and throwing a party. Whether you have a specific event to celebrate or just want to have some fun, the possibilities for a dog themed party are seemingly endless. From Happy Bark-days, Puppy Showers, Bark-Mitzvahs to Howl-oween, there's a celebration for everyone. With nothing specific to throw a party for but a whole lot to celebrate, we decided to ring in summer with an Urban Animal party. Many of the dog models who've been featured on the cover or inside these pages were invited to join us in a Hawaiian themed Lu-Howl.

Set a date

It's important with peoples' busy schedules that you plan well ahead. About four weeks notice should ensure that most of your guests have space in their calendars.

The venue

A dog party requires a larger venue than most backyards. Neutral territory should also be considered when picking a venue. A venue like a doggie day care centre has a number of benefits. Most have agility equipment, time-out areas, experienced staff and is an all weather venue. Another idea is your local dog-park—but as a public area, it's not ideal—you're likely to get doggy interlopers who will gatecrash for cake.

Who to invite

Hosting a dog party shouldn't be a matter of inviting all your doggy mates over for a big party. Careful consideration must be given to the number of invitees, their temperament and the size of the venue. Take a less is more approach as too many dogs in an uncontrolled environment can easily become over excited and this can lead to canine fisticuffs and other displays of bad manners.

Dogs that are already familiar with each other from a dog park, are more likely to be compatible and play nicely. Avoid the guest who's likely to get unruly—there's always one who is likely to end up wearing the lampshade like it was an Elizabethan collar!

The invitation

Your local newsagent will have an array of ready to send invitations but why not make your own. Any good host knows that the invitation sets the tone for social occasion. Making your own invitations can be fun and they add a personalised touch. Scrapbook supply companies—both online and bricks and mortar stores—are popping up just like pimples before a party. Most carry a range of dog themed decorations that are backed with adhesives, ready to stick onto your chosen card.

Your invitation should include the date, time, location, RSVP information and always state that "canine companions must be accompanied by their owners". By making this clear, you'll not have the unfortunate assumption by some dog owners, that they can just leave their dog for a play date.



Paw-dy Cuisine

Don't you just hate those social events where there seems to be more drink than hors d'oeuvres? In the instance of a dog party, this is actually a good thing. Too much party food, no matter how nutritious, can cause tummy upsets. Leave the fancy catering for your human guests. Your canine guests will be happy with a few training treats and plenty of fresh water. Plan to have several water dishes in various locations around the venue as some dogs aren't comfortable sharing their beverages. A little low salt chicken stock can be added to the water for a tasty treat.



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Let them eat cake

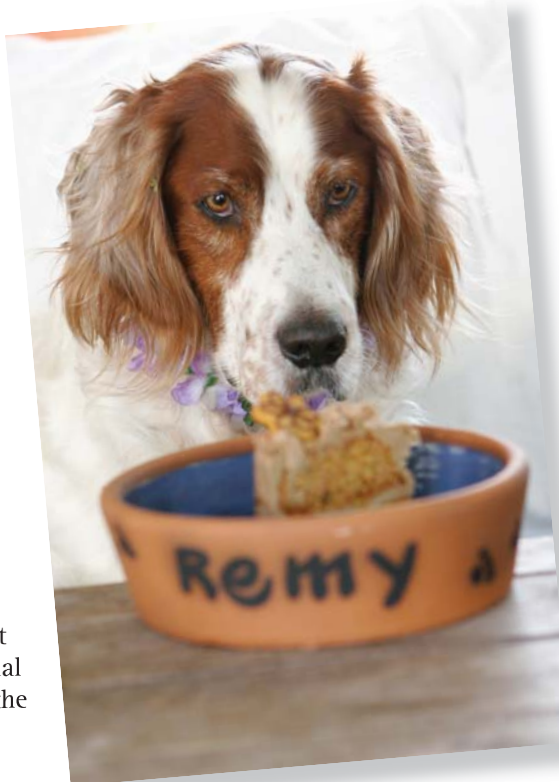
A party's not a party unless there is cake—dog cake. It's not hard to find good dog cake recipes and we've included one in this article. But when you're pressed for time, ordering a professionally made, personalised cake is a great option. Check with the supplier on the ingredients and opt for one that makes quality cakes with human grade or organic ingredients. As they say, the proof is in the pudding and with top quality dog cakes, you'll be proud to serve a slice to your human guests.

Dishing up something special

Make it special for guests by giving a personalised gift that they'll take away on the day. From a bag of delicious bone shaped cookies, embroidered collars to dinnerware—a gift that has the name of the guest on it will be a special treat to take away. Goodie bags can be as simple or as fancy as your budget or imagination permits.

Make the day memorable

Plan a few activities that will engage your guests and provide some entertainment. Hire a dog trainer to come and teach old and young dogs alike a new trick. It could be something as simple as shaking hands to the more complex tricks like taking a bow or learning how to command crawl. Learning a new trick will be challenging for dogs and illuminating for their owners.



Capture the day

In this digital age, anyone with a digital camera seems to be a photographer, yet they wonder why they can't truly capture a great image of their pet to reflect their personality. Make the memories last a little longer and hire a professional pet photographer to take shots on the day and/or individual photos.

You can create a backdrop for a themed party or keep it simple with just a few props. In the case of the photos that are displayed here, we kept it simple by having some decorative gold butterflies suspended above the dogs. The photos all look like they were taken in a studio environment, yet they were all done outside with a simple white background.

It's important to remember that you're paying for a photographer's time as well as talent so discuss if you want them there to capture the whole occasion or if you want them to be there for a minimum amount of time to take the guests' photos. If it's just for a minimum amount of time—generally two hours—then you need to establish the best time for them to turn up. It's safe to say that there will be a flurry of activity for the first hour of the party. Pardon the pun, but to get the maximum exposure, time it so your photographer arrives well after your guests have settled in.

Hot dogs for hot days

All that partying can make your human guests hungry and you can get as fancy as you want to. However, we suggest a simple and fuss free idea would be to serve up gourmet Hot dogs. From the most basic American style hot dogs found in the refrigerated section of your supermarkets to the more gourmet, smoky flavoured Frankfurters available in most up-market delis. Remember to include some vegetarian ones for your non-carnivorous guests. With a mix of condiments and fresh French-style rolls, hot dogs can be a crowd pleaser and your guests can build their own with some fresh salads on the side.

Suggested condiments:

- finely sliced raw red onion
- sauerkraut
- grated cheese
- selection of mustards—Dijon, classic American yellow etc
- tomato sauce/ketchup

Party time-line

Four weeks: Set a date and confirm the venue. Make a list of potential invitees. Once your list is complete, buy or make your invitations and send them out.

Three weeks: Order the party favours, doggy bags and doggy bag fillers. Anything that is to be personalised should be ordered now. Book the trainer and photographer.

Two to three weeks: Order the cake and determine whether you pick it up the day before the party or on the day.

One week: Confirm with the photographer the amount of guests attending and fully discuss the project with them. Finalise the choices for human food and beverages.

Day before party: Pick up ingredients for the beverages and make the cake and/or the pupcakes. Assemble the doggy goodie bags.

Morning of party: Pick-up all human food and make necessary preparations.

The recipes to a successful Paw-dy

Paw-dy cake

Ingredients:

- 1 cup white or whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 cup peanut butter
- 1/4 cup cooking oil
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1/3 cup honey (optional)
- 1 egg

Method:

Mix the dry ingredients. Add the remaining ingredients and mix quickly. Bake in a greased ring baking tin at 180 degrees for 40 minutes. You may ice this cake with low fat cottage cheese, flavoured with peanut butter and decorate with some carob shavings. Store in the refrigerator.



Cake by Delicious Delights 4 Decadent Dogs

PupCakes

Ingredients:

- 2 3/4 cups water
- 1/4 cup apple baby food – preferably organic
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla
- 4 cups whole wheat flour (substitute rice flour if your dog suffers from allergies)
- 1 cup dried apple chips (you can find these in larger supermarkets or health food stores)
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1 egg, beaten slightly
- 4 tablespoons honey

Method:

Preheat oven to 180 degrees. Spray muffin tin with oil spray—we used the larger sized muffin tins that only have 6 per tray. Mix all wet ingredients thoroughly. Combine dry ingredients in separate bowl. Add wet to dry gradually, scraping well to make sure no dry mixture is left. Pour into muffin tins. Bake for 1 1/4 hours or until a toothpick inserted into center comes out dry. Store in a sealed container. Makes around 12-14 pupcakes.



Pup cakes

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Non alcoholic beverage suggestions

Virgin Poochie

- 1 cup Orange juice
- 1 cup Cranberry juice
- 1 cup Peach nectar
- 1 tbs Grenadine
- Pineapple cut into wedges

Mixing instructions:

Mix the orange and cranberry juice. Mix in the nectar. Pour into glasses with ice cubes. Lastly add the Grenadine so it will sink. Garnish with a pineapple wedge.

Lush Puppy

- 4 cups Pineapple juice
- 4 cups Guava juice
- 1 cup Grenadine
- Ice

Mixing instructions:

Pour all ingredients into a large pitcher, mix and serve into chilled glasses.

Suggestions for Paw-dy Beverages (alcoholic for adult human guests)

Planters Pooch

- 1 cup Jamaican Rum
- 3rd cup Lime juice
- 3rd cup Orange juice
- 3rd cup Pineapple juice
- Ice cubes

Mixing instructions:

Stir or shake all ingredients and serve into chilled glasses

Dogarita

- 1 cup Tequila
- 1/2 cup Lime juice
- 1/2 cup Triple Sec
- Salt
- Ice cubes

Dogarita mixing instructions:

Rim glasses with salt. On the rocks method: Shake other ingredients in a shaker then strain into salt-rimmed glasses. Blended: Pour all ingredients into a blender and blend until it becomes an icy slush. Serve into glasses.

Doguiiri

- 1 cup Light Rum
- 1/4 cup Lime juice
- 1 tsp Sugar

Mixing instructions:

Shake all ingredients over crushed ice then strain into ice filled glass.

Okole Maluna! Hawaiian for Bottoms Up

How to make a grand entrance into a party

You've been showered, spritzed, sprayed, had a paw-dicure and donned a favourite party collar. So now it's time to make your grand entrance into the party without sending the social fur flying. Urban Animal's Dog Behaviouralist-at-large, Trudi Thorpe, has a number of suggestions to make your arrival a welcome one, without incident.

Keep in mind that dogs are territorial animals. You are just about to cop an invasion of canine party-goers, and whilst your dog may be great with other dogs on common ground in the park, this is his turf!

Make sure that all your human guests have been told prior to the party, that their dogs must be on lead as they enter the party. This will help ensure an incident free entrance. It will also stop dogs crashing through the house to get to the festivities.

Allow all dogs to say hello as they arrive in a controlled fashion. Once all dogs have arrived, they can then be let off the lead one by one until they are all off.

All dogs should be supervised at all times by all owners. Watch for boisterous pack play and the risk of one too many pooches getting over excited and out of control as this can quickly degenerate into an all-out and not so friendly canine rumble.

Be very careful where food is involved—if you are going to distribute goodies in bowls for the dogs to eat, there are three main rules to follow:

1. make sure that all of the food is prepared in all of the bowls before you begin to distribute them. This'll ensure that all dogs start eating at the same time and avoid them all racing over to the same bowl.
2. all dogs to be snapped on lead before the food is brought out and owners move their dogs out to give space and distance between each other. Once the goodies are dished out...
3. hand the bowl for each dog to their respective owners. All owners put the bowls on the ground at the same time and supervise their dog eating. All dogs should remain on lead until the last bowl is empty and all bowls removed before dogs come off lead.

And a simple reminder for human pet-iqutt—don't forget party poo-pickup. Have those poo bags ready in your handbag!

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