

Dog Parties

Learn what to serve to dogs at dog parties.

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Chow reigns supreme among tail-wagging guests at a dog party. The right party food causes them to drool with lip-smacking delight.

So, how can you ensure that the food you serve is truly fit for a dog? How do you know the food is safe and tasty and will have your party guests begging for seconds? You want to celebrate your dog's special day with great party food, says Patricia Griecci, owner of Smiling Dog, an Emeryville, Calif., dog party catering company. We've found that dogs love cakes made with flour, carob, vanilla, honey and sometimes real apples.

Griecci recommends hosts and hostesses ask dog caterers these important nutritional questions in advance of hiring one for your party:

What are all the ingredients in a dog birthday cake? (Make sure the cake does not contain chocolate, which is potentially lethal to some dogs. A sweet and safer substitute for dogs is carob).

Do any of the recipes contain onions? If so, please omit them. (The sulfur in onions can cause severe anemic reactions in some dogs).

Which party foods will I need to keep refrigerated until serving?

Which foods will I need to warm up before serving?

Do you use all natural foods or do some dishes contain potentially harmful food additives or preservatives?

Whenever possible, can you use organic ingredients (foods certified to be free of any harmful pesticides)?

What is the number of servings for each prepared dish?

What dog biscuits can you recommend to put in take-home treat bags as the guests depart?

Bonus tip: Some dogs, just like people, are allergic to certain foods. Before you book the party menu with your dog caterer, check with the owners of the invited canine guests and ask if any of the dogs have certain food allergies or are on any food-restricted diets as prescribed by their veterinarians. Avoid serving those foods at your party. Bone appetite!