

TRICK OR TREAT: GOURMET AUSTRALIAN DOG FOOD

Forget about throwing an old bone to the dog, now there are a myriad of boutique companies and multinationals dedicated to providing urban and rural customers with tasty treats for their canine companions. Discerning owners can choose products to suit their dog, their lifestyle, or both! There are many options available – gourmet, holistic, handmade, ethically sourced, organic, low-fat, sugar free, biodynamic, vegan – if you want it, your dog can have it.

IS THERE A TRICK TO THE TREAT?

In short, no. With few exceptions, the ingredients of most products are clearly labelled and easy to find. Some offer added Omega oils for stiff joints; or gluten free for allergy sufferers. Others include Niacin, Iron, and Zinc for healthy coats and eyes. As with any product, always check labels before you buy.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT TREAT

The dog food industry still caters to die-hard fans of dried liver, pork ears and chicken necks, but now you can add the following dried products to your dog's diet: shark's cartilage, buffalo, chicken, duck, lamb, kangaroo and turkey. And don't expect simple old strips of meat. Dried meat choices include balls, discs, crinkles, twists, rolls, puffs, cubes and whippets.

If cookies are your bent, you're in luck. They come in all shapes and sizes, but the good old Scottie and Bone seem to be favourites. Dogs probably don't care about the shape of their biscuits, but no doubt owners have shown a preference. Considering the increasing range of dog biscuits made with products graded for human consumption, perhaps making them look distinctly doggie is a wise move!

The range of cookies available is astounding. There are hard cookies to help clean Fido's teeth, cookies with added fish cartilage and vitamins to help prevent arthritis, and cookies with mouth-watering ingredient mixes such as carob and yoghurt; peanut butter and carob; cinnamon and molasses, and oatmeal and honey.

LOOKING FOR SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

If your furry friend is particularly fussy, try yoghurt buds, vegetarian chocolates, donuts, whole fish, Deer Antlers, organic Jerky, mussels, fish roe, or dried tuna cakes. For the calorie-conscious canine, there are a range of meaty flavoured lick sticks, packaged in handy roller-ball bottles. Owners who want to celebrate their pooch's special day can order personalised birthday cakes, complete with sugar-free decorations. The high quality ingredients and variety of flavours ensures every dog can have its treat and eat it too!