FREE PREVIEW

VD

FOUR-PAW TREATS

120 homemade recipes to pamper your dog

Biscuits, cakes, snacks, softies and a journey into the world of mycotherapy



BY

Valentina Deponti

Dedicated to my tail-wagging angels

Eris, Thor, Hell and Benito

Valentina Deponti

Benessere Olistico · Naturopatia · Recupero Funzionale

FOUR-PAW TREATS

120 homemade recipes to pamper your dog

BY

Valentina Deponti

Naturopathy and veterinary naturopathy consultant

Training in mycotherapy

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DEDICATION

To everyone who considers their dog so much more than a pet.

To those who know the joy of a wagging tail, the loyalty of a gaze and that unconditional love that asks for nothing, except to be returned.

And to all those owners who look for little ways, every day, to take care of their life companions.

This book was born for them. And for all those paws that deserve to be pampered with awareness.

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Contents

Introduction 5

An important note for the reader 6

PART I · KNOW BEFORE YOU COOK

1. Why make homemade snacks for your dog 7

2. Ingredients: which ones to choose 7

3. Forbidden and potentially dangerous ingredients 8

4. Flours and grain-free alternatives 8

5. Fruit and vegetables in snack making 9

6. Animal proteins and sources of fat 9

7. Equipment and materials 9

8. How to read the recipes and work out portions 11

9. Storage and food safety 12

PART II · THE WORLD OF BISCUITS

Chapter 1 – Fruit and vegetable biscuits (20 recipes) 13

THE COMPLETE EDITION

The journey continues – what you'll find in the complete book 23

CLOSING

Final safety guide 24

Conclusion 26

The author 27

Resources and contacts 28

Editorial and legal notice 29

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Introduction

> **This is the free preview.** It contains the complete introductory guide (Part I) and the first 20 of the book's 120 recipes. All the other chapters — including mycotherapy and the softies for giving medication — are available in the complete edition at **www.valentinadeponti.it**.

Making something with your own hands for our dog is a gesture of love.

A homemade biscuit, a little cake to celebrate a birthday, a snack to offer during a walk: these are little moments that can turn into special occasions to share.

But making something good also means learning to choose.

Not every ingredient suited to human nutrition is right for our four-legged friends. Not every homemade preparation is necessarily balanced, and not every recipe can be offered indiscriminately to any dog.

It is precisely from this awareness that *Four-Paw Treats* was born.

In this book I wanted to gather 120 ideas for making biscuits, little cakes, crunchy snacks and soft bites, trying to combine simplicity, creativity and attention to the dietary needs of our life companions.

I also wanted to dedicate a special space to mycotherapy, a world I am exploring in depth through my training and the study of medicinal mushrooms, including their possible use in the veterinary field.

You will also find a section dedicated to softies, little tender bites designed to make it easier — when permitted — to give medicines that some dogs struggle to take.

This recipe book does not aim to replace the veterinarian, clinical nutrition or therapeutic indications. It aims to be a practical, informative tool for anyone who wishes to prepare homemade snacks with greater knowledge and responsibility.

Because even a little treat can be a gesture of care.

Happy cooking, and many sweet cuddles to all your paws!

Valentina

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An important note for the reader

> **READ BEFORE YOU START**
>
> The preparations in this book are **complementary snacks**, not complete and balanced foods.
>
> The amount to offer must be matched to the individual dog's caloric needs. In general, snacks should not exceed **10% of daily calories**.
>
> In the presence of illnesses, allergies, intolerances, drug therapies, pregnancy, growth or particular physiological conditions, it is necessary to consult the veterinarian.
>
> **Safety comes before taste.**

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PART I · KNOW BEFORE YOU COOK

Know before you cook

Ingredients, tools and safety rules for cooking with awareness

Before the 120 recipes, a few pages of practical theory: how to choose ingredients, which ones to always avoid, which tools to have in the kitchen and how to safely store what we make. They are few rules, but they make the difference between a cute snack and a well-made snack.

1. Why make homemade snacks for your dog

Making snacks at home for your dog offers concrete advantages: you know every ingredient exactly, you can avoid salt, sugar, preservatives and unnecessary flavourings, you can adapt texture and size to your animal's mouth, and you turn a simple reward into a moment of connection. For dogs with confirmed food sensitivities, moreover, home cooking makes it possible to control every single component, in compliance with the protocol indicated by the veterinarian.

It is important, however, to dispel a misunderstanding: "homemade" does not automatically mean "healthier". A homemade biscuit is still a snack: it must be counted in the daily diet, it does not replace a complete and balanced food, and it can be unsuitable in the presence of illness. The quality of a homemade snack depends on the choices of the person who prepares it: suitable ingredients, correct cooking, adequate portions and safe storage.

2. Ingredients: which ones to choose

The recipes in this book use simple, easy-to-find ingredients. Some general criteria for choosing:

- **Simplicity**: prefer single-ingredient foods (a meat, a vegetable, a flour) over processed products, which may contain salt, sugars, spices or unsuitable additives.
- **Freshness and supply chain**: meat, fish and eggs must be fresh, well stored and from controlled supply chains.
- **No seasoning**: ingredients should be used plain, without salt, excess oil, butter, stock cubes, sauces or mixed spices.
- **Thorough cooking**: meat, fish and eggs must always be served cooked; many vegetables are more digestible after light steaming.
- **Gradual introduction**: every new ingredient should be offered in a small amount, observing individual tolerance over the following days.

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3. Forbidden and potentially dangerous ingredients

Some foods that are common in the kitchen are toxic to dogs and must **never** go into the preparations:

- chocolate and cocoa;
- xylitol (a sweetener found in many "sugar-free" products: always read labels) and sweeteners in general;
- grapes and raisins;
- alcohol and alcoholic beverages;
- coffee, tea and other concentrated sources of caffeine;
- onion, garlic, leek and chives, in any form (fresh, cooked, powdered);
- macadamia nuts;
- cooked bones (risk of splinters and obstruction);
- raw yeasted doughs;
- mouldy, spoiled or contaminated ingredients.

Salt, fats, cured meats, traditional bacon and dairy products should also be used with caution, and the possibility of individual allergies or intolerances should always be considered. Watch out for contamination too: cutting boards, knives and utensils used for garlic or onion can transfer traces of them to the dog's doughs.

4. Flours and grain-free alternatives

Flours give structure to biscuits. This book mainly uses two of them, plus one alternative:

- **Oat flour**: soft and aromatic, well accepted by most dogs. It can also be made by blending plain oat flakes (with no added sugars).
- **Rice flour**: delicate and naturally gluten-free, useful when you are looking for a simple base; it produces more crumbly biscuits.
- **Buckwheat flour**: technically not a cereal but a pseudocereal; it has a more rustic flavour and appears in some recipes in Part VI.

Wholegrain flours provide more fibre: introduce them gradually. Like any starchy ingredient, flours contribute to the snack's calorie content: the number of biscuits offered should be assessed within the overall diet. Flours should be stored in closed containers, away from moisture and heat, and checked before use.

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5. Fruit and vegetables in snack making

Pumpkin, carrot, courgette (zucchini), sweet potato, parsnip, apple, pear, banana, blueberries, raspberries and watermelon are the plant stars of this book. A few practical rules:

- always remove **seeds, cores and stones**; for watermelon also remove the rind;
- cook the harder vegetables (pumpkin, carrot, sweet potato, parsnip) by steaming or baking, without seasoning: the purée blends better and is more digestible;
- drain and squeeze water-rich vegetables, such as courgette, thoroughly, so the dough does not become too moist;
- wash fresh fruit carefully;
- remember that fruit provides natural sugars: fruit snacks should be offered in moderation and counted in the daily budget.

6. Animal proteins and sources of fat

Meat, fish and eggs make snacks appetising and fragrant. However, they require specific care:

- **Meats**: prefer lean, simple cuts (chicken, turkey, lean beef, rabbit), remove visible fat and cook thoroughly, without salt or seasoning. Liver is nutritionally concentrated and rich in vitamin A: only occasionally, and never in the presence of illness without veterinary advice.
- **Fish**: always cook it and carefully check that there are no bones. Vary the species and avoid frequent use of large fish such as tuna, because of the possible mercury content: the tuna recipes are designed for occasional use.
- **Eggs**: always cooked.
- **Dairy**: fresh unsalted ricotta and plain natural yogurt with no sugar or sweeteners appear in a few recipes as optional ingredients, to be used only if the dog tolerates dairy.
- **Fats**: when needed, a teaspoon of extra-virgin olive oil is enough. Traditional bacon is rich in salt and fat: in the few recipes that recall its flavour it is always optional, and should be omitted for dogs that need to limit sodium or fat.

7. Equipment and materials

To prepare the recipes in this book you do not need a professional kitchen: a few tools are enough, almost all already present at home. It is worth paying attention to the choice of materials, though, for the dog's safety, the success of the recipes and the practicality of the person cooking.

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Silicone moulds. They are the most useful purchase for this recipe book: specific ones exist with bone, little paw, heart and muzzle shapes, suited to dogs, which make biscuits beautiful to look at and help standardise portions. Always choose quality food-grade silicone (preferably platinum silicone), BPA-free and certified for food contact. For small sizes prefer cavities of 3–5 cm (2.0 in); for medium and large sizes, 6–8 cm (3.1 in) works too. Silicone moulds are suitable both for the oven (check the maximum temperature indicated by the manufacturer, generally 220–240 °C) and for the freezer: the same paw-shaped moulds used for biscuits become ideal for the frozen snacks in Chapter 7. They need no greasing or baking paper and are dishwasher-safe; to move them without deforming them, it helps to place them on a rigid baking tray before filling.

Metal cookie cutters. For doughs to be rolled out with a rolling pin you need classic stainless-steel cookie cutters: the bone shape is timeless, but hearts, little stars and circles work well too. Having at least two sizes (small and medium) lets you adapt the biscuit size to the dog's size.

Baking trays, baking paper and a rack. One or two shallow baking trays, baking paper (or reusable silicone mats) and a cooling rack: letting biscuits cool on the rack, rather than on the hot tray, makes them crunchier and more even.

Kitchen scale. The recipes list ingredients in grams: a digital scale with one-gram precision is essential, both for success and for keeping quantities under control.

Blender, food processor or mixer. For puréeing pumpkin, sweet potato, banana and cooked vegetables, homogenising the softie doughs and mincing meat and fish. An immersion blender with a tall beaker covers almost all the needs of this book.

Bowls, spatulas and a portioner. At least two large bowls (one for dry ingredients, one for wet), a silicone spatula for scraping doughs and a wooden spoon. For softies and little meatballs, a small portioner helps to get pieces that are all the same.

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Grater. For carrots, courgettes, apple and fresh ginger: finely grating vegetables makes them more digestible and distributes the flavour better.

A dedicated cutting board. This is an important safety point: garlic, onion, shallot and chives are toxic to dogs. If you use them in the kitchen for human food, it is best to reserve a dedicated cutting board for the dog's biscuits (or wash the shared one carefully), to avoid accidental contamination. The same applies to knives and utensils that come into contact with forbidden ingredients.

Airtight containers and labels. For storage you need airtight glass or food-grade plastic containers, freezer-safe bags and — a precious habit — labels with the name of the preparation and the date: storage rules only work if you know when that biscuit was made.

Useful, but not essential. A silicone mat or pastry board for rolling out doughs; an oven thermometer, if your oven is not accurate; a dehydrator, for those wishing to experiment beyond the recipes proposed.

What you don't need. You don't need expensive equipment, deep fryers (this book never fries), dubious-quality non-stick moulds or decorative cutters with non-food-grade colourings or paints. And you don't need haste either: most recipes take less than half an hour of work, but a rested dough and patient baking make the difference.

> **Hygiene first.** Before starting: wash your hands, wash fruit and vegetables, work on clean surfaces and put perishable ingredients away promptly. Fresh preparations should go into the refrigerator within two hours of preparation. Small attentions that protect the health of the one who will eat our biscuits: the family member with a tail.

8. How to read the recipes and work out portions

Each card reports: **ingredients** in grams (the quantities needed to prepare the whole dough, *not* the daily portion to offer), step-by-step **method**, **baking** with indicative temperature and times, **yield** (the approximate number of pieces) and **storage**.

There is no universal number of daily biscuits valid for every dog: it depends on the actual weight of the single biscuit, its calorie content and the animal's energy needs. As a general reference, snacks should not exceed 10% of daily calories, unless otherwise indicated by the veterinarian. A practical method:

1. weigh a typical biscuit from your batch;
2. estimate with the veterinarian (or with the tables of the usual food) the dog's daily energy requirement;
3. calculate 10% of that value and use it as the ceiling for all the day's snacks, including those used in training;

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4. in case of overweight, clinical diets or illnesses, agree the type and quantity of snacks directly with the veterinarian.

The stated yields are estimates and vary with thickness and size; baking times should be checked on the actual product, because every oven is different.

9. Storage and food safety

Almost all the recipes in the book contain moist, perishable ingredients (meat, fish, eggs, cooked vegetables, fruit): **they are not dry pantry biscuits**. The fundamental rules:

- let them cool completely before packaging;
- refrigerate within two hours of preparation, in clean, tightly closed containers;
- consume within a short time, as indicated in each recipe (the stated times are cautious guidelines, not microbiological validations);
- freeze portions not intended for immediate consumption, already divided;
- thaw in the refrigerator and never refreeze a product that has already been thawed;
- do not rely on appearance or smell alone to judge the safety of a food;
- discard any preparation showing mould, abnormal odours or alterations.

An airtight jar is suitable only for genuinely dry biscuits; "crunchy" describes a texture, not a guarantee of shelf-stability at room temperature. When in doubt, the refrigerator or freezer is always the safest choice.

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PART II · THE WORLD OF BISCUITS

Chapter 1

Fruit and vegetable biscuits



This first collection includes twenty simple preparations, made with common, easy-to-find ingredients.

The recipes are designed as complementary snacks for healthy adult dogs, unless otherwise indicated. The quantities shown are those needed to prepare each dough, not the daily doses to administer.

For all the preparations:

- do not add salt, sugar, honey, sweeteners or seasonings;
- use fruit freed of seeds and cores;
- cook thoroughly any ingredients that require it;
- let them cool before serving;
- introduce any new ingredient gradually, checking individual tolerance.

1. Pumpkin and oat little biscuits

Ingredients

- 150 g (5.3 oz) cooked pumpkin, mashed
- 100 g (3.5 oz) plain oat flour
- 1 egg

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Method

1. Steam or bake the pumpkin without seasoning. Let it cool and mash it to a purée.
2. Add the egg and gradually incorporate the oat flour. Work until you have a homogeneous dough.
3. Roll out to about half a centimetre thick and cut out the biscuits with a cutter.

> **Baking:** preheated static oven at 170 °C (340 °F) for about 20-25 minutes, checking they are cooked through.
>
> **Approximate yield:** 20-25 biscuits, depending on size.
>
> **Storage:** refrigerate in a clean, closed container, use preferably within 3 days or freeze in portions. Do not store at room temperature without having verified the drying and stability of the product.

2. Apple and rice biscuits

Ingredients

- 120 g (4.2 oz) apple, peeled and grated
- 120 g (4.2 oz) rice flour
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon of water, if needed

Method

1. Grate the apple finely, after removing seeds and core completely.
2. Add the egg and rice flour. Mix until you have a workable dough.
3. Form small discs and place them on a baking tray lined with baking paper.

> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for 20-25 minutes.
>
> **Approximate yield:** 18-22 biscuits.
>
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days; freezing recommended for longer periods.

3. Carrot and oat biscuits

Ingredients

- 120 g (4.2 oz) cooked carrots, mashed
- 120 g (4.2 oz) oat flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Steam the carrots until soft. Mash them and let them cool.
2. Add the egg and oat flour. Form a homogeneous dough.
3. Cut out small biscuits and arrange them on the tray.

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Baking: 170 °C (340 °F) for about 20-25 minutes.

Approximate yield: 20 biscuits.

Storage: refrigerator for 3 days or freeze.

4. Banana and oat biscuits

Ingredients

- 100 g (3.5 oz) ripe banana
- 120 g (4.2 oz) oat flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Mash the banana with a fork to a purée.
2. Add the egg and oat flour. Mix thoroughly.
3. Form small, not-too-thick biscuits.

Baking: 170 °C (340 °F) for 18-22 minutes.

Approximate yield: 18-20 biscuits.

Storage: refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze. Banana provides natural sugars: count the recipe in the snack's calorie budget.

5. Pear and rice flour biscuits

Ingredients

- 120 g (4.2 oz) ripe pear, peeled
- 120 g (4.2 oz) rice flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Remove seeds and core from the pear. Mash or blend it.
2. Add the egg and incorporate the flour little by little.
3. Form small biscuits and arrange them on the tray.

Baking: 170 °C (340 °F) for 20-25 minutes.

Approximate yield: 20 biscuits.

Storage: refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

6. Sweet potato biscuits

Ingredients

- 150 g (5.3 oz) cooked sweet potato

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- 100 g (3.5 oz) oat flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Cook the sweet potato peeled and without seasoning. Mash it and let it cool.
2. Add the egg and oat flour.
3. Roll out the dough and cut out the biscuits.

> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for 20-25 minutes.
>
> **Approximate yield:** 20-25 biscuits.
>
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

7. Courgette (zucchini) biscuits

Ingredients

- 150 g (5.3 oz) cooked courgette, well drained
- 120 g (4.2 oz) rice flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Steam the courgette and let it drain thoroughly.
2. Blend it and mix it with the egg.
3. Incorporate the flour until you have a firm dough. Form small biscuits.

> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for about 25 minutes.
>
> **Approximate yield:** 20 biscuits.
>
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

8. Apple and carrot biscuits

Ingredients

- 80 g (2.8 oz) apple, seeds and core removed
- 80 g (2.8 oz) cooked carrot
- 120 g (4.2 oz) oat flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Blend the apple and carrot to a purée.
2. Add the egg and incorporate the oat flour.
3. Work the dough and form small biscuits.

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> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for 20-25 minutes.
>
> **Approximate yield:** 20-25 biscuits.
>
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

9. Pumpkin and rice flour biscuits

Ingredients

- 150 g (5.3 oz) cooked pumpkin
- 130 g (4.6 oz) rice flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Purée the pumpkin and let it cool.
2. Add the egg and rice flour. Mix until you have a compact dough.
3. Cut out the biscuits using a cutter.

> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for 20-25 minutes.
>
> **Approximate yield:** 20 biscuits.
>
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

10. Banana and rice flour biscuits

Ingredients

- 100 g (3.5 oz) banana
- 130 g (4.6 oz) rice flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Mash the banana and add the egg.
2. Gradually incorporate the rice flour. Work the dough until homogeneous.
3. Form small discs.

> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for about 20 minutes.
>
> **Approximate yield:** 18-20 biscuits.
>
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

11. Blueberry and oat biscuits

Ingredients

- 70 g (2.5 oz) fresh blueberries
- 130 g (4.6 oz) oat flour

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- 1 egg

Method

1. Wash the blueberries thoroughly and mash them.
2. Add the egg and oat flour. Mix until you have a mouldable dough.
3. Form small biscuits.

> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for 20-25 minutes.
> **Approximate yield:** 18-20 biscuits.
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

12. Courgette and carrot biscuits

Ingredients

- 80 g (2.8 oz) cooked courgette, drained
- 80 g (2.8 oz) cooked carrot
- 130 g (4.6 oz) rice flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Steam the vegetables separately. Blend them and let them cool.
2. Add the egg and rice flour.
3. Form small biscuits.

> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for about 25 minutes.
> **Approximate yield:** 20-25 biscuits.
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

13. Apple and pumpkin biscuits

Ingredients

- 80 g (2.8 oz) apple, seeds and core removed
- 100 g (3.5 oz) cooked pumpkin
- 120 g (4.2 oz) oat flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Blend the apple and pumpkin.
2. Add the egg and oat flour. Work the dough and cut out small biscuits.

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> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for 20-25 minutes.
>
> **Approximate yield:** 20 biscuits.
>
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

14. Parsnip and rice biscuits

Ingredients

- 120 g (4.2 oz) cooked parsnip
- 130 g (4.6 oz) rice flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Cook the parsnip until soft. Mash it and let it cool.
2. Add the egg and rice flour.
3. Form the biscuits.

> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for 20-25 minutes.
>
> **Approximate yield:** 20 biscuits.
>
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

15. Banana and pumpkin biscuits

Ingredients

- 70 g (2.5 oz) banana
- 100 g (3.5 oz) cooked pumpkin
- 120 g (4.2 oz) oat flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Mash the banana and pumpkin.
2. Add the egg and oat flour. Work until you have a homogeneous mixture.
3. Form small biscuits.

> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for 20-25 minutes.
>
> **Approximate yield:** 20-25 biscuits.
>
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

16. Raspberry and oat biscuits

Ingredients

- 60 g (2.1 oz) fresh raspberries

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- 130 g (4.6 oz) oat flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Wash the raspberries and mash them gently.
2. Add the egg and flour. Blend the ingredients and form small biscuits.

> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for 20-25 minutes.
> **Approximate yield:** 18-20 biscuits.
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

17. Potato and carrot biscuits

Ingredients

- 100 g (3.5 oz) cooked potato
- 80 g (2.8 oz) cooked carrot
- 120 g (4.2 oz) rice flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Cook the vegetables without salt and mash them separately.
2. Combine them in a bowl and add the egg. Incorporate the rice flour.
3. Form small biscuits.

> **Baking:** 170 °C (340 °F) for about 25 minutes.
> **Approximate yield:** 20 biscuits.
> **Storage:** refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

18. Blueberry and pumpkin biscuits

Ingredients

- 60 g (2.1 oz) blueberries
- 100 g (3.5 oz) cooked pumpkin
- 130 g (4.6 oz) rice flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Mash the blueberries and mix them into the pumpkin purée.
2. Add the egg and rice flour. Mix until you have a workable mixture.
3. Form small biscuits.

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Baking: 170 °C (340 °F) for 20-25 minutes.

Approximate yield: 20 biscuits.

Storage: refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

19. Apple and wholemeal oat biscuits

Ingredients

- 120 g (4.2 oz) apple, seeds and core removed
- 100 g (3.5 oz) wholemeal oat flour
- 1 egg
- 20 g (0.7 oz) plain oat flakes

Method

1. Grate the apple finely.
2. Add the egg, flour and oat flakes. Mix and let the dough rest for about 5 minutes.
3. Form small biscuits.

Baking: 170 °C (340 °F) for 20-25 minutes.

Approximate yield: 20 biscuits.

Storage: refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

20. Pumpkin, carrot and pear biscuits

Ingredients

- 70 g (2.5 oz) cooked pumpkin
- 70 g (2.5 oz) cooked carrot
- 50 g (1.8 oz) pear, seeds and core removed
- 130 g (4.6 oz) rice flour
- 1 egg

Method

1. Steam the pumpkin and carrot.
2. Mash the vegetables and add the blended pear.
3. Add the egg and incorporate the rice flour. Work until you have a compact dough. Form the biscuits and arrange them on the tray.

Baking: 170 °C (340 °F) for about 25 minutes.

Approximate yield: 20-25 biscuits.

Storage: refrigerator for up to 3 days or freeze.

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Technical notes for the chapter

The stated yields are estimates and may vary according to the thickness and size of the biscuits. Baking times are indicative and must be checked on the actual product. Refrigerator life is a cautious guideline, not a microbiological validation.

For all the recipes:

- cool completely before packaging;
- use clean, dry containers;
- avoid contamination from dirty utensils or hands;
- freeze portions not intended for immediate consumption;
- discard any preparation showing mould, abnormal odours or alterations.

A note on portions: there is no universal number of daily biscuits per size. Before deciding how many to offer, you need to know the actual weight of the single biscuit, its calories and the dog's energy needs.

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THE COMPLETE EDITION

The journey continues

What you'll find in the complete book

This preview ends here, but Four-Paw Treats continues for another 100 recipes.

The complete edition includes everything in this preview, plus:

- **Chapter 2 – Savoury, protein-rich biscuits** (15 recipes): tasty snacks with meat, fish, eggs and cheese;
- **Chapter 3 – Special and tasty biscuits** (10 recipes): delicious, original ideas to vary the routine;
- **Chapter 4 – Mycotherapeutic biscuits** (15 bases and insights): the chapter dedicated to mycotherapy in the kitchen, with bases designed to accommodate — only on your veterinarian's advice — specific mycotherapeutic preparations;
- **Chapter 5 – Softies and pockets** (10 recipes): soft bites also designed to make it easier, when permitted, to give medication, with a practical usage guide;
- **Chapter 6 – Cakes, muffins and little treats** (10 recipes): for birthdays and four-paw parties;
- **Chapter 7 – Fresh snacks and no-bake preparations** (10 recipes): quick summer ideas;
- **Chapter 8 – Preparations for particular needs** (30 recipes): proposals to assess according to your dog's needs.

THE COMPLETE EDITION · 120 RECIPES

All the chapters, mycotherapy in the kitchen, the softies and the preparations for particular needs.

Available at **www.valentinadeponti.it**

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Final safety guide

Ingredients never to use

Never include in preparations for dogs:

- chocolate and cocoa;
- xylitol and products containing it;
- grapes and raisins;
- alcohol and alcoholic drinks;
- coffee, tea and other concentrated sources of caffeine;
- onion, garlic, leek and chives;
- macadamia nuts;
- cooked bones;
- raw yeast doughs;
- mouldy, spoiled or contaminated ingredients.

Also be careful with salt, fats, cured meats, traditional bacon, dairy products and ingredients that can cause allergies or intolerances.

Storage: the fundamental rules

1. Let preparations cool completely before storing them.
2. Recipes containing meat, fish, eggs, fresh fruit or moist ingredients must be refrigerated promptly.
3. Freeze the portions you do not plan to use soon.
4. Defrost in the refrigerator and never refreeze a product once defrosted.
5. Use clean, well-sealed containers.
6. Do not rely on appearance or smell alone to decide whether a food is safe.

An airtight glass jar can be suitable for truly dry biscuits, but it does not automatically make a moist product safe. Defining a precise shelf life requires specific stability and microbiological safety testing.

How much snack to offer?

As a general reference, snacks should not exceed 10% of your dog's daily calorie intake. The actual amount depends, however, on age, weight, body condition, physical activity, usual diet and health status. There is no universal portion valid for all dogs. Treats must be counted within the overall diet and must not replace a complete and balanced food.

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AN IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATION

In the presence of allergies, intolerances, diabetes, pancreatitis, kidney, liver or gastrointestinal disease or other clinical conditions, do not use these recipes without first submitting them to your veterinarian, preferably one experienced in nutrition. The recipes are not therapeutic diets and are not formulated to treat or prevent disease.

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Conclusion

Why make something with your own hands?

Making a snack for your dog can be a small daily gesture, a moment of sharing and a way to give them attention. You don't need elaborate recipes or expensive ingredients. Sometimes a few ingredients, a little time and the desire to do something with care are enough.

But let us always remember that love for our animals also comes through responsibility: knowing what we offer them, respecting their needs and asking for advice when necessary.

Every dog has its own story, its own tastes and its own needs. May these 120 recipes become an inspiration for creating many small happy moments, always respecting their wellbeing.

Because pampering our dog also means taking care of them in the right way.

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The author



Valentina Deponti

Consultant in naturopathy and veterinary naturopathy, with training in general mycotherapy and a constant interest in the natural wellbeing of animals.

Through this recipe collection she wishes to share ideas and homemade preparations, promoting an aware, respectful and responsible approach to the relationship with our four-legged friends.

Her goal is to bring people to pay greater attention to what they offer their animals, remembering that wellbeing always comes from knowledge, observation and collaboration with qualified professionals.

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Resources and contacts

Valentina Deponti

Benessere Olistico · Naturopatia · Recupero Funzionale

FOR CONSULTATIONS

www.valentinadeponti.it

info@valentinadeponti.com

THE RECOMMENDED SHOP

www.mysnep.com/390274134

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Editorial and legal disclaimer

This recipe collection is for information and educational purposes. The preparations are homemade culinary proposals and do not constitute complete foods, balanced diets, veterinary prescriptions or therapeutic treatments.

The recipes have not undergone individual nutritional validation or laboratory storage testing. Before any publication and commercialisation, a professional review of the formulations, quantities, preparation procedures and food safety is necessary.

The author does not replace the veterinarian and does not guarantee that every preparation is suitable for every animal. The owner is responsible for verifying individual tolerance and choosing ingredients, with the support of a veterinarian when necessary.

In case of doubts, health conditions, drug therapies or adverse reactions, always consult your veterinary surgeon.

The photographs in this edition are illustrative and provisional, pending the real photographs of the recipes.

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