

Boney Appetit!



By Chloë the Wirehair Dachshund

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The Author in repose, guarding her sidewalk.

Dachshunds are noted for stubbornness and being food-oriented, and I am no exception. I cannot recall ever running into a treat or biscuit I didn't like, judging purely by the speed with which I lunge for them and gulp them down.

Still, I have favorites. In a rare moment of *largesse*, I allowed the *Syracuse New Times* to coax me into sharing my secret recipe for the best treat of all time: the Frozen PBB (Peanut Butter Boney).

Now, I can't claim credit for inventing the idea of stuffing food into a dog toy. I've got a few of those bell-shaped, hard rubber Kongs that can hold a lot of peanut butter, fruit or soft snacks in their center. They're OK, but stuffing natural marrow bones instead brings this snack to a higher level of pure doggie delight.



The Frozen PBB, filled

Serving treat-stuffed marrow bones straight from the freezer means a dog has to work harder with tongue and paws to get the filling out, slowing down the consumption rate and turning it into a game. The irregular shapes and sizes of the marrow bones make each one different, a new puzzle to solve. In addition, after licking one clean, if your dog is really, really lucky, its discerning canine nose will be able to detect a faint bouquet of beef, a perfect *aperitif* for this daily delicacy.

Begin by finding beef marrow bones that are 2 or 3 inches long and about 2 inches in diameter at a butcher or in the meat department of the local supermarket. In some stores, these bones are prepackaged and found with liver, giblets, tongues and other soup stock stuff. If you don't see any, ask; every meat department has them out back, and they're cheap.

These bones can be boiled, but I prefer to bake them on a lightly oiled cookie sheet at 375 degrees for about an hour, or as long as it takes to make the marrow in the middle of each bone brown and easy to spoon out. Turn them once during cooking so both sides get browned. After letting them cool, scoop the marrow with a teaspoon into freezable containers.

This marrow is flavorful and nutritious but very rich, so don't let your dog lick it out of the bones all at once. Instead, save the marrow in the freezer and dispense it a little at a time, mixed in with your dog's regular meal. You would be surprised how much more appealing dry kibble becomes to a dog with a teaspoon or two of marrow mixed in.

After the bones cool completely, let your dog chew on them and suck out any remaining marrow, gristle and beefy flavor. When the dog is no longer interested, the bone is ready for stuffing. Since the bones are so inexpensive, my owners accumulate a dozen or more at a time, so they can make a batch of the stuffing mix and freeze a two-week supply at one time. If filling is left over, just freeze and defrost it to blend it into your next batch of frozen boneys. Frozen, the PBB material will last as long as ice cream.

Here's the recipe I use.

FROZEN PEANUT BUTTER BONEYS

Ingredients

3/4 cup nonfat yogurt

3/4 cup peanut butter (I prefer smooth, but crunchy also works)

3/4 cup combo or chopped fruit, nuts, coconut, wheat germ

8 to 12 beef marrow bones, baked for an hour at 375 degrees and scooped clean

Also needed: large freezer bag and flat plate or tray for freezing. Yields 12 Frozen Peanut Butter Boneys.

Directions

Mix yogurt, peanut butter and all other ingredients in a large bowl. Stuff mixture into center of bones with a butter knife. If mixture looks runny, thicken it with additional peanut butter, chopped nuts or wheat germ. To prevent messy leakage in the freezer before the filling solidifies, lay a large plastic bag on a flat plate, gently load the PBBs into the bag and place the plate flat in the freezer. After an hour or when the center filling hardens, remove the plate and store the PBBs in the plastic bag.

As your dog licks out each bone, collect them and refill every two weeks or when you run out. If your dog does as good a job as I do, these bones will be licked so clean that they don't even need to be washed or rinsed before stuffing them again.

Although mixing the peanut butter, yogurt, etc., before stuffing will aerate the mixture, reducing the calories to some degree, I wouldn't recommend giving your dog more than one frozen PBB a day. It's easy to get too much of a good thing, and if your dog is anything like me, you are a much better judge of that than your dog is.

While any time could be the right time to enjoy a Frozen PBB, I prefer to have my daily allotment right after I return from my daily post-breakfast constitutional. It takes me a good five minutes to turn a fully stuffed bone back into a doughnut. Then, satiated and tired, I'm ready for a three-hour nap. Wake me up when it's time for my afternoon walk.

Chloë the Wirehair Dachshund blogs from Seattle, Wash. Follow her at chloethedachshund.wordpress.com.