

Wedding Dogs

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Here Comes the Bride... and Her Dog

By Lisa Wogan

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Claire and Meg DeMarco celebrate with Lex.

Juliana and Justin Caton of Redmond, Wash., weren't confident that their dogs, Jake and Alli, were up to a wedding. They were particularly worried that Jake— one of a litter of puppies they fostered and then adopted from the Seattle Humane Society— might be too excitable. So, they initially opted to include the pups in an engagement photo shoot with dog/wedding photographer Amelia Soper. They chose the Marymoor off-leash area as the setting because "we love going there; it's our dogs' version of Disneyland."

In the end, the Catons overcame their concerns and included both Alli and Jake in the wedding in nearby Bothell. A friend escorted them. "He was giving them a little pep talk down the aisle," Juliana remembers. "Everyone really liked it—they were laughing." The dogs stuck around for photos, then were whisked home by a professional walker immediately après ceremony.

11. Consider eloping— with the dogs. Small, informal, outdoor weddings are a great fit for even the shyest dogs. When Lisa and Louis Ferrugiario eloped to a dog-friendly bed and breakfast in West Cape May, N.J., in September 2008, they imagined that their dogs —Lola, a 13-year old Chinese Crested, and Gus, a 7-year-old Italian Greyhound—plus the mayor, who performed the ceremony, would comprise the entire wedding party. In the end,

they were required to have two additional human witnesses, so the B&B owner's 87-year-old mother and another guest joined the party. The newlyweds and their pups celebrated by taking a long walk through town and down to the beach.

There are as many ways to include dogs in your big day as there are mirrors on a disco ball. Take the time to find the best way to celebrate their special role.

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The Details

Celebrate your dog love with vintagestyle dog-themed tie tacks or lapel pins (\$9). Reproductions of old postcard images of dogs on reused wooden buttons, these are a sentimental accent for the groom or a simple gift for members of the wedding. Search for ohmydogness at [etsy.com](#)

Fresh blossoms make for gorgeous dog collars, but they're fragile. To keep your flower dog photo-sharp for hours, consider an elastic collar of silk daisies, roses or a single camellia from [The Wedding Dog's](#) couture line (\$65-\$260).

Even if your dogs can't attend the wedding, they can be there in spirit. [Star House](#) of Asheville creates custom keepsake cake toppers out of sustainably logged, local poplar in the image of your multi-species family (p. 66; about \$175 for family of four— allow five weeks).

Replace the reception tradition of clinking a spoon against your champagne flute with clicks. [Customized](#)