

Wet nose testing

by Geraldine Cove-Print



If you would like a product review please email the DOG WORLD advertising team at advertising@dogworld.co.uk or Geraldine Cove-Print at wetnoserescue@btinternet.com

Vita Canis 100 per cent natural products

WINTER draws on and along with the aroma of damp dogs, that smell as if they have been rolling in mushroom, there are the delights of sore winter paws, chapped hands and spotty bellies – one would hope the spots were restricted to canine tummies of course! A grooming enterprise which knows all about the perils of winter is Vita Canis in Uttoxeter. Jitka Krizova LCGI is at the helm ably assisted by Klaudia Szonyi and partner John Averis, Pawscar 'Exhibitor of the Year' and of Saredon fame.

Vita Canis had sent me a selection of its new products to try on my motley crew, the range was launched in August and enthusiastically received; it seems clients are asking groomers for quality, natural products and not just for use in the salon. I spoke to Jitka and asked her to tell me more about the ingredients; she told me that each product has been created with a goal in mind and using only the best of essential oils. I'm a great advocate of aromatherapy use around dogs and so I was fascinated as she told me how the Comfort Blend Oil had come about. Jitka said: "The grooming salon can be quite a stressful place for dogs if they are not used to regular grooming, so I wanted to find a way to relax an anxious dog before I even tried to pay attention to the coat."

She told me that she just puts a few drops on the palms of her hands and offers them towards the dog, in most cases the dog responds by approaching the aroma and even licking or rubbing against her hands. "It's almost as if they want to be comforted," said Jitka. "In just the same way when I give a canine massage the dog will often move his body under my hands, trying to show me where he needs the warmth and touch."

Once the dog has indicated that he likes the smell Jitka then strokes her hands through his coat and watches as the dog allows the aroma to do its magic. The Comfort Blend has a very lovely, almost woodland smell. Hints of basil and ylang ylang as

well as bergamot, reminiscent of a steaming cup of Earl Grey tea, the synergy of the ingredients offering calming as well as uplifting notes.

My dogs are pretty laid back, any more and they would be horizontal so I moved on to the Paw Butter. One of my rescue Irish Setters has very dry pads to her feet, she had been spayed some time ago and her fluffy coat tells the story. It's interesting to note that some breeds are particularly vulnerable to cracked pads or sore toes but all dogs' feet can be damaged not just by Mother Nature having a hissy fit in December but by the salt and chemicals liberally scattered on our highways. Paw Butter doesn't contain any water, so by rubbing the product onto pads and between toes regularly it will protect as well as heal. I do like the way Vita Canis lists all the ingredients on its website (www.vitacanis.co.uk) as well as a brief explanation as to the benefits gained.

Time for my paws now and the Hand Butter. Jitka told me this is a really popular item for groomers; wet hands and cold weather make for uncomfortable digits. What a treat this luxurious butter is! I have an impressive scar to the back of my hand, courtesy of a rather miffed GSD and I was thrilled to notice that within a few days of regularly dotting a tiny amount of butter onto my hands, the scar faded. Unlike so many products made for humans the scent wasn't pungent or 'girly', the effect of the nourishment on my skin lasted well, even after bathing a muddy Spinone my hands still benefitted from the barrier effect of the oil blend.

Vita Canis sent me two types of coat spray, one Citrus the other Floral. I regarded the Floral spray with deep suspicion; did I really want my dogs to smell

like a strumpet's boudoir? To my delight the smell is like an innocent roll in a herb garden, no sign of overwhelming attar of roses, what a relief! In a recent report it was discovered that there were more than 5,000 synthetic compound fragrances used by the beauty industry and it appears these are most common allergens in products today. I have found that many of the coat refresher sprays you can buy turn into an alcohol induced fug soon after application, but the Vita Canis sprays had good longevity without mutating into a nasty niff.

Jitka told me that the range have positive alternative uses, for instance the Paw Butter has been found to

work well on hot-spots in Bulldogs and the Citrus Spray is brilliant for keeping insects and winged bugs away, she told me she wafts a bit through her hair in the summer – no flies on Jitka for sure. I loved the comfort blend so much I have a few drops on a piece of cloth tucked into my pillow, the only downside of this being my cats are so attracted by the smell I wake up with a cat on my head!

I can see this range becoming a favourite with groomers and owners alike, thoughtful blends and rigorously tested in a busy salon the products are presented in a simple, stylish packaging.

Importantly they are not mass produced and you feel that care has been taken to source the best of components; I shall be very interested to see what comes next from Vita Canis. ■

