



Nacho Creates His Own Food Company

BY RITA REIMERS

What do our cats really need to eat in order to meet their nutritional needs? Chef Bobby Flay believes he has the answer. But what does a gourmet chef know about cat food and feline nutrition? As it turns out, he knows quite a lot.

A lifelong cat lover and super cat dad, Bobby Flay knows what makes cats purr. An only child, Bobby grew up thinking of cats as his siblings. "From the time I was born, there were always cats in my house," he says. "My mom was and still is obsessed with them. As an only child, they were as close to brothers as I had. I spent countless hours side by side with them, and we kept each other company." But being a famous chef meant he had to put his love for cats on hold, since his busy life didn't leave much time to properly care for a kitty.

After 30 years without a cat in his life, Bobby says, "I'm back in." Bobby adopted his orange Maine Coon, Nacho, 6 years ago. It's no coincidence that Nacho's orange mane matches Bobby's own. As a kid, Bobby had an orange cat named Pumpkin. "I wanted him because he matched my hair and, as a 5-year-old boy, nothing could be cooler in my mind." Bobby has since added Stella to his cat family, a brown-and-white Maine Coon who is now 2 years old. "Stella worships Nacho and copies everything he does," Bobby says.

Nacho and Stella routinely travel

Made by Nacho

Nacho and Stella's own veterinarian, **Dr. Katja Lang**, worked closely with Nacho and Bobby to develop the **Made by Nacho** meals.

And just one of the magical ingredients? **Bone broth**: which is full of protein and flavor and provides hydration. Cats need as much hydration as they can get, and bone broth also adds the additional moisture cats need.

* Find **Made by Nacho** exclusively at PetSmart.

with Bobby. "I can't do without them for that long, even a week is too long, and I feel bad leaving them. I know they miss me, too."

Nacho's influence

As someone who works with food and knows what pleases the human palate, Bobby began thinking about feline nutrition and what cats really need in their diets. With his famous Nacho by his side (Nacho has almost as many Facebook followers as his dad!), Bobby began researching cat nutrition,

working with his veterinarian to create Made By Nacho. Nacho is actually the company founder, as he inspired Bobby to create the line. "I'm very passionate about this project," Bobby says. "I want [cats] to be our only thought at Made By Nacho. Cats are king of the road, they are carnivores, and we can't feed them like humans."

Although Bobby and Nacho have been working on creating his cat food for a few years, the pandemic allowed them to focus on bringing Made By Nacho to reality, launching the company and website (MadeByNacho.com), in April 2021.

Nacho did taste testing along with his little sister, Stella. "Cats have very specific palates and nutritional needs," Bobby says. And he wanted to keep this in mind when developing the food. "The first pieces of wet cat food we made were beautiful, uniform in shape and nice, large pieces. But we're not serving it in a restaurant, we're serving cats. We

can't forget what we're doing here. Cats want flavor and texture, and it needs to be easy to eat." So they changed the pieces to be smaller, in order to appeal to the size and texture cats prefer.

Up next

When asked if Nacho will have his own cooking show, Bobby says, "He's a little busy right now, but at some point that could definitely happen. People like to watch him." Nacho is so popular that when Bobby does appearances without him, people always ask where he is.

The next frontier for Made By Nacho? Kitten food. They are currently working on a line of food specifically for kittens and their special nutritional needs as they grow. They are also working on a line of grain-free food for cats who cannot tolerate grains.

Nacho keeps giving

Nacho uses his voice to get more cats

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Follow Bobby on
Facebook @Bobby Flay
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@bobbyflay.

into loving homes and out of shelters. Bobby encourages people who have never had a cat to adopt one. In fact, Nacho and Bobby are sending a Made By Nacho box to a rescue that is near and dear to my heart, as this rescue has had quite a hard time lately. We are so grateful, as is the rescue.

We asked Nacho for the last word in our interview, but he politely declined as he was relaxing in the living room on a cozy rug, and Bobby did not want to disturb him. Now that's a great cat dad! 🐾



Rita Reimers and Linda Hall are cofounders of The Cat Behavior Alliance, offering a unique duo-approach to cat behavior correction. Visit

them at CatBehaviorAlliance.com for more information. You can also find Rita and Linda on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok @CatBehaviorAlliance.

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