

PRESS RELEASE

CHIC BOUTIQUE FOR THE GUCCI PET GENERATION

The North West's first designer fashion boutique for dogs and cats has opened for Cheshire's Gucci generation of pets.

Customers call in at *Hot Dogs Cool Cats* in Hale village for their pets to try on the latest ranges - from fashionable hoodies, ski jackets, bandanas, jumpers and even Christmas Santa outfits.

Pampered pooches and streetwise mongrels can choose from collections of hip T-shirts and stylish raincoats from Korea ... chic bow-tie collar eveningwear from Paris ... wetsuits from New York (for pet-owning sailors, of course) ... boots from Canada ... and matching UK-made scarves for both pet *and* owner.

They can pick through accessories that include exclusive Swarovski crystal collars and leads. And 'doggles' sunglasses are "a practical solution for dogs who like to stick their heads out of car windows," says Michelle Whittle - owner of *Hot Dogs Cool Cats* in Broomfield Road, Hale.

There are dog fitness products from New York, poo-bag holders from Italy and glitzy crystal collars and leads from the California-based company that supplies Beverley Hills pet lovers like Jennifer Lopez and Paris Hilton.

Many are already sold in the swankiest shops in Paris, Milan and Rome - such as the super-trendy Puchi Bag pet carriers from Hollywood's West Sunset Boulevard ... and Michelle stocks the actual design featured in the Reese Witherspoon film 'Legally Blonde'.

Dedicated followers of fashion are also keen to match custom pet beds and feeding bowls (for the handmade biscuits?) with their existing home furnishings and domestic colour schemes.

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And there are even specialist aromatherapy treatments - to calm a stressed pet by brushing its coat through with lavender, camomile and aloe vera ... fighting dry, itchy skin with an oatmeal-based shampoo ... or freshening its breath with a spearmint and peppermint spray.

"I'm constantly looking to expand my range of edgy, unusual pet accessories," says Michelle - an environmental biology graduate and former medical product sales specialist.

"Major designer names like Gucci, Prada, Burberry and Ralph Lauren have their own four-legged fashion ranges.

"The clothing side is stronger in the United States than in England but the demand, here, is growing - although most ranges are for dogs. Cats are less tolerant to being dressed.

"The boutique is not just for pampered pedigree pooches, either. It's for mongrels too. If they're loved ... they're loved!

"I have one scruffy little rags-to-riches customer who was rescued from a local dog's home and now wears a £90 crystal collar.

"Statistics suggest that fewer people have pets, these days, but those that do are spending more on them. Some humanise their animals more than others but they all want to repay the love and affection they receive from important members of their family."

- *Hot Dogs Cool Cats* is at 2 Broomfield Lane, Hale. Tel: 0161 929 5544.

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