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ON THE COVER
Svetlana Markovic



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AMERICAN
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*Wedding
Trends*

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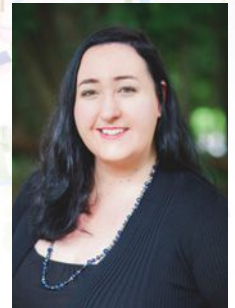
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A SWEET Celebration

For most cake decorators, the very first time they ever made a cake was for a party. For me, it was creating a buttercream birthday cake for my daughter Esme's first birthday. The one-tier, wonky cake with buttercream rosettes was the centerpiece of the party, and I was so proud! That cake brought me into a world filled with imaginative, creative people, and turned a spark of passion into a new career. Party cakes are the gateway to the cake-decorating industry, and for those of us who answered the call to make a simple birthday cake for a loved one, it was the beginning of our journey as cake artists.



For businesses, party and celebration cakes serve as their bread and butter, and while we often dream of being able to make those big, exclusive wedding cakes, birthday cakes can be just as fulfilling, and highly lucrative. In the last five years, the custom-cake industry has boomed with cake designers crafting everything from simple smash cakes to elaborate sculpted structures and everything in-between.

Above all, party cakes remind us of why we do what we do. It's because no celebration would be complete without a cake! We will never forget the beaming smiles as we place a lovingly crafted, homemade cake in front of a child. Or watched the tears in the eyes of a client as we deliver their dream cake. Our delicious creations are a token of love and affection and represent everything from telling a crush how we feel about them on Valentine's Day, to showering a mom

with appreciation on Mother's Day, to showing the world that life begins at forty! So, all that remains to be said is, "Let's Party!"

Happy Caking,

Rebekah Wilbur
Managing Editor



LET'S PARTY!

BY REBEKAH WILBUR



A cake for every occasion! Whenever there's a celebration to be had, whether it's welcoming a new baby, celebrating a milestone, throwing a birthday bash, or honoring a loved one, there's one thing these events ALL have in common—that's right, cake! No party would be complete without an edible centerpiece to make all your guests gasp in amazement. Our Let's Party showcase assembled some of the world's best sugar artists and tasked them with creating a perfect party cake for an event of their choosing, to give you the inspiration to up your party-cake game!

*Cake by: Willie Soto and Lili Cuellar
Vanille Couture Cakeshop | Mexico City, Mexico*

MOTHER'S DAY LOVE

MARLENE DEBATTISTA

CAKE HEAVEN BY MARLENE | MALTA

With the words "MOM" lovingly displayed across the front of this cake, there's no guesses for which event this cake was created. Marlene Debattista chose Mother's Day as her celebration, creating this stunning one-tier wonder, complete with bas-relief decoration and possibly the cutest tatty teddy bear we have ever seen. There's no doubt that any mother's heart would melt if presented with this cake. Known for her visually creative, and bold and colorful designs, Marlene has created a visual feast for the eyes. The only problem we foresee is that this cake is just so darn cute, we might never want to cut it!





KAWAII CHEEKS

JEAN A. SCHAPOWAL

CAKES WITH CHARACTER HICKSVILLE, NY

Kawaii cakes and cupcakes are HUGE right now, and best of all, they are super simple to make. Award-winning cake artist Jean Schapowal shares this cute tutorial for a kawaii cinnamon roll cake. This cake would make an adorable centerpiece for a birthday party.



Jean A. Schapowal is the owner of Cakes with Character, located in Long Island, NY. Previously a cartoonist and illustrator for numerous years, Jean found her way into cake decorating when her family expanded, and has flourished as an edible artist. Jean has appeared on TV and in numerous cake magazines. As an award-winning artist, she loves to share her talent and passion for cake decorating with others.

COMPONENTS

Large cupcake pan	Prepared buttercream
Fondant smoothers	Rolling pin
Paintbrushes	X-Acto knife
Ball tool	Serrated knife
Gel colors: pink, brown, white, and beige	Viva paper towels
Satin Ice fondant: white and pale yellow	Piping gel

To Prepare: Bake 5 ½ cups of cake batter (or 2 boxes of prepared cake mix) in a large cupcake pan. Allow the cakes to cool fully.

Jean notes: I use a heating core in the bottom section and a rose nail in the top section to help prevent burning and promote even baking.



Cakeswithcharacterbyjean
Facebook.com/momshchap

1. With a serrated knife, trim off the top and the bottom/base of the cupcake. Clean up the edges and level the cake.

Jean notes: *Make sure that the top piece of the cupcake is even in diameter with the bottom portion.*

2. Join the two pieces together and crumb coat the whole cake with a stiff-crusting buttercream.
3. Using a Viva paper towel, smooth the buttercream along the sides and into the swirled grooves that are on the top part of the cupcake. Chill the cake until firm.
4. Create a toasty-beige fondant by mixing some yellow fondant with a small amount of beige and brown. You should aim to achieve a golden ochre color. Roll out the fondant large enough to cover the cinnamon roll cake.
5. Drape the fondant over the cake and smooth down the cake. Use the ball tool to work the fondant into the grooves of the cinnamon bun to clearly define them. Trim away any excess.
6. Mix brown gel color with some cool, boiled water until thin, and begin applying the paint to the cake. Build the color as you go along, making sure to get into the grooves of the cake.
7. Once the cinnamon roll is dry, roll out two balls of black, pink, and white fondant for the eyes.

Jean notes: *You can use the ball tool to make an indentation for the eyes and remember the kawaii look is far apart, low eyes.*

- 8. Add a small highlight to the eyes with a little white and then add two pink circles for the kawaii cheeks. Use a little black fondant to roll a small, thin rope for the mouth.
- 9. You could glaze the cake with traditional icing, but here I used a mixture of piping gel and white food color.



For a tutorial of the checkerboard cake drum, head on over to americankakedecorating.com.

SWEET CELEBRATION



DOMINIKA (DOMY) DUBEK

SWEET REVOLUTIONS BY DOMY
DUBLIN, IRELAND

Domy was inspired by the trend for mermaid cakes when designing her Let's Party showcase contribution. As a modeling expert, she chose to create a stunning mermaid figurine topper. "As it is soon going to be the summer, my mind took me to beaches, sun, sea, sand, and mermaids," notes Domy. The topper was crafted from Saracino modeling paste, but U.S. cakers could use modeling chocolate with similar effect. Domy has developed a line of specially designed face and body molds which are available via her website and can be shipped internationally, which means those of us who are not modeling experts can re-create this beautiful topper with ease. We particularly love Domy's design because it would be perfect for a child or an adult birthday!



For a tutorial of Domy's mermaid topper, check out our Digital Extra content.

VASILIJE VASILJEVIC NAŠA MALA ZAVRZLAMA BELGRADE, SERBIA

Choosing Valentine's Day as their celebration inspiration, Vasilije created a modern and romantic cake. Vasilije notes, "This is my vision of a sophisticated St. Valentine cake for the Let's Party issue. It represents two, hand-painted 2-dimensional flamingos in love. The feathers were created with wafer paper to give them some movements." We really love this design because it's unexpected, but "birds" have always been synonymous with romance, and the pink color palette of the flamingos works perfectly for the St. Valentine theme.



HEMU BASU
THE SWEET SENSATION
KATY, TX

When it comes to baby-shower cakes, why reinvent the wheel. Oftentimes, classic cake designs are best. Award-winning sculpted cake artist Hemu Basu chose to create a sweet baby bag cake for our Let's Party showcase. "I love baby showers, they are such a special time. I really wanted to play to my strengths and create something sculpted and sophisticated. Baby bag cakes are timeless and they've become a classic for a reason," states Hemu. This cute cake would really be ideal for a baby boy or a baby girl. We especially love all the little handcrafted baby supplies.



For a tutorial of how to create this sculpted baby bag cake, check out our Digital Extra content.

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SPRING AWAKENING

BARBARA
LURASCHI

SWEET JANIS BY
BARBARA LURASCHI
COMO, ITALY

International instructor Barbara Luraschi is known for her distinct modeling style and her feminine, girly figurines. Adapting her popular “Winter Girl” figurine, Barbara created a pretty and feminine dress cake. “The skirt is sculpted cake, and covered completely with hydrangea. I was really inspired by spring when I created this design, especially the pastel color palettes and the beautiful flowers. Spring is filled with new beginnings and a wonderful time of the year for celebrations” says Barbara. Barbara created a full step-by-step tutorial for the sweet cake.



To access the tutorial, check out our Digital Extra content.



A CAKE CAROUSEL

SHARON WEE

SHARON WEE CREATIONS
MASCOT, NSW, AUSTRALIA

We were thrilled when the very talented and internationally recognized cake artist and teacher Sharon Wee agreed to create a special cake for our celebration-cake issue. And boy, she did not disappoint. How adorable is this carousel cake? We love the little details, such as the animals on the Ferris wheel and that little bunny with a bouquet of balloons. The mixture of soft pastel colors makes this cake perfect for girls or boys, or even big girls and boys, too. We could see this cake as the centerpiece of a baby shower, or a birthday celebration. Carousel cakes are exceptionally versatile and still remain one of the biggest trends for children's birthdays. It's these sweet and beautifully executed details that have made Sharon such a household name.



3, 2, 1...LIFTOFF!

LORI MAHONEY

LORI'S CUSTOM
CAKES

OCEAN BEACH, CA

Simple 2-D cake toppers are an easy and cost-effective way to really jazz up your birthday-cake designs. This rocket-cake tutorial from Lori Mahoney is a great way to boost your celebration cake business into 2018!

For Lori Mahoney, cake decorating is more than a business, it's a passion. Lori began her cake-decorating journey two years ago, and she is now the owner of Lori's Custom Cakes, where is known for making adorable celebration cakes for all occasions. Lori enjoys sharing her skills with others and creating cake tutorials for several notable magazines.



[Facebook.com/Loriscustomcakes](https://www.facebook.com/Loriscustomcakes)

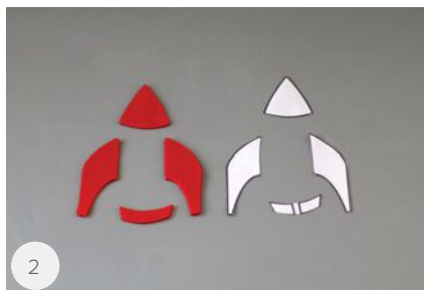
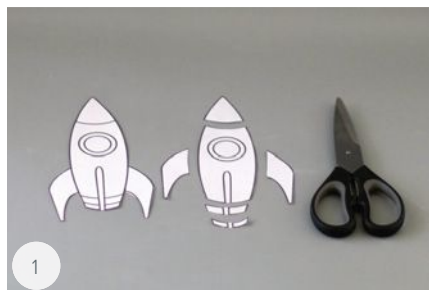
COMPONENTS

Rocket ship template
1,000 g of white fondant, 100 g of red fondant, 50 g each of light blue, yellow, and gray fondant

CMC or tylose powder
Various sizes of round plungers, cookie cutters, or icing tips

Medium- and small-size star plungers
Scalpel
Scissors

Small rolling pin
Small paintbrush
Water
Dowel/skewer



1. Print out the rocket ship template provided onto plain white paper, and cut out the template as shown. Take half of the white fondant and add $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of tylose powder to stiffen the fondant. Roll out the fondant to $\frac{1}{8}$ " thickness, then place the template over the top and cut out the pattern. Roll out the second half of the white fondant (without the tylose) and repeat the step to create two rocket shapes, as shown.
2. Roll the red fondant into a long strip approximately $\frac{3}{16}$ of an inch thick. With a scalpel, cut out the red portions of the design, using the template as a guide.
3. Roll out the gray fondant, then, using two round plungers or circle cutters (one larger than the other), cut two circles to create the window for the rocket ship. Cut a strip for the bottom of the rocket. Cut a small circle from blue fondant for the inside of the window. Allow to dry.
Lori notes: I used the back of a large piping tip to cut one circle and a smaller one to cut out the middle.
4. Roll out the yellow fondant quite thinly, and, using the star plungers, cut out enough stars to cover the bottom of the cake.
5. Push a dowel about halfway into the thicker rocket cut out from step 3, and brush with water. Place the thinner cutout on top and let dry.
6. Attach the remaining precut pieces of fondant to the rocket with a little water, and allow to dry overnight.
7. Push the rocket topper into the top of the cake, leaving about an inch of clearance.
8. Roll a variety of different-size balls of white fondant and adhere to the top of the cake, around the base of the rocket. This will form the plume.
9. Roll more fondant balls and adhere around the base of the cake tier. Attach the fondant stars to the cake, ensuring even coverage.

BIRTHDAY BEAR

MONIQUE
ASCANELLI
THE CAKE TOPPER
GÜTERSLOH,
GERMANY

Monique is well-known for her adorable cake-topper designs featuring cute animals, so we were not surprised when she sent us not one, but two, precious party cakes for this issue. Choosing “birthdays” as her inspiration, she created two party-perfect designs fit for a child of any age. Her characters look like they’re enjoying a party themselves; we just love the expressive faces on the figurines, the parcels, presents, little party hats, and the fun color palette. Monique models her characters from fondant stiffened with a little CMC or tylose powder, and she has a number of topper tutorials available on her Facebook page, website, and via the ACD website.



To see more of Monique's cakes, head on over to americandecorating.com.



PATCHWORK PRINCESS

RALITSA KAMBUROVA

DELICE | VARNA, BULGARIA

A perfect patchwork cake, fit for a little princess. This pink cake is full of texture, with knitted panels, wafer-paper lace, and a beautiful bas-relief effect, there are so many eye-catching details that make this cake unique. Although this sweet little cake was made for a first birthday party, it would also make an adorable centerpiece for a baby girl shower, and would look great with a variety of different customizable toppers. “I have created several versions of this cake in other colors, it is always a popular design, but also one that utilizes a lot of texture, which is something I love to do when designing cakes,” notes Ralitsa. The textural patchwork certainly adds something special to this design, and could be adapted for other cake designs, too.



For a tutorial of the bear topper, check out our Digital Extras.

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TOTALLY Unconventional

BY REBEKAH WILBUR

As the theme of our issue is **Let's Party**, we decided to take a look at some of the hottest, emerging **celebration-cake trends for 2018**, and what we found is that unconventional cakes are like, **totally kawaii**—which my six-year-old informs me means super cute! As a millennial, I can admit that we **love ANY excuse** to celebrate, and we love to stand out, and it is this group of thirty-somethings that is driving the market for **unconventional cakes**.



Just Desserts

Proving that there really IS a cake for every occasion, divorce-day cakes are becoming the next big thing. I mean, if you are going to get divorced, there should at least be cake! These creative cakes are showing up in Instagram feeds and Pinterest boards everywhere. We like them because moving on, even when things may not have worked out, should be a cause for celebration. From a business perspective, with 1 in 3 marriages now ending in divorce, it could also potentially be very profitable! Oooph!

Cake by Maria Castaneda



30 and Smashing It

We've all seen the smash-cake trend: cute, chubby-cheeked babies, smashing their way through a one-tier buttercream cake, frosting flying everywhere. Well, you may not know it yet, but there's an adult version of this trend and it's HUGE! Thirtieth smash-cake shoots have become a tongue-in-cheek, and highly amusing, way to celebrate adulting. We love this trend because cakes should always be about having fun, and what could be more fun than eating a fistful of Swiss meringue buttercream? We're all still children at heart!

*Cake by Nikki's Cake Art
Photography by: Raymie Day Photography*



Black Is Back

Black food is going viral; black bagels, black donuts, black pastries, charcoal ice cream, cocoa-noir buttercream—ebony is everywhere. We love this trend because it's a perfect counterpoint to the nauseating unicorn, rainbow craze that seems to have taken cake decorator's hostage. While black food may not be to everyone's tastes, we have to admit, these decadent black-chocolate cakes, with shiny black frosting, look incredibly drool-worthy!

Cupcake by: Kara Andretta

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Heidi Holmon, De La Creme Studio
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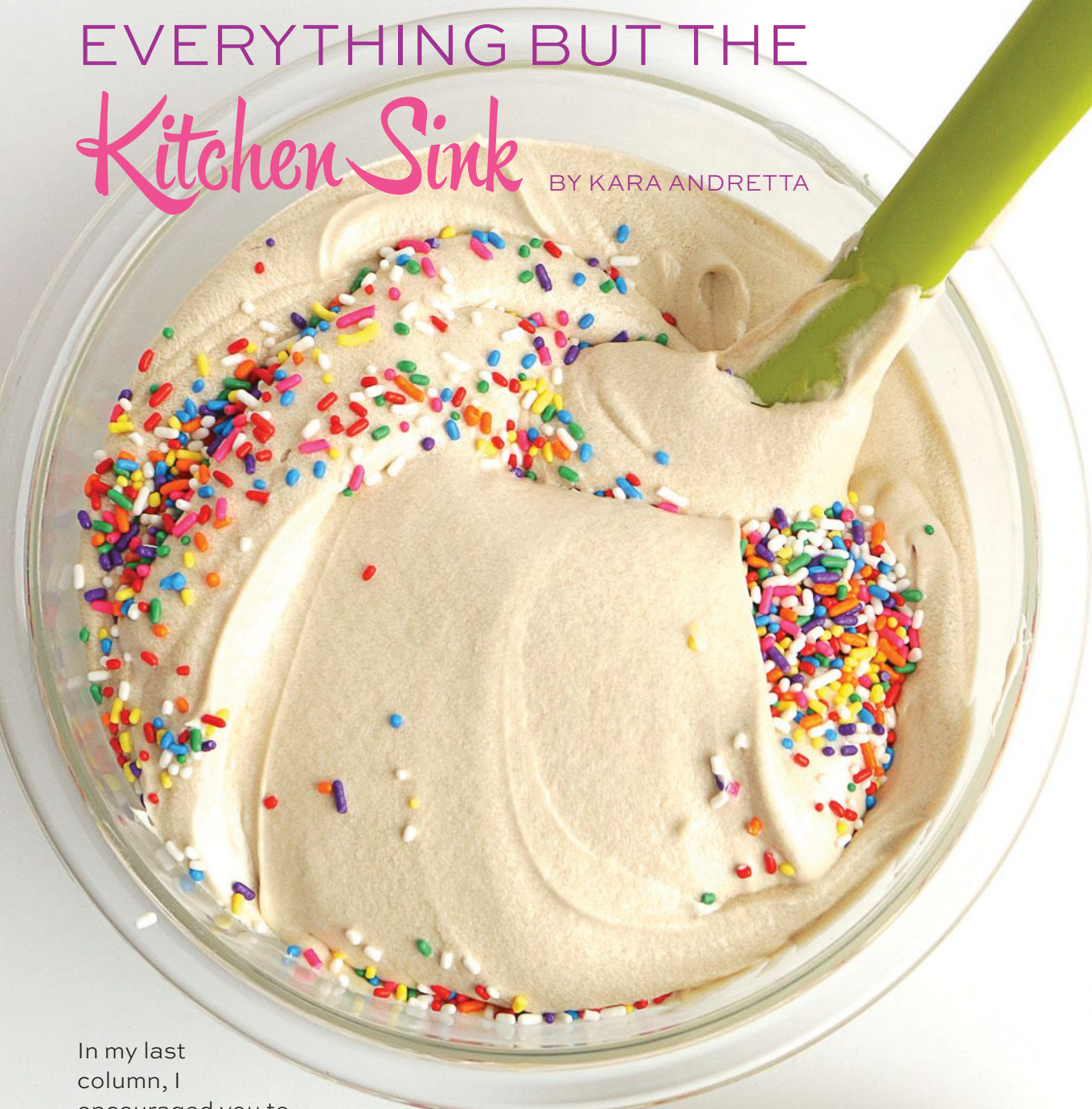
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EVERYTHING BUT THE *Kitchen Sink*

BY KARA ANDRETTA



In my last column, I encouraged you to experiment with **different flours** in your recipes. And I want you to explore ALWAYS. But this time I had to do the experimenting myself. Because **#cakescience**. So, what you're about to see is the raw, unfinished results of my **baking explorations with inclusions!** And I want you to have success throwing anything you wish into your cake by **discovering what I discovered**. Keep reading.



What Are Inclusions?

Inclusions are those fabulous bits of fruit, candy, nuts, or other mix-ins that you add to your cake batter for extra flavor and gastronomic delight! But we all know it doesn't always work out the way we imagined.

Often, they sink. Sometimes they oversaturate a batter. Maybe they even float in the batter and rise to the top. And then there are the ones you can always count on to stay where they belong, perfectly distributed throughout your baked cake.

What creates success in mixed-in bits of fun?

Well, it can be easier to explain what doesn't work and WHY so that you can make a more well-educated decision about fancying up your cake offerings successfully. Sometimes seeing the results of what you shouldn't do is what helps you to not "have to try it yourself, Kara..." (Yep. I'm one of those.) Hence, my cakes and I are your sacrificial lambs, your culinary guinea pigs.

Size Matters

Let's be honest. Size matters. Even in cake inclusions. We tend to have a false sense of security when we mix things into our cake batters, watching them sit perfectly suspended in that rich, thick batter, and we pour it into our pans.

Here's the thing about batter: It's thick when it's room temperature. But because sugar is a liquefier and applying heat to our ingredients more or less melts them, the batter thins in the heat of the oven and is no longer as able to hold inclusions (like the large chocolate chips) perfectly dispersed. Then what happens? They sink.

And while this Caramel Chocolate Chip cake didn't fully sink, with a few rogue chips in the middle and the ring of chips around the edges, it's not nearly as even as I'd like it to be.

The fix: Smaller chips. Or give your chocolate chunks a quick chop.



Like a ring of fire, but with chocolate chips. Mostly sunken, they needed to be a bit smaller.

Beware Moisture

I know. Caker trigger word for many. I'm okay with it, so I'mma say it. MOISTURE is either your friend or your foe. And understanding how adding very moist, or very unmoist, things to your batter affects it is crucial.

Let's take the blueberry cakes I baked. First, I want to point out that I used three different types of blueberries: regular-size frozen, wild (small) frozen, and freeze-dried (just to be opposite).

“INCLUSIONS ARE THOSE FABULOUS BITS OF FRUIT, CANDY, NUTS, OR OTHER MIX-INS THAT YOU ADD TO YOUR CAKE BATTER FOR EXTRA FLAVOR AND GASTRONOMIC DELIGHT!”



The batter in each is from the same batch, and there are no other alterations to the cakes other than one got the two kinds of fresh, frozen berries, and the other got the freeze-dried berries.

I was testing two things with frozen berries: how much size mattered (we discussed that with the chocolate chips), and moisture content. These berries were drained overnight so they had very little residual liquid with them in the batter. What you can learn from these two cakes: The additional moisture in the fresh, frozen blueberry cake on the left was so much added liquid that the cake didn't caramelize around the sides of the pan like its freeze-dried twin. Even though the cake is fully baked throughout, it's also denser and very moist, making it more delicate to handle. Also, all the blueberries sunk. Even the small ones.

The fix: Fresh berries are better when in season, or toss frozen in flour first to help suspend them like you do with muffin batter. Also, remove a portion of the liquid ingredients to balance added moisture.



Berry Confusing

The freeze-dried blueberry cake was interesting to me...I thought they would absorb enough moisture before the batter began to set that they would have a much better chance of remaining evenly spread throughout the batter. Nope. Those little airy suckers all rose to the top! I was intrigued. Had they been slightly soaked in liquid, or even allowed to hang out in the raw batter a bit longer before entering the fiery oven, it may have made a difference. The cake did bake better all-around and had the qualities I look for in my final baked cakes. So, they didn't steal the moisture the cake required.

The fix: Allow them to soak in a bit of moisture before tossing them in the batter.

Get Confectionary

What is the other thing everyone wants to add to their batters? CANDY! Or candied things. And again, take size into account here. But I have some caveats to share, as well as successful ideas...

Let's start with the funnest-est (yep, it's so much fun it needed a misspelled non-word) inclusion known to cakedom: SPRINKLES!!! These are always a success even when you add bunches like I did. They stay suspended right where they belong and add their bright little colorful flecks to every bite. One note: Don't overmix or allow the batter to sit too long or the colors may bleed into your batter.

Nuts about Cake

Next, a classic add-in: sweetened shredded coconut! You can't even see the coconut in my Caramel Coconut cake because it's so perfectly incorporated. Nothing sunk to the bottom and it's beautifully spread through the whole cake mixing in seamlessly with the delicate crumb. Score!

A note about nuts: They are dry and can be chopped to the perfect size. In general, have fun with nuts.



“HERE'S THE THING ABOUT BATTER: IT'S THICK WHEN IT'S ROOM TEMPERATURE. BUT BECAUSE SUGAR IS A LIQUEFIER AND APPLYING HEAT TO OUR INGREDIENTS MORE OR LESS **MELTS** THEM, THE BATTER THINS IN THE HEAT OF THE OVEN AND IS NO LONGER AS ABLE TO HOLD **INCLUSIONS**...”

Check out those beautifully dispersed rainbow sprinkles!



The coconut is so perfectly incorporated that it plays hide-and-seek with you.

Sweet TALK

A ROYALLY GOOD TIME

BY REBEKAH WILBUR

If you make party cakes, then you've probably seen the work of **Lesley Wright**. Known for her fun, colorful, and expertly executed designs, Lesley has carved a niche for herself as a **high-end party-cake maker** and **celebration-cake teacher**. We sit down with Lesley to learn all about her life, and her work at the **Royal Bakery**.

ACD: Thanks for joining us Lesley. We're so excited to talk with you about your work at the Royal Bakery. It seems that a lot of business owners are striving to make wedding cakes these days, with wedding cakes being seen as the pinnacle of cake design. You've managed to carve a niche as a high-end custom party-cake designer. Was this a conscious choice or a happy accident?

Lesley: I think you have to really, really want to do those high-end wedding cakes; when I look at them, I think they're incredible, gorgeous, but I don't want to make them. I can't imagine how much pressure and work they are, and it's a pressure that I feel I can't put on myself. I don't feel I'm going to ruin anyone's day if "Jake the pirate" falls over, but you could seriously ruin someone's special day if something goes awry with a wedding cake. Plus, there's a whole culture around the tasting and the consulting. I'm quite an introvert so I find that whole meeting with people to be quite stressful; I like to do everything via email, and party cakes work perfectly for that. Plus, I just enjoy making them.

ACD: Your cakes always seem so original. How do you steer your clients away from copying other designs, and allow you to create something custom and unique?

Lesley: Well we very much live in a "Pinterest-inspired world"; people will send me a cake and say, "How much for this particular cake?" Those clients are sometimes unavoidable, but I also have a lot of repeat clients, and it is those people who will allow me to have creative freedom, because they trust my work. They might bring me a party invitation, or an example of the décor, or the dress, and we can design the cake using their inspiration. I also get very busy, so even first-time clients know that if they want me to take them, they will have to trust me, and give me a little leeway.

ACD: We noticed on your Facebook page that you often share digital sketches of the designs. Is this something you offer to your clients? Do you have a particular software that you use?

“I THINK I FEEL COMPELLED TO DO IT. CAKE MAKING HAS BECOME SUCH A CREATIVE OUTLET.”



Lesley: I used to be a graphic designer, so it's Photoshop where I learned to do that—the sketches are really total overkill for what I am doing, but I find it helps me as much as it helps the client. I don't consider myself a really creative mind. I have to absolutely see what the finished cake will look like before I begin to make it. I can't just wing it, that just wouldn't work for me.

ACD: What's your favorite cake from the last year, and can you tell us why you like it so much?

Lesley: Oh, I knew you were going to ask me this and then I didn't prepare. I think my favorite cake was the glow-in-the-dark cake with the disco mirror ball. There are other cakes I've made that I've liked as much, or even a bit more, but that cake was one I designed. I was so excited about using the glow-in-the-dark fondant. It was just such a fun cake!

ACD: Can you tell us a little bit about your caking process? How do you organize your time? How far in advance do you work?

Lesley: The design is done when the booking is made, I don't leave anything until the last minute. Most booking are made 6–8 months in advance. Sometimes that means I run into problems with the client changing their mind and I may have to make some changes. “Oh my daughter, doesn't like Doc McStuffins anymore,” type of thing.

Most cakes are due on Saturday, so my week begins on Monday. Usually, I will shop for any ingredients that I need, sometimes I need specialty stuff. I will start on any prep, like if I am making figures, that kind of thing. I normally don't bake the cakes until Thursday.

Then if I am doing one cake I will bake, fill, and ganache and refrigerate all on Thursday. If I am doing two tiers and up, or two cakes, I will bake on Wednesday, fill and ganache on Thursday, and decorate on Friday.

ACD: It's a simple question, but why do you do what you do?

Lesley: I think I feel compelled to do it. Cake making has become such a creative outlet. I never realized it before but I do now. I also think that a big part of why I love this industry is the social aspect. Just being on Facebook, I've met so many people, people that are local and messaged me and said, “Let's have a cup of coffee.” And now we're best friends. **ACD**

“...PEOPLE WILL SEND ME A CAKE AND SAY, “HOW MUCH FOR THIS PARTICULAR CAKE?” THOSE CLIENTS ARE SOMETIMES **UNAVOIDABLE**, BUT I ALSO HAVE A LOT OF REPEAT CLIENTS, AND IT IS THOSE PEOPLE WHO WILL ALLOW ME TO HAVE **CREATIVE FREEDOM**, BECAUSE THEY **TRUST MY WORK.**”

Lesley Wright

is an English cake artist, living in Campbell, California. She has been running the Royal Bakery, a home-based bakery, for six years, creating just one or two custom cakes per week. She also teaches classes, gives private lessons at home, and writes online tutorials.

Although she'd rather eat a bag of potato chips than a slice of cake, she is a big fan of chocolate ganache and is often to be seen eating leftovers with a spoon. Lesley has a husband, a son, two dogs, and a cockatiel, which she thinks is quite enough of each.



Facebook.com/theroyalbakery
Royalbakeryusa.com

The Do's and Don'ts OF QUOTING SPECIAL OCCASION CAKES

BY CHRISSIE BOON

Let's face it. Quoting cakes is not an easy task. Why are we afraid? Is it the fear of being rejected? That we'll be told our prices are too high? The truth is no one likes rejection but the general public **needs education**. Most potential customers are used to the sticker price they see on a cake at grocery stores. A custom cake is exactly what it says it is—**CUSTOM**. Get to grips with pricing your custom creations with this guide to pricing your celebration cakes from **Chrissie Boon**.



Educate Your Customers

Our clients are not the bad guys. They, for the most part, are not trying to offend you when they let you know their cake budget. They are simply unaware, and it is our job to educate them.

Yes, there are a lot of people who don't charge enough for their cakes. I am sure 99 percent of the cake artists out there have sent a cake out in the past six months that they feel in the end they didn't charge enough for.

The only way to help avoid this situation is to educate our clients on the cost of the cake and educate ourselves on the cost of what actually goes into the cake—and then stick to it! Do not shortchange yourself!

Give Them Choice

When quoting a cake, my strategy is to provide several options for potential customers at different price points. Some may feel this will lead to the client automatically picking the cheapest option, but, from my personal experience this almost always guarantees me a sale. I want my client to realize they are not going to be able to ask me for a discount or to match someone else's price.

Right from the beginning I let them know what my minimum order is for the number of servings they are requesting. After that I present choices to them (think about parenting skills here—kids respond better when having a choice...and adults do, too!).

Option One: Offer them a single-tier cake with basic decoration to match their theme and serving requirements—set this as the minimum order.

Option Two: Offer the client a tiered version of the cake design with slightly more elaborate decoration.

Option Three: If sculpted cakes are part of your repertoire, you could offer the client an elaborately sculpted cake to match their theme.

If the client is someone who doesn't have a budget for the higher-priced cake, they always have a choice and more budget-friendly options. When quoting cakes this way I can probably count on one hand the number of people who have come back to me and still asked for a discount. It is incredibly rare.

Is there the possibility that with all the options presented they still may not have the budget for a cake from me? Yes, of course! And that is not something to take personally. Many people have never had a custom cake quoted to them before, and they may find that their perfect cake does not equal their budget.

Preparing Your Pricing

So how do you come up with your pricing? No one can tell you what you should charge. Asking another cake decorator on the other side of the globe, or in the next city, what they charge for their cakes is a redundant question. It will not help you in your search for your price.

The first thing to consider is the obvious—your hard costs. The ingredients and supplies: cake boards, boxes, ribbon, etc. All the items that the customer will physically leave with.

“OUR CLIENTS ARE NOT THE BAD GUYS. THEY, FOR THE MOST PART, ARE NOT TRYING TO OFFEND YOU WHEN THEY LET YOU KNOW THEIR CAKE BUDGET. THEY ARE SIMPLY UNAWARE, AND IT IS OUR JOB TO EDUCATE THEM.”



The next factor is one that we all know we have to charge for, but one that most people don't value to the extent they should. **YOUR TIME.** Two difficult things come into play here—deciding what your time is worth, and thinking about all the time you intend to spend on the cake.

Most of us look at the hours spent baking and decorating and call it a day. But really think about the time you spent on that cake—quoting it, designing it, research, shopping for ingredients, preparing your work space, cleaning up after, and even arranging and waiting for the pick-up time or delivering.

What Is Your Time Worth?

When you gain more experience you will feel you are justified in charging more for your time. As in any profession that sees their salary or hourly pay increase with experience, so should yours. And I do feel that when you are starting out, you should be starting at the bottom of the pay scale just like you would if you were entering a new profession. That being said, I also believe no one should be working for less than minimum wage.

Next up is your overhead. This is another factor that will be a huge variable from one business to another and why comparing the price of one decorator to another will not work.

Your overhead costs include, but are not limited to, rent, hydro, water, insurance, phone, internet, vehicle, advertising, etc.

These costs are something that you will need to calculate before you even start to price your first cake. Looking at your monthly expenses you'll get a good idea of how much in sales you need to bring in to cover your costs. You'll need to divide this figure by the number of cakes you make, on average, each month.

Profit = Success

And finally, we have **PROFIT.** Yes, I said it, the dreaded "P" word that some people see as a dirty one, but one of the **ESSENTIAL** words needed to not only survive, but grow! Profit is not the amount you pay yourself, as so many people tend to think, but it's what is left over after all your expenses, including your pay, are calculated.

There is no one-price-fits-all answer to cake pricing. I can't look at a cake and tell you what you should charge for it, and I can't look at a cake and tell you what I would charge, and expect that answer to help you. I would be doing a disservice to you if I did. One thing we can do is give you the tools to add it up yourselves which allows you to see what goes into each creation of yours. **ACD**

“AND FINALLY, WE HAVE **PROFIT.** YES, I SAID IT, THE DREADED 'P' WORD THAT SOME PEOPLE SEE AS A DIRTY ONE, BUT IS AN ONE OF THE **ESSENTIAL WORDS** NEEDED TO NOT ONLY SURVIVE, BUT GROW!”



DO THE MATH

1. Add up all cost of the ingredients and supplies.
2. Calculate number of hours.
3. Calculate the overhead costs.
4. Set your profit margin.

EXAMPLE

1 Ingredient cost	2 Six hours x \$20/hour	3 Overhead calculated	4 Profit margin desired
\$80	\$120	20%	25%

CALCULATE

(1) + (2) = \$200 x (3) = \$240 x (4) = \$200 (FINAL PRICE FOR CAKE)

Chrissie Boon is owner of Too Nice to Slice, a custom cake shop and teaching academy based in Ontario, Canada, where she also owns a cake supply store and a retail store-front bakery. Chrissie is the director of Icing Smiles Canada, head of the Canadian Cake Decorating Guild, and a Creative Director at Icing Inspirations. Chrissie recently joined the Renshaw Americas team as their newest Canadian ambassador.



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MUSICAL Mayhem

BY REBEKAH WILBUR



Welcome to **The Cake Confessions**. Here, cake artists from all walks of life share their **deepest, darkest caking secrets**. Our readers reveal their most embarrassing, cringeworthy, cake-related stories AND the valuable lessons they have learned through **trial and terror**. So, buckle up, because it's going to be **a bumpy ride!**



Do you have a confession you'd like to share with our readers? Send your anonymous confessions to our editor at editor@americancakedecorating.com and you could be featured in our next issue!

“Years ago, when I only played around with sheet cakes, a high school friend of mine wanted me to make a two-tier cake for her son; as a loyal client, she ordered sheet cakes from us faithfully. Her son had just signed a record deal and they were having a HUGE event for him. So naturally, I said yes! I was so excited to make my first tiered cake! Of course, I knew absolutely nothing about supporting a tiered cake with dowels.

Just my luck, on the day of the event, it's pouring cats and dogs. Yet again, I'm clueless about transporting cakes in cake boxes. My two daughters and I are driving down the road with the ugliest two-tiered cake with funky uneven music symbols, and what is supposed to be a 3-D mic as a topper (I tried using ALL fondant for the mic). It was hideous! Again, we knew nothing about other mediums. The stupid mic weighed more than the entire cake!

So, we are about one block from the location when my daughter starts yelling. Wait, first envision an unboxed, ugly cake in the back of a Tahoe. We had removed the third-row seating to allow space. My daughter is illegally and dangerously sitting next to the cake with no seat belt on yelling, 'MOM THE CAKE IS SINKING!'

“MY DAUGHTER IS ILLEGALLY AND DANGEROUSLY SITTING NEXT TO THE CAKE WITH NO SEAT BELT ON YELLING, 'MOM THE CAKE IS SINKING!'”

I pull into the nearest gas station, get out panicked, and I'm devastated. The top tier is sinking into the bottom tier. I didn't know what to do. The event was happening just a block away and I'm beyond done. No repair kit, because you know I didn't know any better! I went inside and grabbed a bunch of drinking straws and the largest lid to a drinking cup I could find. The top tier is a hot mess by now, there are fingerprints in the buttercream, it's bulging. I begin to shove drinking straws into the bottom tier and I also added the

drinking-cup lid for more support. The cake had a supporting board but no dowels. I don't know how I thought that lid was going to add support to this cake, but it's in there. I go back inside, grab a plastic spoon, and frantically try to repair the messy buttercream.

So, we get going, not knowing there was a back entry with a covered entryway, we parked in the front and begin to roll the cake out in pouring rain, trying to keep it dry by covering it with jackets and umbrellas. We place the cake on the cake table and the photographer looked at us and asked, 'What happened to the cake?' With a shocked look I said absolutely nothing and walked away, my head down, trying to avoid my friend. Here she comes around the corner, with nothing but kind words. She must have seen the disappointment in our faces through our dripping wet hair. She thanked me, gave me a tip, and said, 'It's OK. I'm glad you tried, I'm sure it tastes better than it looks.'

All I could do was hug her!!

My poor girls! We drove home soaking wet and crying. Lesson learned? Absolutely! Never go in blind on a project, always do your research, practice, and NEVER stack a cake without dowels. Most importantly...find friends who will support you, even on your worst days.” ACD

Story submitted by Christy Mcatee with Brian's Baker



“I BEGIN TO SHOVE DRINKING STRAWS INTO THE BOTTOM TIER AND I ALSO ADDED THE DRINKING-CUP LID FOR MORE SUPPORT.”



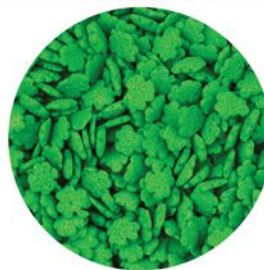
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TIME-SAVING Tools

BY EMILY MCGREGOR

With the **increasing popularity** of pearl-adorned wedding cakes, quilted birthday cakes, and couture-inspired beaded designs, cake artists are looking at the humble dragée with a **renewed interest**.

The only problem: They are the stuff of nightmares to apply to cakes. That's where the **Dragéekiss** steps in.

This quirky little tool was developed by entrepreneur **Gwen Powell** and is set to revolutionize dragée application. Fast, easy, ergonomic; this handy applicator claims to shear hours of time from the fiddly and exasperating job of applying those sweet little balls to cakes.

Emily McGregor, of Happyhills Cakes, took the Dragéekiss for a test-drive, and we **can't wait** to hear what she makes of it!



First Impressions

The Dragéekiss comes in simple plastic packaging, which unlike most plastic packaging is surprisingly easy to open. The device comes with a cardboard funnel to help put the pearls into the tool, and the instructions are simple and easy to follow. As I create a lot of beaded cake designs, I was very happy to give this new tool a test-drive. I also found the price point to be very reasonable.



An Ergonomic Design

The tool is a lovely purple color, which makes it stand out. It looks sturdy and well-designed. I found that the applicator fit easily into my hand and I felt no strain during or after using it. I have fairly big hands and I can comfortably rest my thumb on the end of the pushing lever; surprisingly, it's not fiddly at all. I would recommend not being heavy-handed with it, and make sure you keep the lever straight (don't push at a slight angle). Sometimes I gave it a little shake between each pearl, which keeps the application process running smoothly.

The Dragéekiss works with both 4mm and 5mm pearls, which are the most commonly used sizes of pearls. The applicator coped very well with switching between the two sizes, following the instructions, and I had no problems or issues with the tool jamming.

Simple Goals

The Dragéekiss is really designed with a simple goal, and that is to make our lives as cake decorators easier. On a normal day, applying the pearls by hand, this intricate design would have taken about 8 hours. I probably may have lost half of my sanity in the process watching dragées ping around my kitchen table! Using the tool, this cake took me about 5 hours, which shaved 3 hours off the application time. In Netflix time, that's two movies, or 3 episodes! It was also stress-free as I wasn't wasting time playing find the dragée! If all the pearls on this design had been Dragéekiss-size, the design would have taken even less time, as I did apply the larger pearls by hand.

I would highly recommend that when using the Dragéekiss you don't choose a fondant that sets or crusts too quickly. You will get better results working with a fondant that hasn't had time to get too firm. This will allow the tool to do its job of making sure the pearl sits comfortably in the icing.

“I'VE SPENT SO MANY HOURS ON CAKES LIKE THIS, AND IT REALLY IS A PLEASURE TO FIND A TOOL THAT IS SPECIFIC TO THIS JOB.”



WWW.DRAGEEKISS.COM

Final Thoughts

I would absolutely recommend this product to other cakers. I've spent so many hours on cakes like this, and it really is a pleasure to find a tool that is specific to this job—you probably would appreciate it the most if you're familiar with that pinging sound of pearls hitting the floor! With this tool, that's a sound you'll never have to hear again!

“USING THE TOOL, THIS CAKE TOOK ME ABOUT 5 HOURS, WHICH **SHAVED 3 HOURS OFF THE APPLICATION TIME.** IN NETFLIX TIME, THAT'S TWO MOVIES, OR 3 EPISODES!”

Emily McGregor

has been running Happyhills Cakes for the past seven years, working predominantly in wedding cakes in the idyllic wedding location off the coast of Scotland. She has a love of contemporary design, loves working with sugar flowers, and likes cakes to be as individual and stylish as possible.



Happyhillscakes.co.uk
Facebook.com/Happyhills-Cakes
Instagram.com/happyhillscakes

Beaded Beauty

BY EMILY MCGREGOR

COMPONENTS

Dragées in different sizes and colors: silver, black, pearl, and white

Dragéekiss Pearl Applicator

Water

Brush

To Prepare: Cover your cakes in fondant, and stack and dowel as necessary.

1. Choose a color scheme and organize your edible dragées.

Emily notes: I like to work with monochromatic colors as the design really stands out. I find that combining different sizes gives the design more interest.

2. Find an inspiration picture or a beaded design to work from. Print out the design onto plain white paper.

Emily notes: I like to use non-cake images to get different ideas. Couture embroidery is a great source of inspiration.

3. Pin the design to the cake, repositioning until you are happy with the placement of the design. Then, using a sterile pin or needle, prick through the paper into the cake to leave a guide for where to apply the pearls.

4. Using light dabs of water on the cake as a glue, place the larger dragées on by hand to flesh out the design.

5. Use the Dragéekiss Pearl Applicator for 4mm and 5mm dragées. **ACD**



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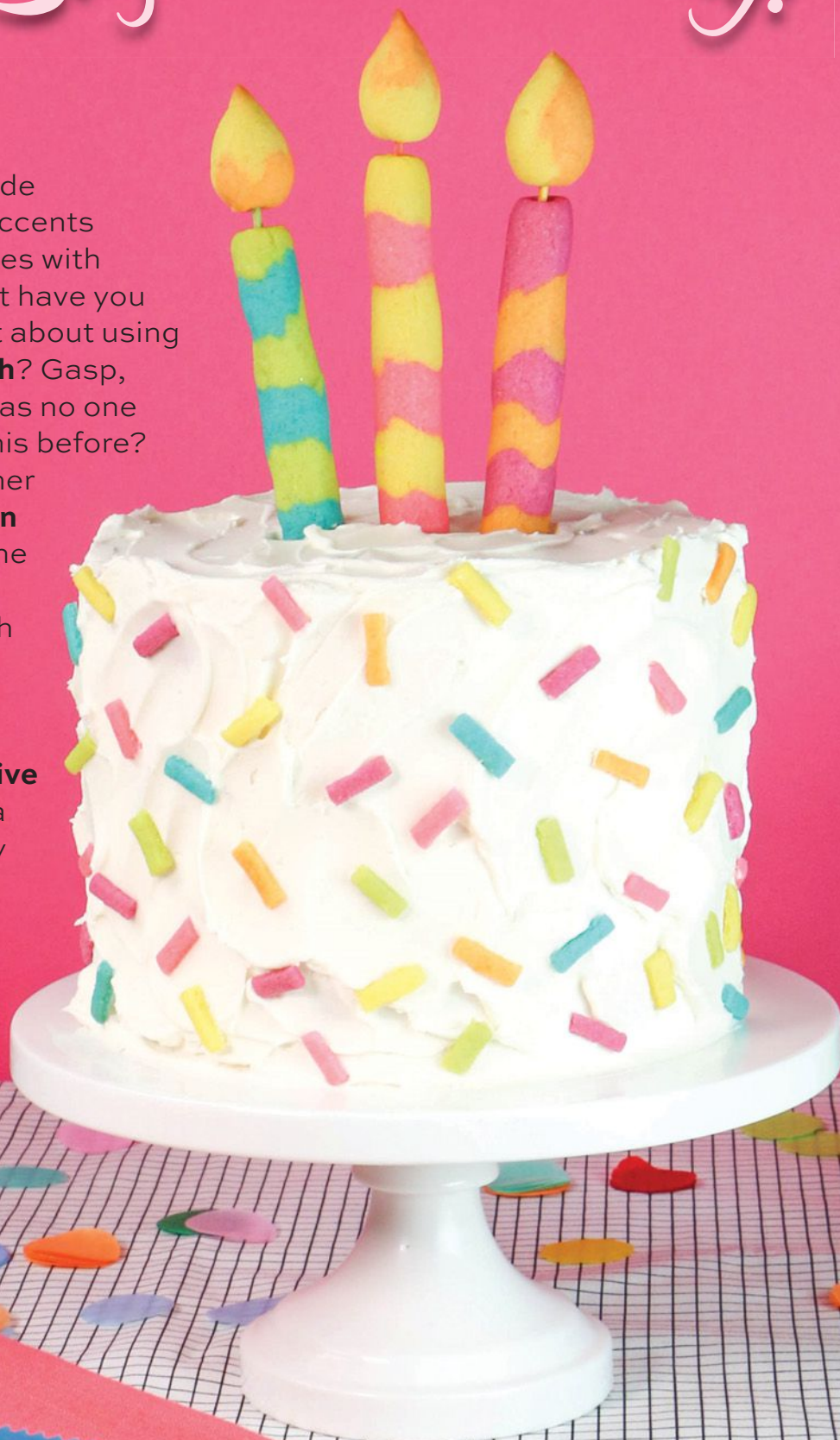
SWAG!!

Amazing Swag Backpacks for competitors and VIP!

Sugar-Cookie Party!

BY ERIN GARDNER

We've all made decorative accents for party cakes with fondant...but have you ever thought about using **cookie dough**? Gasp, right...why has no one thought of this before? Erin shares her **adventures in baking**, as she uses sugar-cookie dough in a rainbow of colors to make some **fun, decorative accents** for a perfect party cake.



For my next Adventure in Buttercream, I've invited along one of buttercream's besties—the sugar cookie. It is a party-cake issue, after all! What's a party without a few good friends?

Sugar-cookie dough has long held a superpower that, I believe, we've only begun to scratch the surface of understanding: the ability to mimic fondant. You can color it, knead it, sculpt it, and layer it, just like fondant. Unlike fondant appliqués or sculpted pieces, it doesn't take hours or days to dry, just minutes to bake. From a flavor perspective, is there a comparison? I'm not a fondant-hater by a long stretch, but have you ever snuck down to the kitchen at midnight for a strip of fondant? Didn't think so.

Of course, sugar-cookie dough has its limitations. Getting dough to look pure white is a task. I'm sure someone in the cake world (Me? You?) will conquer that mountain any day now. The bake time needs to be watched like a hawk or you'll lose your bright colors. The dough has to also be super-chilled or frozen to ensure that the shapes are maintained. At the moment, it's not a dead ringer for fondant, but it sure makes for a tasty runner-up.

COMPONENTS

1 batch sugar-cookie dough (your favorite or my recipe on ErinBakes.com)

Gel food coloring: vibrant pink, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple

Parchment paper

1-inch circle cutter

Toothpicks

Rolling pin

Bench scraper

6-inch round cake finished in classic buttercream swoops

Erin Gardner is a self-taught pastry chef, author, cake-design instructor, wife, mom, and self-described occasional unicorn. After taking an inspiring sugar-flower class in NYC, she decided it was time to strike out on her own. In 2009 she opened Wild Orchid Baking Co. in NH. Erin has competed on, and won, Food Network's *Sweet Genius*, and received nods from both *Martha Stewart Weddings* and *Brides* magazine as one of the top wedding-cake pros in the country. After the birth of her second child, Erin made the big decision to move on from Wild Orchid Baking Co. and launch her website, Erin Bakes, where she draws on her fine pastry skills, modern cake-design aesthetic, and overall kitchen MacGyver-ness to create easy, accessible, and delicious recipes and cake-decorating projects.



Erinbakes.com

Erinbakes.com/books

[Amazon.com/Erin-Bakes-Cake-Decorate-Adventure/dp/1623368367](https://www.amazon.com/Erin-Bakes-Cake-Decorate-Adventure/dp/1623368367)

A Rainbow of Colors

Coloring sugar-cookie dough is very similar to coloring fondant. Knead the dough a few times to warm up the butter and make the dough pliable. Poke a well in the dough and drop in a few dots of color. When coloring cookie dough, keep the yellow-ish hue in mind when deciding how much coloring to add. By all means, use gel food coloring when tinting sugar-cookie dough. Water-based food color would turn this whole thing into a huge mess. I'm sure powdered colors would do a great job as well, I just haven't tested them myself. Follow my lead and divide your dough into six parts, then tint each one a different color of the rainbow. Or customize this project by using colors that match your party's theme. Dust your work surface with flour as needed if the dough gets too sticky.

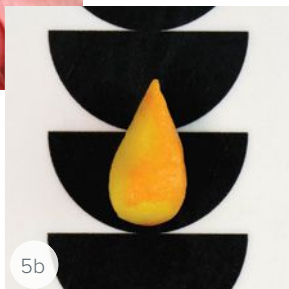


Preheat the oven to 325°F and place a rack in the center of the oven.

“COLORING SUGAR-COOKIE DOUGH IS **VERY SIMILAR** TO COLORING FONDANT. KNEAD THE DOUGH A FEW TIMES TO **WARM UP THE BUTTER** AND MAKE THE DOUGH **PLIABLE**. POKE A WELL IN THE DOUGH AND DROP IN A FEW DOTS OF COLOR.”

Cookie Candles

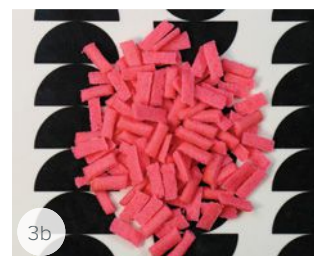
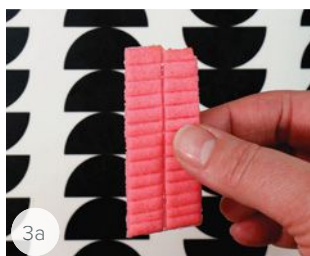
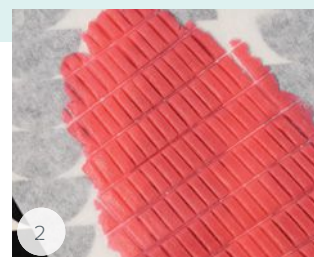
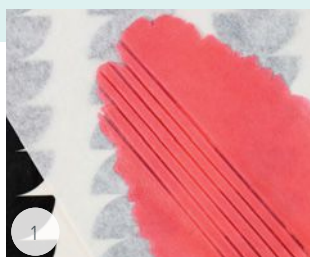
1. Pinch off two egg-size portions of dough in contrasting colors. Set the pieces of dough side by side and roll the dough to about ¼ inch thick. Cover the rest of the dough with plastic wrap to prevent it from drying out while you're working. Keep the dough covered when not in use.
2. Cut three circles from one color and four circles from the other color. Peel away the extra dough and set it aside to reuse.
3. Stack the circles up, alternating the colors. Give the stack a gentle squish to make sure they're adhered to one another.
4. Roll the log between your hands to start blending the doughs and elongating the log. Once you're confident it's one solid piece, roll the dough against your work surface to make the body of the candle as long and thin as you'd like. Place the log onto a parchment-lined cookie sheet. Insert a toothpick into one end of the log, leaving about ½ inch of the toothpick sticking out. I used colored toothpicks for extra flair, but you can use whatever you have. Obviously, make it known to all who will be served this cake that there are toothpicks supporting the candle flames. Just like you would with sugar flowers.
5. Pinch off small gumball-size rounds of yellow and orange dough. Roll the colors together to make a single ball. Allow the colors to blend but remain distinct. Shape the ball into a teardrop and slide it onto the end of the toothpick. Pop the tray in the freezer while you work on the other candles. Allow all of the candles to freeze solid before baking.
6. Bake the candles for 8 minutes or until they've just lost their raw sheen. If your oven runs hot, set the timer for 6 minutes and just hang out nearby until you're confident they're done. Allow the cookies to cool completely before using them on the cake.



“SUGAR-COOKIE DOUGH HAS LONG HELD A **SUPERPOWER** THAT, I BELIEVE, WE'VE ONLY BEGUN TO **SCRATCH THE SURFACE** OF UNDERSTANDING: THE ABILITY TO **MIMIC FONDANT.**”

Cookie Sprinkles

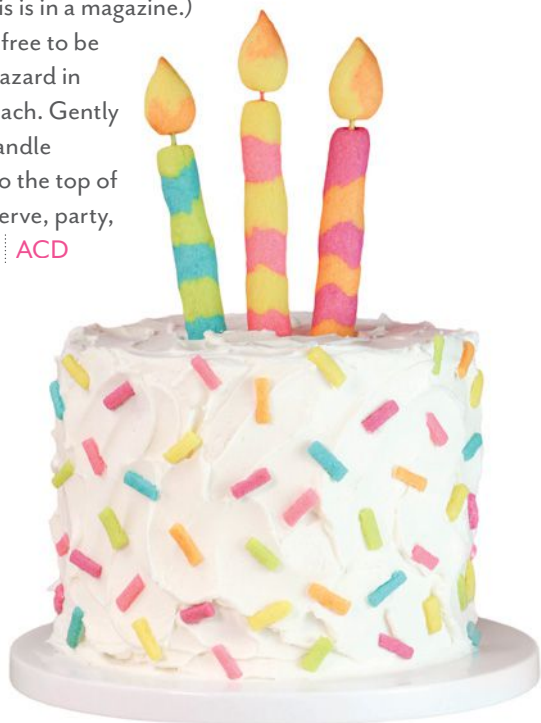
1. Cut six pieces of parchment paper (a piece for every color you're using) into small rectangles approximately 6x4 inches in size. Tear off another egg-size mound of dough and roll it out on one of the small parchment rectangles until very thin, thinner than you've probably rolled sugar-cookie dough before, thinner than you'd roll fondant to cover a cake. I was able to make out the pattern on my cutting board through the dough—that's pretty thin!
2. Use a bench scraper to score long lines in the dough about ¼ inch apart. Turn the paper and cut the strips into ¾-inch segments. Leave this grid intact on the paper and move it to a cookie sheet. Pop the sheet in the freezer until the dough is solid, about 5 minutes. Repeat with the other colors.
3. Bake the frozen sheets of dough for 4–5 minutes. These will bake up very fast, so don't wander too far once you've hit the 4-minute mark. Allow the cookies to cool completely before breaking them up into sprinkles.
4. Pick up the baked cookie sheets in segments and snap the sprinkles apart. It's a very satisfying process. These cookie sprinkles and candles can be made up to a week in advance and stored in an airtight container or zip-top bag at room temperature.



All Together Now

I gingerly placed each of my sprinkles onto a freshly iced cake. (I mean, this is in a magazine.)

Please feel free to be more haphazard in your approach. Gently push the candle cookies into the top of the cake. Serve, party, and enjoy! | ACD



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CUPCAKES Galore!

BY SUE MCMAHON

Everyone loves cupcakes! Simple, delicious, bite-size, and completely customizable. In this issue's **Matter of Taste**, we share a fabulous rose cupcake recipe from **The Cupcake Handbook**, by **Sue McMahon**. As the cookery editor for *Woman's Weekly* magazine, Sue brings years of sweet expertise to this cupcake anthology. With 80 recipes, and lots of mini-tutorials, Sue provides **kitchen-tested recipes** for children, and grown-ups, with cupcakes for birthdays, weddings, festive holidays, and **so much more**.



GRAB YOUR COPY

You can pick up a copy of *The Cupcake Handbook: Your Guide to More than 80 Recipes for Every Occasion* from the following retailers:

Barnes and Noble \$12.99

Amazon.com \$12.99

About the Author

Sue McMahon owes much of her success to her mother, who strongly encouraged her interest in baking and cake decoration at a young age. "She has shared her love and enthusiasm for baking with me," says McMahon. "I hope readers will now enjoy sharing those skills." It's that caring touch that gives this cupcake book a little something extra.



Suemcmahon.com



Rose cupcakes

Not only are these cupcakes decorated with rose petals, but they are scented with rosewater, too! Make sure you use rose petals that have not been sprayed with any harmful chemicals.

Makes 12 standard-size cupcakes

For the cupcakes

- 11 Tbsp. (150 g, or 5½ oz.) butter, softened
- ⅔ cup (150 g, or 5½ oz.) superfine sugar
- 3 medium eggs
- 1¼ cups (150 g, or 5½ oz.) self-rising flour
- 2½ Tbsp. rosewater

For the topping

- 12 rose petals
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 5–7 Tbsp. superfine sugar
- 2¾ cups (350 g, or 12½ oz.) confectioners' sugar
- 3½–5 Tbsp. rosewater
- Pink food coloring

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F/190°C (gas 5).
2. To make the cupcakes, beat together the butter and sugar in a bowl until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, flour, and rosewater to the bowl and beat until the mixture is smooth. Divide the mixture among the cupcake liners and bake in the center of the oven for 15 to 18 minutes until the cakes have risen and are just firm to the touch in the center. Remove the cakes from the oven and transfer them to a wire rack to cool.
3. To crystalize the rose petals, brush them with egg white and lightly sprinkle with superfine sugar. Place them on a sheet of parchment paper and set them aside to dry.
4. To make the icing, sift the confectioners' sugar into a bowl and add sufficient rosewater to make a thick, glossy icing. Color the icing a pale pink. Spread the icing on top of the cupcakes and place a crystalized rose petal on each.

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Stand-ing Out!

BY REBEKAH WILBUR

ARKON® MOUNTS

Did you check Facebook today? How many people are following you? How's your Instagram presence? Are you looking for ways to **improve your reach**? Bakers, sugar artists, and pastry chefs alike are always on the lookout for **easier and better ways** to create and post compelling videos and photos to **boost** their online visibility and **propel** their business. Intrigued? Then read on...

Named one of the Top 50 Social Media Influencers of 2017 by Joel Comm, **Aaron Roth** has positioned Arkon Mounts as one of the most admired brands in the live-streaming community. "We really enjoy meeting others and empowering them with the knowledge and tools that can make their business stronger," says Aaron.

Taking a Stand

If you recently attended a cake show, there's a good chance you've met Aaron Roth, VP of Sales & Marketing at Arkon Mounts. Aaron is on a mission to help bakers use live streaming, demo videos, and Instagram to promote their brand on social media.

Though entering its 30th year in business, connecting with the baking community is a relatively new development for Arkon Mounts. Back in 2016, Candy Ramirez, founder of the Queen Bee Bakers community, was searching for a high-quality phone mount to record her baking tutorial videos. Candy notes, "Meeting Aaron has really changed my business for the better; before investing in the Pro Stand, I was using a wooden device my husband had made. The Pro Stand has definitely improved the quality of my content, allowing me to go hands-free, and to get better angles and close-ups, which has had a knock-on effect on the growth of my audience," states Candy.

Not long after their introduction, Candy joined Aaron in Los Angeles as a special guest in the "Arkon Live Lounge" studio, a platform to demonstrate ways to utilize tools and techniques for upping the ante of your social media game. While icing and decorating cupcakes, they live streamed the baking demonstration to both of their communities on Periscope and Facebook simultaneously. Aaron notes, "On any platform you choose, the Pro Stand enables bakers, sugar artists, cake designers, and fruit sculptors alike to maximize the visibility of their talents and leverage demos into their full potential."

A Glowing Recommendation

Since that time, Aaron has fostered many relationships to help professional and aspiring bakers to gain visibility both as artists and businesses. One such artist is Elizabeth (Lizzo) Marek of the Sugar Geek Show. Liz uses the Pro Stand in her tutorial creation. "The overhead feature that the Pro Stand has is key to professional-looking demos or little YouTube videos, and has made making videos in this digital age super easy!" said Lizzo. "I think every caker should have one!"

With glowing recommendations from the cake elite, it's no surprise that other content creators are jumping on the Arkon bandwagon. Chef Pepsy Garcia has been an advocate of Arkon for several years, and newcomer Kerrie Wyer of Viva La Buttercream uses the Pro Stand to both film live and prerecorded tutorials, and to communicate with her audience, which has grown from 5,000 to over 75,000 in a little over eighteen months.



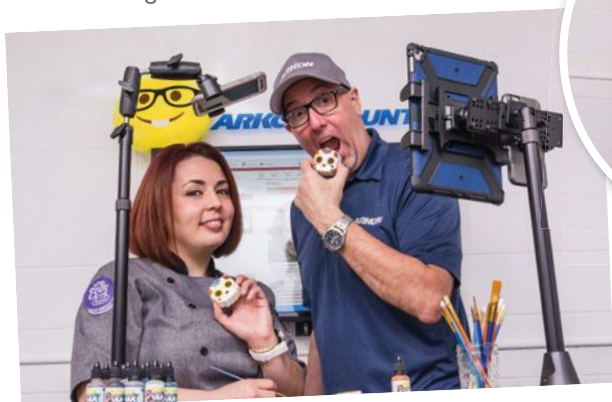
Queen Bee Baker Candy Ramirez with Aaron Roth at the Arkon Live Lounge studio in Los Angeles.



Candy uses the Arkon Pro Stand (model HD8RV29) online, a height-adjustable phone stand.

“THE OVERHEAD FEATURE THAT THE PRO STAND HAS IS KEY TO PROFESSIONAL-LOOKING DEMOS OR LITTLE YOUTUBE VIDEOS, AND HAS MADE MAKING VIDEOS IN THIS DIGITAL AGE SUPER EASY... I THINK EVERY CAKER SHOULD HAVE ONE.”

—LIZ MAREK
(SUGAR GEEK SHOW)



Chef Pepsy Garcia using Arkon Mounts during her live broadcast.

A Must-Have for Marketing

With more and more cake decorators, bakers, and bloggers becoming content creators, and seeing the huge benefits garnered from live streaming, Arkon has developed an increasing role in the baking community and is gaining a solid reputation through referral. “I recommend Arkon to my followers because it was a one-time investment that has had a big impact on the growth of my business. Everything is moving toward social media, fast. Even if you don’t use it for business, it makes life easier; you can watch a show, listen to a podcast or music, all while on one of the stands and hands-free versus on the counter or worrying about dropping your device,” states Candy.

Getting in Touch

“I’m excited about this year’s upcoming *The Cake Bar Cake Show* in Long Beach, CA, [July 7–8] where I’ll be teaching a two-hour class designed to help bakers showcase their talents on Instagram and Facebook through live video,” says Aaron. “I’ll be sharing tips and tricks to help you grow your business.” Show attendees can sign up for this event and classes at thecakebarshow.com.

Other than trade shows, how does Arkon connect with the baking community? “We love Instagram and so do bakers,” says Aaron. Top-notch bakers like Angelica Garcia (@redflourcreations) utilize Instagram to achieve mind-boggling exposure. “It doesn’t need to be complicated,” notes Aaron, adding, “Something simple but well-executed that resonates with people in a digestible format can be extremely powerful.” Angelica posted a simple yet pretty video showing the proper way to roll out fondant and had nearly one million views.



Angelica Garcia reaches an audience of over one million followers during her Instagram broadcasts.

Serving the Community

It’s clear that Arkon and Aaron are committed to better understanding and catering to the needs of the cake-decorating and baking industry. Partnering with the people who benefit from their products, and learning their individual stories, has informed their growth in this industry. Aaron says, “I love that many in the baking community rely on their Arkon mounts to showcase their talent. We’re honored to not only have them as customers, but to also call them friends. There are some truly exceptional artists who do amazing things with sugar. It’s still a treat to see Liz Marek, Joyce Marcellus, Janelle Copeland, and Pepsy Garcia using our tools to help them share their gifts with all of us. We look forward to making many new friends in 2018.” **ACD**

Arkon Mounts offers more than 600 products designed to hold tablets, phones, and cameras. In an effort to reach out to the community, each month Aaron gives away the “baker’s dream bundle of products” on Instagram. If you weren’t this month’s winner, you can still find them online:

- Pro Stand (model HD8RV2g)
- Fold-Up Tablet Stand (model IPM-TAB1)
- 11" Phone Tripod (model RVTRIXL)
- Clip-On LED Mini Ring Light (model SPLEDRING)

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The Hot List



1. ifiGOURMET is proud to offer an all-natural line of confetti decorations.

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3. Enjay: Quality Bakery Packaging Manufacturer since 1983 Full Line of Pads/Boards/Boxes/Cupcake/Tulip Cups and MORE ASI and AIB 3rd Party Audited Facility Distributor and Broker Enquiries welcome. sales@enjay.com, www.enjay.com. **4. New from Ateco!** 3 piece non stick sculpturing tool set. Great for isomalt and other sticky foods. Available at Simi Cakes www.simicakes.com and other cake decorating supply stores. 516-676-7100, doug@atecousa.com.

5. New Lower Cost Pure Vanilla Extract!

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6. Express Creativity with Precision Grex Airbrush is recognized for their innovative and quality line of airbrush products used across a wide range of industries and applications. By partnering with talented and cross disciplinary artists, Grex has helped specifically re-invent the use of airbrushing in the world of culinary arts. 888-447-3926, info@grexairbrush.com, www.grexairbrush.com.

LORANN Oils and Flavors

Unicorns and Rainbows

BY VIOLET LIN TRAN

“Unicorns are **SO popular** nowadays and used for a huge **variety of celebrations**, from baby showers to children’s birthdays, to teen birthdays and even weddings, so it was a logical choice for the theme of my **celebration design** for this month’s Let’s Party issue of ACD,” notes Violet. Learn to re-create this bold party cake with this step-by-step tutorial from **The Violet Cake Shop**.



COMPONENTS

3 oz of white gum paste	Cutting mat	Two skewers (¼" or 2mm thick)
30 oz or 2 lb total of 50/50 fondant/gum-paste mix, colored to deep magenta, peach, light yellow, light chartreuse green, light blue, and light purple (approximately 5 oz each)	Small rolling pin	Toothpick
Tylose powder (optional)	Needle-nose pliers	Round filigree silicone mold (the one used is from Way Beyond Cakes by Mayen)
Vegetable shortening	Pasta or pizza wheel cutter	Unicorn profile template
Edible glue	Craft knife or X-Acto knife	Sheet of paper towel
Lemon extract	Small brush for water	
Gold luster dust	Small brush for shortening	
Gel paste colors: electric pink, violet or purple, yellow, orange, sky blue, leaf green, and red	Wide flat brush for painting (½" wide or larger)	
	Scissors	
	Ruler	
	Ball tool	
	Dresden tool	
	Thin foam pad	



Download the unicorn template on our blog at americancakedecorating.com.

TO COLOR PASTE FOR DÉCOR ELEMENTS

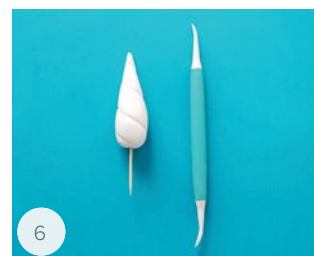
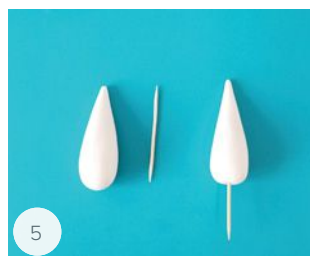
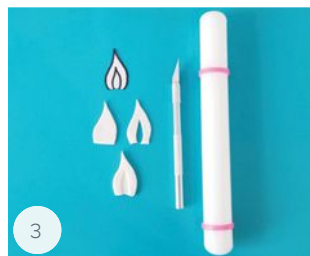
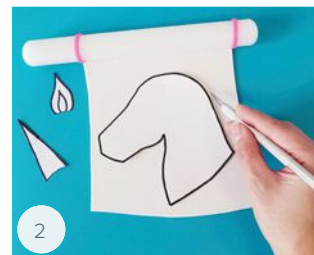
Start with white 50/50 fondant/gum-paste mix and add coloring a bit at a time. The amounts below are approximate and will depend on the brand of coloring you use, you can adjust as needed. If your fondant/gum-paste mix is a little soft, you can add a small amount of tylose powder to stiffen the paste.

- **Deep magenta** – 8 parts deep pink, 2 parts violet, 1 part red
- **Peach** – equal parts yellow and orange
- **Light yellow** – add a touch of yellow
- **Light chartreuse green** – equal parts yellow and leaf green
- **Light blue** – add a touch of sky blue
- **Light purple** – equal parts deep pink and violet

To Prepare: Cover a 5-inch and 6-inch round cake with light pink fondant. The tiers should be 5 inches tall.

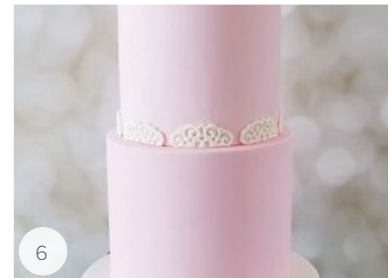
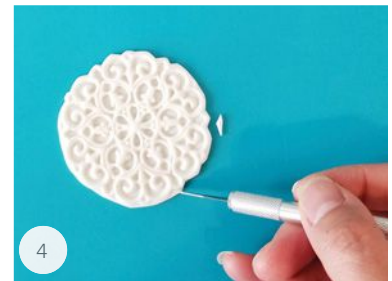
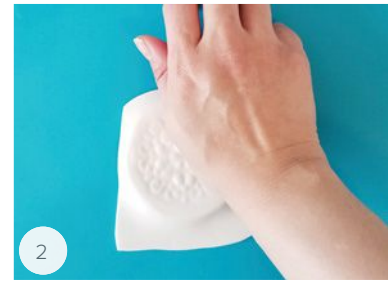
Creating the Unicorn Profile Decal

1. Print out the unicorn profile template provided (see link on ACD blog) and cut out with scissors.
2. Roll out 3 oz white gum paste to 1mm thickness, large enough to cover the template; place template over top and trace around the profile section with a knife to cut out the shape. Carefully transfer to a sheet of paper towel to set for about an hour while you work on the other pieces.
3. Cut out two pieces for the ear using the ear section of the template. Cut out the inner portion from the ear pieces as shown, and place the cut-out portion over top of the full portion.
4. To create the horn, roll 1 oz of white gum paste into a ball, then taper the shape into a cone by rolling and pressing on one end with your fingers or the palms of your hand.
5. Lightly dampen a toothpick and insert into the bottom of the cone, about halfway up.
6. Create the spiral detailing on the horn using the thin end of a Dresden tool; hold the Dresden tool at approximately a 45-degree angle and press to mark a continuous line along the entire length, rolling the piece as needed. Go over the line again to deepen the grooves. Set aside to dry for about an hour.

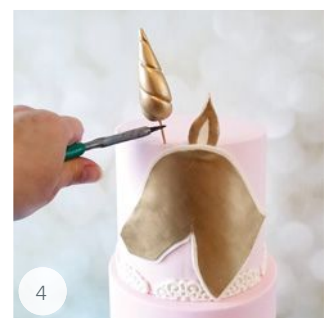
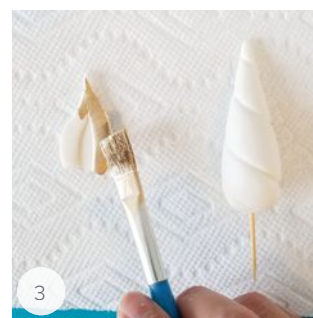
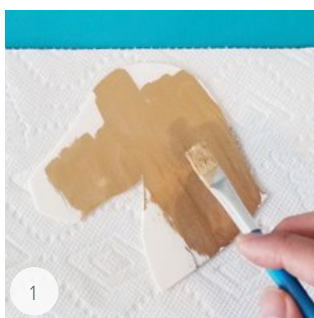


Creating the Top Border Detailing

1. Brush a thin layer of shortening into the cavity of a filigree mold. Roll out white gum paste to 1mm thickness, large enough to fit over the round filigree mold (or a similar mold with intricate detailing).
2. Place the gum paste sheet over top of the mold and press into the grooves and cavity of the mold, using your fingers and palms of your hands, ensuring all grooves are filled with paste.
3. Unmold the paste and cut along the outer edge of the pattern using your wheel cutter. Next, clean up the edges of the embossed pattern using a sharp knife.
4. Cut small equal portions from the embossed piece as shown to create the border detailing. Create more pieces as needed.
5. Cut away the edge pieces, leaving a triangle in the center. The edge pieces will be used to create the decorative border.
6. Evenly space the border detailing along the bottom of the top tier. Once you are satisfied with the spacing, adhere to the cake by brushing some water or edible glue to the backs of the embossed pieces.



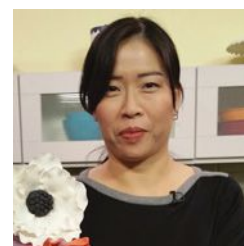
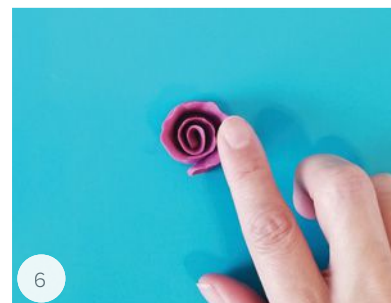
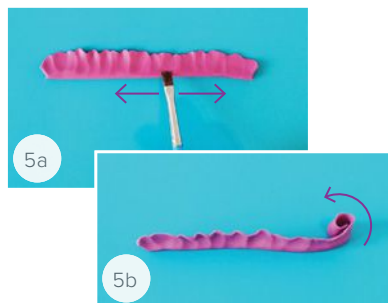
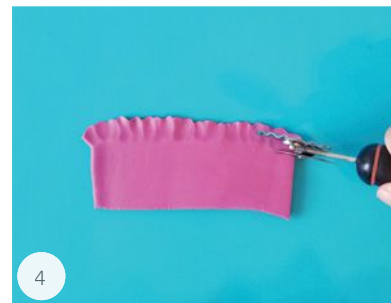
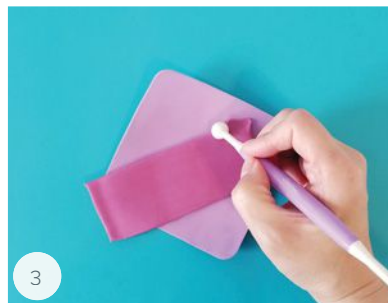
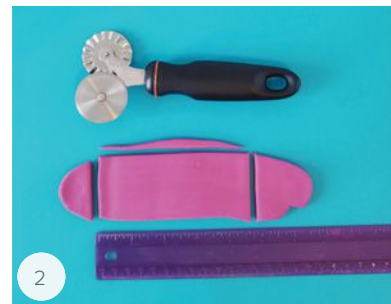
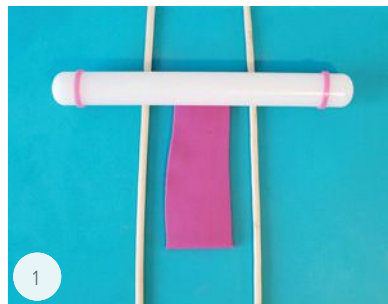
Painting the Unicorn Profile Pieces with Gold Luster



1. Mix gold luster dust with lemon extract until you get a smooth paint-like consistency and paint the decal with long, even strokes using a wide, flat brush. Let dry a few minutes before painting a second layer, go over again with a third layer if needed.
Violet notes: Using lemon extract or pure alcohol to paint luster dusts gives a shinier, more lustrous finish than using vodka since the alcohol content is much higher and dries quicker and more evenly.
2. After the paint has dried (about a minute), roll out white gum paste to 1mm thickness, large enough to cover the profile, and place the painted profile on top. Attach with a little water before cutting a small border around the profile with an X-Acto knife.
3. Paint the top layer of the ear piece and the horn with gold luster, but leave the bottom layer of the ear white.
4. Add the profile piece to your top tier as shown, attaching with water or edible glue. Add the ear piece which should sit on top of the top tier, just behind the head profile. Finally, add the horn using needle-nose pliers to push the toothpick into the cake, at a 45-degree angle.

Creating My Stand-Up Ruffle Rosettes

- Roll out a handful of the deep magenta 50/50 paste into a wide strip, $\frac{1}{4}$ " in thickness, using the dowels as a guide.
Violet notes: Using a 50/50 mix will prevent the paste from drying too quickly and tearing when the ruffles are being thinned.
- Trim the strip to 4.5" long, and cut a straight edge on one end.
- Create a ruffled texture on the top trimmed edge of the strip by using the large end of your ball tool. You will want to drag the ball tool about $\frac{1}{2}$ " out, starting $\frac{1}{8}$ " under the top edge and rolling or thinning the fondant/gum paste upward and away from you, using even strokes.
Violet notes: As you ruffle, you will also thin out the top edge.
- Once you've ruffled the entire length of the strip, use a wheel cutter to cut just under the ruffled portion where the paste is still thick; this will create a strip that has thin ruffling at the top that is approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ " tall and a bottom that is still $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick so it can stand up on its own. Create four more strips in the same way before rolling into rosettes.
- Apply water or edible glue to the bottom portion of each ruffled strip on the right half and roll the strip counterclockwise.
- Flare out the ruffled edge with your fingertips to create a fuller rosette. Repeat the process with the other strips, before allowing to set for 10 minutes and then adhering to the cake.
- Attach the rosette to the side of the cake, and hold for a few seconds. Keep adding rosettes until you've finished a complete row with the magenta, then do the same with each of the colors.
Violet notes: It is best to work with four rosettes at a time. Add each new row of rosettes on top of the previous row by positioning those on the top row in between two rosettes from the bottom row.
- Embellish the unicorn profile with some ruffle rosettes to act as the hair, ensuring the colors are evenly spaced. Fill in the gaps and spaces with some smaller rolled roses in complementary colors. **ACD**



Violet is a full-time stay-at-home mom of two, who happens to also "cake" on the side. She has been creating custom cakes for nearly a decade, is self-taught, and has become known and recognized for her unique designs and distinctive use of bold colors and textures. Her work has been featured in numerous magazines internationally, as a sugar-art instructor, and a Satin Ice Artist of Excellence. Violet teaches her unique style in demos, hands-on classes, and magazine tutorials, as well as online with Craftsy (U.S.) and Pretty Witty Cakes (UK).



thevioletcakeshop.com
thevioletcakeshop.wordpress.com



[thevioletcakeshop](https://www.facebook.com/thevioletcakeshop)



GORGEOUS *Gingham*

BY REBECCA SCHARMAN

Inspired by stunning pastel Easter dresses, **Rebecca Scharman** creates a beautiful cake perfect for spring. This step-by-step tutorial will show you how to create gingham pleats, sensational smocking, and captivating cross-stitching. “I love Easter dresses, they have so many **unique elements** that translate so perfectly into cake artistry,” states Rebecca.



COMPONENTS

Fondant smoother	Fondant-covered cake tiers: 4x4, 5x2*, 6x5, 7x2*, 8x8 (*fondant is not required as cake will be wrapped during decoration)
Sharp cutting tool (e.g., scalpel or X-Acto knife)	
Right-angled ruler	
Straight edge for cutting lines (metal ruler, quilting ruler)	Small and medium ball tool
Rolling pin (large and small)	Fondant
	Gum paste

Rebecca Scharman started cake decorating in 2010 during her maternity leave with her first child, and what started as a hobby quickly blossomed into a passion. Since then, Rebecca has immersed herself into the world of cake art. She taught herself the fundamentals but wanted to perfect her skills. In 2015, she enrolled in a class with Margaret Braun and since then has been taught by some of the world's best, including Ron Ben-Israel and Susan Trianos.



Everaftercakes.com

Creating the Cross-Stitch

For this design, the cross-stitch pattern is first created on graph paper, then a square texture pattern is embossed onto the fondant and the pattern is piped onto the cake.

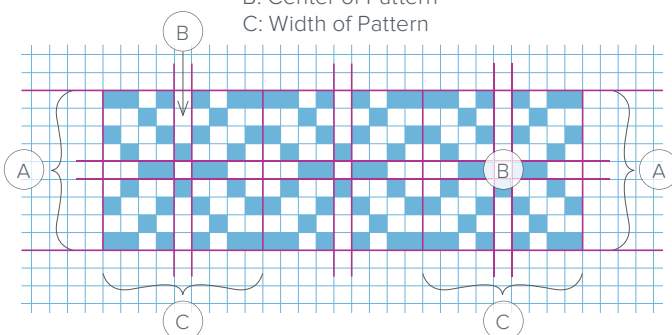
Cross-Stitch Pattern Design

1. Measure the height of the cake, and using the texture mat, work out how many squares on the graph paper equal the height of the cake. For the 7x2 tier I have used in the example, a total of 10 squares fit into the height of the cake. As I wanted the design to have a clear center point, I used a pattern of 9x9 squares.
2. Using the graph paper, measure out 9 squares for the height and width of the pattern. To get a sense for what the design will look like when repeated, I mapped out 3 pattern areas.
3. As I found it very hard to visualize the design when I used an "x" in each square, I just colored in a square where a cross-stitch would be placed.

COMPONENTS FOR THE CROSS-STITCH

Texture mat/embossing tool: square (each square should be no larger than ¼ inch)	Piping tips #1 and #1.5
Piping bag filled with stiff white royal icing, fitted with coupler	Graph paper
	Pointed tool such as a pin
	Dresden tool

A: Height of Cake (9 squares)
B: Center of Pattern
C: Width of Pattern



Fondant Embossing (Wrapping Method)

To prepare the cake for piping we first need to cover the cake with an embossed fondant. I find wrapping the cake to be much easier than draping fondant on the cake. The seams can be hidden at the back of the cake.

1. Roll out some blue fondant onto a smooth surface to a size just larger than the circumference of the cake.
2. Place the fondant on the top of the cake and then put a larger cake board on top. Flip the cake over so that the fondant is now on the bottom.
3. Using a sharp tool, cut the fondant around the circumference of the cake, keeping the cut as clean as possible.
4. Flip the cake back over and remove the cake board. Touch up any imperfections before the fondant crusts.



5. Roll out a long strip of the same blue fondant a little bit longer and taller than the height of the cake.

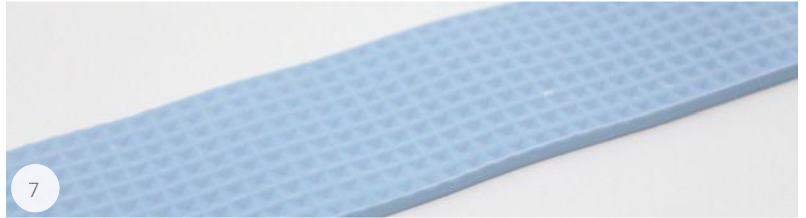


6. Lay the texture mat on top of the fondant and emboss the design using the fondant smoother by evenly applying pressure to transfer the design. Carefully remove the texture mat and reposition as needed, paying attention to align the design as closely as possible.

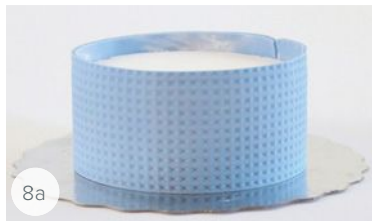


7. Using a sharp knife, cut the fondant flush with the design.

Rebecca notes: *It is important to keep the design as straight and even as possible as any slant may skew the over design.*



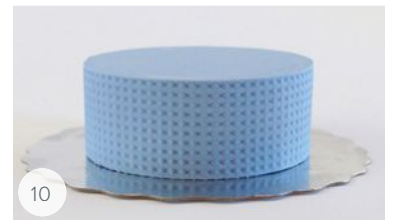
8. Place a larger cake board on top of the cake again and flip the cake over. Wrap the textured fondant around the cake with the cut edge flush against the cake board. Using a square ruler, cut through both pieces of fondant and press the seams together as neatly as possible.



9. Using a sharp knife or blade, trim the excess fondant off the cake.



10. Flip the cake over and fix any imperfections at the top of the cake. I like to make sure that the top and sides of the cake are flush together.



Piping the Cross-Stitch Design

Before applying the cross-stitch, you may want to let the fondant-covered cake sit a little so that it forms a crust. This way any errors can be safely removed without leaving marks in the cake.

1. Find the front and center of your cake where you want to place your pattern. To help you visualize the space of the pattern, you can insert pins into the cake or make a mark with a fine-pointed object.



2. Using a piping bag filled with stiff-consistency royal icing and fitted with a PME #1 tip, pipe the pattern onto the cake, using the template you created earlier as a reference.

Rebecca notes: *I piped the cross down (top to bottom) and then piped the cross up (bottom to top) so that the lines overlapped the same way for each stitch. Using a smaller tip will yield a more defined stitch.*



3. Repeat the pattern until you reach the back of the cake.
Rebecca notes: *I found it helpful to work from the front center to the left, and then again from the front center back to the right. This way the front has a perfect pattern and the back hides any imperfections.*



COMPONENTS FOR THE SMOCKING EFFECT

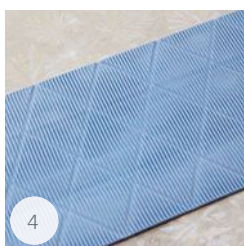
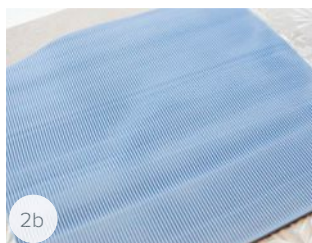
Texture mat/embossing tool/quilting pattern/threaded rod (ridged)

Round dragées (gold)
Knife tool for marking flowers

Flower cutters: blossom, daisy, and leaf

To Prepare: A ribbed effect is given to the fondant. Over top, a quilting pattern is used which will act as a guide for mimicking stitches in the smocked portion of a dress. Royal icing is used for the stitching as I found it the easiest and most efficient. Lastly, flower appliqués are added that appear to be stitched onto the tier.

Fondant Embossing-Paneling Method



1. Roll out fondant to your desired thickness. Keep in mind that this fondant will be textured with a threaded rod (or similar texture) and will thin out as a result.
2. Using the threaded rod, and gentle, even pressure, work your way from top to bottom.
Rebecca notes: Make sure that the fondant is well dusted with cornstarch as the rod or texture mats have a habit of sticking.
3. Once the fondant has been textured, lay the quilting mat on top and imprint the pattern. You will want to align the quilting pattern and the ridges already created as best as you can.
4. Take the quilting pattern off the fondant and trim the top and the bottom to the correct height.
Rebecca notes: You will need to trim to the same spot on the pattern each time or the pattern will not align when placed on the cake.
5. Next you will need to trim along the diagonal of the quilting pattern.
6. Use piping gel to attach the fondant to the cake.
Rebecca notes: The edges should be flush with the top and bottom so that the ribs in the fondant run straight up and down.
7. Apply the panels all the way around the cake, don't worry if the design doesn't match up perfectly. To trim the cake, hold a ruler at the same angle as the quilting pattern and with a sharp knife make a clean cut over both layers of fondant.

Piping the Sewing Pattern

Using a piping bag filled with stiff-consistency royal icing and fitted with a PME tip #1.5, begin to pipe short lines in the quilt-pattern seams. Continue all the way around the cake.

Rebecca notes: These lines are to mimic stitching and it is a personal preference to how long the lines will be.



Creating the Stitched Flowers

FLOWER

Cut out a piece of fondant using any flower shape such as a blossom or daisy. Using a knife tool, create lines along each petal. Finally, pinch the tip of the petals to reshape the point. Using a small ball tool, cup the center of the flower slightly.

Rebecca notes: *This will spread out the petals a little, give a bit more movement, and allow for space to add a dragée for the flowers' center.*



LEAF

The leaf was made using a single petal from a large daisy cutter. Using the knife tool, make a line down the center. Then make markings down each side on a slight angle similar to normal veining of a leaf. Finish by redefining the center line. Pinch the tip of the leaf to reshape.



Gingham Pleating

Gingham design is the quintessential pattern on children's Easter fashions. It is a lovely design that represents the coming of warmer weather. The stencil used for this tutorial is from Evil Cake Genius.

COMPONENTS FOR THE GINGHAM PLEATS AND BOWS

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Gingham stencil set | Royal icing |
| Marvelous Molds Braided Scroll Mold | 24-gauge floral wire |
| Offset spatula | Toothpick for making bow loops (optional) |

Fondant and Stencil Preparation



For this particular portion of the project, you will need a fondant that does not dry out quickly. The fondant needs to be rolled, stenciled twice, dried slightly, and then pleated.

1. Roll out your fondant fairly thin. The thinner you can roll it, the more realistically it will look. Trim the fondant to just bigger than the size of the stencil.
2. Place the first stencil on the fondant. Using thin-consistency royal icing and an offset spatula, spread the royal icing over the stencil. Once the stencil has been fully covered with royal icing, use the cake scraper and remove the excess. Carefully peel off the stencil once complete. Let the royal icing dry a little (about a minute).
3. Place the second gingham stencil onto the fondant, making sure that the stripe patterns are perpendicular to each other. Repeat the process by spreading the royal icing over the stencil and scraping off the excess with a cake scraper. Carefully peel off the stencil once complete. Let the royal icing dry a little.
4. Using a sharp knife and a straight edge, trim the fondant to the desired size. For this particular project, the area that required the pleats was a height of 5.5 inches.

Attaching the Pleats



1. Apply the piping gel to where the top of the pleats will be placed.
2. Create a pleated look at the top by folding over pieces of the fondant on top of itself.
Rebecca notes: I find it more aesthetically pleasing to create random pinches and folds along the pieces of fondant. Just remember to work quickly; as the royal icing dries, it will become a little flaky.
3. Apply piping gel to the bottom where the pleats will be attached. Using the same technique, pleat the bottom portion and adhere to the cake. Continue adding pleats all the way around. ... ACD



For a tutorial of the wired gingham bow, head on over to americakedecorating.com.



Do we have that color?

Yes.



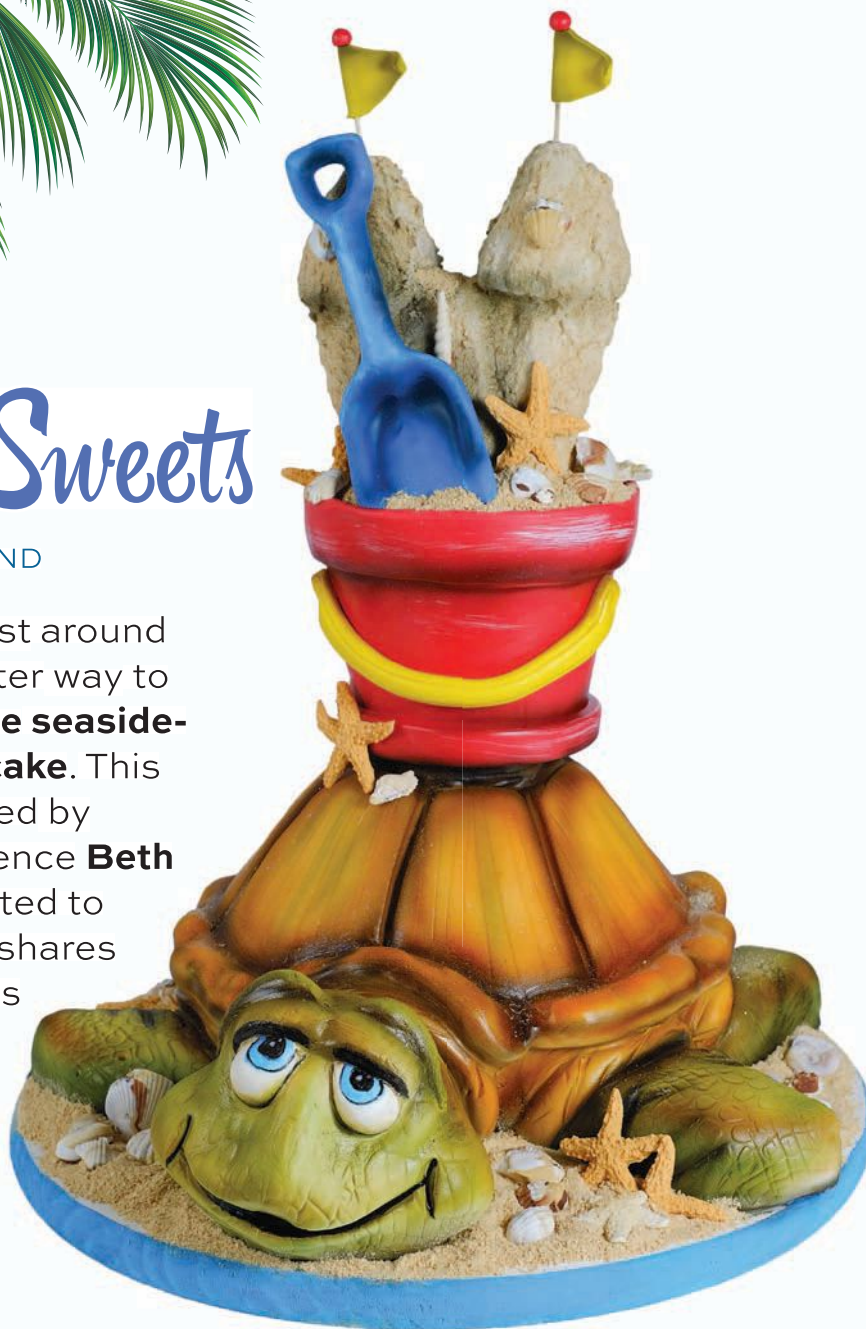
americolorcorp.com  



SEASIDE Sweets

BY BETH TOWNSEND

Summer birthdays are just around the corner, and what better way to celebrate than with a **cute seaside-themed sculpted turtle cake**. This adorable cake was created by Satin Ice Artist of Excellence **Beth Townsend** and was donated to a local orphanage. Beth shares the steps to re-create this little guy for your **next celebration**.



Beth Townsend is an award-winning cake artist from Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. She started cake decorating about six years ago and found quickly that her passion was creating sculpted cakes. Beth loves teaching her art, and sharing her self-taught skills with others. She was the winner of Food Networks *Christmas Cake Wars* season 1, and also was the winner of *The Cooking Channel: Cake Hunters* season 2 (twice as nice).



cakeproshop.com

COMPONENTS

Satin Ice fondant: red, yellow, blue, and white	Small and large rolling pin	Bubble tea straws
Rice Krispies Treats™	Edible gel colors: black, blue, and white	Scissors
Candy wafers	Graham crackers, brown sugar, and animal cracker mix	Cake boards
Powdered sugar (for dusting)	Serrated knife	Unused spade
Dresden tool	Offset spatula	Large 14" wooden board
Pizza cutter	Fondant smoothers	Beth Townsend Airbrush and Airbrush colors: orange, yellow, green, brown, black, and ivory
Paintbrushes	Dowels and skewers	Shell molds
Scale texture mat		

To Prepare: Make all the edibles at least 12 hours before. Place the cakes into the freezer overnight to firm up ready for carving.

To Make the Sandcastle

1. Blitz some graham crackers, animal crackers, and brown sugar in a food processor until fine and set aside.

Beth notes: *This will form the sand.*

2. Form some Rice Krispies Treats™ (RKT) into two cylinders (3 inches long), a wider cylinder (3 inches long), and two conical shapes as shown.



3. Adhere the RKT structures together using some melted white candy coating.



4. Cover the entire structure in a generous layer of the melted candy coating before immediately covering with the ground graham cracker crumb mixture. Allow to dry.



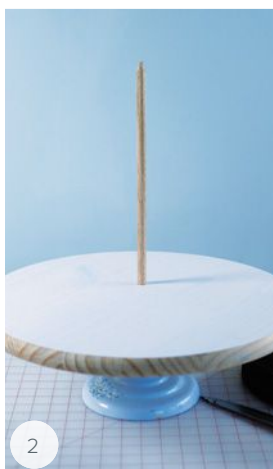
Preparing the Cake Structure

1. Pull the prebaked cakes from the freezer and unwrap, and allow to rest for about 20 minutes at room temperature.
2. Sharpen the end of a long wooden dowel to a point (this will help the cakes slide over more easily). Cover a wooden board with contact paper. Drill a hole in the board the same size as the dowel. Add a small amount of wood glue to the hole and insert the dowel. Clean the board very well and allow to dry.
3. Add a little buttercream to the board and begin to stack and layer the two 10-inch cakes. Add a little more buttercream and then the 8-inch cake. Cut off the top edge of the 8-inch cake, beveling it into a shallow dome shape as shown.



4. Cover the whole cake with a layer of ganache, and smooth. Allow to set.

Beth notes: *This will form the turtle's shell.*



- Using the foot template, carve four feet from a semi-frozen sheet cake. Attach the feet to the cake using a little buttercream.

Beth notes: *Make sure you flip the foot template when cutting the right-side feet and hands.*



- Ganache over the feet to seal in the crumbs and allow to set.

- Once the ganache is set, cover the entire cake in a generous layer of buttercream.

Beth notes: *This will allow you to carve in some detail later.*



- Take a fist-size amount of RKT and press into a ball for the head. Add some rice cereal treats to the crown of the head to heighten where the eyes would be. Add small balls of RKT where the cheeks are, to build them up. Use a little to build up the neck. Finally, attach the head to the board with buttercream and cover the head in buttercream.

Beth notes: *Pay attention to the proportions as you build the head, and keep comparing to the size of the body.*



Covering the Turtle with Fondant

- Roll out a large piece of fondant to about ¼" thick. Drape the fondant over the top of the shell cake and gently push it into the crevasses of the top and bottom shell. Trim the fondant around the head, hands, and feet. Use a Dresden tool to mark out the plates of the shell.



- Add some fondant to the front top of the turtle's head to build up the eye area. Use your thumbs to create even holes for his eyeballs.



- Roll out a fondant rope to about 3" long and ½" thick, then add this to the face where his mouth would be. Press the edges into the cereal treats to help it stick.



- Roll out another rope the same size and add it to where his nose would be.

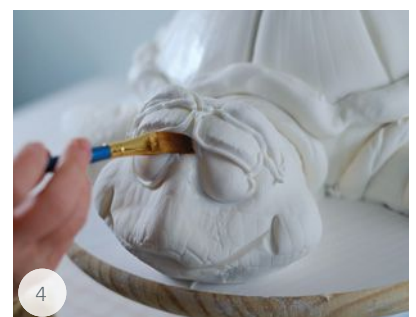
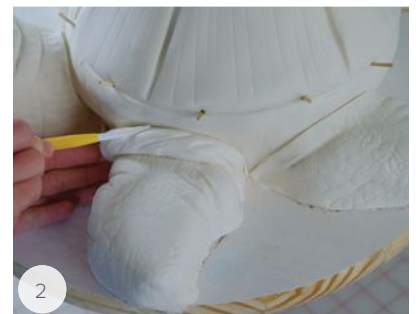
- Add two balls of fondant to his cheeks to build them up, making sure to press and smooth them into the face.

6. Roll out some fondant to about ¼" thick and press into a scale impression mat to create texture. Cover the hands, feet, and head in this and cut around the base.
7. Using the Dresden tool, mark where the creases are in his feet and arms.
8. Smooth a panel of fondant over his face, pressing into the eye area. Then, using the Dresden tool, carefully mark out his mouth and smile crease.
9. Use the Dresden tool to mark out the wrinkles on the back of his neck.
10. Roll out two equal-size balls for his eyes. Place them in the eyeholes to make sure they will fit. Taper the eyes at the top to create a teardrop shape. Adhere using a small amount of water.
11. Roll out another ball of fondant the same size as before, and flatten out to about ¼" thick. Cut in half and attach, cut-side down, to the top of the eye to form the lids.
12. Roll out a rope of fondant with tapered edges and flatten and thin in the middle. Attach it to the top of the eyes to form the brow.

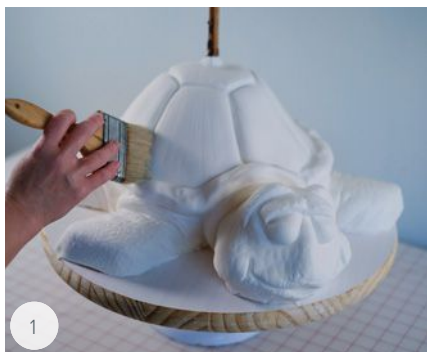


Creating the Turtle Details

1. Add wooden skewers that are between 4" and 6" long into the cake midway up where the ridge on the shell would be.
2. Roll out four ropes of fondant about ½" thick and about 6" long and attach them to the area where the feet and hands meet the body. Texture them with the Dresden tool. Then do the same for his neck.
3. Make a long rope about ½" thick and long enough to go all around his shell. Add a little water and a line of icing around the shell to attach.
4. Add a line of buttercream around all the seams of your cake anywhere that you joined fondant; this will create a seamless look. Wipe away the excess with a paintbrush dampened with warm water. Allow to dry for about an hour.



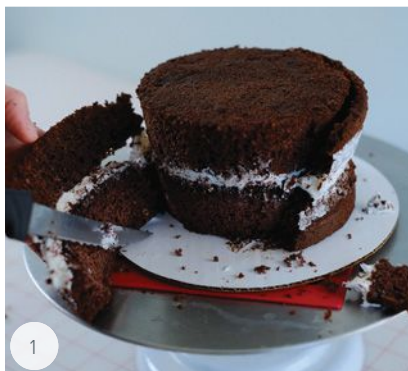
Airbrushing and Detailing



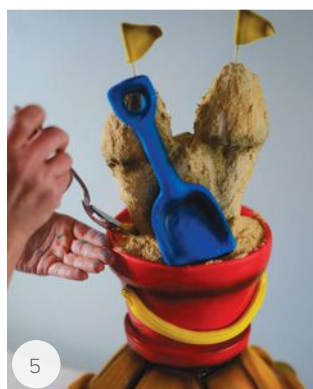
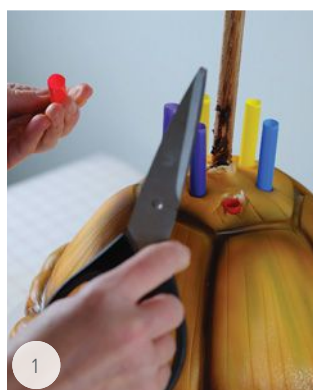
1. Remove any excess powdered sugar with a soft wide brush.
Beth notes: This will ensure that the airbrush color sticks to the fondant correctly.
2. Using ivory airbrush color, spray a light, even coat all over the whole cake. Be sure to put a solid coat on the bottom half of the shell.
3. Spray an even coat of the green onto his arms, legs, and head.
4. Lightly add some shadows with a medium brown, spraying the color into the crevasses of the shell and the creases of his body.
5. Spray a light coat of yellow all over the shell. Add some highlights of orange on the shell, around the outlines of each section, to deepen the tone.
6. Spray a very light coat of black into the crevasses to deepen them and along the shadowy parts of his body, including the very bottom edge of his body, hands, and feet where they meet the board.
7. Use a soft, slightly damp brush to clean off any excess airbrush overspray from his eyes and keep wiping the brush clean on a paper towel to not retransfer any color back onto his eye. Lightly dry the eye with a paper towel to ensure there is no wetness left.
8. Carefully draw a blue circle in the center of his eye close to the eyelids and fill in. Line the outside of the iris with a thin black line.
9. Draw in the pupil and then line his eyelid with black to frame his eye. Carefully fill in the lines of his mouth with the black.

Making the Sand Pail

1. Cut a hole in the center of a wax-covered cake board, before layering and stacking the previously baked 6-inch cakes. Carve the cakes into a pail shape, tapering the cake toward the board. Cover in a layer of ganache and allow to set for 30 minutes.
2. Cover the pail with red fondant and smooth well. Add a strip of fondant about 1" wide around the top and bottom edge of the pail.



Assembling the Cake



1. Place six bubble tea straws into the turtle shell and trim as shown.
2. Place the sand-pail bucket over the dowel and onto the top of the shell. Make sure to center the cake as much as possible. Add a little melted candy melts to the top of the bucket and attach the sandcastle you made earlier.
3. Roll some yellow fondant to make a handle for the pail and attach using a little water.
4. Airbrush a little medium-brown color in the recesses of the sandcastle to add some shadows and depth. Use a little black to add dimension.
5. Add some of the crushed graham cracker mix to the top of the pail and around the castle.
6. Paint the edge of the board with blue edible paint, or add a blue ribbon using a little glue. Add some crushed graham cracker sand to the board, all around the turtle.
7. You can add some decorative accents like gum-paste shells, flags, and a spade.
8. Add some highlights to the turtle's eyes using a little edible white paint. **ACD**



For a tutorial of the decorative accents, head over to americandecorating.com.



DREAM Carousel

BY SVETLANA MARKOVIC



First birthday parties mark an **exciting and important milestone** full of dreams and hope for the future. What better way to capture the memories of those first twelve months than with this **adorable dream-inspired carousel cake**? This cake seamlessly blends pinks and blues, for a cake that is perfect for either a **little prince or darling princess**.

COMPONENTS

White gum paste	Parchment paper	Dust colors: blue, pink, gold, black
Fondant: pink, navy, blue, yellow, and white	Quilted impression mat	Vodka or lemon extract
Tylose powder	Star cutter in three different sizes	Cornstarch and shortening to prevent sticking
Small and large rolling pins	Royal icing	Water/edible glue
X-Acto knife	Brushes #1, #4, and #8	Drinking straws
Ball tools	Cutting wheel	Pencil
Dresden tool	Gel colors: blue, red, brown, yellow, white, black, pink, and lavender	Toothpicks
Serrated tool		

Svetlana

Markovic is the owner of the award-winning Cake Studio Rouge. Founded in 2011, this bakery makes custom cakes for all occasions. Svetlana has been highlighted both nationally and internationally for her impeccable designs, appearing on local TV and several international publications. She enjoys sharing her work with others through the creation of tutorials.



[Facebook.com/CakeStudioRouge](https://www.facebook.com/CakeStudioRouge)

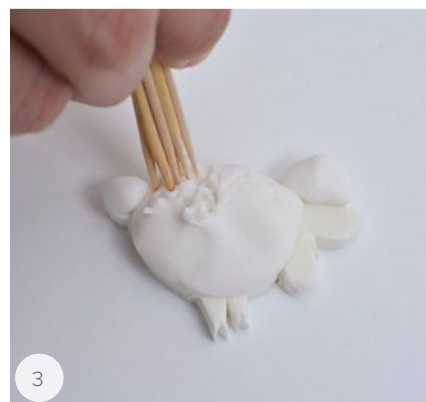
To Prepare: Cover an 8-inch and 6-inch cake using the paneling method. To create the ombré-effect fondant, mix together different shades of blue and roll together to merge.

Making the Moon and Cloud Decór

1. Create a crescent moon shape, approximately 3" long and 1" thick using some white fondant strengthened with a little tylose.
2. Using a ball tool, make indentations and craters; this will create a more realistic effect.
3. Allow the moon to set for an hour before painting with a light blue wash made from mixing blue edible dust color with alcohol or lemon extract. Shade the edges with a deeper shade of blue as shown.
4. To create the clouds, draw the shape of a cloud onto parchment paper. Use the template to trace cloud shapes onto a piece of gum paste. **Svetlana notes:** *The clouds should look whimsical; you could also use a printed template.*
5. Cut out the cloud with an X-Acto knife. Repeat the previous step to create several clouds.
6. When the clouds have set a little, use the same blue wash as used for the moon to outline the clouds using a fine paintbrush.



To Make the Sheep Carousel



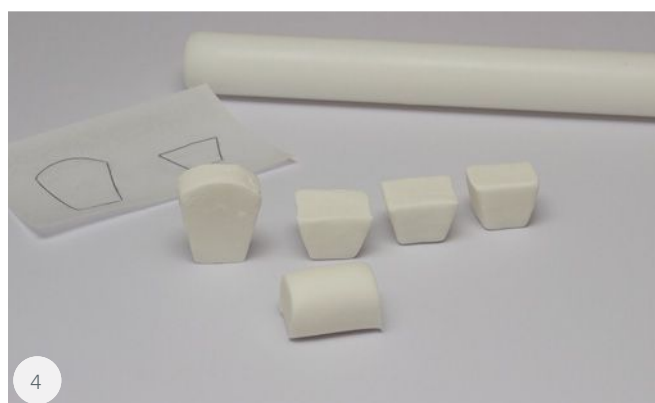
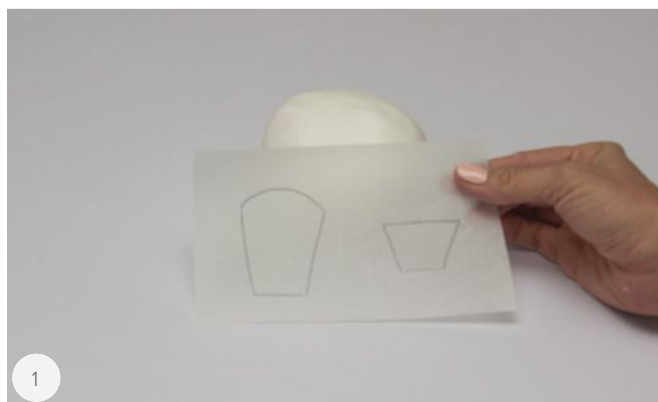
Pre-cover a 3-inch round cake dummy and a 5-inch half-sphere with some navy fondant and allow to dry. Once dry, paint some little white stars onto both pieces.

1. Draw an outline of a sheep onto a piece of plain paper and roll some white gum paste to about $\frac{1}{4}$ " thickness. Use the template to cut out five sheep shapes.
2. Build up the "wool" by adding small mounds of gum paste to the sheep as shown.
3. Texturize the wool using groups of cocktail sticks. Use swirling motions to give a curly appearance.
4. Paint the sheep bodies with a pink wash made from pink petal dust. Add a deeper pink color to the edges for depth, and paint the eyes using a little black gel color.
5. Wrap a rope of pale pink gum paste around five skewers to create the carousel poles. Add a ball of gum paste to the top and paint it gold. Attach the sheep to the center of the pole with a little royal icing.

Svetlana notes: Leave some of the skewer exposed at the bottom so that the poles can be inserted into the cake.

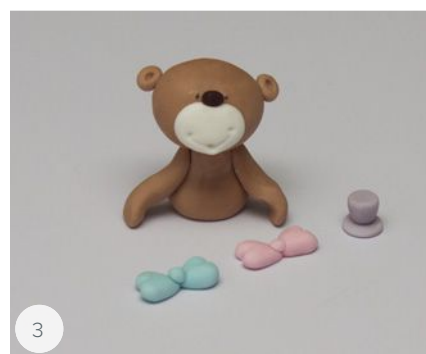


To Make the Train



1. Create a template for the train and wagons by drawing the shapes, as shown, onto parchment paper.
2. Roll out some white fondant to approximately 1" thickness, then place the template over the fondant and, using a very small ball tool or the sharp end of a Dresden tool, trace the shape to create an indentation.
3. Remove the parchment and use a sharp knife to cut out the shapes.
4. Roll out a log of fondant for the front of the train and trim to about 2" in length. Allow the pieces to dry for several hours.
5. Tint a small amount of white fondant with light blue, light pink, lavender, and navy, respectively. Using a button mold, create small buttons in each of the four shades; these will be used as the wheels for the train. Cut the remaining fondant into rectangles to create a roof for each wagon.
6. Adhere the "wheel" buttons to the train using a little edible glue and a roof to each wagon as shown. Roll small strips of navy fondant to cover any seams, such as where the front of the train and the carriage meet. Add a chimney.

To Make the Teddy Bears



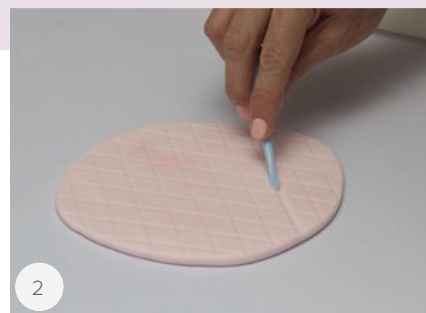
- Using some brown-tinted fondant strengthened with tylose, roll a teardrop shape for the body, a larger oval for the head, two small discs for the ears, and two curved sausage shapes for the arms. Roll a white circle for the muzzle and flatten into a disc. Roll a very small ball of black fondant for the nose.
- Assemble the bear, adhering the pieces together using a little edible glue. You can use a small toothpick to support the head if necessary. Draw on a mouth shape using a Dresden tool and add two black dots for the eyes as shown. Add some stitching details using a stitching tool.
Svetlana notes: You can shade the bear using a little dark brown petal dust if you wish.
- Create some bows, using a little blue and pink fondant, and a bow mold. Create a little top hat using gray fondant.

Repeat the above steps to create several bears for the train and for the cake. Remember to roll two extra sausages for the legs if necessary. Decorate the bears with the bow and top hat accessories.

Svetlana notes: You can pose the bears any way you like. For support, you can use toothpicks and a little cotton wool while the bears dry into position.

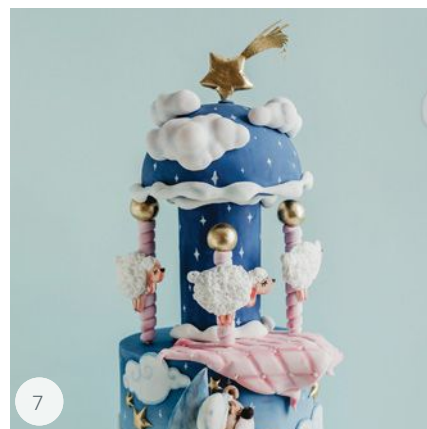
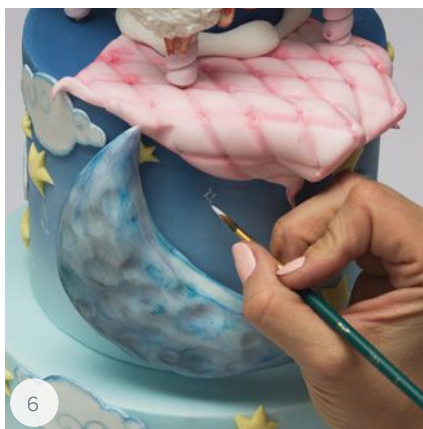
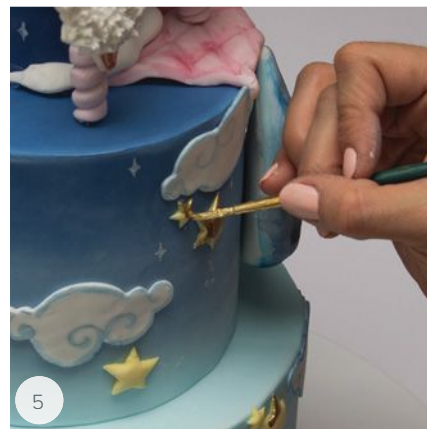
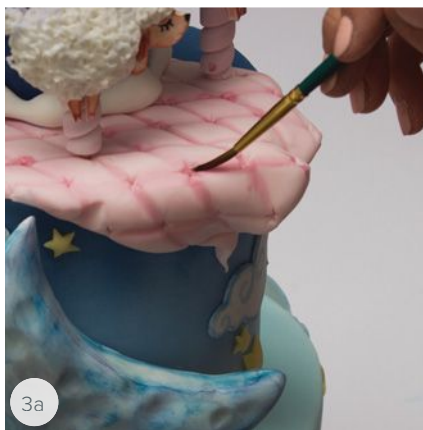
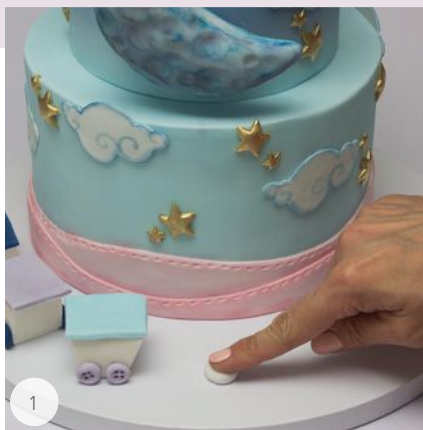
To Make the Blanket

- To make the blanket, roll out some pink fondant to $\frac{1}{4}$ " thickness. Next, use a quilted impression mat to imprint a quilt pattern.
- Define the quilted pattern using the sharp end of a Dresden tool.
- Make indentations where the lines intersect using a serrated tool.
- Cut the fondant into a square shape then pinch the corners to give a natural appearance to the blanket.
Svetlana notes: The blanket should be adhered to the top tier of the cake before it dries, as it will go underneath the carousel and drape over the edge of the cake.



Assembling the Cake

1. Secure the train pieces to the cake board and place the teddies into their wagons.
2. Adhere the moon and clouds to the exterior of your cake using a little royal icing and place one teddy bear onto the moon as shown, securing in place with royal icing.
3. Add the blanket to the top tier, allowing it to drape over the edge of the cake. Add a little dimension by shading the quilted lines with a little pink dust color mixed with some alcohol or lemon extract to make a wash. Pipe some white royal-icing dots in the indentations.
4. Roll out some yellow fondant to $\frac{1}{8}$ " inch thickness, and place a piece of plastic wrap over top and cut out several star shapes in different sizes.
5. Attach the stars to the exterior of the cake and paint with edible gold luster.
6. Using some white edible paint and a fine paintbrush, add a few smaller stars to the exterior of the cake.
7. Add the carousel center you created earlier to the center of the top tier. Add the carousel poles and the sheep to the top tier before securing the roof to the central pole. Add some white clouds to the roof and a cloud border as shown. Add a large gold star to the top of the roof. **ACD**





SOMETHING

Special

BY STEFANO TULIPANO

“I enjoy putting a spin on classics,” notes Chef Tulipano. “My strawberry shortcake is a simple interpretation of the American classic dessert but with a European twist. Instead of using a simple whipped cream I replaced it with a decadent vanilla whipped ganache. The fior di latte gelato pairs beautifully with the cold strawberry compote. This method helps to preserve the fresh flavor of the strawberry. Dessert to me is all about balance, so I finished the plate by adding a touch of texture and saltiness provided by the Marcona almonds and Maldon sea salt.”

VANILLA BISCUITS

INGREDIENTS

280g whole eggs 160g flour Orange zest
200g sugar 80g potato starch 30g honey
2g baking powder

METHOD

In a medium bowl, whip whole eggs with sugar, honey, and orange zest.

In a separate bowl, sift the dry ingredients together.

When the mixture is really foamy, add the dry ingredients and combine. (Do not overmix).

Roll onto dough onto floured surface and cut out biscuits.

Place on tray, and cook at 375° Fahrenheit for around 20 minutes.

Chef Stefano Tulipano is a graduate of The French Pastry School and executive pastry chef at Paramount Events, Chicago, Illinois.



EdeninChicago.com/welcome

PASTRY CREAM

INGREDIENTS

1,000g milk 100g cornstarch 1 tsp vanilla
250g sugar 300g egg yolks

METHOD

Whip together the egg yolks and sugar, add the cornstarch.

Bring to boil the milk in a medium saucepan.

Pour hot milk over the yolk, sugar, and cornstarch mixture.

Return custard to the saucepan and bring to boil (stirring).

Cool the mixture completely in a refrigerator.

VANILLA WHIPPED GANACHE

INGREDIENTS

350g heavy cream 75g white chocolate 1 tsp vanilla bean
4g gelatin 10g sugar seeds

METHOD

Melt the chocolate in the microwave in 30-second bursts, stirring in between until fully melted.

Bloom the gelatin in cold water.

Warm the cream with the vanilla, add the gelatin, and pour the mixture over the melted chocolate.

Stir to combine before straining.

Let cool in refrigerator for at least 2 hours.

Remove from cooler and whip as a heavy cream.

CAMELIZED MARCONA ALMONDS

INGREDIENTS

300g Marcona almonds 150g sugar 50g water

METHOD

Place the almonds on a sheet tray and toast in a 325° F oven for 10 minutes.

In a heavy-bottom saucepan, bring to the boil the sugar with water.

After two minutes boiling, add the toasted Marcona almonds and mix until caramelized.

Pour onto a parchment-lined tray and allow to cool.

STRAWBERRY COMPOTE

INGREDIENTS

250g strawberry 30g honey
250g strawberry purée Juice of half a lemon

METHOD

In a medium bowl, place sliced strawberries with strawberry purée, honey, and lemon juice and allow to macerate for several hours.

AMERICAN

CakeDecorating

LET'S
PARTY

*Celebrate in Style with Our
Perfect Party Cakes*



Digital  Extras





Under THE SEA

BY (DOMY) DOMINIKA DOBEK

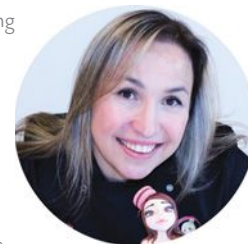
Our **Let's Party** issue wouldn't be complete without touching on one of the **hottest trends** of the year. You guessed it, **mermaids!** What better way to decorate a celebration cake than with a stunning, handmade mermaid topper! Learn the steps to create a beautiful mermaid figurine with this tutorial from award-winning artist **Domy Dobek**. Known for her incredible modeling skills, Domy has a line of face and body molds **specifically designed** to help make your modeling easier.



COMPONENTS

Small flat makeup brush	Rubber-tipped tool
000 fine artists brush for detail painting	Scissors
Water brush	Aluminum foil
Large soft brush	6-inch cake drum
Scalpel	Saracino modeling paste or similar
Dresden tool	Gel colors: blue, brown, super white, and purple
Soft silicone brush	Magic Colors dust colors: brown, green, pink, and purple
Small and medium metal ball tool	

Dominika Dobek (Domy) is an award-winning cake designer, author, and owner of Sweet Revolutions by Domy. Domy has her own brand of face and body molds that are available for purchase anywhere in the world. Her passion for sugar paste was born four years ago, and through passion, practice, and dedication she has become a professional cake artist, specializing in modeling and figurine work. Domy has taught sugar-art skills to students around the world for many years and loves sharing her knowledge with others, helping them to grow their modeling skills and indulge their passion for sugar artistry.

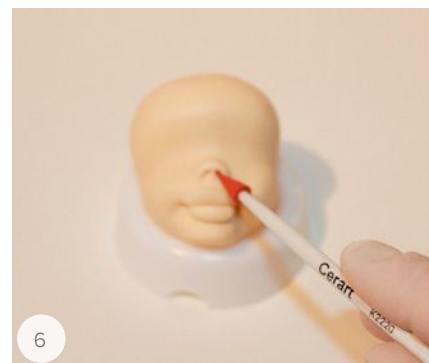
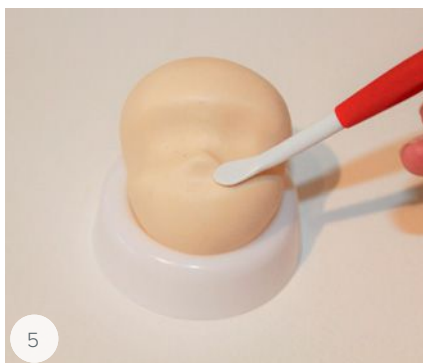
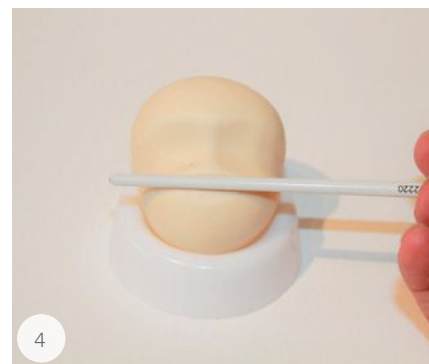
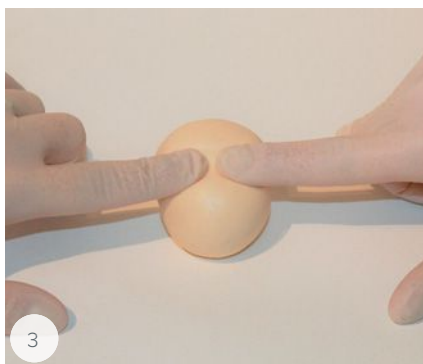
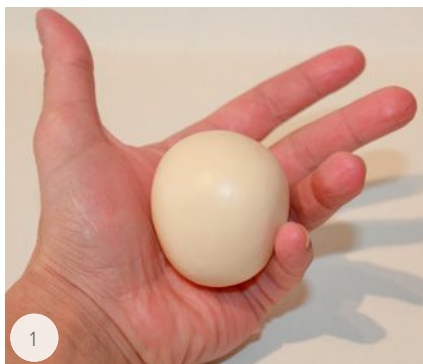


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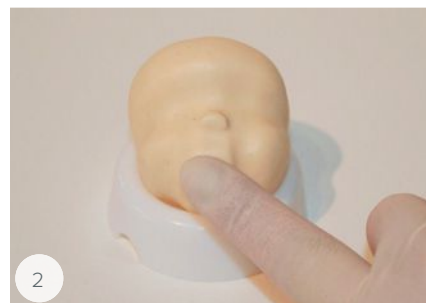
Sculpting the Face

1. Roll 50 grams of flesh-colored modeling paste into a slightly elongated ball. Make sure to smooth completely.
2. Make a small indentation, one-third of the way down, going from one side of the head to the other, by rocking the smooth, rounded side of a tool against the ball.
3. Use your fingertips to create the eye sockets by pushing into the paste and allowing a small ridge of paste to form between your fingers. This will be the bridge of the nose.
4. Use the small end of a paintbrush and press into the paste just under the nose bridge. This will help to define the tip of the nose and the top lip.
5. Use the small/flat end of a Dresden tool to define the nose, pressing into the paste to create a small inverted triangle shape as shown.
6. Use the silicone brush to make two little nostrils at the end of nose.



Sculpting the Lips

1. Use a medium ball tool to define the chin, pressing to the left and the right side, leaving a peak of paste running down the centerline.
2. Use the tip of your finger to press into the mound of paste you just created; this will create the recess of the chin and there should be a small mound of paste left from which to create the lips.
3. Use a small silicone brush or conical tool to create two dimples.
Domy notes: These marks will form the outer edges of the lips.
4. Use a sharp knife or a scalpel to cut into the paste and form the mouth.
5. Using the Dresden tool, gently rub the lips, pushing up and using circular motions to round off the edges of the upper lip.
6. Define the lips further by shaping with a small, soft-tipped silicone brush.
7. Push the cheeks back gently and lift the chin up slightly to give a more flattering profile.
Domy notes: Take care here, you don't want to reshape the face too much.
8. Define and part the lips by gently pressing the silicone tool between them as shown.



Shaping the Eyes

1. Use the Easy Eyes Tool to imprint the shape of the eyes, this will help you to create identical-size and correctly spaced eyes.
2. Remove the extra paste using a sharp tool.



3. Roll two very small balls of white paste and fill the eye sockets.
4. Use a small ball tool to define the eyelids and brow bone as shown.
5. Roll two tiny (similar-size) balls of blue paste and two even smaller balls of black paste. These will create the iris of the eye.
6. Use the Dresden tool to create a crease line in the eyelid and to pull the paste over the eye a little to create the lid.
7. Roll some black paste into a very thin rope and outline the eye as shown.
8. Use a little ice blue gel color and a fine artists brush in size 000 to add some detail to the iris.
9. Use a little chestnut brown gel color to paint in a cut crease along the eyelid.
10. Roll a tiny amount of black paste into an elongated teardrop and cut two small eyebrows, then adhere above the brow bone.
11. Use a little dust color and a small, soft brush to add a little "eyeshadow" to the eyelids.
Domy notes: I used brown and green petal dust colors.
12. Use a little petal pink dust color to stain the lips.
13. Add a few tiny drops of super white gel color to the pupils; this will give them a bright, open, awake appearance.
14. Roll some more black paste into thin teardrops and attach to the eyes for the eyelashes. Flare the lashes outward to the left and right respectively. This will make the eyes look large and open.



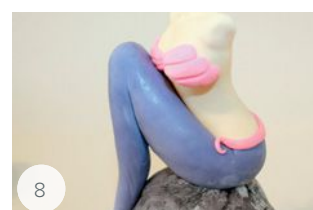
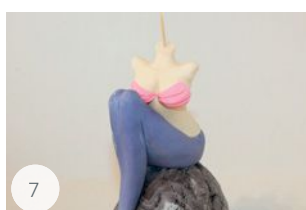
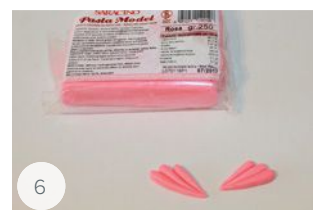
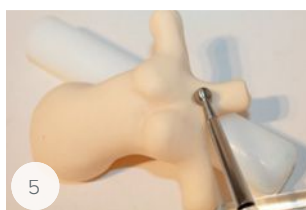
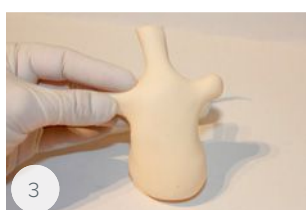
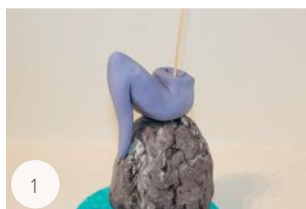
Creating the Rock and Pool

1. Add some black gel color to 300 grams of white fondant and marble to create the appearance of stone. Model into a loose rock shape. Take a piece of scrunched up aluminum foil and texture the rock all over.
2. Dust the rock using a plush dusting brush and some black petal dust. This will highlight the texture you just applied.
3. Remove any excess dust using a food-safe wipe or some clear alcohol.
4. Mix a little blue gel color into 200 grams of white paste. Marble the color throughout until the paste is almost fully saturated and press into a round disc. Place the “water” disc onto a covered board and then place the rock on top as shown.

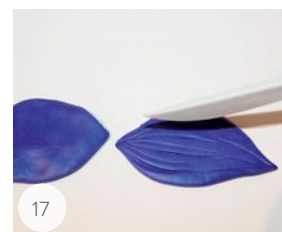
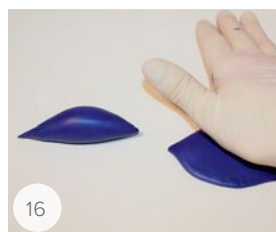
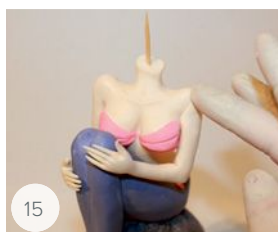
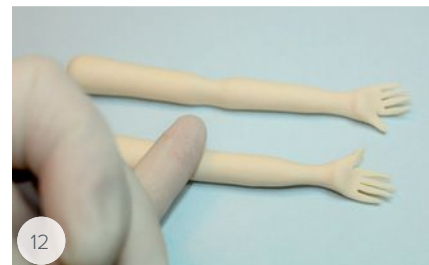


Sculpting the Mermaid's Body

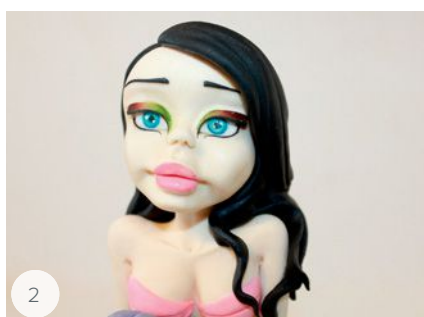
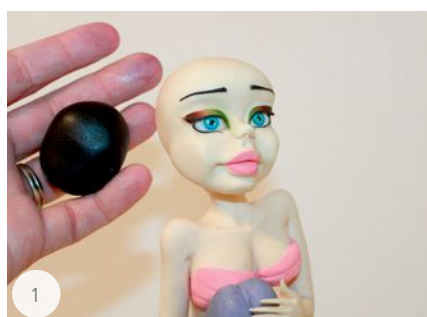
1. Roll 150 grams of purple paste into a tapered cone, bend slightly at the center point, and then attach the tail to the rock using a long skewer, with several inches protruding.
Domy notes: Take care to leave enough of the skewer exposed so you can attach the torso and head later.
2. Roll 70 grams of flesh-toned modeling paste into a slightly tapered cylinder, with the small end forming the waist.
3. Pinch the center to define the waist and the top to create a neck. Pinch the paste at the top right and the top left to form the shoulders.
4. Make a small cut in the center of the torso to define the breastplate, and then start shaping the breasts using the soft silicone brush.
Domy notes: You can use your fingers to smooth the breasts and create a nice round shape.
5. Use the ball tool to define the clavicle and the Dresden tool to define the collarbone.
6. Create a small seashell “bra” by rolling small teardrops of pink paste and adhering them together to form two shells.
7. Remove any excess paste from the shoulders and attach the torso to the tail, and the bra to the torso to cover the breasts.
8. Roll a thin rope of fondant to hide the join where the tail and torso meet.



9. To create the arms, roll two slightly tapered ropes from flesh-toned modeling paste. Cut the bottom of the paste on an angle as shown.
10. Cut a small "V" shape from the hand to form the thumb and fingers.
11. Cut the remaining paste into four fingers and gently shape to define.
12. Using the tip of your finger, press the arm in at the bottom (just above the hand) and at the center point, to create the wrist and the elbow.
13. Bend the arms at the elbow as shown.
14. Attach the arm to the torso and position as shown, with the arm holding the tail.
15. Attach the second arm, and blend the seams using a soft-tipped silicone brush and your fingertip.
16. Roll two teardrop shapes from purple modeling paste (15 grams each) and flatten to create the tail fins.
17. Use a knife tool to add texture to the fins.



Final Assembly and Finishing Touches



1. Attach the head to the torso and blend the seam. Next, attach a small ball of black paste to the back of the head to round out the back.
2. Create some hair pieces either by using a mold or by rolling teardrop shapes from black paste, texturing with a knife tool and attaching to the hair.
Domy notes: Start from the back and work forward, making sure to gently shape the hair around the face.
3. Dust the tail with a little black petal dust to define the texture and finally add a touch of shimmery petal dust to make it shine. **ACD**



A Sweet Shower

BY HEMU BASU

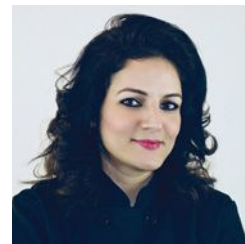
There's no better excuse for a celebration than hosting a baby shower or sprinkle, and **welcoming a new baby**. Baby-shower cakes are more popular than ever, with mommies and daddies opting for incredible tiered masterpieces and adorable sculpted designs. Award-winning artist **Hemu Basu** shares a wonderful sculpted cake tutorial for a baby bag cake that is **sure to delight!**



COMPONENTS

Rolling mat	X-Acto knife	2 wooden dowels
Large and small rolling pin	Paintbrush	Fondant: white, sky blue, yellow, and green
Spatula	Fondant smoother	Gel colors: brown, white, yellow, red, and blue
Ruler	Flexible smoother	Three 9"x9" cakes
Texture mats (wood and jute)	Extruder	5 cups of filling (chocolate ganache 3:1 ratio)
Zipper mold	Scissors	
Dresden tool	Scraper	
Stitching tool	14-inch square cake board (or big enough to hold your cake and all the accessories)	
Serrated knife		

Through her love of art, accidentally stumbling into an awesome cake-decorating class, and a little bit of cajoling from her friends and family, The Sweet Sensation was born! Hemu Basu turned her passion into a thriving cake business four years ago and has never looked back. Hemu has won several prestigious prizes at cake-decorating competitions across the U.S. and UK, and has been featured in many notable publications.



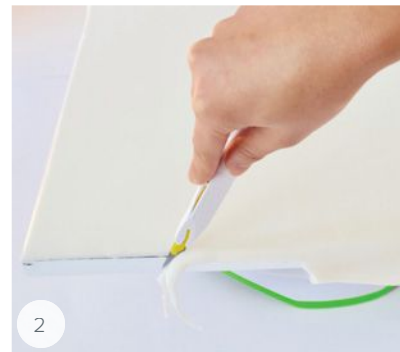
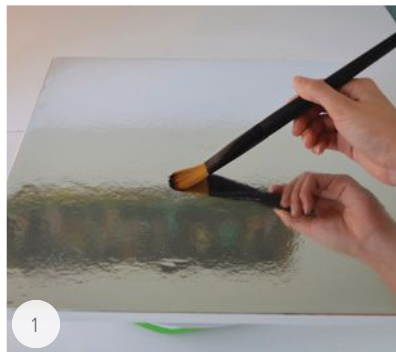
[Facebook.com/hemubasu](https://www.facebook.com/hemubasu)

Making the Wood-Effect Cake Board

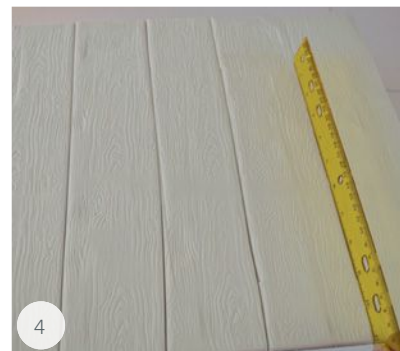
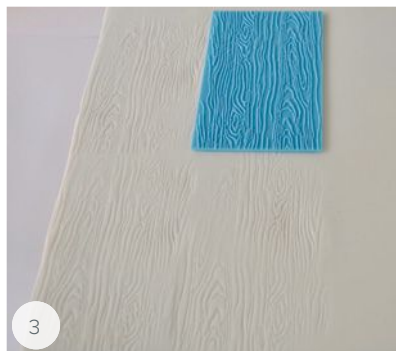
1. Roll the white fondant to approximately 1 cm thickness and so that it is large enough to cover the board.

Hemu notes: You can use a bit of water (boiled and cooled) to stick the fondant to the board.

2. Place the fondant on the board. Smooth the surface with a smoother, and then using a sharp knife or scalpel, remove the excess fondant and smooth the surface and the edges once more.



3. To create the wood texture, you can either use a mat, or add the wood-grain details by hand. Place the wood texture mat onto the fondant and press down firmly to imprint the texture. Continue until the entire board has been textured.



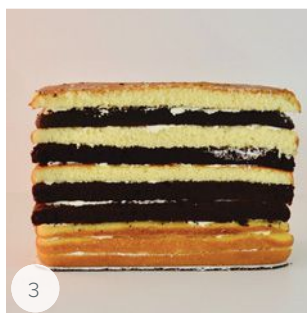
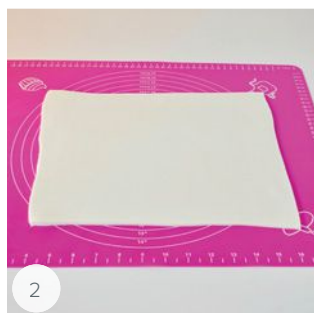
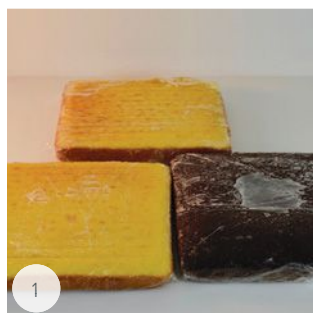
4. Use a ruler to mark the plank lines as shown. Take care to stagger the boards so they look realistic.

5. To paint the board, drop a few drops of gel paste onto the board and swirl with a dry brush. Then, create a thinner wash by mixing the gel paste with a little clear alcohol or extract and paint the board in even strokes, going in one direction. Use dark brown to paint in between the cracks and grooves.

Hemu notes: The areas of undiluted gel color will give the appearance of knots in the wood grain. To get different shades of brown you can mix together blue, red, yellow, and white in different proportions.



Carving the Cake



1. Bake the cake according to your recipe. Let it cool completely and then chill the cake overnight. This will make it easier to cut and yield less crumbs. Cut the cake into six 9-inch by 4.5-inch rectangles and set aside.

Hemu notes: *It's a good idea to do all the carving in one go and then clean away the crumbs thoroughly before stacking and ganaching.*

2. Cut out the foam core board (9"x4.5") to build the cake upon.

3. Place a small amount of icing on the foam board and then place the first layer of cake on top, spread on a layer of filling, and level. Continue to stack the remaining layers of cake, layering them with frosting until all the layers have been added.

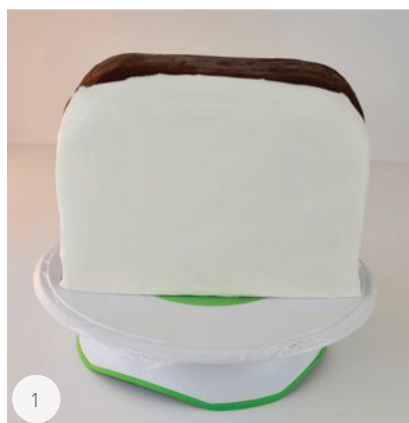
Hemu notes: *The height of the cake should be 7 inches tall.*

4. Begin carving the edges by trimming with a serrated knife and sculpt the cake into the shape of a bag (you can use your own template). Make sure you give the bag a curve at the top. Add dowels for support and then cover the entire cake with chocolate ganache and smooth with a scraper and a flexible piece of acetate.

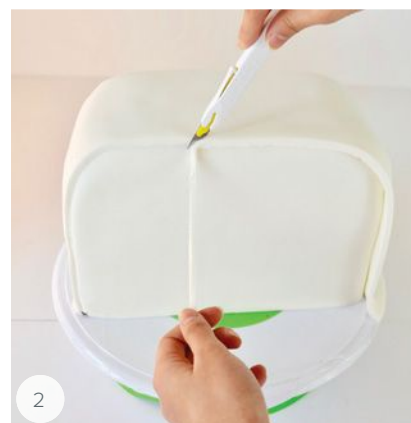
Hemu notes: *I used the Innovative Sugarworks flexible smoother; it does an amazing job on the round edges. Allow the cake to sit in the fridge for at least 3-4 hours to firm up.*

Covering the Cake

1. Cover the bag with white fondant, in sections. Begin by rolling out some white fondant a little larger than the front of the bag. Brush the front of the bag with a little cooler, boiled water and drape the fondant over the front. Smooth the fondant against the cake and trim away the excess.



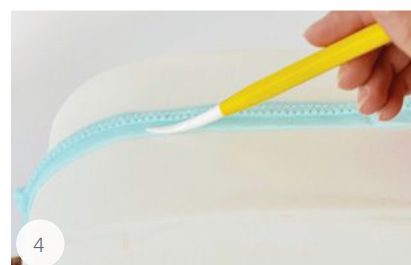
2. Cover the opposite side using the same process, and then roll a long strip of fondant to cover the exposed sides of the bag. Trim the excess leaving a neat seam. Transfer the cake to the board.



3. Using some blue fondant that has been stiffened with a little tylose powder, create a zipper using a zipper mold as pictured.

Hemu notes: *You can purchase a zipper mold from NY Cake.*

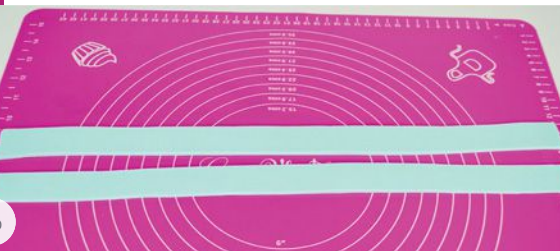
4. Attach the zipper to the cake with a small amount of water.



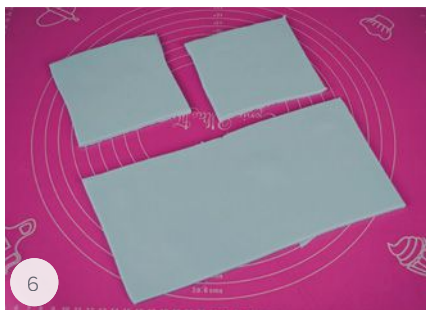
5. To create the handle for the bag, roll out some of the same blue fondant used for the zipper, large enough to cut two strips that will be 16"x1.5". First, emboss the fondant using the texture mat and cut the two strips to size. Add stitching using the stitching tool to both sides along the edge and set aside.



5b



6. Next, make the front and side pockets of the diaper bag. Cut out a large rectangle and two squares from the blue fondant.



6



7

7. Adhere the pockets to the bag, dividing the front rectangular pocket into two by securing the center to the front of the cake. Attach a small strip of fondant to the middle of the pockets. Add stitching along both sides and along the edges as shown. To keep the shape, place some folded paper towel into the pockets until dry.

8. Using an extruder fitted with a small circle attachment, extrude some ropes of yellow fondant and adhere to the edges of the bag. This will give the appearance of piping and hide the seams.



8



9

9. Attach the handles to the bag, adhering one strip in the front and one in the back. Add some stitching along the edges as shown.

Finishing Touches

Create some fun accessories like booties, baby cream, lotion, stuffed animals, diapers, bibs, toys, and a baby bottle that are proportionate in size to your cake. Insert diaper, lotion bottles, face cloth, and soft toys in the pockets. Finally paint some blue and yellow polka dots to the bag using a small paintbrush.

Hemu notes: For realism, you can print some bottle labels onto wafer paper using an edible printer. | ACD





Spring Fling

BY BARBARA LURASCHI

“I was imagining spring when I designed this tutorial,” notes Barbara. “I wanted to capture the **beauty and freshness** of the flowers and the soft pastel colors.” This elegant figurine with a floral gown would make a **perfect topper** for a Sweet 16 celebration, birthday cake, or more. Learn how to re-create Barbara’s **award-winning style** with this step-by-step tutorial.



COMPONENTS

Cake carved in a cone shape (6" tall with a diameter of 4" at the base)

8-inch cake, filled and frosted

Modeling paste (modeling chocolate or gum-paste/chocolate mix) as follows:

- 150 grams of flesh-toned paste
- 60 grams of brown color 60 paste
- 100 grams of white paste
- 1 kilogram of white fondant

Petal dust colors in: peach, brown, pink, lilac, and apple green

Gel colors: blue and brown

Edible glue

Lilac satin ribbon

Small and large rolling pins

Ruler

Fondant smoother

Dresden tool, ball tool, bone tool

Skewer, toothpick

Pastry bag fitted with PME tip #3

Hydrangea flower cutter and veiner

Scalpel or X-Acto knife

Foam pad

Fine artists paintbrushes

Silicone brushes (Sweet Janis by Barbara Luraschi)

24-gauge floral wires

Floral tape

Dowels

Barbara Luraschi, a.k.a. Sweet Janis, was born, and currently resides in Como, Italy. She discovered her passion for cake decorating about five years ago. Barbara is now an internationally recognized, multi-award-winning artist. Known for her signature, stylistic cake toppers and figurines, she has traveled all over the world to teach, most recently teaching in both the U.S. and UK at several prestigious shows. Barbara loves interacting with her students via face-to-face modeling classes but also enjoys creating online content as a tutor for Pretty Witty Cakes.



Sweetjanis.com

[Facebook.com/SweetJanis.page](https://www.facebook.com/SweetJanis.page)

To Prepare



1

1. Cover an 8-inch cake with white sugar paste and add a lilac ribbon at the base. Make a bow and adhere it to the cake using some edible glue.



2

2. Make the decorative buds by shaping some white gum-paste into a tapered ball. Insert a hooked 24-gauge floral wire dipped in some edible glue. Mark three lines around the cone starting from the bottom toward the point. Dust the buds using some apple green edible petal dust at the bottom and lilac at the point. Assemble a few of them together using green floral tape. Position the buds next to the bow on the cake.



3

3. Cover the prepared, carved cake with white fondant and insert a skewer in the middle leaving 4 inches exposed.

To Model the Body

1. Take some flesh-toned modeling paste (I use Saracino) and shape into a thick tapered cylinder. Pinch the tapered end to create the neck and push out the paste a little to form the shoulders.



2. Model the breasts by pushing into the paste using your fingers as demonstrated in the picture.

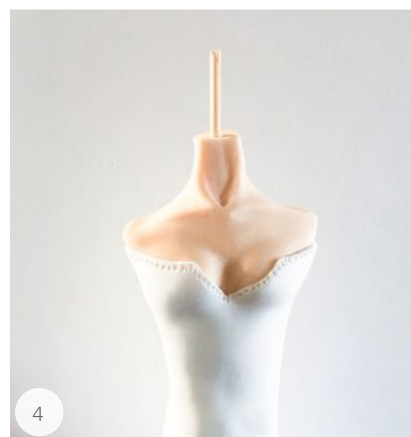
Barbara notes: You can add some small balls of the modeling paste and blend into the torso with your fingers if you do not have enough paste to work with.



3. Mark the cavity (clavicle) under the neck and define the collarbone using a silicone brush or soft-tipped modeling tool.



4. Push the torso onto the skewer which you previously inserted into the cake. Roll a piece of white modeling paste thinly, and wrap around the torso to create the top portion of the dress. Join the paste at the back and trim away the excess at the back and the bottom. Blend the bottom of the bodice into the dress below using a soft-tipped shaper. Shape the bustline by cutting in a "V" shape at the center point. To decorate, mark the edge of the dress using a stitching wheel.



To Model the Face

1. Take some flesh-toned modeling paste and roll it into a ball. Indent in the middle with your finger, pushing up the paste to define the nose, then use your fingertips to make the eye cavities.

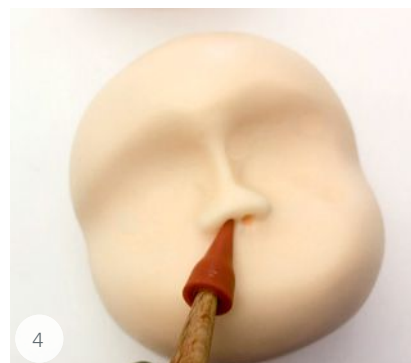
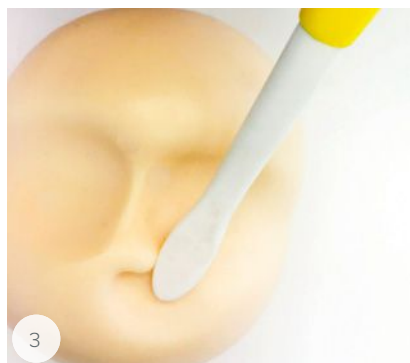
Barbara notes: There should be an equal distance between the top of the eye cavity and the top of the head, and the bottom of the eye cavity and the base of the chin.



2. Use the Dresden tool to define the nose, pressing into the paste to create the tip and the bridge.

3. Use a conical pointed tool to mark the nostrils.

4. Use a sharp knife to cut in a line for the lips in the bottom portion of the face as shown.





5

5. Use the silicone brush to define the lips. Pressing into the chin area, under the bottom lip, will allow the lips to protrude. Define around the top lips.



6

6. In the eye cavities you created earlier draw a small oval shape for the eye and remove the paste from inside. Use the tip of a silicone brush to define the eyelid and brow bone.



7

7. Fill the cavity with a small ball of white paste, then paint the eyes using a fine artists brush. Dust the cheeks and the lips with red petal dust, and paint the eyebrows.

For the Flowers



1



3



2



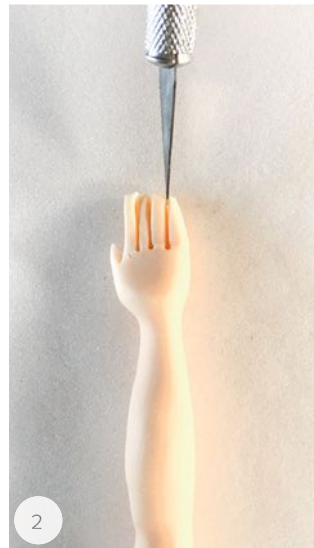
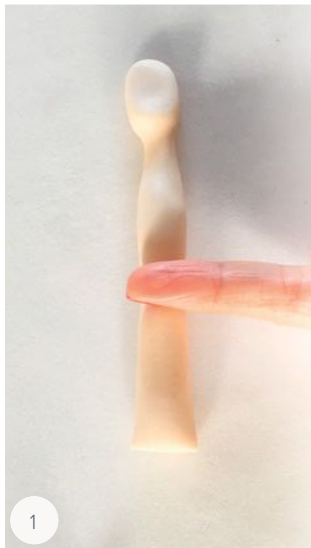
4

1. Roll out some white modeling paste to $\frac{1}{8}$ " thickness and cut out lots of hydrangea flowers using a hydrangea cutter.
2. Place the flower inside a two-sided hydrangea veiner and press gently to impress the veins.
3. Allow the flowers to dry on a foam pad.
4. Dust the flowers using lilac edible petal dust along the edges and apple green in the center.
5. Position the flowers all around the cake, using a little edible glue to adhere them.



5

To Make the Arms



1. Shape a small amount of flesh-toned paste in a slightly tapered cylinder, and using the finger, create an indentation for the wrist and the elbow. Flatten the tapered end to create the hand.
2. Cut a small "V" to define the thumb first, and then three more cuts to create the fingers.
3. Gently taper each finger and then position the arm onto the body. Use a little edible glue to adhere the arm to the torso. Dust the top edge of the dress with lilac petal dust.
4. Add a flower onto each shoulder.

Finishing Touches

1. Position the head onto the body, securing the head onto the exposed skewer. To make the hair, cut strips of brown paste and add them around the base of the head and then on the top of the head.
Barbara notes: You can texture the hair with the Dresden tool and position the pieces to give a natural effect.
2. Add two flowers to the hair. To position the doll, place three dowels in the center of the cake for support and place the doll on top, securing with a little frosting to hold it in place. **ACD**



Tatty Teddy

BY RALITSA KAMBUROVA

“I took inspiration from a **patchwork quilt** in the creation of this baby-shower cake,” notes Ralitsa Kamburova. “I love to create cakes with texture, so I decided to give the patchwork a three-dimensional effect using wafer paper, and no baby-shower cake would be complete without **an adorable topper**.” Learn to create this cute “Tatty Teddy” inspired cake topper with this **easy step-by-step** tutorial.



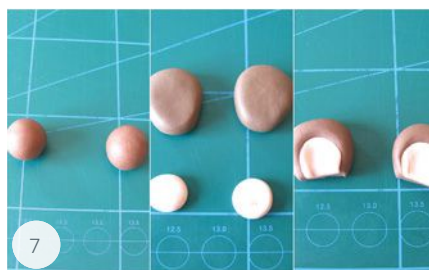
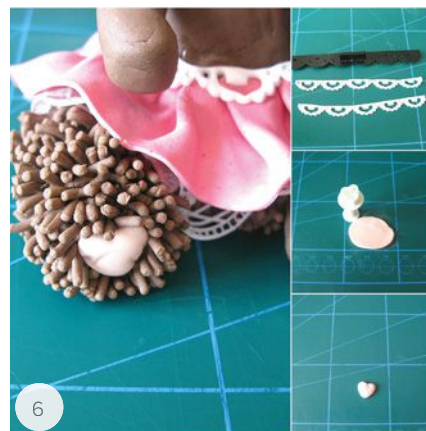
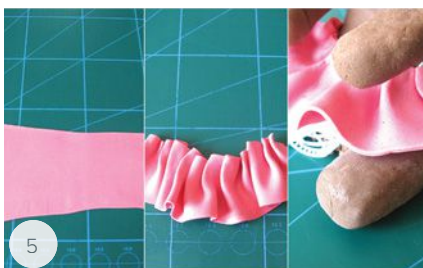
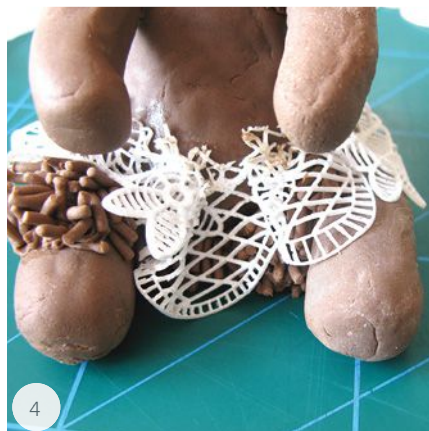
Ralitsa

Kamburova is owner of Delice, a boutique cake business based in Varna, Bulgaria. Ralitsa loves to create striking

designs inspired by texture, fashion, and textiles. She enjoys sharing her techniques with others by creating fun online tutorials. Ralitsa has been featured in many notable cake-decorating magazines.



[Facebook.com/DeliceVarna](https://www.facebook.com/DeliceVarna)



1. Make an RKT ball, cone, two sausages for the hands, and two sausages for the legs. Prepare a piece of lace for under the teddy's skirt.
2. Cover the body parts in brown fondant. Don't try to make them perfect, they will be covered in fur later. Attach the body parts.
3. Make the fur by filling a garlic press with a small amount of brown fondant.
4. Add the lace to the teddy's body.
5. Make the skirt. Roll a piece of pink fondant, cut a strip a fondant with straight edges, and make pleats. Attach the fondant over the lace.
6. Finish the skirt and make the bear paws. Cut a lace border with the Patchwork lace cutter. Add it to the skirt. Cut two small hearts using a heart-shape plunger cutter. Add them to the teddy's legs. Attach fur around the hearts.
7. To make the ears make small balls of brown fondant. Make two smaller balls of pink fondant. Press the brown balls into teardrops. Place the pink balls over the brown teardrops and press slightly. Cut the edges.
8. Make an ellipse of ivory fondant, then add a small black triangle for the nose. Attach the ellipse to the teddy's head. Attach the ears. Right above the ellipse add two small balls for the eyes. Cover the rest of the head in fur.
9. Place the number in the teddy's hands. ... ACD

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