

Contents at a Glance

<i>Introduction</i>	1
<i>Part I: Getting Ready to Decorate with Ease and Expertise</i>	7
Chapter 1: Acquiring the Skills and Creativity.....	9
Chapter 2: Assembling Your Cake Decorating Kit.....	15
Chapter 3: Planning Your Workspace	31
Chapter 4: Stocking Your Pantry	39
<i>Part II: Preparing the Canvas of Cake</i>	49
Chapter 5: Prepping for the Cake Decorating Process	51
Chapter 6: Baking the Perfect Cakes.....	61
Chapter 7: Smoothing the Way for Decorating.....	81
<i>Part III: Topping, Filling, and Embellishing Your Creations</i>	93
Chapter 8: Whipping Up Frostings	95
Chapter 9: Dusting and Glazing: It's Icing on the Cake	109
Chapter 10: Amping Up the Flavor: Spreading Fillings	129
Chapter 11: Tip Talk.....	143
Chapter 12: Enhancing with Embellishments	159
<i>Part IV: Sweetening Life's Special Occasions</i>	181
Chapter 13: Festive Cakes for Kids.....	183
Chapter 14: Cakes for Grown-Ups	205
Chapter 15: Showering Brides and Moms-to-Be	223
Chapter 16: Lifting a Fork to Weddings and Anniversaries.....	243
Chapter 17: Savoring Holidays and Special Occasions	259
<i>Part V: Thinking Outside the Cake Box</i>	285
Chapter 18: Prepping for Showtime	287
Chapter 19: Quick Cakes and Last-Minute Decorating Techniques	297
Chapter 20: Starting a Cake Decorating Business	311

<i>Part VI: The Part of Tens</i>	323
Chapter 21: Ten Great Sources for Cake Supplies and Ideas	325
Chapter 22: Ten Ways to Cut a Cake	329
Chapter 23: Ten Easy Baking and Frosting Alternatives.....	337
Chapter 24: Ten (or So) Troubleshooting Techniques	341
<i>Index</i>	345

Table of Contents

.....

<i>Introduction</i>	1
About This Book.....	2
Conventions Used in This Book	2
Foolish Assumptions	3
How This Book Is Organized.....	3
Part I: Getting Ready to Decorate with Ease and Expertise.....	4
Part II: Preparing the Canvas of Cake	4
Part III: Topping, Filling, and Embellishing Your Creations.....	4
Part IV: Sweetening Life's Special Occasions.....	4
Part V: Thinking Outside the Cake Box	5
Part VI: The Part of Tens	5
Icons Used in This Book.....	5
Where to Go from Here.....	6

<i>Part I: Getting Ready to Decorate with Ease and Expertise</i>	7
---	----------

Chapter 1: Acquiring the Skills and Creativity	9
---	----------

Bridging Baking and Creativity.....	9
Gathering the Tools and Ingredients	10
Picking Up the Skills.....	11
Baking the foundations.....	11
Spreading on the layers.....	11
Decorating with tips and embellishments	12
Setting up, striking down.....	12
Infusing Your Own Taste	13
Calling All Occasions	13
Recognizing Possibilities.....	14

Chapter 2: Assembling Your Cake Decorating Kit	15
---	-----------

Targeting Tips and Flower Nails.....	15
Starting with essential icing tips	16
Adding couplers	17
Fixating on flower nails.....	17
Picking Out Paper Goods and Pastry Bags	19
Sizing Up Pan Shapes.....	20
Rectangular and square.....	20
Round and oval.....	20
Cupcake tins.....	21
Bundt.....	21
Specialty shapes	21



Boarding Cakes	21
Gathering General Utensils	22
Ruler	22
Cookie, fondant, and gum paste cutters	22
Cooling racks	22
Pastry brush	23
Rubber spatulas	23
Large spatula	23
Thermometers	23
Cake tester	24
Rolling pins	24
Toothpicks, bamboo skewers, and dowels	24
Tooling Around with Decorating Specifics	25
Decorating comb	25
Turntable	25
Leveling assists	26
Icing spatulas	26
Bench scraper	28
Fondant smoother	28
Modeling tools	28
A color wheel	28
Keeping All Your Tools Together	29
Finding the Goods	30

Chapter 3: Planning Your Workspace 31

Organizing Your Kitchen: What Goes Where	31
Creating a decorating zone	32
Promoting accessibility and efficiency	33
Checking out the counter space	33
Giving yourself a little elbow room	34
Hauling Out the Heavier Equipment	34
Kitchen mixers	34
Food processors and grinders	35
Pasta makers	35
Firing Up an Accurate Oven	36
Conventional vs. convection ovens	36
Perfecting temperatures	37
The microwave has its place, too	37
Refrigerating and Freezing	37

Chapter 4: Stocking Your Pantry 39

The Lowdown on Baking Staples	39
Cake flour and all-purpose flour	40
Sugars	40
Butters, oils, and shortening	41
Eggs and egg whites	41
Baking powder, baking soda, and cornstarch	41
Chocolate	42
Spices and seasonings	42

Opening the Dairy Case.....43
 Fresh milk43
 Canned milk43
 Other dairy products44
 Coloring Agents44
 Gels.....44
 Pastes45
 Gathering Flavorings and Other Liquids45
 Extracts and flavorings45
 Other common liquids47
 Embellishing with Pizzazz47
 Candies47
 Chocolates.....48
 Colorful additions.....48

Part II: Preparing the Canvas of Cake.....49

Chapter 5: Prepping for the Cake Decorating Process 51

 Considering the Occasion and the Atmosphere51
 Surveying the celebrant and celebration52
 Taking theme and audience into account53
 Calculating how much cake to make53
 Picking Up Cake Decorating Lingo54
 Understanding the tools54
 Gathering components and coverings.....55
 Prepping the surface56
 Adding embellishment.....56
 Picking Flavors for the Cake and Frosting57
 Devising a Design58
 Finding inspiration58
 Taking stock of your options58
 Discerning colors59
 Greenlighting your plan60

Chapter 6: Baking the Perfect Cakes 61

 Comprehending the Language of Cake Baking61
 Measuring Up.....62
 Flour63
 Sugar64
 Butter and shortening.....64
 Eggs65
 Spices, baking soda, and baking powder65
 Sticky substances65
 Vanilla, vinegar, and other liquids65
 Fruits, nuts, and the like65
 Prepping the Pans66
 Mixing the Batter.....67

Getting Down the Rules for the Perfect Cakes	68
Reading up and getting ready	68
Battering up and baking	69
Leveling during baking	70
Knowing when a cake is done	70
Cooling and extracting the cake	71
Avoiding cake-tastrophes	71
Perfecting the Basic Cake Repertoire	72
Lining up the ingredients	72
Making the cakes (finally!)	73

Chapter 7: Smoothing the Way for Decorating. 81

Devising Your Game Plan	81
Timing	82
Keeping design in mind	83
Covering Cake Boards	83
Wrapping it up in paper and fabric	84
Using fondant or royal icing	84
Considering unconventional ideas	84
Leveling and Torting the Cake	85
Loving to level	85
Tackling torting	86
Drawing Up Designs	87
Sizing up the cake	88
Sketching	88
Tracing	89
Using templates	89
Following patterns	89
Choosing Colors	90
Experimenting before proceeding	90
Mixing just the right color	90

***Part III: Topping, Filling, and Embellishing Your Creations* 93**

Chapter 8: Whipping Up Frostings 95

Stirring Through the Rules for Frosting	95
Matching up Frostings and Cakes	96
Mixing Frostings	97
Tinting Frostings	102
Frosting with Finesse	103
Taking care to crumb coat	104
Smoothing out the frosting	105
Going the Textured Route	106
Ridges	106
Hobnails	107

Zigzags	107
Swirls	108
Petals	108
Chapter 9: Dusting and Glazing: It's Icing on the Cake	109
Sweetening Up Your Cake with Icing	110
Starting with basic confectioners' sugar icing	110
Getting versatile with royal icing	115
Giving Fondant a Try	116
Working with rolled fondant	117
Pouring fondant	119
Dusting for a Different Look.....	121
Deciding what to dust with	122
Using stencils	122
Putting the Shine on with Glazes	124
Chapter 10: Amping Up the Flavor: Spreading Fillings	129
Picking the Best Filling for Your Cake.....	129
Taking Care with Fillings	130
Indulging in Creaminess: Smooth Fillings	131
Crunching Things Up: Chunky Fillings	138
Summoning Syrups	141
Chapter 11: Tip Talk	143
Decoding Tip Numbers.....	143
A tip-tionary	144
The most popular tips	145
Preparing to Pipe.....	147
Gathering the goods.....	148
Outfitting a pastry bag.....	148
Holding the bag.....	150
Practicing Tipping Points and Techniques	150
Lining up dots, rosettes, shells, stars, and leaves	151
Guiding lines, garlands, and swags	152
Piping borders	153
Basket weaving without becoming a basket case	153
Flooding, Filling, and Other Fun Design Techniques	155
Flooding a design.....	155
Filling a design	155
Lettering and scripting	156
Creating a frozen buttercream transfer	157
Chapter 12: Enhancing with Embellishments	159
Easing into Enhancements.....	159
Adding zip with fresh fruit	160
Smelling the fresh flowers	161
Getting a bit nutty	163

Modeling with Marzipan.....	164
Simple techniques: Coloring and cutting	165
Advanced techniques: Modeling	166
Working with Gum Paste	168
Tooling around with gum paste.....	170
Assembling and coloring gum paste flowers	172
Tending to Frosting Roses.....	175
Nailing the form	175
Skipping the nail and going straight for the cake.....	177
Dipping into the Candy Jar	177
Simple but sublime options	178
Candies	178
Confections	179
Other treats.....	179
Choosing Inedible Features	179

Part IV: Sweetening Life's Special Occasions..... 181

Chapter 13: Festive Cakes for Kids 183

Conceiving the Perfect Birthday Cake.....	184
Carving Cakes into the Shape of Numbers and Letters	184
Theme Cakes Boys Go Nuts Over	187
Theme Cakes for Little Ladies	191
Pleasing the Whole Gang: Cakes for Boys and Girls	196
Getting Kids Involved	200
Trying Kid-Friendly Recipes	201

Chapter 14: Cakes for Grown-Ups 205

Gearing Up for Grown-Up Cakes.....	205
Brainstorming a design.....	206
Taking personality into account.....	206
Simple Letter and Number Designs	206
Playing the alphabet game	207
Piping monograms and initials	207
Designing Cakes Ladies Swoon Over	208
Winning Over Men.....	212
Pleasing Both Men and Women.....	217
Following the invitation.....	220
Looking like the honoree.....	220
Shaping up other cakes	221

Chapter 15: Showering Brides and Moms-to-Be 223

Analyzing the Occasion	223
Bridal showers: Tying in to the main event	224
Baby showers: Making parents-to-be feel special	225
Commanding Popular Shower Power Moves	225
Crafting cutouts	225
Adorning with flowers	228
Piping the lacy look.....	228
Tossing Cheer into a Bridal Shower.....	229
Bringing Up the Baby Shower.....	236

Chapter 16: Lifting a Fork to Weddings and Anniversaries 243

Considering the Event's Theme and Colors	244
Figuring out the logistics.....	244
Daring to be different?	245
Staying in style.....	245
Positioning to stand out	246
Creating a Simple Wedding Cake.....	247
Tiering Up for Success.....	249
Moving Up to a More Elaborate Wedding Cake.....	251
Celebrating Another Year with Anniversary Cakes	255

Chapter 17: Savoring Holidays and Special Occasions 259

Bringing Seasonal Treats to Your Decorating.....	259
Saluting Spring and Summer.....	260
Having Fun in the Fall	267
Greeting the Winter Holidays	273
Celebrating Other Occasions.....	277

Part V: Thinking Outside the Cake Box.....285**Chapter 18: Prepping for Showtime 287**

Giving Your Cake the Once-Over	287
A Cake Decorator's Checklist for the Big Day	289
Livening Up the Cake Presentation.....	290
Mapping out the space	291
Playing around with props	291
Transporting Your Creation.....	292
Taking measurements for fit	292
Using standard gear and procedure.....	293
Stabilizing more complicated cakes	293

What to Do with Leftover Cake	295
Give parting gifts	295
Refrigerate for good taste	295
Rework it for another occasion	296
Chapter 19: Quick Cakes and Last-Minute Decorating Techniques	297
Keeping a Well-Stocked Pantry.....	297
The essentials	298
Decorating odds and ends	298
Quick Fixes with Mixes	299
When You Have Only Minutes	305
Making it special, quickly	305
Salvaging a broken cake	307
Fast designs.....	308
Chapter 20: Starting a Cake Decorating Business	311
Setting Up Your Own Business	312
Deciding if you have what it takes	312
Doing your research.....	313
Determining your specialties.....	314
Regarding the upsides	315
Finding a Location for Your Business	315
Working out of your home.....	315
Scouting for commercial kitchen space	316
Getting Down to Basics	317
Running a cake-centric office.....	318
Finding out about licensing.....	318
Drawing up contracts	319
Attracting a Clientele and Marketing Your Cakes	319
Spreading the word	320
Brainstorming cool marketing methods.....	320
Designing a Web site for your designs.....	321
<i>Part VI: The Part of Tens</i>	<i>323</i>
Chapter 21: Ten Great Sources for Cake Supplies and Ideas	325
Chapter 22: Ten Ways to Cut a Cake.....	329
Chapter 23: Ten Easy Baking and Frosting Alternatives.....	337
Chapter 24: Ten (or So) Troubleshooting Techniques	341
<i>Index.....</i>	<i>345</i>

Recipes at a Glance

Basic Cakes

A Most Excellent White Cake	74
Cocoa Chocolate Cake	75
Delicious Yellow Cake	76
Flavor-Friendly Sponge Cake	77
The Best Carrot Cake Ever	78
Rich Pound Cake.....	79
White Velvet Cake.....	80

Frostings, Icings, Glazes, and Fondants

Buttercream Frosting.....	98
Stiff Decorator Frosting	99
Cream Cheese Frosting.....	100
Chocolate Ganache	101
Milk Chocolate Frosting.....	102
Simple Confectioners' Sugar Icing.....	113
Simple Chocolate Confectioners' Sugar Icing.....	114
Sunshine Cupcake Icing.....	114
Royal Icing.....	116
Rolled Fondant.....	117
Poured Fondant	120
2EZ Petit Fours Quick Fondant	121
Buttery Vanilla Glaze.....	125
Chocolate Glaze.....	126
Mocha Glaze.....	126
Caramel Glaze	127
Lemon Glaze.....	128
Fruit Glaze	128

Fillings

Basic Whipped Cream.....	132
Chocolate Whipped Cream	133
Coffee Cream.....	133
Caramel Filling	134

Amazing Chocolate Filling	134
Chocolate Mousse	135
Key Lime Mousse.....	136
Dulce de Leche Filling	137
Pink Cherry Filling.....	138
Crazy Crunchy Filling.....	138
Peanut Butter Filling	139
Coconut Filling.....	140
Raspberry Filling	140
Orange Syrup	141
Your Choice Fruit Syrup	142

Embellishments

Marzipan.....	165
Gum Paste	170

Kids' Cakes

Play Ball! Baseball Cake	187
“Have a Good Year” Race Car Cake	190
Ballerina Stage Cake.....	192
“You’re a Real Doll” Cake.....	194
Down on the Farm Cake.....	196
Circus Roar Cake	198
No-Bake Cherry Cake and Icing	201
S’mores Cupcakes	202
Berry Good Crumble Cake	203

Cakes for Grown-Ups

Jewelry Cake	208
Luscious Luau Cake	210
Vegas, Baby! Cake	213
Golf Game Cake.....	215
Rock Star Cake.....	217

Bridal and Baby Shower Cakes

Tasteful Registry Cake	230
Floral Fantasy.....	232
Cupcake Tower	236
Baby Animal Zoo	238

Wedding and Anniversary Cakes

Italian Chocolate Wedding Cake	247
Tahiti-in-SoHo Wedding Cake	252
Bubble Dot Anniversary Cake.....	256

Year-Round Cakes

Garden Path Cake	260
Chick-Chick Cupcakes	262
Patriotic Star	264
Haunted Mansion	267
Jack-O'-Lantern	269
Cornucopia Cake	271
Christmas Tree Cake	273
Skating Rink Cake	276
Heart-O'-Mine Cake	278
Housewarming Cake.....	279
Cap 'n' Tassel Graduation Cake	282

Quick and Easy Cake Ideas

Tropical Fruit Panorama Cake	161
Lori's Chocolatey-Chippity Cake	300
Cinco Leches Cake	301
Summer Lovin' Lemon Cake.....	302
Moussetachio Cupcakes	303
Barbara and Vera's Rum Cake.....	304
Cake Fondue.....	307

