

Wedding cake

Custom-made creations for your big day.



HERE COMES THE CAKE - Nina Hemmes, executive pastry chef and owner of Tartlets Cake Design & Dessert Catering, is gearing up for a busy summer wedding season.

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Given the choice, few women would pick an imitation ring or dress over a designer original.

But when it comes to selecting wedding cake, faux is fabulous.

"There has been a huge increase in fake cakes," said Nina Hemmes, executive pastry chef and owner of Tartlets Professional Pastry and Cake Design. "The display cake has a real top layer for the cake cutting ceremony and then we use real cake slabs for serving."

The purpose of the display cake is to create a visually appealing dessert for the wedding party and guests, which, because of its light weight, is easier for pastry chefs to design. The cake served to guests mimics the design of the display cake, but is simpler to cut because of its shape.

So, it appears brides do in fact want to have their cake and eat it too. And why shouldn't they? Modern brides are hip to what they want on their big day and their cake is no exception. Real ingredients, real fruit, a wedding cake that not only looks the part but also tastes it too.

"Because people are more educated about

other cultures, they are willing to try flavours like green tea that are not traditional Canadian," said Hemmes. "And since people from Vancouver have varied heritages, you can make a cake to represent their culture."

As for design, you'll find a mix of cakes for the traditional, modern and every bride in between. White and ivory are time-honoured favourites for classic gals and multi-coloured tiers are for brides who want an elegant yet fun dessert. To accommodate all your guest's tastes, try different flavoured tiers.

"To help me design the cake the first questions I ask are: where and when is the wedding going to be held? What are the ages of the guests? And what is on the menu?" explained Hemmes. "Also, if they know the colour of the bridesmaids' dresses or flowers, that will help with colour selection."

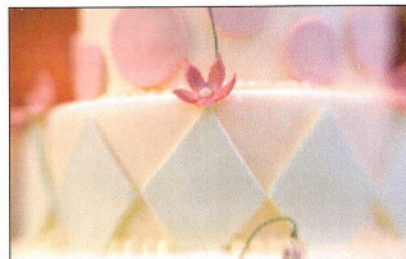
The selection process begins with a cake tasting. The pastry chef provides three or more customized samples and the bride tastes different flavours and textures and discusses different design options.

The final cake will not be ready until the

day of the wedding to ensure the freshest confectionery quality.

For those who want to forgo the customary cake for something decadently daring there are bite-sized tarts, truffles, mousse cups – and even cascading chocolate fountains. And while frosted cupcakes reigned as supreme petifore in recent years, their heyday seems to have passed.

At Tartlets Professional Pastry and Cake Design, tastings cost \$40 and the finished cake starts at \$4.95 per serving.



Cake pricing also depends on the filling used and the amount of time spent on design and decorative work. For an additional display cake, clients are charged for the design, not the filling.

"Each cake I make is custom-made and unique to each wedding," said Hemmes. "Then on your anniversary or when your baby is born you can have a cake for your special event that is your very own."