

# *Eastern Idaho State Fair's Cake Show*

2009

## *Wedding Cake Shows*

Most cake shows are held in the spring or fall. The summer months are generally wedding season and shows simply aren't practical.

### **1. Why have cake shows?**

Shows give decorators an opportunity to stretch their skills, try new ideas, share ideas with other decorators and educate the public on what can be done with the never ending art of sugar skills. Many people only see what can be done by a local bakery. When they see a cake show and all the seemingly impossible things that can be made from sugar, they will be amazed. Decorators won't get orders for wonderful sugar creations unless the public is educated to know what things are possible. It is greatly to our advantage as cake decorators to educate the public.

### **2. Who sponsors cake shows and where are they held?**

Local cake shops, local cake clubs, local businesses, state and international cake clubs all help organize and sponsor the shows. Cake shows take a lot of work behind the scenes just to get them organized and jobs delegated. These shows are volunteer based and the organizers welcome those who are willing to help with all the numerous tasks that must be done to run a show, i.e. registration, draping tables, marking categories and divisions on the tables, organizing the prizes and ribbons, soliciting the prizes in advance of the show. Lots of work goes into the organization before the show even starts. They are shown in State fairs for two days only.

### **3. Who can enter the shows?**

Anyone (child to senior adult) who wishes to share an idea, enter a sugar piece or cake into the show, and has carefully read all of the show guidelines is welcome to enter the cake show.

There are 3 categories to choose from:

1. Wedding cakes: Fondant and butter cream
2. Special occasion cakes
3. Sugar art (floral)

Categories will be separate.

### **4. Why enter the shows?**

This is a way to test your personal skill abilities and your creative talents. It is fun to see the wonderful creative ideas that come from all levels in a cake show. Even when the skill level is low on a cake it may give others an idea to take home and try. The ribbons and prizes are nice but it is also fun to talk to the public and new decorators about the possibilities of things that can be imagined in sugar. The sharing of ideas and meeting your fellow decorators should be incentive enough to enter the show.

### **5. What do the judges at the shows look for?**

#### **CREATIVITY:**

Copying a cake from a book, magazine or yearbook will not gain points if the cake judges

are aware of that original cake design.

### OVERALL DESIGN:

The overall cake design should be well coordinated. Flowers, leaves, graphic design or sugar additions such as butterflies or fairies should all be coordinated in color and design. Group things together that complement one another. If you put a lot of time and effort into a piece, you will walk away with a lot of satisfaction.

### PRECISION AND NEATNESS:

Shells or balls should all be the same size and shape, and borders uniform in size. Borders should be very even and any top or side designs should be done very neatly. Creativity and precision are very important in show work.

### COLOR:

When creating a cake, try to keep all colors as natural as possible. Pink roses in real life are not one shade of pink from the outside into the center. Shading, color accents, painting little details, adding soft blending of color - all those little details can make the difference. A royal icing that is one color, pink rose, will not have the life that three shades of pink rose icing will have. Learn to use color and texture to your advantage to make your design outstanding.

### SIZE:

Bigger is not necessarily better. Size of the cake doesn't matter when it is extremely well done and beautifully displayed. Sometimes very small cakes take the best of show ribbons because of the beautiful precision work, exquisite detail and over all beauty in the design and color.

### BOARDS:

In most cases the board under the show cake should be very sturdy and approximately 4 inches larger on all sides than the displayed cake. Of course there are exceptions when the board is part of the design in an unusual novelty cake. Care should be taken to be sure all boards are very neatly covered and complement the cake design.

### DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY:

Some techniques are much harder to do than others, such as realistic gum paste flowers, floating collars or very detailed figures. As a decorator advances through the divisions in a cake show they build skill levels. But all have the possibility of learning very advanced techniques at any level. When techniques that take higher skill levels are done well by persons in lower division levels, the judges take that into consideration, Do the very best work you are capable of when entering a cake show. Get creative, be very neat and precise and stretch your imagination to build your skill level no matter what division you are in.

### PLASTIC FIGURES, SILK FLOWERS, ETC.:

Plastics, silks, porcelains, and even cold porcelain items used on a cake in a cake show are basically ignored. They don't count for or against you. When you take away those decorations from the design than what is left is what is considered in the judging. Most of the time the only type of plastics that are considered in the judging are the separators used in the wedding cake set up. Even purchased cake tops are basically ignored as far as the judging is concerned.

## **6. What can come from participating in a cake show?**

Please consider the cake show to be a learning experience. Enter to build your skills - not to show off what you already know. Many decorators have gotten discouraged at cake shows because they

entered expecting their work to be thought of as wonderful, perfect, the best in their area. It is a real ego breaker to find that there are others who are as equally or even more talented. Celebrate the creativity and the wonderful work no matter who wins the ribbons. Congratulate the winner and learn from what that person has executed.

The ribbons and awards are not the important things in the long run. The important thing is learning from and about our fellow decorators. When you leave a cake show with a new friend and new knowledge about sugar techniques then you have come away from the show better for having been there.

I hope you will come out to have fun and enjoy the cake show!

For more information about cake shows :

[www.earlenescakes.com](http://www.earlenescakes.com)

[www.oksugarartshow.com](http://www.oksugarartshow.com)

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