



Toba Garrett

Cake Decorating By Toba
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In the business since: 1983

Training: Cake Artistry: Deco Cake & Candy School, NY; The Chocolate Gallery, NY; Woodnutt's, England, Creative Cutters, Canada; Maid of Scandinavia, Minnesota, and with individual artists from England, South Africa, Australia/New Zealand, and Mexico. For Baking: Le Cordon Bleu, France. Art Training: Parsons School of Design, NY, the Loft School of Calligraphy, NY and Fine Arts minor at City College and Fordham University in NY.

Cake philosophy: A well-decorated cake should inspire the viewer to admire its beauty and technical skills, but it should excite the palate and make the viewer wonder about the sumptuous treasure that's behind this confection.

Inspiration: I always had a love for baking. I can remember my grandmother in the kitchen making a cake from scratch with a handful of this and a handful of that, a large mixing bowl and a wooden spoon. There was no recipe, just her experience and memory of cooking and baking. We never had icing on the cake as it never seemed to require it. The cake was so delicious and yummy; I can taste it right this moment. I never forgot the experience of watching her creaming the butter and sugar and cracking eggs, right from the chicken. Later in life, I went to a Halloween party and saw a decorated cake that was made by my best friend. The cake was so delicious and so was the icing. These two memories has inspired me to become a cake designer.

Signature style: While I enjoy a large range of cake decorating tasks and challenges, I am most noted for classic cake decorating with heavy emphasis on precision piping, fine



without driving me stark crazy.

Biggest cake disaster: A client was extremely disappointed in a wedding cake that I designed many years ago. He and his family hated the way the cake was decorated. I took the cake order on a hand shake with no sketch or picture and was told to do something extremely simple. I did just that. Apparently, they had expected me to do something quite elaborate, but only expected to pay for something very simple. This was a colleague of mine and it still affects me to this day. I learned never to do a cake unless I make a sketch of it and the client approves of it. By the way, they absolutely loved the taste and flavor of the cake!



Greatest triumph: My very first cake decorated in the Australian stringwork style. I felt that I had arrived.

How has the cake artistry field changed since you started? When I started learning cake decorating in the early 1970's, there was a great deal of piping on cakes. Now you see chocolate, pulled and blown sugarwork, figurines, portrait, three-dimensional free-hand designs, sculpting, 8-ft high cakes, the works!



detail work with lots of elegance and style.

Strangest request: My strangest request was to design and decorate a wedding cake with lions, tigers and bears... 'oh my'!

Favorite flavors and colors: My favorite flavors are: raspberry,

I see less and less pipework and it bothers me. Perhaps it's one of the reasons I teach and I teach a variety of piping skills, from buttercream to the most elaborate royal icing piping skills.

Where do you see the field of cake artistry going? I see no limits to cake and its artistry. A couple of decades ago, cakes in the U.S. were limited to buttercream or royal icing with gumpaste and pastillage work. Now you see chocolate, pulled and blown sugarwork, figurines, portrait, three-dimensional free-hand designs, sculpting, 8-ft high cakes, the works!

Personal quote: A cake should be truly admired before eating, thus "presentation before degustation."

