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Modern confections enhance weddings

By Kelly Griffith

Tradition states that wedding cakes are to be tiered masterpieces featuring white cake and white frosting. However, today's modern couples are going in decidedly different directions with their wedding cakes. Often the dessert is as varied and unique as the couple themselves.

"Nobody's doing just white cakes anymore," Owner and Cake Decorator of Simply Cakes in Apex Lorie Murray said.

Wedding cakes can be created to match couples' individual styles and tastes, as well as the color scheme of the wedding. Shapes and sizes can be mixed and matched depending upon what the bride and groom envision. Working closely with a skilled cake artist can yield a truly exceptional confection.

Here are some ideas for embellishing wedding cakes and making them mirror the personality of the wedding.

Consider a different shape other than standard round tiers. How about something that ties into your theme, such as a seashell or a sandcastle for a beachside wedding?

Pastry Chef at Stick Boy Bakery in Fuquay-Varina Stephen James said many brides are choosing to get away from ornate cakes and going for the simple, clean look of square tiers.

Murray said many brides she works with also have chosen hexagonal-shaped tiers. She has done some elaborately decorated works, like an armadillo-shaped cake for one wedding. However, most of the specialty cakes are for grooms' cakes.

Instead, many brides are using colors from the bridesmaids' dresses or invitations as accent colors on the cake. Sweet Cheeks Owner Jackie Green in Holly Springs said she does many cakes with satin ribbon that matches the weddings' color schemes.

Consider matching the flowers in bouquets and table settings on the cake. Skilled decorators can create sugar or piped flowers that rival the look of the real thing. Green and Murray said they also use fresh flowers on several of the cakes they decorate.

Base the cake on the style of the bride's wedding gown. A cake artist may be able to mimic the look of lace, beading, appliques and more. A photo of the gown may be all the inspiration the professional needs. Murray said she has used a bride's dress as the inspiration for the cake before and she has designed cakes, which match invitations sent out to guests.

There are many decorating styles available and you may not have to go with the traditional buttercream icing. Rolled fondant can be cut and shaped into a variety of embellishments. Talk with the cake designer about his or her specialties in cake design, and ask to see a look-book of past cakes created. Be sure the person whose work you are reviewing will be the actual person doing your cake. This trend has become very popular. However, brides should remember that the cost of cake with fondant would most likely be higher. Who says you need to have vanilla? Today's cakes come in so many flavors, including chocolate fudge, ba-



Michelle and Dacote Whittaker were married on September 26, 2009 at the Fuquay-Varina United Baptist Church. They are both firefighters for the Raleigh Fire Department. That's where they met. Their wedding cake was topped with firefighter bride and groom, making their day even more special.

nana, carrot, caramel, pumpkin and so many more. Ask about the cake flavors and filling offerings. Can't decide? Find out if you can have multiple flavors, where each tier is a different option. Green said it is very important the brides keep in mind the setting of the reception. If the cake will be served outdoors in the late spring or summer, brides should tell the decorator to be sure that the cake would be able to hold up in the warm temperatures. Save your appetite. Consider skipping the extensive dessert bar so guests can truly savor your cake.

Most importantly, a bride should have fun choosing her wedding cake. James suggested going online and looking at other cakes to get ideas. Murray tells her bridal customers the same thing. Even if they don't find exactly what they are looking for, they will find a trend.

"Definitely make sure you love your cake," James said. "You want to make sure it's your own."

According to Murray, brides shouldn't be afraid to go crazy. "It doesn't have to be your grandmother's wedding cake," she said. Base prices run from about \$3.75 to \$6 per serving, based on what type of cake you order. For more information, contact Stick Boy Bakery at 919-557-2237; Simply Cakes at 919-772-0223; or



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