



Most celebrations in life include the eating of cake. Heather Zubek puts on the kettle and brings out her best china so she can enjoy a delicious journey through the world of cakes.

Did you know?

In Ancient Rome, the wedding cake made from wheat or barley, was broken over the bride's head in order to bring good luck to the couple.

Bridesmaids would sleep with pieces of wedding cake under their pillow to dream of their future husband. The most expensive wedding cake cost over \$41 million. The cake was created in New York and was covered in diamonds and jewels. A slice of the Duke and Duchess of Windsor's 1937 wedding cake was sold for nearly \$30,000 in 1998.

Take some flour, sugar, eggs and butter, mix them with some cocoa, vanilla or even fresh fruit, and after some time in an oven, you have cake: the sweetest part of life's celebrations.

LET'S EAT KAKA!

The earliest cakes were actually bread that was sweetened with honey and nuts. The term "cake" goes as far back as the Vikings, from the Old Norse word "kaka".

The ancient Greeks called cake, *plakous* which is taken from the word *plakoeis*, meaning flat. In ancient Rome, basic bread dough was mixed with butter, eggs and honey creating a cake-like loaf.

During the Middle Ages, only the very wealthy ate sweet baked goods similar to the cakes we have today. During the 15th century in Britain, people began to enjoy eating sweet dough made from cream and butter. Baking no longer belonged to the upper classes during the 16th and 17th centuries, so more people began to bake and eat cakes and biscuits.

People enjoyed eating cakes filled with butter, cream and raisins but they were very 'stodgy' and heavy. It was during this time that recipe books and cake tins made an appearance. It wasn't until the 19th century, with the introduction of baking powder, that cakes became lighter.

TYPES OF CAKES

Cakes are divided into different types, mainly based on their ingredients and the way they are mixed.

Butter cakes are the type of cake used for birthday cakes and even wedding cakes.

They are made from creamed butter, sugar, eggs and flour.

Sponge cakes, sometimes called foam cakes, get their volume from the beaten eggs rather than the use of baking powder. These cakes do not contain butter. Sponge cakes are believed to be the oldest type of cake made without yeast.

CAKES FOR EVERY CELEBRATION

Cakes can also be classified according to the occasion they are celebrating.

WEDDING CAKES

The wedding cake is generally served at the wedding reception after the main dinner. Sometimes elaborate and often having many tiers, or levels, designs for wedding cakes have changed greatly over the years.

For many years, wedding cakes were tiers of fruit cakes topped with white marzipan and icing. It was when Queen Victoria used white icing on her wedding cake that the icing was called "royal icing". Today, the wedding cake can be anything



Sponge cake. Picture: Iain Gillespie



A three-tier wedding cake. Picture: Getty Images

from carrot cake to a chocolate mud cake covered in multicoloured icing and real flowers.

In some parts of America, two cakes are presented at the wedding: a bride's cake and a groom's cake. The groom's cake is generally a dark cake like chocolate, and decorated in the shape of a hobby or favourite sports team.

early 1900s, the Postre Chaja is named after the chaja, a South American bird. The original recipe for the cake remains a secret with the family which invented it.

JAPAN

Lovers of the Japanese anime character Doraemon would recognise the **Dorayaki**. This cake is the cartoon robot cat's biggest obsession. The Dorayaki is a sponge sandwich filled with anko, a sweet azuki red bean paste.



Make your own choccie cake

This **Easy Chocolate Cake** recipe is perfect for the first-time cook. Make sure you have an adult supervise.

Easy Chocolate Cake

Ingredients:

- 1 cup self-raising flour (sifted)
- 1/2 cup cocoa (sifted)
- 1 cup caster sugar
- 1/2 cup butter (softened)
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2 eggs (lightly beaten)

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 180 degrees Celsius (160 degrees Celsius fan-forced). Grease and flour or line a 24cm cake tin and set aside.

2. Place all ingredients into a bowl and, using a mixer, mix on high for 4 minutes.

3. Pour into cake tin and bake for 35-40 minutes or until the cake springs back when lightly touched in the centre.

Simple Buttercream Icing

Want to ice your cake? Try this easy recipe for **Simple Buttercream Icing**. You can add

flavours such as vanilla or cocoa.

Ingredients:

- 200g butter, softened
- 2 1/2 cups icing sugar mixture
- 2 tablespoons milk

Method:

1. With an electric mixer, beat the butter until it is pale and fluffy
2. Use the milk at the end to thin the mixture. You will notice it makes it puff up.
3. Gradually beat in the icing mixture, half a cup at a time.

Source: Created by Jennifer Cheung for Kidspot Kitchen.

Did you know?

The idea of having cakes eaten to celebrate birthdays has been around since ancient Roman times when flat circular "cakes" made from flour and nuts and sweetened with honey were eaten. But it wasn't until the 15th century that the "modern" birthday cake was born in Germany, when bakeries began selling cakes for customers' celebrations.

Cakes on Show

With the IGA Perth Royal Show just around the corner, ED! chats with one of the judges who has the tough job of deciding which cakes wins a prize. **Rochelle Smith** has been part of the IGA Perth Royal Show's judging team for the past seven years.

ED!: Have you always liked baking?

Rochelle: Yes, always. I loved cooking with my Nana when I was a little Vegemite. She was a great teacher, very patient. My favourite thing to make were her apricot balls, they were the most delicious treats, sooo yummy. Just thinking about them makes my mouth water.

ED!: Your favourite cake to bake and eat?

Rochelle: Gosh, that's a hard one. So many great cakes out there. I love cooking pound cake; it's a cake that has equal measures of butter, sugar, eggs and flour. You can then add any flavours you like. Once you follow the basic rules it's a creative cake to bake. I also love a good carrot cake.

ED!: What do you look for when judging a cake?

Rochelle: There are four things to look for: overall appearance, texture, fragrance/aroma and flavour.

ED!: Do you have a checklist that you need to "tick off"?

Rochelle: Yes, we have a judging sheet for each cake so we can write down comments, good or bad, and scores. This helps if we have a couple of cakes that are contenders for the top prize.

ED!: Have there been times when the taste was "off" or just dreadful?

Rochelle: Unfortunately, yes. Sometimes the best-looking cakes taste horrible. Generally speaking, dreadful tastes come from one of the ingredients being tainted, stale or rancid, or an overpowering flavour.



Rochelle Smith, right.



A variety of cakes on show.

Let's eat cake!

Charlotte Penn, 12 of Perth, has been baking cakes since she was six years old. ED! caught up with her and asked about her yummy hobby.

ED!: What was the first cake you baked by yourself?

Charlotte: My first attempt at baking a Christmas fruit cake (using my nan's recipe) by myself was when I was around eight.

I decorated it with royal icing and made a fondant snowman and snowflakes using special shape cutters.

ED!: Why do you like it so much?

Charlotte: Surprisingly, I don't really eat cake but enjoy being creative with the decorating side of baking. I like baking for family birthdays, special holidays, decorating Christmas gingerbread houses or just cooking with my friends and making a mess.

ED!: If you could bake a cake for anyone in the world, who would it be?

Charlotte: If I could bake for anyone in the world it would be JK Rowling as she is my hero. I would bake her a red velvet cake and decorate it with a Harry Potter-themed unicorn.

ED!: What three tips would you give to young people wanting to start baking?

Charlotte:

1. Carefully follow recipes, especially with measurements and cooking times.
2. Have fun with decorating using fondant, edible glitter, food colouring and being as artistic as you can.
3. Wait until the cake has completely cooled before icing — otherwise the buttercream will melt!

'Wait until the cake has ... cooled before icing!'



Did you know?

Baking powder is a mixture of acid and alkali which, when mixed with water, releases carbon dioxide gas into dough. These bubbles expand as the dough cooks, causing it to rise and the resulting cake to be lighter.