

# Art for your taste buds

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Cakes. Every time you think about one, your imagination isn't just limited to a lump of sugary dough garnished with cream and toppings—you imagine something more, something rather artistic. Thanks to the rise in demand and popularity, modern day cakes aren't just baked, they are crafted. They need to be visually pleasing and at the same time, leave a delicious taste in our mouths.

Rewind the clock to sometime around early 2000s or so. A toddler's birthday would be celebrated with a cake that most likely had the picture of a popular Disney character. Later years saw people celebrating occasions with cakes of different exquisite flavours such as coffee, black forest, strawberry, and so on. These cakes were delicious and quite popular, even today.

However, the only visible difference now is the appearance of the cakes. They have come out of the basic shape protocol and are now being moulded into art—delicious and aesthetic at the same time.

In recent times, cakes are being crafted into different shapes and sizes. Your wildest imaginations, accurate details and, of course, desired flavours are all being brought to life by hard-working bakers and their teams. Preposterous cakes with the most luscious flavours and eye-catching details are being prepared all across the world to satisfy cake lovers both in terms of taste and visuals.

"The wildest cake I ever had to make was a six feet tall, nine-tiered wedding cake" says Adeeba Ibnat, founder of The Baking Pit, a small-scale cake boutique located in Dhaka. "At first, I couldn't believe that someone actually wanted such a huge cake, and then after I was done I couldn't believe that I had pulled it off for the client. She was extremely delighted with it!"

In business since 2013, Adeeba specialises in customised cakes and desserts, all of which are home-made by her. The delicacies in question here are not just your regular everyday desserts either. Almost all of her creations are tailored to perfection with the most accurate

detailing in terms of appearance while at the same time, the taste is kept intact. One look through the gallery of her business' Facebook page will help you to understand what I am going on about.

These cakes taste just as good as they look, at times even better. But one of the most interesting thing about these cakes is the fact that each and every decoration that adorns them is edible. Pastry chefs go to amazing lengths to get this done using ingredients and



tools that are often too complex for the general people to use.

Precision is needed to get things done when it comes to maintaining both the look as well as the taste factor. However one cannot be sacrificed for the sake of the other as the two are completely different elements of the same product and issues with anyone of them will eventually deteriorate the final output.

"The first thing you need to keep in mind while work-

ing on the visual appearance of the cake is knowing when to stop" says Elma Arifeen, professional baker and Co-founder of Pastryarchy. "Make the presentation coherent with the flavours of the cake itself. For example, use a similar colour scheme as per the flavour. Keep it neat and clean; show some technique that will capture the interest of the people being served and always make a sketch of how you want the decor to be instead of just winging it."

For Elma, it was passion turned profession as she took off to France after her graduation and came back with a diploma in French pastry and work experience in a Michelin-star restaurant. Currently operating in Dhaka, Pastryarchy takes orders for various types of cakes and pastries. Just like The Baking Pit, they too specialise in homemade customised cakes, pastries, and other desserts.

Passionate chefs like Adeeba and Elma will do anything to make sure their clients are fully satisfied. This, of course, means that these bakers need to aim for absolute accuracy using the best ingredients and tools available. As mentioned earlier, each and every bit of decoration that comes with the cake is edible, meaning they require certain flavours and colouring. These elements are usually hard to come by but chefs do not give up on their ideas. They try to gather these elements either from local or foreign sources. In case both the options fail, chefs take it upon themselves to prepare the missing elements from scratch. In fact, most professional bakers prefer starting from scratch than using readymade components.

The end result of all this hard work is a cake that is moulded into perfection, using the most extravagant of flavours and showered with the wildest decoration. Its appearance will make you want to display it in your living room while its heavenly taste will leave you craving for more.

*Faisal wants to be the very best, like no one ever was. To survive university is his real test, to graduate is his cause. Send him memes and motivation at abir.afc@gmail.com*



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