

## Exposed: Naked Cakes Show Off Bare Sides

Waterloo Region Record

By Liz Monteiro

WATERLOO REGION - It's all there for the naked eye to see.

All the imperfections are exposed, from the drier, crustier parts to the slight differences in height within the tiered layers.

**"It's like your body. Clothes cover the imperfections," said Lori Dale, owner and cake baker of The Cake Tutor in Waterloo.**

It's known as the "naked cake." The cake is exposed because the sides are bare.



Instead, the icing is tucked in between layers and a light layer of cream often tops the cake. The cake can be decorated with fresh fruit, garden flowers or greenery.

It's a trend that started in 2010 when Hilary Duff got married and showed off a naked cake at her reception. Photographs of naked cakes started popping up on the social media site Pinterest, and, in Toronto, brides are choosing the rustic alternative.

But in Waterloo Region, it's not quite as popular.

Locally, cake makers say they have had plenty of inquiries from soon-to-be brides. They want to know how the cake can be decorated, what kind of cake is best for a naked cake and how long can it sit out without frosting to protect it.

Klara Johnson of Cambridge, who's been baking cakes professionally for 27 years, says she's been approached by brides about naked cakes in the last couple of years, but hasn't had a bride order one.

But she's made the naked cake for her bake shop on Main Street and it definitely attracts attention.

Last week, a customer came in and purchased the three-tiered chocolate naked cake spiked with Bailey's and whipping cream between layers. It was decorated with chocolate shavings and berries.

"He came back and ordered another one. The cake was a hit at a dinner party," she said. "He said it was delicious."

Naked cakes offer a more natural and relaxed look.

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**"People want to stick their finger in it and lick it," said Dale, 51, who's been decorating cakes for 30 years. She opened her shop seven years ago and has been located on Park Street for five years.**

**She bakes about 60 wedding cakes a year. This time of the year, she offers back-to-back cake decorating classes.**

**Dale, who was at wedding show at Bingemans earlier this month, said a few brides asked about naked cakes, wondering if it was the cake for them.**

**"It's a nice balance between cake and icing," she said. "It screams garden wedding."**

**"It's not a 'wow' cake," Dale said.**

At The Cake Box on Victoria Street in Kitchener, cake makers have made a few naked cakes for local weddings.

Cake decorator Sarah Witmer said they have made fall-themed cakes with carrot and pumpkin cake layers oozing with buttercream icing.

A recent apple orchard-theme naked cake "looked stunning," she said.

"It's a different esthetic," Witmer said.

Naked cakes offer less icing which often leads to less work when it comes to decorating, making it a cheaper alternative to the traditional fondant cakes.

**Dale said many are tired of the fondant icing which can be chewy and stiff and tends to be layered on thick.**

But when it comes to its appearance, no one can deny the vintage elegance of fondant-layered cakes. The decorating options are endless from beads and ruffles to metallic accessories.

Both Johnson and Dale said they've noticed customers are choosing buttercream icing over fondant.

Johnson, who worked with Liberty Group Sugar Decorations in Toronto to create a better-tasting fondant more than 14 years ago, said many cake buyers like the look but often leave the fondant icing on their plate.

Plus, a good decorator can make a buttercream-iced cake look like a fondant cake.

Unlike other wedding cakes that can be made the day before the event, a naked cake must be decorated just before it's delivered to prevent it from drying out.

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"It's a breeze to make," she said. "It's almost idiot-proof."

"Would I have it for wedding? I'm not sure. A wedding shower though? Yes I would," said Johnson, 56, who sells cake supplies and decorations out of her cake-making shop on Ainslie Street. She taught a wedding cake course at George Brown College for the past 10 years.

Just as cupcake wedding cakes were a recent craze, the same could be said for naked wedding cakes.

**"It's charming because it's new," said Dale.**

As online: <http://www.therecord.com/living-story/5278307-exposed-naked-cakes-show-off-bare-sides/>