

# Let them eat cake: How to get your wedding cake (and eat it too)

The bride and the groom may be the stars of the big day, but the wedding cake deserves a nod for its time-honored supporting role.

In ancient Rome, guests broke a wheat bun over the bride's head to bring good luck and fertility. Fortunately, the buns sweetened up, and in the 17th century a creative French baker stacked and frosted them. Voila! The first tiered wedding cake was born. One cake tradition that is still under debate — saving the top tier for the first anniversary. “You can save a fruit-cake,” says Cheryl Kleinman, of Cheryl Kleinman Cakes in Brooklyn, New York. “Beyond that, I don't encourage it.”

## CAKE BAKE-OFF

White cakes, buttercream frostings, columns and dazzling sugar flowers are wedding cake classics, but feel free to break from tradition. If you prefer a trendy design, try a colorful Southern red velvet cake, a mango creation that boasts Caribbean flair or even an Asian-inspired creation with red frosting.

As colors go bolder, style and form

are also changing. Askew cakes, whose tiers are placed off center, are gaining popularity. Even wilder, Krispy Kreme, a popular doughnut chain, has seen a number of requests for multi-tiered cakes made entirely of their doughnuts — one for each guest. Krispy Kreme Executive Chef Ron Rupocinski has created several templates so brides can choose the look that best fits their reception. Locate your nearest Krispy Kreme branch at [www.krispykreme.com](http://www.krispykreme.com) or visit a store to investigate the options. Your local baker may be able to shape the doughnut delight into a wedding cake to remember.

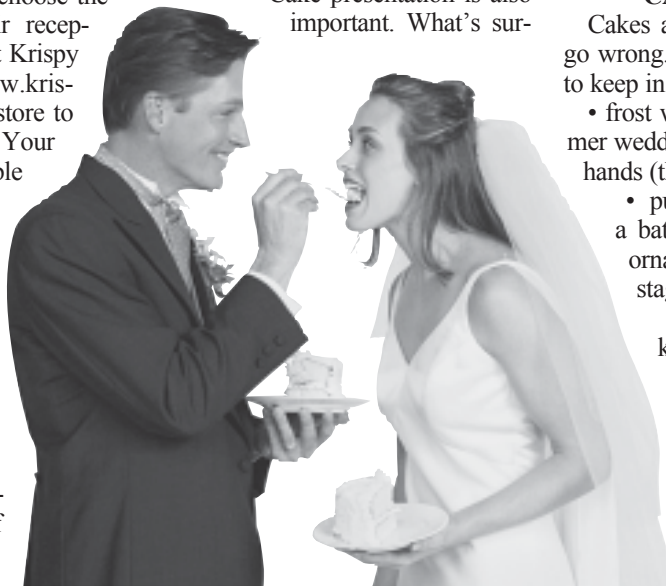
## BEYOND THE TASTE BUDS

So what's on top? Joining the ranks of the plastic couple, new toppers are simple and design-oriented: a slim, petite vase with a single rosebud; a layer of flower petals; a plain tiny top tier. Family is in, and

## TRENDS

some couples are choosing a portrait of themselves, a sentimental keepsake like a keychain or small stuffed animal, or their initials in royal icing, an egg white-based icing that can be sculpted into shapes.

Cake presentation is also important. What's sur-



rounding your cake is just as visible as the cake itself — especially in photos — so plan ahead. Possible cake surroundings include a nature-inspired display of twigs spread on the table, baby photos of the bride and groom or a handmade tablecloth from Grandma that matches the cake's colors.

## CAKE MISTAKES

Cakes are beautiful, but they can go wrong. Here are several “don'ts” to keep in mind. Don't:

- frost with buttercream at a summer wedding unless you want sticky hands (the icing melts quickly).
- put your cake in front of a bathroom or distracting wall ornament. It deserves center stage.
- forget to cut it with a knife suited to the cake's composition and texture.
- forget to talk with your florist about safe, edible blooms if you intend to have your wedding cake decorated with fresh flowers.
- let the photographer

take distant photos of your cake. It's an important part of your ceremony, so get up close to capture details.

## THE COST OF A CAKE

Designing the perfect dessert can leave you with a not-so-perfect budget. Save on your cake with these tips:

- Have a small cake to cut in front of guests, while pre-sliced sheet cakes (or cute bakers' cupcakes) wait in the back to be served.
- Talk to your baker about extra costs — you can usually get delivery thrown in for free.
- Not everyone will eat cake — subtract 10 people from your guest total when calculating the slice count.
- Use fresh flowers or fruit garnishes and your own supplies as cake decorations to avoid handicraft fees from the cake designer.
- Skip a separate dessert — your wedding cake is enough.
- Serve half slices of cake for your guests, and enhance the plates with fresh fruit or sorbet.
- Forgo the fondant. Buttercream icing is less expensive (and tastier!).



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