



SWEETUMS DESIGNER CAKES

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text: Katie Cincotta

If there was an A-list for cake designers, Greg Cleary would be on the top tier. The sugar master has been perfecting exquisite wedding cakes since his professional debut at the tender age of 12. That first creation – a two-tier fruit cake with white fondant icing for his school teacher – was the promise of raw talent that would turn a passion into a career.

"My fascination with cakes started from the age of 5, where I would make decorated cakes for afternoon tea. So I've always been passionate about cake decorating. I think food really brings people together," says Greg.

Through his business Sweetums Designer Cakes, Greg's talent hasn't gone unnoticed, attracting orders from celebrities, dignitaries and brides looking for cakes of distinction.

His signature designs are classic and romantic – ornately decorated with handmade sugar flowers – with the regal elegance you might expect to find at a royal banquet.

"The hot new look is called contemporary vintage – lots of all-over lace and beading with a '20s and '40s style. All that lacework and embroidery is also coming into vogue for cakes," Greg says.

With 30 years of artistry to his name, the Brisbane cake veteran

specialises in adapting a wedding's theme to the cake, like his recent masterpiece, which mirrored the bride's gown with its lace motifs and intricate beading.

But Greg believes cakes are made to be savoured, not just admired, and advises couples to set aside the ritual of saving the top tier, in favour of spontaneity.

"People are too frantic to enjoy it on the day so I tell them to take it on their honeymoon. Why not enjoy it while it's fresh and at its best?"

For those looking to push the creative boundaries, Greg recalls one of his most dramatic wedding cakes, which was served as dessert with individual fireworks on every plate. Other less glitz ways to focus on dessert are to serve the wedding cake with the couple's entwined initials piped onto the plate, or sprinkled with edible gold leaf.

It seems the sky is the limit when it comes to wedding cake couture, but Greg always recommends elegance and simplicity over gawdy fads. "Less is more. You're going to look back at it in years to come and you want to say 'Wasn't that beautiful?'"

