

3 Common Cake Decorating Mistakes - And Their Easy Solutions

How To Manage Crumbs When Cake Decorating.

At one time or another we have all had this happen to us. We have been decorating a cake and everything was going smoothly, then all of a sudden you notice crumbs in your beautiful icing mixture. When this happens you can ruin the whole effect of your cake. There is a way to combat the dreaded crumb problem when decorating your cake; the method is called a 'crumb coat.'

A crumb coat is a thinner mixture of the exact same icing that you use on your cake. You can thin the mixture down with whatever liquid you have used to make your icing, for example water or milk. The icing has to be thinned down just enough to cover the surface of the cake with a thin layer.

Once you have applied a crumb coat to the surface of your cake you will then need to let it set awhile. Place your cake in the refrigerator and let it set overnight, or for at least an hour or two. Don't be overly concerned if crumbs get into your crumb coat, as the crumbs will become "glued" into the surface of the cake. Once set the surface will be ready to decorate.

By following these instructions you will win the war on crumbs!

Beating Bulging Cakes.

Often people who decorate cakes are faced with the problem of their fillings bulging out of the sides of their cake. Luckily there is a remedy for this little cake decorating disaster. Below are some helpful tips to stop the dreaded cake bulge.

By baking your cake in advance, for example the day before, you will firm the cake up, and give it time to settle down. Freshly baked cakes tend to be unstable and won't hold fillings as well as settled cakes.

Another procedure that can be used to stop fillings from overflowing or bulging is to use piped icing to create a dam. This will act as a barrier and keep your fillings from bulging out the sides of the cake.

After you have created your icing dam, you can then cover the whole cake with a crumb coating; a thinned down version of the icing that you intend to use to decorate your cake with.

Once you have done a crumb coating of the cake you will find that refrigerating the cake overnight, or for at least 2-3 hours will help the icing to firm up. This will reduce the likelihood of bulging also.

Once the cake has had time to firm up in the fridge, the dams that you put in place and the crumb coat will stop the cake from bulging.

Follow these steps and you'll be well on your way to having beautiful bulge-free cakes!

Freezing Cakes To Save Time.

Finding the free time to prepare a specialty cake can be a frustrating task. Thankfully, the practice of freezing cakes has become an invaluable tool for the novice and professional alike. Just think, you can have a cake baked and ready for decoration weeks before the special occasion.

Some cake makers shy away from freezing cakes due to the fear that their creation might dry out. If the proper method is not utilized, that fear will be justified. The key lies in how you wrap the cake. It's also important to postpone the decorating process until the cake has fully defrosted. Icing tends to sweat and become gooey when a cake is left out to defrost.

Air and moisture will eventually ruin a cake. To keep the air out, wrap three layers of sturdy cling wrap around the cake. Then just prior to freezing, wrap one layer of aluminum foil over the cling wrap. This storage method helps keep the moisture and flavor from escaping.

Allow the cake to slowly defrost at room temperature for 1-2 days before the event. Do not decorate the cake until it has completely thawed. By following this method cake decorating should be easier and quicker, especially if you are put on the spot to make and decorate a cake at the last minute.

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