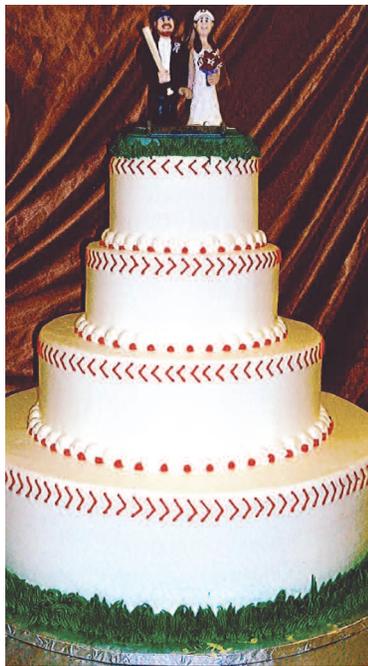


Let Them Eat Cake

by Clint Hamblin

Cake is a simple mixture of ingredients including flour, eggs, butter, milk and sugar. These confectionary concoctions have been a part of our history for thousands of years going back to the early Egyptian culture. Cake-making evidence has been found in caves where our culinary predecessors produced coarse and floury delights on heated stones. You could say that, "Let them eat cake," was our motto long before Marie Antoinette allegedly proclaimed this infamous phrase.

In the 21st century, the cake-making business has become gigantic and a great deal of the responsibility for this newfound attention goes to the Food Network, where neighborhood bakers have become internation-



A Montilio's Bakery cake

goes!"

"I don't like little flowers," the bride-to-be proclaimed. "I don't want ribbons. I don't want chocolate. I don't want anything red." The edicts continued while the sober-faced groom sat there frozen. They looked so serious, you'd think they were negotiating a kidney transplant. The mother-in-law was nodding her head up and down like one of those plastic dogs that sits in the back of the car. Well, not my car, but somebody's car!

This is the interview process when the bride usually has the final say on what the single most important food item at the wedding will look and taste like. "It's her cake," Montilio said. "If she doesn't like it, it's over."

At another table, the bride tast-



A Montilio's Bakery cake



Chef Duff Goldman of Ace of Cakes

al stars. Chef "Duff" Goldman from the television show *Ace of Cakes* is perhaps the most famous of them all. Duff's Charm City Cakes constructs cakes that resemble buildings, sports fields, animals, comic characters, hospital equipment and anything else imaginable. From design to delivery, television audiences, including yours truly, love to watch this dramatic process.

At 6 years old, George Montilio remembers baking with his dad Ernest in their corporate kitchens. Montilio's Bakery was established in 1947, and George took over the business in 1974.

"I literally grew up in the bakery," the jovial and charismatic

Montilio said. "And dad encouraged me to learn as much as possible."



Ernest and George Montilio with the cake made for Pope John Paul II

"I remember when all wedding cakes were white with white flowers and all looked the same," Montilio said. "Now, anything

ed several pieces of cake and her groom took her picture every time. They giggled through the entire process determined to enjoy the complete experience. This is going to be a fun wedding.

"We do an average of 2,500 wedding cakes each year, and the average price starts at \$500 going to \$800 per cake or \$2,000 for specialty cakes," Montilio said. "We once did a very tall specialty cake for \$10,000. The father of the bride warned that he would not pay the bill unless the cake was over 10 feet tall."

Cakes take several days to make. On the first day, the cake is baked and then rests until the second day when the cake is

filled. After resting another day, the cake is decorated and then refrigerated. "If the cake doesn't rest," Montilio warned, "it could collapse at anytime."

Some of the more famous specialty cakes that Montilio's has made include those for the renowned conductor of the Boston Pops. "Any cake we made for Arthur Fiedler had to include a fire truck," Montilio said. "He loved them."

The list of Montilio's cake recipients is a who's who of the entertainment and political scene and includes 10,000 servings for John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Ball. Montilio's also made cakes for Ronald Reagan, George Bush, Alfred Hitchcock, Luciano Pavarotti, Queen Elizabeth, Pope John Paul II, Jimmy Durante, Whitney Houston, Liberace, and the list goes on and on.

If anyone is interested in getting hitched, I'd like the three-tiered carrot cake with butter cream frosting and lots of seashells cascading down the side. Skip the ring – just give me cake and a big glass of milk!

Let them eat cake, indeed. Let us all eat cake! Bon Appétit!



A Montilio's Bakery cake



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