

HOW TO MAKE A SEMI-NAKED CAKE

In this tutorial I will show you how to make prepare and decorate a naked cake. A naked cake is a cake with bare sides that does not have fondant or frosting covering the cake. So here are some things to note when preparing a naked cake:

Keep it fresh - naked cakes need to be prepared a day before or even on the day of the event because a naked cake dries out much quicker so in order to keep it fresh assemble it as late as possible.

Keep it firm - use a firmer style of cake as a soft cake will crumble and if stacked will not be able to hold the weight of the upper tiers.

Keep it even – as there is no fondant or frosting to cover flaws you need the cakes to come out of the pans firm, even with no crusty edges. I prefer to use straight sided cake tins as they give you a sharp corner. These are usually commercial grade from well known brands such as Mondo, Fat Daddios and Wilton.

Be precise – try and ensure your layers are of equal size as this adds not only to the aesthetics of the cake but also ensures its stability.

Keep it simple – do not overfill the cake as this will compromise the stability and the weight of layers will make the filling spread out the sides. If you choose to fill with buttercream, cream cheese or other filling make sure you chill the cake to firm it up.

Keep it real – you do need to decorate the top of the cake with some finishing touches. There is no hard and fast rule on what to decorate with however keep it more natural – for instance use fresh flowers, fruit, foliage, nuts etc.

STEP 1

Level your cakes. In this example I used 2x 23 cm (9 inch) and 2 x 15 cm (6 inch) cakes and levelled them at them at 8cm (3 inch) high. You could also cut them at 4cm (1.5inch) so you had more layers. Up to you and the design look you are after.

Spread buttercream on the cut side of one of the larger cakes and place a cardboard cake board under the cake that is slightly smaller than your cake – you do not want it sticking out from under your cake when you turn it over.



Turn the cake over and spread your filling on the top of the cake. Keep in mind to not overfill the cake as this will compromise the stability and level and the weight of layers will make the filling spread out between you layers – unless this is the look you are after.

In this example I have only spread a very thin layer of buttercream between the layers as it is a caramel mud cake which is very rich and does not need a filling as such. Stack your next cake on top.



STEP 2

Place your cake on some wax paper. This helps to keep the bench clean and makes it easy to turn the cake around as you are spreading and removing the buttercream.

Spread the buttercream liberally around the sides of your layered cake.

I use a plastic ganache scraper for the next stage. However, you can use whatever item you have that has a right-angle straight edge (plastic or metal ganache scraper, a right angle ruler etc). You need something that will stay flat on the bench as you remove the buttercream. This way you end up with straight sides on your cake.



STEP 3

Dip your scraper into boiling water and let it get hot. Remove and quickly dry off and then hold your scraper flat on the bench. Press the scraper against the side of the cake and scrape towards you – ensure you keep the scraper flat on the bench and straight.



Do this in small sections, keep dipping in the water and scraping the excess buttercream off until you are happy with the effect. You may need to add buttercream back on in some places and redo until you are happy with the effect.

Remember it does not need to be perfect – depending on your design and decorations you should be able to cover any minor issues and also remember naked cakes in their very nature are more natural looking.

STEP 4

Once you are happy with the side spread your buttercream on the top. I forgot to take photos for the next couple of steps however just remember to spread the buttercream evenly and level. At this stage you need to lift you cake and move onto your presentation cake board before tiering your cake.

Repeat the process for each tier level. Refer to my tutorial on How to Stack a Cake using Straws which is located in the Tips & Technique section of my Cakes by Vivienne website.

You can now decorate your cake however you like. On this occasion I used pink chocolate drip and flowers.

