



# *Pretty special*

Create *Mich Turner's* stunning cake for a wedding or make one tier for any party or celebration

PHOTOGRAPHS *Malou Burger*





Mich Turner has made cakes for international royalty and celebrities, including David Beckham, Madonna and Gordon Ramsay, who describes her as 'the Bentley of cake makers'. Her award-winning Little Venice Cake Company is one of London's leading makers of couture wedding and celebration cakes

## Lemon wedding cake with roses

Serves 85 or up to 120 for finger-sized portions. The 15cm cake serves 15; 20cm cake, 30; 25.5cm cake, 40

### FOR THE 15CM CAKE

150g soft unsalted butter  
150g golden caster sugar  
3 large eggs, lightly beaten  
200g self-raising flour  
3 tbsp (45ml) milk  
seeds from ½ vanilla pod  
zest of 2 unwaxed lemons

### For the syrup glaze

juice of 2 lemons  
55g golden caster sugar

### FOR THE 20CM CAKE

300g soft unsalted butter  
300g golden caster sugar  
6 large eggs, lightly beaten  
425g self-raising flour  
6 tbsp (90ml) milk  
seeds from 1 vanilla pod  
zest of 4 unwaxed lemons

### For the syrup glaze

juice of 4 lemons  
115g golden caster sugar

### FOR THE 25.5CM CAKE

450g soft unsalted butter  
450g golden caster sugar  
9 large eggs, lightly beaten  
650g self-raising flour  
9 tbsp (135ml) milk  
seeds from 1½ vanilla pods  
zest of 6 unwaxed lemons

### For the syrup glaze

juice of 6 lemons  
225g golden caster sugar

### TO FILL AND ICE THE THREE CAKES

#### For the royal icing

3 medium egg whites  
500g icing sugar  
1 tbsp lemon juice

#### For the lemon buttercream

450g soft unsalted butter  
900g icing sugar  
seeds from 1 vanilla pod  
2 tsp vanilla extract  
525g lemon curd

#### For the marzipan and white icing

4kg ready to roll white icing  
about 150g icing sugar, to dust  
6 x 454g packs marzipan  
1 x 275g jar apricot baking glaze  
2 tbsp brandy (or use cooled boiled water)



## Three days ahead

Bake the lemon cakes up to three days ahead or freeze them. Before you start, ensure all the ingredients are at room temperature. Make the royal icing and prepare the base cake drums

- 1 Preheat the oven to 160°C, fan 140°C, gas 3. Grease and line the base and sides of all the cake tins with nonstick baking paper (see equipment list below). Make the cakes in batches. For each cake, beat together the butter and sugar with an electric hand whisk or in a food mixer until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs a little at a time, beating well between each addition. Add a few tablespoons of flour in between the eggs to stop the mixture curdling. Sieve the remaining flour into the creamed mixture, then carefully fold it in. Stir in the milk, vanilla seeds and lemon zest. Spoon the mixtures into the tins and bake the 15cm cake for 1 hour 15 minutes, the 20cm cake for 1 hour 30 minutes and the 25.5cm cake for 1 hour 45 minutes. When cooked, the cakes should be risen and light golden, and a skewer inserted in to the centre of the cake should come out clean.
- 2 While each cake is baking, put the lemon juice and sugar for the syrup
- 3 To make the royal icing, place the egg whites in a medium bowl and whisk with an electric hand whisk until they form soft peaks. Sift in the icing sugar and whisk slowly at first, then on high speed until glossy and mallowy. Add the lemon juice through a tea strainer and whisk for a further minute. The icing should have the consistency of freshly whipped double cream – it should be glossy, not dry or stiff. Transfer the royal icing to a container with a lid and store at room temperature. It should be re-whisked every day before using.
- 4 Prepare the 14-inch cake drums to make a base for the largest cake. Rub a glue stick over one of the drums and press the other directly on top. Knead 750g of the ready to roll white icing until smooth and pliable. Liberally dust a work surface with icing sugar and roll out the icing to a thickness of 3mm and large enough to cover the double-thickness drum. Brush the drum with cooled boiled water. Run an icing smoother over the surface of the icing, then carefully lift it on to the cake drum. Smooth the top and trim the excess with a sharp knife. Leave at room temperature overnight to set. ▶

## Equipment you'll need

- 3 x 9cm-deep round cake tins: 1 x 15cm; 1 x 20cm; 1 x 25.5cm
- Pastry brush
- Small sharp knife
- Large serrated knife
- Palette knives
- Scissors
- 1 pack Sainsbury's plastic piping bags
- Pencil and ruler
- 35 open roses – 'Sweet Avalanche' or Sainsbury's Fairtrade
- 4m x 25mm white bridal double satin ribbon
- No 2 plain nozzle
- 2 x 5cm-deep polystyrene blocks: 1 x 13cm diameter; 1 x 7.5cm diameter
- 12 dowelling rods
- 35 x 10cm lengths of 20-gauge floristry wire

### SPECIALIST KIT

- 8 round silver cake drums: 1 x 6 inch; 2 x 8 inch; 2 x 10 inch; 1 x 12 inch; 2 x 14 inch
- 50cm acrylic rolling pin
- Icing smoother

**READER OFFER** To buy all the specialist kit for just £44\*, see page 70.



## Two days ahead

### Fill the cakes and cover with marzipan and icing

- 1 To make the buttercream, beat the butter in a large bowl with an electric hand whisk until creamy. Sift in the icing sugar and beat, slowly at first, until fluffy. Stir in the vanilla seeds, extract and 200g of the lemon curd. Remove the cakes from the tins, trim off the tops to level them and upturn on to cake drums (15cm cake on the 6-inch drum; 20cm, 8 inch; 25.5cm, 10 inch). Split each cake horizontally with a serrated knife. Drizzle both cut sides with the reserved syrup glaze; spread one side with the buttercream.
- 2 Spread with a layer of the remaining lemon curd and sandwich the halves together. Use three packs of marzipan to cover the 25.5cm cake, two for the 20cm cake, one for the 15cm cake. Knead the marzipan until smooth and pliable but not sticky. Warm the apricot glaze and brush over the top and sides of the 25.5cm cake and cake drum edges. Dust the work surface

with icing sugar and roll out the marzipan to 4mm thick. Lift it over the cake and gently press it down until the top and sides (including the cake drum) are covered; trim all but 2.5cm excess away. Lift up the cake and run the smoother over its sides. Trim off the excess by running a small knife around the cake drum base, neaten with the smoother and set on a larger cake drum to use as a 'working board'. Repeat with the other two cakes.

- 3 Ice the largest cake first. Knead 1.5kg of the white icing until smooth and pliable. Brush the marzipan with brandy (or cooled boiled water). On a work surface dusted with icing sugar, roll the icing out to 4mm thick and large enough to cover the top and sides of the cake. Lift the icing on to the cake and smooth down over the sides. Trim the excess away as before and neaten the edges with the smoother. Place a dab of royal icing on the centre of the prepared 14-inch base and lift the cake centrally into position. Cover the remaining two cakes with icing in the same way

(using 1kg for the 20cm cake and 750g for the 15cm cake) and return to their larger cake drums. Leave the cakes, uncovered, overnight to set.

## The day before

### Fix the ribbons, pipe icing pearls and dowel the tiers ready for stacking

- 4 Wrap a length of ribbon around the base of each cake and attach at the back with dabs of royal icing. Run the glue stick around the edge of the 14-inch base drum and fix a length of ribbon flush with the base.
- 5 To decorate the cakes with icing pearls, fill a piping bag and a No 2 nozzle with some of the royal icing. Pipe a row of evenly spaced 'pearls' just above the ribbon on each cake. Position the nozzle just away from the cake and apply pressure to the piping bag. When the pearl is the desired shape and size, release the pressure on the piping bag and snatch the nozzle away at the same time. This takes practice to build up a steady rhythm. Repeat on all the cakes. ▶



- 6** Place the 13cm polystyrene block on the centre of the largest cake. Space 6 dowelling rods evenly around the block, pushing them down to the base. Use a pencil to mark the level of the top of the block on each dowelling rod. Carefully remove the dowels, work out the average height of your pencil marks and cut each dowel to this length with heavy-duty scissors.
- 7** Check all the dowels are level, then gently reinsert them into the cake. Repeat the process with the smaller polystyrene block on the middle cake. Stack the middle and top cakes, still on their 'working boards' at this stage, to ensure the tiers are level and stable. Leave to set overnight.

### On the day

#### Prepare the roses and assemble the cake at the venue

- 8** Prepare the roses as close to the assembly time as feasible (no more than 4 hours in advance). Trim the roses to leave 3cm of stem. Reserve 3-5 roses for the top tier and insert

- 10cm lengths of floristry wire into the stems of the remaining roses.
- 9** Starting with the base tier, insert a wired rose into the polystyrene block until the bloom sits flush with the edge of the cake. Position the next rose up to the first and work your way around the polystyrene block until the tier is fully blocked with roses. Repeat with the middle tier. Transport the cakes unstacked.
- 10** Once at the venue, place the base tier on a cake stand, if using, with the ribbon joins at the back. Using a sharp knife inserted at the base of the back of the cake and a palette knife, gently ease the middle cake from its working board and use two hands to carefully place this tier on the base tier, ensuring the ribbon join is at the back. Check the cake from the front and sides to ensure it is level, even and straight. Repeat to place the top tier on the middle tier. Finish by dressing the top tier with the reserved roses.
- 635cals; 19g fat (10g sat fat); 117g carbs; 99g total sugars; 0.3g salt ♦

### READER OFFER

Sainsbury's magazine readers can save 20% on the specialist kit needed to make the wedding cake (listed on page 67). To buy it for the special price of £44, plus £5.95 for postage, call 020 7584 6177 or visit [janeasher.com](http://janeasher.com) (click on the 'As Seen In' section for 'Sainsbury's magazine wedding cake') by 31 October 2011.

We recommend that you try to hire the tins from a local cake decorating shop.



### BOOK OFFER

Save £5 when you buy Mich Turner's Cake Masterclass (Jacqui Small, £30). To order for the special price of £25 (postage included), call 01903 828503 and quote ref JS43 by 31 May 2011.