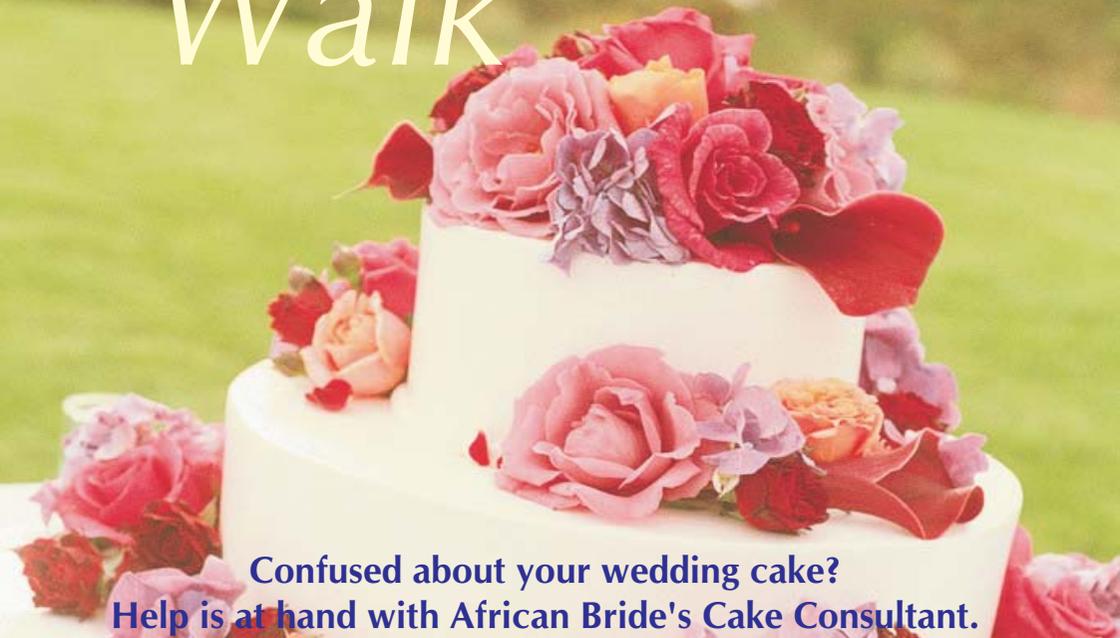


CAKE Walk



Confused about your wedding cake? Help is at hand with African Bride's Cake Consultant.

It wasn't so long ago that wedding cakes consisted of three tiers, pillars and a plastic bride and groom (who bore no cultural resemblance to the couple), perched on the top. Thank heavens times have changed. As a bride you have as much choice and variety for your wedding cake as you do with your dress. By following this simple guide, acquiring your dream wedding cake will literally be a piece of cake.

If you already have a colour theme for your big day, it's a great starting point for the design of your cake. If you haven't got any fixed ideas, now is the time to let your imagination run riot. Look through wedding magazines, interior designs magazines for colour

combinations, or even look to nature to inspire you.

When it comes to the price of your cake, there are a number of factors to bear in mind. The more elaborate the design, the more you'll pay. The number of tiers and the number of portions, will determine the price. The number of guests you will be serving determines the size of the cake.

You won't have a dream cake unless you have a dream cake maker. Go on the recommendation of family and friends, or look in your local directory. Also, when in doubt, Google it. Make an appointment to see your cake maker as early as possible. June – October is usually a busy time for cake makers,

because of the wedding season. Have your cake booked and confirmed with your cake maker, so they factor this into their schedule. Cake makers recommend you book your cake 12-16 weeks before your wedding. When you have your appointment take pictures of cakes you like, swatches of fabric, flowers, or anything that encapsulates your wedding theme and cake style.

When ordering your cake, it is standard practice for your cake maker to require a deposit. Payment in full is usually on collection or delivery, or sometimes a week before the wedding date.

STYLE TIP

If you're getting married somewhere tropical, take inspiration from vibrant flowers, or the cool colours of the ocean for your cake.

A couple I worked with recently had no colour or theme for their wedding. I suggested we used colours from their national flags to celebrate their cultural diversity and have a colourful cake.

It is a good idea to 'try before you buy'. Your cake maker can prepare samples of the variety of flavours available for a tasting session. Traditionally, fruitcake was served at weddings, however, modern brides opt for Vanilla Sponge, Chocolate, Carrot Cake, Banana or Lemon, with a multitude of fillings. Discuss flavours with your cake maker. You could choose a different layer of cake for each tier. Most wedding cakes are covered with fondant icing, but you can cover your cake with buttercream or chocolate.

The cutting of the cake is usually after the speeches and main meal. Check that

CAKE FACT

Traditionally, the top tier of a wedding cake (fruitcake) to be used at the couple's first anniversary or the christening of their first child.

your venue is supplying a wedding cake knife or order one from your cake maker. As the cake cutting is one of your first official duties as a married couple, it's essential that your cake table is prepared for this photo opportunity. A cake placed in the middle of a bare table won't flatter your cake. Accessorise your cake table similar to your guests' tables, or in a manner that complements your cake. Your cake should take centre stage at your reception venue and grab the attention of your guests. If your cake maker can deliver and set up your cake at the venue, it is advisable to pay for this service (don't leave this to well-meaning family and friends. It will only end in tears.) Confirm the date, venue address and time of your wedding with your cake maker and confirm all details again, one week before the wedding.

Finally, after your wedding, if you're lucky enough to have any cake left, store it in an airtight container. If you have a top tier that is a fruitcake, wrap the cake in acid free tissue paper and store in a cool, dark place. Fruitcake can keep for several years if stored correctly and can then be re-iced.

Choosing your cake should not be a long and laborious task. Have some fun with it. Take your fiancé or your bridesmaids along for tasting sessions. This is one of the enjoyable parts of organising your dream day.

Cynthia Akinsanya is a Cake Consultant and owner of Delights by Cynthia. She is available for consultations at www.delightsbycynthia.com