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weddings

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FALL 2002

23>



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\$5.50 USA (CAN. \$6.50)

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old, new, borrowed, blue

A swatch of fabric provides the inspiration for a *lacy cake*

Create a meaningful, beautiful cake by “borrowing” the lace pattern from your dress or an heirloom fabric. The starting point for this four-tiered confection, designed and crafted by Ron Ben-Israel of New York City, was an antique tablecloth of Chantilly lace, so named for the French city in which it was originally made. This type of lace is characterized by its flower-and-swag patterns. Ben-Israel studied the swatch and even visited lace makers to get a feel for how the design could be transferred onto a cake. “There are lots of elements in lace,” says Ben-Israel, “so we had to compose it using many different techniques.” (See next page for details.) The cake is displayed on a tablecloth made of the same lace and draped with a tulle canopy, a pretty and practical idea, as the sheer fabric keeps curious bugs away at an outdoor wedding.





A closer look at the cake shows how intricate the embellishments are (left). To re-create the Chantilly lace (below), Ben-Israel designed flowers and swags out of sugar paste that had been imprinted with the fabric itself, and layered them over an ivory-colored, vanilla-flavored fondant.



STEP BY STEP 1. To create the multilayered look of real lace, Ben-Israel starts by transferring the pattern to sugar paste. To make the imprint, he presses the swatch of real lace against the sugar paste, then runs the two through a pasta-making machine. To create flowers, he cuts sections from this imprinted sugar paste using cookie cutters. 2. Then, he pipes royal icing onto the centers of blooms, and uses a dry brush to coat them with pearl dust, also known as petal dust, an edible powder that gives decorations a shimmer. 3. For larger flowers, Ben-Israel presses pieces of the sugar paste between two pieces of a patterned silicone mold, then trims around the edges. All of the various decorations are attached to the tiers of the fondant-covered cake with a little sugar water. Then Ben-Israel pipes on more detailing, such as the lily-of-the-valley, with royal icing. SEE THE GUIDE FOR SOURCES