



## **Dawn Ward, cake maker extraordinaire**

Elaine Well, I'm back in Gouarec today to talk to Dawn Ward, Cake maker extraordinaire. As we mentioned in the previous chat with John Hanson, Dawn was responsible for making that very special train cake for him - or locomotive I should probably say. So, how long did that take you to make Dawn and where did the idea come from?

Dawn Well, the idea I got off Jenny. She was going to give him a surprise so it was a cake and she asked if I would do that and I had to ask for a photo and some description of the cake. So he collects all his magazines - so she gave me a magazine with some photos on - so I did the cake from that - which I had to bake and then you have to carve the shape of the cake and then put the butter cream on then cover it in fondant. And then you have to make all the small bits, the wheels, all the little engines, the windows, everything that goes with it. So all and all probably about two and a half days to do that..

Elaine Goodness me- it's the attention to detail isn't it?

Dawn Yes. But yes, you have to paint all the wheels, all the little gold trims. It just takes so long- all the fiddly bits. It's a pleasure to do. Its so nice to try and copy a picture, and you put all the wire on, all the little fancy bits around the windows and all that- its lovely..

Elaine Fantast.., well it was fantastic! We were all really amazed, wow, what a creation. So how did it start, this cake making career?

Dawn Well, I started making cakes when I worked at the hospital in Newcastle - everybody liked the cakes I used to bring in -so when it was their birthdays they used to shout 'Dawn, if I give you some money can you make the cakes' and its just gone on from there. And then when I came over here I wanted to make myself a special birthday cake so I looked into that, pictures on You-tube, Google, bought magazines, books- but you couldn't buy the fondant in France so then I thought -well- I did the recipe and went and bought the glucose from the pharmacy which was ok at the time and but I could mix the fondant but to roll it, it was just impossible so when I was telling a friend, she told me that the pharmacy had given us the wrong glucose, so it was for somebody who was a diabetic. So then I decided after that I'd just buy it but I had to get it ordered from England-

Elaine So you still have to buy some of your ingredients in England although some of the shops now are starting to..

Dawn They are, I noticed, last year I think one shop was starting to sell some fondant and I noticed last week Intermarché are also selling the fondant

Elaine So what would you say has been your most challenging cake

Dawn I got asked by the Buddhist Temple at Plouray to make a cake for them, for one year, for a very special man coming over for a New Year's Eve and she asked me to make a lotus cake - a lotus flower cake and that was about a metre high, maybe a little bit higher and a metre round and that was so nice to be able to do but a big headache wondering how to do the petals? How will they stand? And that took forever to do. There was a hundred and ten petals and it had to be five colours and she asked for fuchsia pink at first so I thought all bright and just before I started putting all the petals together on the cake she said she didn't want it bright - so I had to spray all the petals with white to tone the colour down- It went like a pastel colour.

Elaine So that was enormous then wasn't it?

Dawn Huge....

Elaine That was for the whole of the Buddhist community..

Dawn Yes, and it took four men to carry the cake..

Elaine Fantastic - and have you had perhaps any disasters? I shouldn't maybe ask that...

Dawn Well yes- I did a lovely birthday cake for a friend not so long ago. It was her, one of her special birthdays so it was a three-tier cake. The two top parts were hand painted and the bottom was done with petal paste and it was like feathers all the way round and I put it on a beautiful cake stand- packed it all in a box and off we went. We took the wrong turning, my husband slammed on the breaks and the whole lot just toppled forward. Most of it was ok apart from the back. Some of the feathers had snapped off but once it was stood on the table and you couldn't see any of that 'cos that was at the back so I was very lucky there.

Elaine I bet your husband didn't get a piece of that cake, or did he?

Dawn I don't think anybody did!

Elaine It was just for decoration..

Dawn Most people don't cut the cakes...

Elaine They just take photographs..

Dawn Yes, its too nice they all say, I can't cut it.

Elaine So I understand that you have students who come and stay and do a little course..

Dawn Yes. They come to learn or to improve their English but also they all come and make cakes so they have a week course on doing a cake so they take a special cake home with them and they do something that they like, like one of the young girls, she did make-up. We had.... even the little boys do them. The boys, one little boy, he did a golf course 'cos he was into golf and then another little boy he liked M&Ms so he made a cake like an M&M. With the little people coming out of it. So they all have something that they want to do.

Elaine And then they take it away with them when they go..

Dawn Yes, yes.

Elaine And that's amazing- so they're starting from scratch ..

Dawn Yes, they actually make the cake, they do the whole lot..

Elaine That's terrific..

Dawn I do help a little. Some need a little bit more help than others and some are great..

Elaine Well, looking at the incredible range that you cover, which we can't go into- Doc Marten's boots, Alice in Wonderland, Barbie Dolls, Castles- you must obviously have a very vivid imagination?

Dawn Well you have to. I did a lovely teapot cake for some friends and a lot of it was fruit-cake. It was a six tier cake and that was all slices of cakes with little cupcakes on the side but it was all different- it was a teapot on the top hanging over because you can do these what they call gravity defying cakes now, so you have, with the teapot, you have the water pouring out - so that's all fondant coming out - and its lovely how you do it..

Elaine Gosh, it just.... Its unbelievable- I'm very amateur in the cake making world. I used to make three a year and that was for my children's birthdays and that's it. Sometimes there would be a bit of imagination but certainly nothing like that! So, it's been amazing talking to you Dawn, and there's so much more that you can tell us. So if you want to find out more and you want to get in touch with Dawn to make you a very special cake go to: [Facebook.com/gateauxjadore](https://www.facebook.com/gateauxjadore). Thank you so much Dawn and I shall be ordering certainly one from you for my birthday next year.

Dawn Oh, Thank you! Its been a pleasure.

Elaine      Its been lovely..