

ICA CATIE AWARD SUBMISSION 2019 | Best Celebration Cake



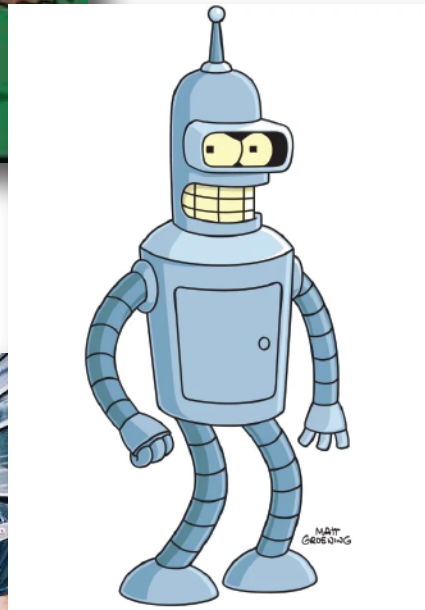
HARRY PLOPPER CAKE

33rd Birthday Cake

April 2018

OVERVIEW

A 33rd birthday calls for a unique and wacky cake! At least it did for our client Meagan, who celebrates 33 as a big milestone year. It was a tradition her and her friends started and called it the "Larry Bird" year, which is a phrase they came up with because their favorite Celtics basketball player, Larry Bird, was number 33. When Megan contacted us this past year to create a memorable cake for her party, that is when the real fun started.



DESIGN & CONCEPT

When our Executive Pastry Chef first met with Meagan on March 20th, she had no idea what she wanted for her 33rd birthday cake but she knew she wanted it to be fun, different, and memorable. She also needed it to serve between 25-35 guests and was thinking a flat sheet cake. We started asking her questions on her likes, dislikes, hobbies, favorite bands, shows, and movies to give us inspiration. She mentioned she loves Harry Plopper, a character from The Simpsons movie. That gave us the perfect inspiration for the base of the cake. Meagan also noted she loves the TV show Futurama and the band phish. We began sketching a design for our follow-up meeting.

Over the course of the next few days, our team started drawing the design and decided they didn't like the idea of doing a sheet cake - because that wasn't as fun! They began working on a 3-D design of the pig. They also wanted to tie in other elements that reflected things Meagan enjoys. That is where the idea of creating a Phish inspired dog collar with a bender dog tag came from. When Meagan saw the final sketches, she was so thrilled and even more excited for her party!



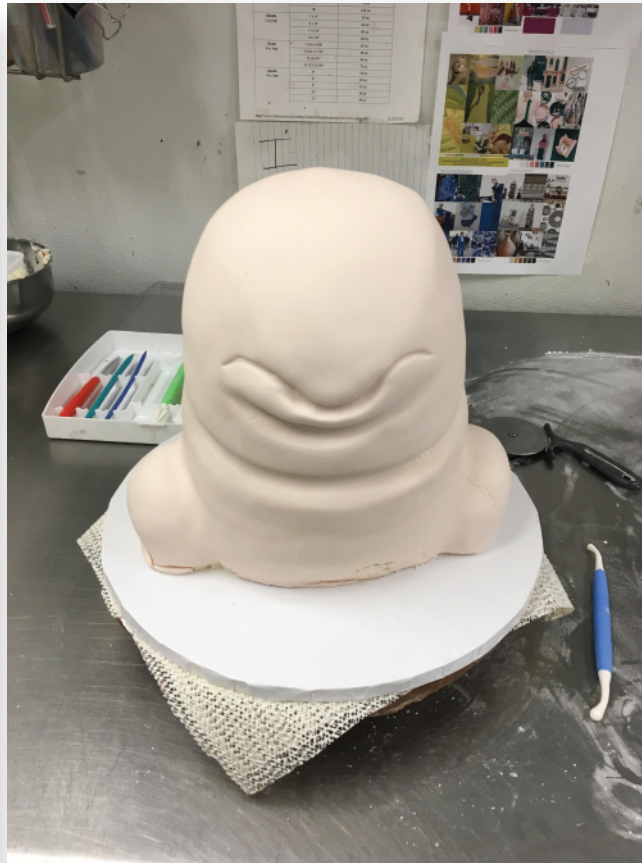
DESIGN & MECHANICS

On April 4th, our team started constructing the birthday cake. The flavor Meagan chose was our popular lavender pear - vanilla cake with lavender poached pears. We baked five 6" vanilla cakes and started assembling the body. We carved out the shape free hand with a serrated knife and used cake scrapes for the pig's thighs. We colored fondant in a very light pink shade and covered the pig's entire body with it. We then used fondant tools to create his rolls, mouth and eyes. The snout and front hooves were made with pink and gray fondant. Every element from the hair and eyes to the lightning strike and collar were handcrafted and molded before placing on the cake.

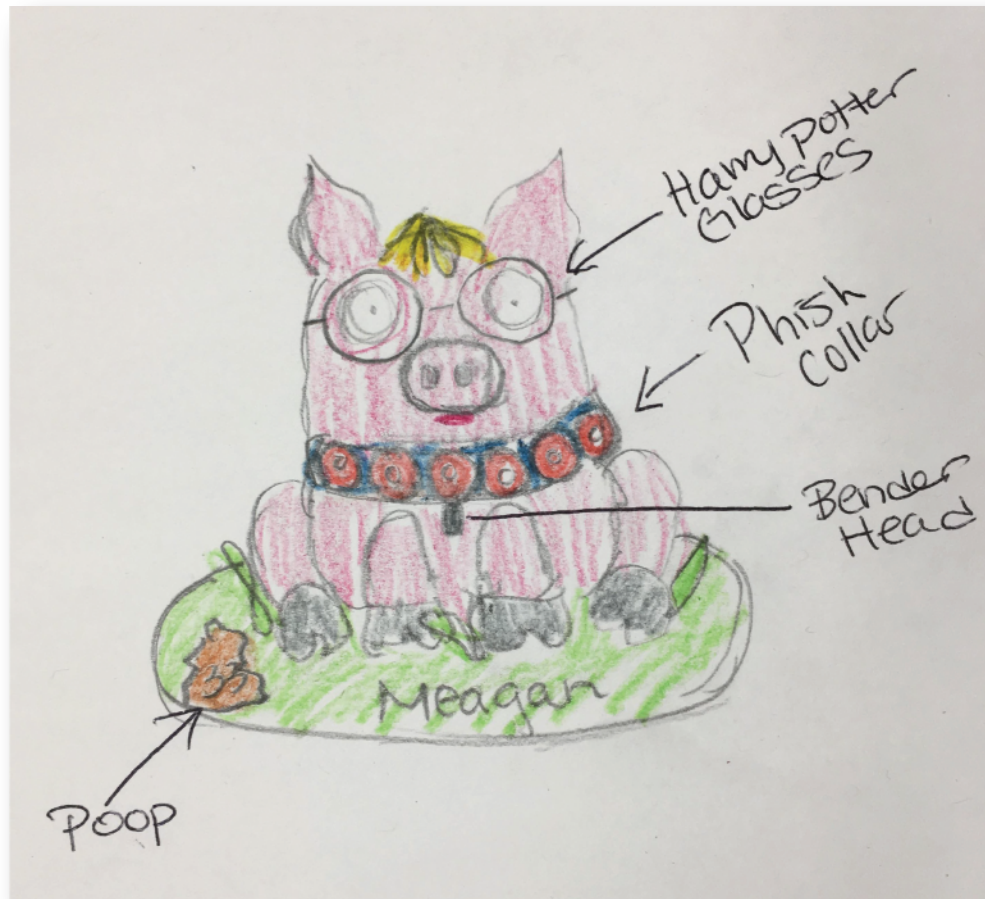


CHALLENGES

The most challenging part of making the cake was shaping the pig figure. Even though he had a simple body shape, it was hard to get his rolls to look just right. Once the fondant was on the cake, we could play around and mold him like he was clay. Another challenge was finding the perfect glasses as we wanted Megan to have a keepsake from the cake which meant the glasses needed to be real. We went to six different stores until we finally found the perfect ones at Barnes and Noble!



SKETCHES



RECIPES

Buttercream Recipe:

4 pounds sugar
2 pounds Egg white
3 pounds unsalted butter
2 pounds shortening
1 TB Vanilla Extract

Directions:

On a double broiler heat the sugar and egg whites until the sugar is completely melted. Add the sugar mixture to a electric mixer and mix until cooled and white/fluffy. Slowly add the shortening, butter and vanilla until completely incorporated.

Lavender Poached Pear Filling

Ingredients:

3 Pears
2 TB dried Lavender
16oz Sugar
16oz Water

Directions:

1. Peel the pears and cut into small $\frac{1}{4}$ cubes. 2. Add sugar and water to a pot with the pears and lavender. Bring water/sugar mixture to a boil, heat for 5 minutes, turn off heat and let the pears/sugar water come to room temp. Use as needed.

Vanilla Cake Recipe

Ingredients

- 1 cup butter
- 1 1/2 cups white sugar
- 8 egg yolks
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups cake flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease and flour 2 - 8 inch round pans.
2. Sift together the flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside.
3. In a large bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the egg yolks one at a time, then stir in the vanilla. Beat in the flour mixture alternately with the milk, mixing just until incorporated. Pour batter into prepared pans.
4. Bake in the preheated oven for 25 to 30 minutes, or until tops spring back when lightly tapped. Cool 15 minutes before turning out onto cooling racks.

THE RESULT

When Meagan saw her final cake, she was beyond happy. She loved all the details on the cake, from the Bender dog tag, Phish collar, and Harry Potter glasses to Harry Plopper himself and the number 33 on the pile of poop.

The following day, we received a call from Meagan, thanking us for creating the most perfect cake. She said all her friends thought the cake wasn't real and nobody wanted to take the first bite because it would ruin the pig. Meagan took it upon herself to be the first by taking a huge handful out of the pig's head to eat! She then wore the Harry Potter glasses the rest of the night at the party and told us she was going to keep them forever!

It's stories like these that get us excited about what we do every day. It's so rewarding hearing enthusiastic feedback from our clients and being given the opportunity to create something so memorable.

