

Why become a Certified Decorator?

- RBA Certification is to verify professional competency throughout the industry. Certified Decorators are recognized and acknowledged among their peers.
- Employers need qualified professionals with proven competence. Certification verifies the work, skill, and knowledge brought to the market place.
- The test is designed to demonstrate a candidate's ability to prepare, ice and finish a variety of high-quality cake products within strict time limits using various cake decorating processes, methods and techniques
- A decorator at this level and for this designation prepares and finishes sweet baked goods for a commercial bakery. Duties include preparing icings, decorating a variety of cakes using various techniques, seasonal display and specialty designs, and working with customers.

The Objectives to becoming a Certified Decorator

- A decorator at this level prepares and finishes sweet baked goods for a commercial bakery.
- Each contestant will prepare cakes and tiers that are level on top with straight sides, logical height and proportional.
- For each test problem, cover cakes and/or boards with an icing that is smooth, flawless, with no air bubbles, water spots, knife marks, sanding, patches or crumbs.
- Prepare colored icings that are of consistent shading and use color that is balanced and harmonized, and appropriate to theme or decorative motif.
- Apply borders, writing, central decorations and trims that are uniform, free of air bubbles, smooth, free of small drying cracks, precise and neat.
- Apply flowers and leaves that have definite shaped petals with proper form, correct number of petals, coloring and detail as close to nature as possible.
- For each problem, create a decorative design that is balanced, proportioned, appropriate to technique or theme, not over-decorated, and structurally stable.

Practical Test Requirements

- **Education: must have a verification of the Serv-safe certification or the completion of a 30 hour sanitation course offered by a school, government agency or association**
- **Work Experience: a minimum of 4 years of verifiable decorating experience working in a commercial/retail bakery.**
- **A basic knowledge about sanitation**
- **Practical Test: achieve a passing score for a one day practical test administered by RBA.**
- The test is an 8 hour exam during which candidates will ice and decorate cakes and boards.
- Each candidate will be given test problems at the start of the practical test. These problems will contain required specifications:
- Rolled Fondant 8" Round Cake, with decorations
- Custom Design Cake- 6 Boards (Quarter Sheets)

- Creative Expression-1 Real Cake (Quarter Sheet) Decorator will be asked to use a plastic decorative piece to create a scene.
- Flowers & Sprays w/Borders, 3 Boards (quarter sheet)
- Sculpted Cake (Real Cake) 2 ½ sheets or rounds, cupcakes if desired. Must be 3 dimensional.
- Three-Tier Wedding Cake layers provided.

8” Rolled Fondant Cake with Decorations

- Candidates must prepare an 8" rolled fondant cake with decorations made from buttercream or fondant icing. Non-edible decorations will not be allowed. This must be a traditional fondant cake and not a sculpted cake.

Six Custom Designs

- Candidates will ice and border six ¼ cake boards using the themes described. Penalty points will be assessed for failing to conform to problem specifications.

Creative design cake.

- **A theme will be added to include a plastic decorative item.**
- **Decorators will be asked to use this item to create a scene.**
- **The plastic decorative item will not be given to the Decorators until the day of the test.**
- **The theme of the seventh category will not be Disclosed until the day of the test.**

Three Flowers & Sprays with Borders

- **Candidates will decorate 3 quarter sheet boards with flowers and sprays with borders.**
- **Each of the three boards should be different. Avoid using the standard shell border.**
- **Display One: Use only roses.**
- **Display Two: Use two kinds of flowers (a mixed bouquet) either from the list below or other flowers of the contestant's choosing as long as they are recognizable. No roses.**
- **Display Three: Create sprays that are appropriate to a season of your choice. The flowers must be different from display one and two. Candidates may select from either the list below or other flowers of their choosing as long as they are recognizable.**

One Sculpted Cake

- **Candidates will be provided with**

**Two ½ sheets and/or rounds,
and cup cakes if desired.**

- **Using creativity and artistic talent, candidates will decorate, sculpt or cut-out the cake in any design.**
- **The design must be 3-dimensional.**

3 Tiered Wedding Cake

- **The cakes may be stacked, separated or not: but may not exceed three tiers.**
- **The cakes may be cut or shaped.**
- **Non-edible and or manufactured decorations may not be used.**
- **The only exceptions are the use of the separators or stands and the wedding cake top.**
- **The size of rounds available to be determined.**
- **Sheet cakes will also be available-you may cut cakes to any size and shape you want.**

Certification Conditions

- **Work table space. Display table for finished products.**
- **Equipment-Mixers, scales, microwaves and refrigeration will be shared by all contestants. Electrical outlets at each station.**
- **Tools-Contestants must supply their own small wares, hand tools, and decorating tools including bags, tips, colors and airbrush. They should bring a variety of common tools such as rolling pin, knives, cups, spoons, spatulas, bowls, towels, and so forth.**
- **As a general rule, decorators may bring any tool currently used in their work.**
- **The only exception to this rule are tools that unduly automate a decorative technique such as a rubber stamp, textured fondant mat, engraved rolling pin, molds or casts, and includes pre-made stencils, masks or template.**
- **However, contestants may make templates or masks during the contest.**

What RBA Provides

- **Cakes- 8 inch rounds, cupcakes, full or half sheet cakes, rounds for wedding cakes.**
- **Boards- 9 or 10 inch, quarter sheets and half sheets.**
- **Fondant- 3 to 5 lbs per contestant.**
- **Icing.**
- **Clear pastry gel.**
- **Plastic Decorative Piece.**

- **Contestants may bring: edible glitter, plain rice paper, corn starch, cocoa, and luster dust.**
- **Contestants may NOT bring: premade/finished decorations, gum paste, chocolate, poured fondant for piping, coconut, sprinkles, confetti, candy rocks, draggles, or pulled sugar pellets, and all purpose shortening to make decorating icing. But you can bring to use on work surfaces. Be sure to bring your own.**
- **Contestants must complete work for all categories within the time limits.**
- **Prep and Clean-up time: Decorators will be allowed to set-up equipment, organize work space, pull cake and other supplies as well as mix/bag colors. They may not make up any decorative pieces.**

- **Contestants should dress professionally. This may include chef pants, baker's whites, or coat or apron over slacks or skirt and shirt. If their bakery has a standard uniform-they may wear that.**
- In the Practical test, categories and products are evaluated.. Sample scoring sheets for each test problem and general skills are provided to the contestant.
- A candidate's final score for each test problem and overall is an average of the judges individual scores and must achieve the minimum passing grade (70%) for each test problem and a 70% for the test overall.
- Judges will assess penalties only in cases where a contestant failed to follow directions for the test problem, or ignored the test problem criteria. The penalty is a percentage assessed against the total score within the test problem.
- If the candidate does not display product in any one test problem or fails three or more test problems, they must re-take the Practical Test in its entirety. Candidate failing two test problems may retake the test for those problems only.