

# Sea Escape

By Marilyn Bawol

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A Tutorial by Marilyn Bawol

A few years ago I attended a class at the Chicago School of mold making. While I was there, Michael Joy talked to me about the Pastry Live event held in Georgia. They had been trying to incorporate more cake related events to marry the two worlds of pastry chefs and cake decorators. I couldn't make it that year but did enter the competition the following year. This is one of the few cake competitions where the cake can be sculpted but must resemble a tiered cake and should not contain real cake. You do have to present your sculpted piece with a tasting cake which is also judged. Last year the theme was the "The Seas and the Skies." This was perfect for me as my whole life revolved around a family of scuba divers. I decided to create a tiered cake that incorporated an undersea world with a large sea urchin as the focal point, some coral reefs and sea kelp with hidden sea life, two large fish, water and a sun setting sky with blown sugar clouds and bird.

**I called it my "Sea Escape."**

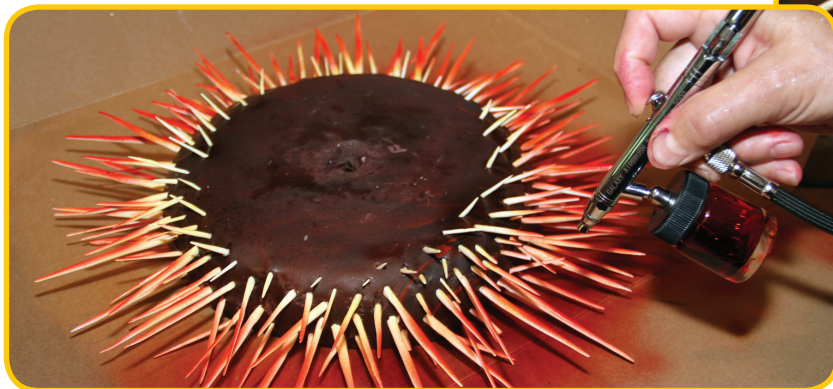
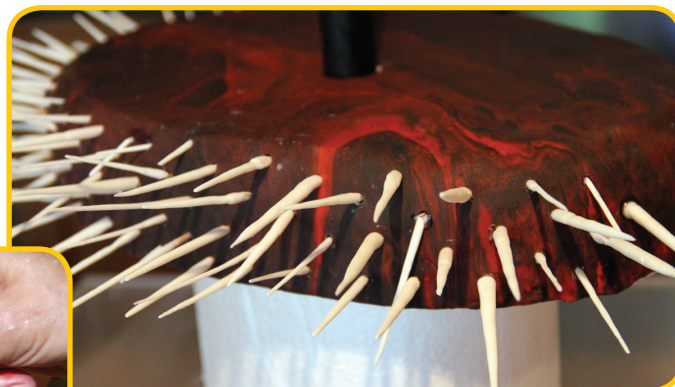
**Here's how I put it together:**



I started out with a 12 inch oval 3 inch thick Styrofoam piece which was covered with some marbled fondant using Satin Ice Dark Chocolate and Red mixed with a hint of CMC.



I rolled various sizes of pointed urchin spines from gum paste and inserted them into the Styrofoam by first making holes with a skewer and adding a drop of edible glue (CMC with water) to the end. Then I airbrushed them first with yellow then red. The effect was amazing.



I carved a sea turtle, several starfish and molded some shells and rested them on a brown sugar base which resembled the ocean floor.



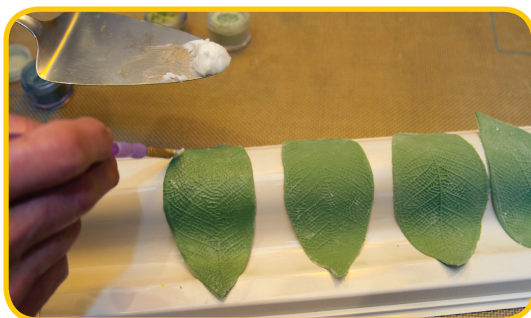
My husband, Joe, created a plexiglass box on a wooden base which housed this underwater scene. I painted the sides of the plexiglass with gelatin to make it look like water. Joe anchored a floor flange to the wooden base and screwed in an 18 inch steel rod onto which I mounted the tiers as I built them.



The textured rock was created using royal icing combined with boiled sugar (Find recipe in digital download). I applied the mixture while it was still hot to the next two tiers in a rugged manner to resemble coral and rock. The mixture hardens when it cools then you can paint the crevices darker colors (browns and pinks).

I stacked two oval tiers 4 inches high on top of the plexiglass box with the smaller one (6 in.) on the bottom.

I added some coral shelves which always intrigued me by cutting gum paste ovals and making them into crescents. Using a small stars tip, I piped green (sage) royal icing onto the surface of the shelves and attached them to the reef with the same icing. When they were dry, I dusted them lightly with green luster. I painted some blue colored gel into the openings making it look like water.



Using leaf veiner molds I created the leaves of the sea kelp drying them over foam and brushed them with several shades of luster. I rolled some green fondant as the stem and attached the leaves with melted chocolate as glue.



The lion fish was formed out of orange gum paste with white stripes incorporated. The poisonous spiny tails and fins were formed out of gum paste and then painted and gingerly attached to the body of the lion fish with the edible glue.

Other creatures such as an eel coming out of one of the cave like opening in the coral reef and other fish and star fish were added to the coral to bring it to life.

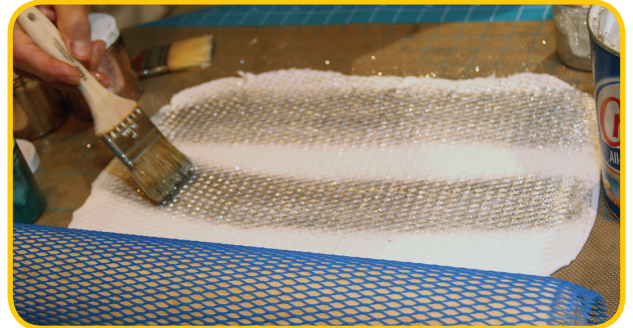
As a final added touch, I used Norm and Zane's (The Sweet Life) chocolate curling tool to curl some other coral reef pieces out of confectionery coating or almond bark.





Next came the two fish which encompass the entire tier. I fashioned the bodies and tails first then carved the head to stand out over the body. Using artistic license, I decided to leave out the fins. The eyes were actually store bought gummies which I coated with gelatin. The head was then covered with fondant and colored with Nu Silver luster dust mixed with oil.

For the scales, I used Ateco's roller sleeve to roll the impression onto fondant.



On the next tier up I piped blue fondant onto a blue marbled fondant covered tier to make it look like an open sea with waves.

I used a colored rolled fondant technique to create a setting sun sky background for the next tier by separately rolling out dark and lighter blue, yellow and red fondant pieces then seaming them together and rolling them as one.

Next, I made some various size Isomalt balls to resemble clouds using white with a touch of blue.

Then attached them to the top of the top tier using a torch or melted Isomalt.



The desired effect was to make it look like the bubbles being blown by the fish were rising to form the clouds in the sky.

As a final touch, I pulled a seagull out of hot Isomalt and carefully placed it on top of the clouds.



Marilyn brings the latest cake artistry skills to her business, and continues to study innovative cake design techniques under nationally-renowned cake masters. As the Owner and Creative Director of Unique Cakes, she focuses on the unusual in wedding cakes, three dimensional sculpted cakes and blown and pulled sugar amenities. Marilyn has been featured in national cake decorating publications. For a full gallery of her cake photos visit [www.UniqueCakes.biz](http://www.UniqueCakes.biz).

