

Christmas Cactus in Bloom

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edibleartists
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Supplies Needed

- 14", 12" 6"x 6" round cake or dummies
- 18" drum covered in Ivory fondant
- Platinum Flower Paste
- Petal dust, terracotta, baby pink, ginko, grass, gold, buttercup, gold sand & azalea
- 50/50 paste
- Textured pin, linen
- Acrylic rolling pin
- Royal icing, med/stiff – Ivory
- Wire 33 or 30g, 24g
- Mold Acanthus Scroll
- Gold sugar beads
- Veiner, Poppy all purpose

- Cutters, Flexi mistletoe, gloriosa, lily and smallest rose petal cutter (Various leaf cutters can be used)
- Ball tool
- Petal shield/or plastic
- Cell pad
- Gum glue
- Brush water bottle
- Dusting brushes
- Sea sponge small piece
- Work board non stick
- Scissors fine
- Floral tape, green ¼ & ½ width
- Pallet knife small
- Tweezers
- Crimper, wavy line

- Friller tool
- Bulbous cone
- Cutting tool
- Paint Mate, vodka or Everclear
- Strip Cutter
- Ivory ribbon for 18" drum
- Gold spray
- Ribbon insertion blade or tool
- Stamens fine white
- White glue
- Icing tip 44
- Confectioners' glaze 50/50
- Q-tips
- Corsage pins
- Styrofoam insert small
- Oreo cookie crumbs



Prep: Cover 14" & 12" cakes or dummies with fondant. Cover 6"x 6" cake with fondant using linen textured rolling pin. Cover 18" cake drum with fondant texturing with friller tool.

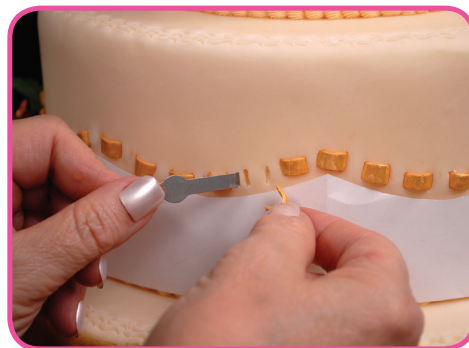
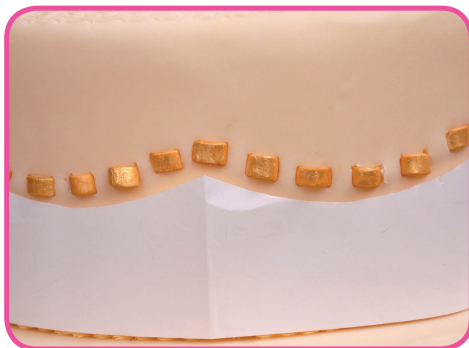
Step 1: Crimping

Crimp each cake immediately after covering with fondant. Move 0 ring down the crimper to obtain the width required for the pattern. Hold the wavy line crimper straight up and press into the fondant ½" from edge of cake and gently squeeze together. Release and remove the crimper. Crimp two rows on each cake one above the other.



Step 2: Sponging

Mix gold dust with vodka or Paintmate. Dip sponge into mixture and dab on side of 14" cake just up to top rotating your sponge as you go.



Step 3: Ribbon Insertion

Cut paper template in shape desired. Roll out Platinum Flower Paste or fondant. Place strip cutter on paste and cut out strips. Cut the strips into ½" pieces. Curve each ribbon piece over straw or brush handle to form. Dry completely and spray with gold spray. Starting in back of cake, with ribbon insertion blade or tool cut two indentions following the template and press curved ribbon piece into the indentions.

Step 4: Scroll Designs

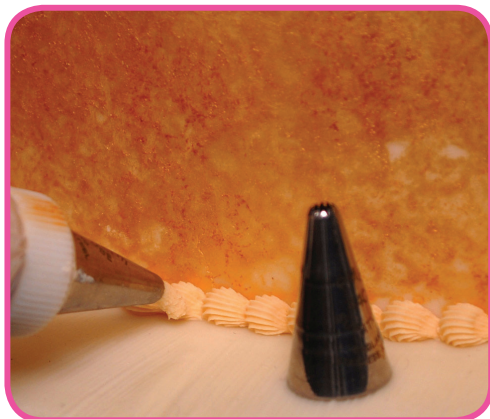
Roll out Platinum Flower Paste as before and cut out strips with strip cutter. Attach 2 strips at top ends with slight amount of water. Using Bulbulous tool or your fingers, twirl strips into a coil. Repeat on other end. Open center to form desired pattern. Let dry. Attach 1-3 strips together to make different scroll designs. With a very thin brush, wet edge of scroll with gum glue and attach with tweezers or fingers to the front of the 6 inch cake in desired pattern. Use corsage pins to hold pieces in place until set. Highlight scroll with gold dust mixed with Paintmate, vodka or Everclear. Attach gold beads to enhance the scrolls.



NOTE: Stack cakes and place them on the cake drum

Step 5: Borders

Using tip 44 and ivory royal icing, pipe a very small shell border around bottom of each layer.



Step 6: Flower Pots

Mix terracotta color into 50/50 fondant and place over flower pot dusted with cornstarch and smooth. Cut around bottom edge. Let dry completely. Cut out 2-1/2 inch wide strip and form in a circle for the base of the flower pot. Circle should be same size as the pot. Let dry completely.

Cut out 4 strips 6" long by 2 1/2 inches wide. Cut ends at a slant, curve and let dry. These are the 4 small pots for side of cake.



Step 7: Assembly of Flower Pots

Place 50/50 paste in Acanthus scroll mold. No shortening/dust needed in these molds. Flex mold and remove Acanthus scrolls. You will need 4 triangle shape scrolls and 10 long shape scrolls. Place paste in the leaf only at the end of the long scroll mold. Make 8.

With gum glue, attach the triangle shapes to the center of the small strips and the leaves on the end of the small curved strips. Place 4 long scroll shapes at the top of the large pot on the outside and then glue 4 more on the inside of the pot matching up to the first 4. This will give you a pattern on both sides. Glue 2 long scrolls on the front and back of the base. Attach the base to the pot with gum glue. Trim the small styrofoam insert and place in the large pot. Layer royal icing on top of styrofoam. Take Oreo cookie crumbs and sprinkle over the royal icing to look like dirt.

To mark placement for the small pots on the cake, place 1 in front and back and 1 on each side. Do not attach yet. Insert a flower pick in the cake in the center of the small pot and then attach pots with royal icing.

Step 8: Stamens

Take approximately 8 white stamens and cut 1/8" off of the bottom of the bunch of stamens. Take one stamen and cut off the bead at the bottom of the long stamen. Roll a very, very small amount of paste on the end of the long stamen (pistil) over the bead. Cut off the bead on the other end. Color the pistil azalea and place in the center of the 8 white stamens. Cut a 24g wire in half, dip the wire into the white glue and insert into the center of the stamens. Roll the stamens and they will adhere to the wire. Set aside.



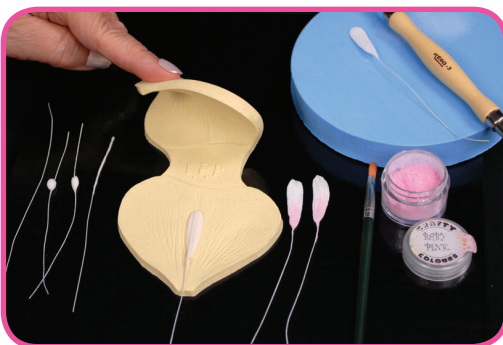
Step 9: Bud Examples

The pink buds are real for you to see two stages. Take a small ball of Platinum Flower Paste and form into a cone. Make a loop on the end of a 24g wire, wet with water and insert in the cone. Make buds on the wire in different sizes. Some buds are very, very tiny and rounded. Dry completely.



Step 10: Buds

Roll out the Platinum Flower paste very thinly on a non stick work board. Do NOT use shortening or cornstarch/powdered sugar. Let paste STICK to the board (Don't pick up paste). Let paste dry to the touch and then FLIP over the paste (very important). Take the small mistletoe cutter and rose cutter and cut out pieces and place them under plastic or petal shield. Do not let the petals dry at this time. Take a couple of petals out of the petal shield and with a slight amount of water attach around the cone. Petals can be attached at different levels and some are bent down to look like various blooming stages. The tiny buds can be left as is or the ones that are larger can be cut with scissors at the top and then pinched back together with no petals added. For each bud, take a very tiny ball of light green paste, push the paste up the wire and attach to the bottom of the bud.



Step 11: Petals Wired

Roll Platinum Flower Paste very thinly on nonstick board. Let paste stick to board (don't pick up paste). Let paste dry and FLIP paste over. Cut out 9 petals using the small Flexi mistletoe cutter. Place petals under petal shield or plastic. Take a small ball of paste and insert a dry white 33 or 30 g wire equal to the length of the cutter. Squeeze firmly and roll back up (twiddle - created by Lin Cook, Sugar City UK) to the tip of the wire (twiddle must NOT dry). Place a petal on the bottom of the Poppy all

purpose veiner and lay the twiddled wire down on the petal to the very end of the petal. Cover petal and twiddled wire with top of veiner and press firmly. This will fix the petal to the wire while veining. Place petal on a piece of tissue and VERY lightly brush pale pink color from the bottom of the petal up to center of petal. This is a white cactus with just slight highlights of pink. Place petal on cell pad and lightly ball tool the edges. Since the petal is thin, the ball tool only gives it some movement. Slightly curve the petal to the front at this time and set aside. Repeat 3 more petals. Continue with 2 more petals and curve petals to the back. Repeat with 3 more petals and curve petals down over thumb and up at the end. (Petal will look like a wave).



Step 12: Assemble Top of Bloom

Attach ¼ width green floral tape to the prepared center wire of stamens. Bend the wire back on each petal before assembling. Tape the 4 petals that are curved forward around the center wire keeping them close to the top. Fan them out evenly. Attach the two petals that are curved out on either side of the center wire. The three wavy petals are attached backwards at the bottom of the center wire and then brought down. Tape down the stem. Bend the pink pistil forward.

Step 13: Attachment of Flower Tube

Roll out a small piece of white paste. Shape the piece in a 1 ¼" long x 1/2" wide rectangle. Wrap around the base of the wired petals like a tube going from the front to back of the wire. Wet with water and smooth the tube to look like a part of the flower. Very lightly dust the tube with baby pink color.



Step 14: Assemble Bottom of Bloom

Roll out the paste with above instructions. Cut out and wire 2-3 petals from mistletoe cutter and bend down. Cut out 4+ small petals from rose cutter, do not wire. Attach the wired petals to the bottom of the tube with ¼" width tape. Take the unwired small petals and, with water, attach to bottom of tube and bring some slightly forward.

Take a green ball of paste and smooth around the base of the bottom petals on the tube. Tape down the wire with ½" width tape. Lightly brush the edges of some of the bottom petals with baby pink color.



Step 15: Cutting Out Green Leaves

Mix grass color in Platinum Flower Paste. Roll out paste with above directions. Stems are not rolled as thinly as the petals. Cut out two duplicates from each cutter. Place under the petal shield. Lightly place a pair on top of each other and cut in half.

Step 16: Indentations In Leaves

With scissors, cut into the top of the leaves while they are together leaving two dog ears on each side.



Step 17: Attaching Leaves To Wire

To start a stem without a bud, tape down a 24g wire with ½ width tape. Slightly wet a leaf and wire with water. Lay the wire on the leaf with matching leaf on top and press together with your fingers. Cut with scissors on sides of leaves to create indentations. Repeat this process applying pairs of leaves below the ones made prior. Continue this 2-3 times to lengthen the stem.

To make a stem with a bud at the top, repeat the same steps as you did with the above stem with no bud; just use your wires with the buds attached. To attach two stems with leaves, just tape together two of the wires with or without buds and proceed as before.



Step 18: Attaching Full Blossom To Wire

Cut leaves as before BUT while they are together make the indentations and carefully separate them. To keep from breaking the petals on the blossom, take the Poppy veiner using the smooth back of the veiner and place on a higher cell pad or object. Repeat the procedure that you used to make the previous stems, EXCEPT you will lay one side of a leaf on the veiner (leave the matching side on table). Continue to line up 3 more of the leaves overlapping them at the top. Wet all the leaves with water. Lay the dampened wire with the blossom on top of the wet leaves and carefully lay the leaf from each matching set on top, press slightly and bring the back of the veiner down and carefully press to adhere. Two stems can be taped together.



Step 19: Shading And Glazing Stems

With grass color, dust the stems front and back. Shade the edges of the leaves with ginko and azalea color. Glaze the green stems with confectioner's glaze.

Use the end of a brush to make holes in the styrofoam in the pot for either single or double stems.



Dianne Gruenberg is the owner of Avenues Sweet Choices and Sweet Choices Cake Decorating School. She has been decorating for 46 years, 26 years as an instructor and show judge. She has appeared twice on teams on Ultimate Cake Off and once on the \$10,000 winning team. Dianne is a PME approved teacher for Diploma Courses, approved teacher for ICES, a USA consultant for London Publishers and has been featured in cake magazines, TV and radio.