

ICES

International Cake Exploration Societé

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Belle Bas

Relief



Tree Trunk Cake

A Grand Style Show Cake

**Parrot Tulip and
Hydrangeas in Gumpaste**

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Belle Bas Relief

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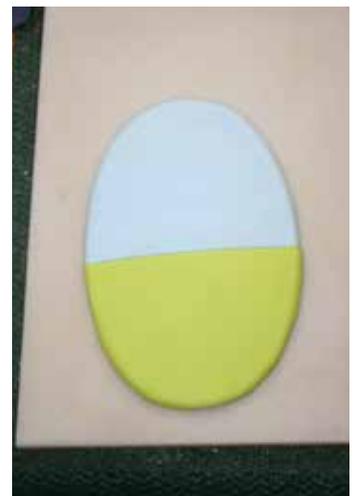
Materials

- Oval shaped fondant plaque, dried
- Fondant
- Colors: spring green, sky blue, flesh, pink, brown, yellow
- Dusting powders: shades of blue, green, pink, caramel
- Gum glue
- Paint brushes
- PME® cutting wheel
- Clay shapers
- Ball tools
- CelBoard
- X-ACTO®
- Garret frill cutter
- Needle tool
- Textured rolling pin
- Small stylus
- Scalloped circle cutter

This project starts out with a plaque base on which I built the scene. From time to time I find that I will have some excess fondant that needs to be used up so I roll it out, make plaques of various sizes and shapes and then store them away when they are dry. It is a real time saver to have pre-dried ones when I need them. This particular plaque started out as a white oval blank, I rolled out some light spring green fondant and some sky blue to make the background. I decided where I wanted my horizon line and then trimmed both the green and the blue fondant to have a straight line where they would meet.

Placing the horizon line closer to you will make the scene appear to be farther away as you will have much more sky than foreground. Placing it farther away will have the opposite effect, bringing the foreground closer to the viewer. I moistened the

surface of the white plaque with a damp paint brush and laid the straight line of my blue fondant on the horizon line, then added the green. Finally I trimmed around the edge of the plaque with a PME® cutting wheel. I trimmed the fondant about 1/8" away from the edge of the plaque and used my fingers to smooth out the edges so you don't see any of the white base. You can also certainly color the background with an airbrush or by painting directly on the white plaque. I just happened to be in the mood for this method so this is the one I chose.



The next step is to add some depth to the background with dusting powders. I like to use several shades of color for both the sky and the grassy areas. Begin with the darkest shades at the horizon line and apply the color with a thin brush along the line leaving little skips and breaks here and there. Next use a wider brush with no color at all to blend the applied color either up or down into the appropriate half of the plaque. For the sky area, I applied some medium toned color in places throughout the sky, finishing with touches of the darker shade at the very top and sides. Again I came back with a clean wider brush and blended everything together. I did the same thing on the grassy area using shades of green.



This scene was based on a public domain embroidery pattern which I pulled off the internet. I didn't want to spend the time on a full garden behind my figure, so I edited it down to two flowering bushes, one behind the figure and one in front. Both began with two very small pieces of dark brown paste rolled into a ball and then into a thin snake. I cut two pieces off of the snake and used them for the trunks. The smaller (farther away) bush was made from a piece of darker green paste about the size of half a grape which was rolled into a ball and then flattened into a pancake which was thicker in the center and thinner on the edges to give me a half-round. The larger bush was made with a piece of paste the size of a whole grape.

Next I made the torso and head of the figure from a piece of flesh-colored paste which started out the size of two grapes. I rolled it into a ball and then rolled it between my fingers to define the neck area. You want to leave about 1/3 of the paste for the head and keep 2/3 for the neck and torso. I used my fingers to make the head egg shaped and flattened it a bit on the edges. The



sun hat will cover the face completely so the details do not matter, just the general shape. The torso needs to have a shoulder and bust area which then tapers down into a tiny waist. Be sure to make things like the waist smaller than you want them to be because you will be adding clothing and even though the fabric is very thin, it will add a surprising amount of bulk. Now is also the time to make an indentation in the shoulder and across the torso where the arm will be placed. I used my ball tool for the indentation and my fingers, clay shapers and ball tools to stroke and push the paste into the shape I wanted. Because I wanted to keep my background nice and clean, I formed the pieces on my CelBoard and transferred them to the plaque when I was happy with them.

Clothing is the next step. I rolled out some light pink paste very thinly and placed it across the figure where I wanted the neckline to start and just like the background colors on the plaque, I trimmed the cloth close to the figure, but left a tiny margin so that I could use my fingers to smooth it out giving the appearance that it went under the figure. This looks much more natural than just chopping the fabric off at the edges – you don't want to see any of the base color at the edges. When you smooth the fabric into place make sure that you press it down into the indentation for the arm so it will fit where it needs to go.



I made the arm next using a piece of paste the size of a blueberry, rolling it into a ball and then into a snake with more paste in one end than the other. The thicker end of the snake will be the upper arm. Roll the thinner end of the snake between your fingers to delineate the wrist. The hand should be a small ball on the end of the snake. To make the elbow, lay the snake across the index finger of your non-dominant hand (if you are right-handed, lay it across your left index finger, reverse if you are left-handed) and use the first two fingers of your dominant hand to roll across the snake. This will make an instant elbow every time. (It works for knees, too.) Lay the arm into the indentation to make sure it fits properly. Use your fingers to flatten the hand slightly. Place the arm/hand on your board, bent as it will be when attached to your figure. If the figure will be facing towards the left as in the pictures, you will want to make a cut which indicates a left hand. Do not put a right hand where a left hand should go...it will show. Go ahead. Ask me how I know.

Use a small piece of the light pink paste to make a sleeve head which covers the upper arm. I rolled some white paste out very thinly and used a garret frill cutter to get the fluted edge. Since the garret frill is rounded, when you apply the trim to the dress at the neck line and sleeve edges it will ruffle naturally. I also used the tiny opening of a tip #1 to make the holes in each of the flutes. Dry fit the ruffles in place and then use a very tiny paint brush and some water to attach them to the dress.

The hair came next and was made from yellow paste rolled into very thin snakes and wrapped around the shank of my needle tool. I set it aside to firm up a bit.

I made the hat at this point from a circle of gumpaste embossed with a texture to suggest a woven fabric of some kind. I embossed the paste, cut out the circle and then cut a quarter of it away. If you use the whole circle, it will be too full. I arranged the join where the cut edges met so that it would be under the



head for the finished product. Sandwich the head of the figure between the two sides of the hat and use the hair coils to fill in where needed. At this point I placed the figure onto the plaque and glued it in place. The crown of the hat was made from a pea-sized piece of paste which had been rolled into a ball, made into an oval, flattened and then cut in half. One half was attached to the hat and the other went back into the bag. I dusted the hat at this point with some caramel colored dust to bring out the detail on the fabric. I rolled a hat band from some pink paste and glued it over the join between the crown and the brim.



The next thing was the body and legs. This just needs to be roughly the shape you want – it will give shape to the skirt, but will not be seen. Pieces like this are good ways to use up left over paste from past projects. I used a piece of paste about the size of two grapes, rolled it into a ball and then into cylinder which was thicker at the top and tapered towards the bottom. The thicker end is the stomach, hip and rump

area. This figure has a generous backside as many of the dresses of this style had bustles. Use your fingers to shape the thigh, knee and calf areas. You can use the same trick here that I used for the elbow if that makes it easier. I used my X-ACTO® knife to cut a “V” into which the torso was placed. I dry fitted the piece to check for size and then glued it in place.

I made the skirt using a scalloped circle cutter. I folded the circle in half and gathered it with my fingers, arranging the pleats and folds to suit me; then I cut off the point on the top just far enough down the fabric so that it fitted over the point of the torso. I dry fitted the skirt, fluffed it a bit and glued it in place then I rolled a sash from some darker pink paste and glued it to the waist to cover up the seam.

The last things I did to the figure were to shade it with some darker pink dust and add a flower and two leaves to the hat. Be sure to get the dust into the folds of the skirt, the gathers at the sleeve head and where the arm crosses the body. Roll a tiny pink ball of paste and use a small stylus to put it in place on the hat, then cut two leaves from thinly rolled green paste and put them in place. Dust the hole in the center of the flower.



I wanted to add some texture to the bushes so I used some of my leftover paste to do it. When I have some gumpaste that is going to go bad, I often roll it very thinly and leave it to dry. Once it has done so, I use my rolling pin and break it up, then store it small baggies. I used three shades of green paste that had been previously broken, making the pieces even smaller using a mortar and pestle. I painted the bushes with gum glue and sprinkled the bits of paste over them. I wanted more shape, so I let the glue dry and repeated the process in the center of each bush. I also added bits and pieces over the grassy area in the same manner.



The flowers are just tiny bits of pink paste rolled into balls and applied with the small end of a stylus. While I liked the plaque just the way it was, I decided that I wanted something else to go with it so I cut a larger plaque from white paste and decorated it with the simple flowers and leaves. The light green edible pearls were purchased in jar so all I had to do was put a tiny dot of corn syrup where I wanted each one to go and use my tweezers to place it.

