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Rent your cake and eat it too

Faux cakes keep costs down, while still providing traditional wedding cake

By STEVE MACNAULL
The Daily Courier

How can you rent a wedding cake? With a bit of optical illusion and some slight of hand.

"Faux cakes, or wedding cake rentals are a real trend in the industry," said Kristy Lockhart, who owns and operates Kelowna-based Le Cake Couture with Tracy Kowch.

"The bride and groom get a great six-tier wedding cake, but only the top tier is real cake.

"The rest is what we call a dummy cake – foam covered with fondant icing and detailing."

It looks and feels real, but the bottom line is renting a cake is less than a quarter of the price of buying a real cake.

Don't worry, the bride and groom and wedding guests still get their cake and eat it to.

"The bride and groom cut and eat the top tier because, of course, it's real," said Lockhart.

"There's also what we call a serving cake behind the scenes that is cut and brought out to feed up to 100 guests."

A six-tier cake can traditionally feed up to 300, towers over two feet tall and can cost up to \$3,000.

By going fake, the cost of a rental is \$410 (a special for the month of February only before it goes back up to the regular price of \$560).

"The goal here is that every bride and groom get a large, beautiful cake at a substantial savings," said Lockhart.

"The bride and groom still get to cut cake and 100 wedding guests are served."

The difference is the bottom five tiers of the cake gets returned to Le Cake Couture and is topped off again for the next wedding.

With all the wedding cake and



Contributed photos

Kristy Lockhart, left, and Tracy Kowch own and operate Le Cake Couture, a Kelowna wedding cake company that features faux cakes for rental.

the baking reality TV shows being aired, brides have been exposed to bigger and better cakes and expectations soar for their own nuptials.

"Wedding cake rental is a way for all that to be affordable," said Lockhart.

"Just because you have a budget doesn't mean it has to look like it."

Any cake can be customized to what the bride wants, but the couture cakes are pre-designed to be big, beautiful and over-the-top and come in enough choices that brides should find what they are looking for.

There are five basic cake types – white, ivory, chocolate, lemon and vegan – and 30 filling choices ranging from lemon, mint and grapefruit to chai tea and pina colada.

The most popular filling?

Sex on the beach, a blend of pineapple, orange and cranberry.

With the wedding season – the summer – coming up, Le Cake Couture has lots of bookings for its rental cakes and orders for full real cakes.

That's right, Le Cake also does regular wedding cakes.

The two partners do all the cake baking, filling and decorating themselves so the cake is always delivered fresh.

Before getting into the wedding cake business Lockhart worked for Royal Caribbean, Celebrity and Princess cruise lines as a port shopping specialist.

Kowch is a registered nurse who's hobby has always been cake decorating.

LeCakeCouture.com or 250-808-6010.

Wedding cakes are detailed affairs at Le Cake Couture.



There's buyers in them thar hills

The ultra high-end buyer is coming back to Big White Ski Resort near Kelowna, but slowly and from different places.

"Previously, we concentrated on U.K. buyers because I'm British and the exchange rate for them was so good a few years ago," said Christopher Sherriff of Solido Group, which is developing The Edge, an enclave of 19 contemporary townhouses at the end of Snowbird Way in the Happy Valley area of Big White.

"Now the exchange is terrible for them, so we're targeting Albertans, Torontonians and Australians."

Big White is owned by Australians and the resort is heavily marketed there.

Of the 19 townhouses, 12 have been sold, four are for sale and three are being completed.

Of the units for sale, the three-level, 2,200-square-foot, three-bedroom model is \$1.2 million.

The priciest is No. 9, a 4,000-square-foot, four-level, four-bedroom beauty with its own elevator, billiards room, home theatre and wine cellar for \$2.5 million.

The Edge is unlike anything else at Big White.

There's nothing typically alpine about the development because it features edgy contemporary design with its butterfly roofs and huge commercial plates of glass.

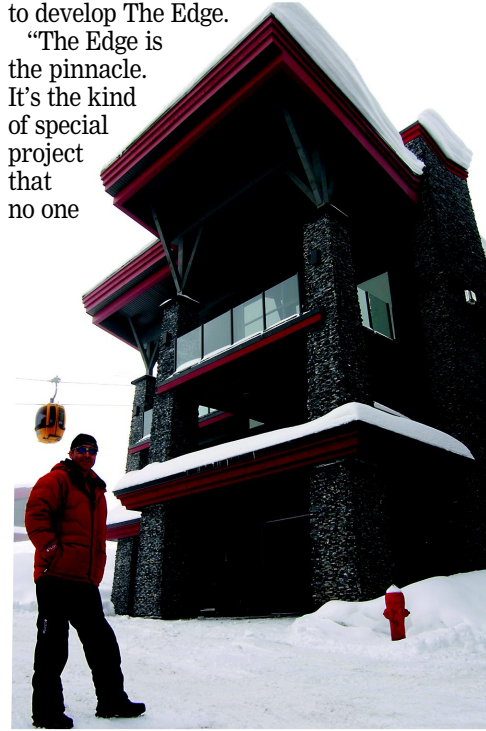
Lara's Gondola, the main lift between

Happy Valley and the Big White village centre, cuts right through The Edge.

"Everyone sees them (the townhouses) and talks about them," said Sherriff.

While sales have been almost non-existent through the recession, Sherriff isn't sorry he went out on a limb to develop The Edge.

"The Edge is the pinnacle. It's the kind of special project that no one



STEVE MACNAULL/The Daily Courier

else has dared to do," he said.

Sherriff also developed the Timbers, Glacier Lodge and Raven condominium complexes at Big White.

Best bed and breakfast

Apple Blossom Bed and Breakfast in West Kelowna has popped up on a list of the top 10 B&Bs in Canada.

The list was compiled by Internet travel critique, information and booking site TripAdvisor.ca for its 2011 Travellers' Choice Awards.

Awards are based completely on reader's reviews and opinions of properties, which are posted on the site.

The B&B on Appleyway Boulevard overlooks Okanagan Lake and is walking distance to both Mission Hill and Quails' Gate wineries.

Owners Jeanette and John Martens pride themselves on offering comfy rooms with views and three course breakfast.

Rates are \$100 to \$140 per night.

Other B.C. B&Bs that made the list include Abbeymoore Manor in Victoria, ThistleDown House in North Vancouver, Eagle Landing in Qualicum Beach, Harvey

Christopher Sherriff of Solido Group is the developer of The Edge, a collection of 19 high-end contemporary townhouses at Big White Ski Resort.



STEVE

MACNAULL

Valley Views

House in Tofino and West End Guest House in Vancouver.

Work and learn

Besides going to school, 550 UBC Okanagan students also work part-time on campus through the Work Study and Work Learn programs.

They make a total of \$780,000 a year, a sum that helps pay a lot of tuitions and living expenses for students.

The Career Centre at the Kelowna campus administers the programs with Work Study designed to help domestic undergraduate and graduate students and Work Learn for international undergrads.

"Students can develop career-related experience and can gain an advantage in their transition from school to the work force," said on campus student employment program coordinator Deanna Simmons.

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