

Choosing the cake: decisions, decisions

By Tom Baer
staff writer

Many factors must be considered by a bride-to-be and her parents before they decide on a cake — the centerpiece of any wedding reception.

Cost, size of the party to be served and type of cake desired are important considerations.

And one area baker has an additional bit of advice: Try a piece before you buy it.

"One thing that's important is testing the cake out," said Sharon Koster of Troy's Bavarian Bakery. "I'd would go for a sample, definitely."

Wedding cakes are a specialty at Bavarian, where chefs use 27 1/4 pounds of eggs in their batter which is mixed in 80-

quart bowls.

"Usually, wedding cake servings go by the number of people you're inviting," Koster said. "We charge about 65 cents a serving, so if you're inviting 200 people, that would be \$130."

Popular cakes these days are white, yellow batter, chocolate, cherry nut, banana nut and marble, according to Koster. "Especially popular is a cherry

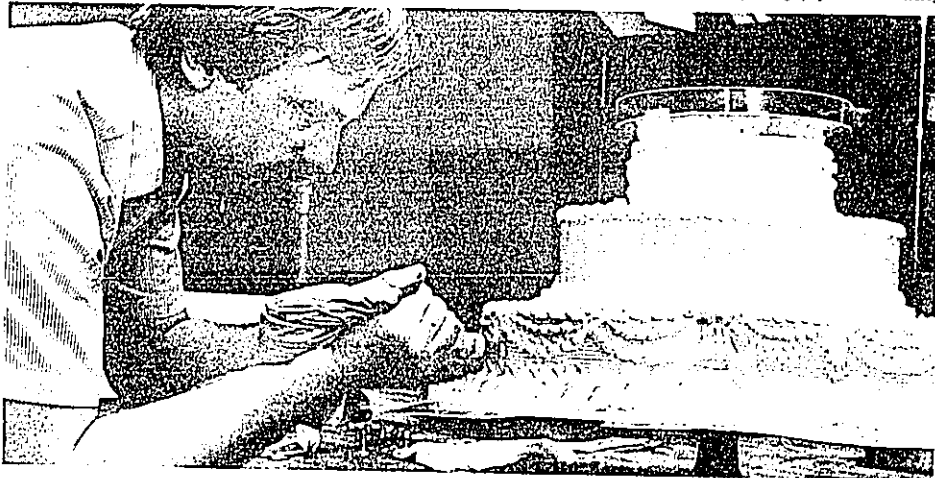
nut with butter cream frosting," she added.

Wedding cakes usually are multi-layered affairs. Sometimes the layers are simply stacked on each other, but more often the layers are separated by plastic pillars (on which a deposit is usually paid) supporting the layers.

"Some people don't like plastic on their cakes, so they stack the layers," Koster said. "But pillars make it look taller," Koster said.

The ornaments which top most wedding cakes add to the cost. "Most people want the tradition bride-and-groom figures," said Koster, who added that a baker sometimes will supply plastic bells, lilies of the valley and roses.

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RANDY BORSI/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Culinary artist Stu Koster creates hearts, bells and flowers for the base of the specially ordered cake (above) that is completed with pillars, flowers

and a fountain (at right). Koster is ready with samples so the bride will know what the cake will taste like, as well as know how it is going to look.



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