

# We Love pastry

CAKE DESIGN · CURIOSITY ·  CHARACTERS · EVENTS

n.2

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[saracinodolci.com](http://saracinodolci.com)

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"Gaia" Silvia Mancini

# Why I like Cake Design



*I have always been charmed by the elegant presentations of the great chefs I've met during my career. For me, the transformation of the Italian confectionery industry over recent years has been a completely natural one: first we saw the modern style of dessert: mousses,*

*moulded puddings and frozen goods, and then came the English style of cake decoration.*

“Cake design has really given our creativity a chance to shine, by combining the passion and artistic backgrounds of cake designers with Italy’s great culinary tradition”.

*What has emerged is an Italian “school” of cake design, particularly when it comes to the modelling and creation of 3D figures by designers inspired by the latest cartoons as well as Italy’s artistic heritage. The world’s leading confectionery fairs just wouldn’t be the same without Italian cake designers.*

*The strong competition in our field has generated a wealth of new ideas and sophisticated techniques, and has given rise to a range of eye-catching, beautiful creations reminiscent of some of the incredible offerings of Renaissance masters. There are lots of new developments in the pipeline, and I look forward to seeing the new crop of ideas from our wonderfully talented cake designers.*

Paolo Zolla  
Sales director, Saracino



## Cake Designer



**B**efore I ventured into the world of cake design, I worked in a small family-run firm that made women’s footwear. I never would have thought that one day, I would be making Mickey Mouse out of sugar paste, or teaching people how to model a variety of different grins and grimaces.

Then, one day, as I was browsing the Internet looking for ideas for my daughter’s third birthday cake, I came across these wonderful, brightly-coloured cakes, decorated with all kinds of things: sugar paste, isomalt, gum paste, modelling chocolate, and wafer paper.

Being a curious type, and also a bit of a perfectionist, I decided to try to make something similar by myself, with the help of books and tutorials. Then, I started looking for the best cake design courses in Italy, and found some. Quite quickly, with lots of practice, persistence (and several mistakes!), I managed to perfect my skills and develop my own style. My efforts were appreciated both by my friends and by the online community, so then I began dreaming of having my own cake studio. But, as I lived in a small town, I immediately realised that wasn’t the right path.

I started working with some local confectioners, and in the evenings I would give free rein to my creativity. It wasn’t an easy time, as I would have to stay up very late. But I had such a passion for it that as the years went by, my style



gradually developed. It was irreverent, humorous, people liked it. I'd won over the enthusiasts, but not yet the majority. What I enjoyed doing was changing and reinterpreting fairytales, and dispelling clichés. Some people might find competitions frustrating: you make cake after cake according to your own tastes and preferences, yet sometimes you aren't even selected. But I didn't mind. I loved what I was doing, and I knew that it was the right road for me. About three years ago, I achieved my goal, creating a series of characters with a cheerful, friendly style: this was my moment.

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out of the blue. I asked myself "Why? What do I have that the others don't?" The answer came from the lovely things people said to me at the time. My cakes tell simple stories describing everyday moments and situations, in my humorous, upbeat style.

I have always used Saracino products because of their quality, and I immediately forged a friendly, trusting relationship with the com-

pany. Our exchange of opinions and favours is now an integral part of my life.

Saracino products are the only ones that suit my needs, both because they are easy to work with and also

because of the care they take in selecting materials. I now work with various confectioners to produce cakes for special occasions or complex toppers, although I spend most of my time teaching cake modelling all over Italy and internationally. I'm going to keep on doing that for as long as people keep calling me – and then, maybe, I'll take another peek in my drawer of dreams.

*"... I never would have thought that one day, I would be making Mickey Mouse out of sugar paste, or teaching people how to model a variety of different grins and grimaces ..."*

Porto Sant'Elpidio, 23 settembre 2016



[www.silviamancinicakeart.it](http://www.silviamancinicakeart.it)

"Maternità" Silvia Mancini



# shoe

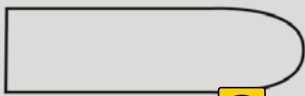
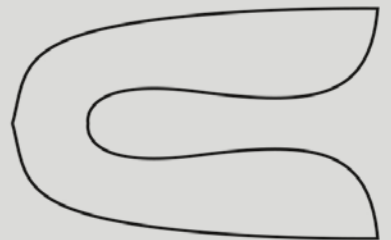
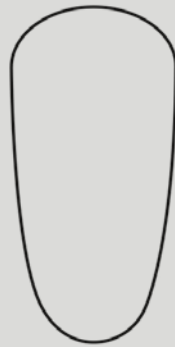
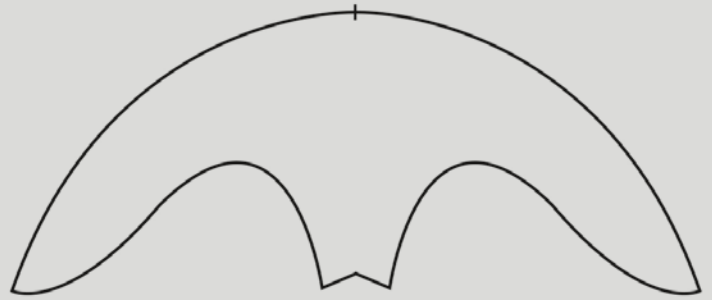
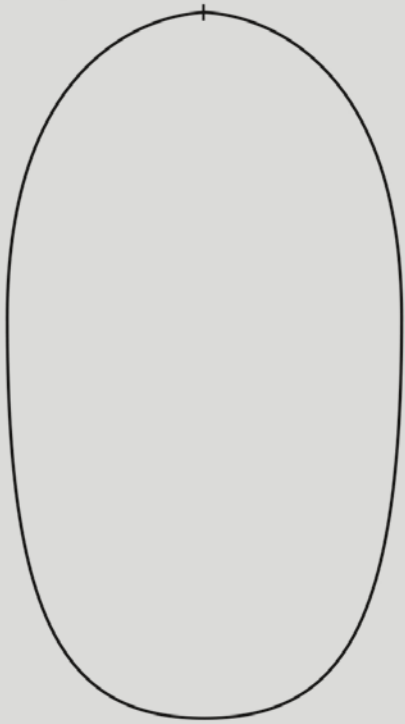
*di Silvia Mancini*

The paste for the sole and upper needs to be at least 4 mm.  
The other details need to be much thinner (apart from the heel strip).  
All the strips are a little bit longer, so they can be cut to fit.

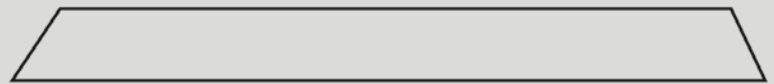


# “shoe”

PATTERN by SILVIA MANCINI



UPPER STRIPES 4 PCS



BACK STRIPE



SIDE STRIPE 8 PCS



# Pasta Model

*Sugar modelling paste.*

*Once upon a time... there was a master pastry chef who loved his work, especially making cakes for his customers.*

What he really liked doing was mixing together all the ingredients he'd been fascinated by since childhood: sugars, natural flavourings, spreads and syrups, blending them into amazingly imaginative shapes to make special desserts. Everyone who visited his confectionery shop was enchanted by his creations, and couldn't resist eating the cake. Never satisfied, he kept striving to improve his creations, and was admired by other confectioners who tried to copy his style and to give their desserts the same delicious flavour.

Sure that his recipes were going to revolutionise the lives of many professional chefs, our master confectioner decided to produce his own range of professional products for people who, like him, wanted to make their cakes even more delicious.

*He also wanted to make a sugar modelling paste that was not only easy to use but also suitable for decorating, and tasted delicious like his cakes.*

He would spend his days trying and trying again, but he couldn't get the results he wanted. Just when he was about to give up on his plan, he had a flash of inspiration:

*"What if I replaced the fats normally found in sugar pastes, with cocoa butter?"*

He had previously disregarded this idea because of the cost – he thought it would have pushed the price up too high. He was very unsure, but after mixing the cocoa butter with the other ingredients he noticed that when the mixture was handled, it took on the shape he wanted. It dried quickly that without over-drying, and it could be re-used a few hours later, in a new creation.

Buoyed by enthusiasm, he iced the cake with an ultra-thin layer of this sugar paste. Inspired by the garden next to his cake shop, he created a series of fun decorations featuring garden gnomes, roses, anemones and an array of other flowers. At last, he'd created **Saracino Pasta Model**, but he wasn't yet completely satisfied.

The master confectioner looked out of the window of his cake studio. At that precise moment, a rainbow lit up the sky: *"that's what's missing"* he said, *"a range of coloured pastes that makes cake decorating easier, quicker and simpler"*.

Very soon, he'd created a beautiful collection of 13 colours ranging from blue to hot pink, pale blue to purple, flesh tones to dark brown: all delicious and beautiful to look at: for the delight of children, and of cake makers alike. Many years have passed since that magic moment. But **Saracino Pasta Model** has never ceased to amaze cake designers and pastry chefs all over the world, though the original recipe has never changed.

*Our compliments to the chef!!!*



# Pasta Model

## Faq

### 1. *Is Pasta Model edible?*

It might sound like a daft question, but it's one that we hear most often at cake fairs and demonstrations. OF COURSE, Pasta Model is a combination of cocoa butter and sugar paste. Not only is it edible, it's also delicious and is made from top-quality ingredients. Try it, and you'll see.

### 2. *Is Pasta Model gluten-free?*

Yes, we don't use products containing gluten, so we can guarantee that this allergen is completely absent. On our website, you'll find an up-to-date list of ingredients, an allergens table and a nutritional table, which should answer all your questions.

### 3. *Once the package is opened, how long will Pasta Model last?*

If the paste is stored correctly and not impaired, the shelf life is exactly as it says on the label.

### 4. *Why is there one paste for covering cakes, and another for modelling?*

Because each sugar paste has a different task, and different characteristics. You can't use the same paste for everything. That would be counter-productive, as there's a risk that it won't do either task very well. Also, converting an icing paste into modelling paste requires lots of additives, and this would compromise the structure and flavour.



### 5. *Can Pasta Model be kept in the fridge?*

Usually, it's best to keep the product in a well-sealed pack, in a cool place, away from direct sources of light to prevent the colour from spoiling. It's very important that the temperature is no higher than 35°C. We don't recommend keeping the product in the fridge, because domestic fridges can create very humid environments which may cause mould to develop in a can or pack that isn't airtight.

### 6. *What colourings can I use to colour Pasta Model?*

We recommend colour pastes or gels for the brighter colours, and powdered colourings for paler shades. When you start a project with pastes of different colours, you should make the lighter parts first, adding the darker ones later. Coloured pastes – especially red, blue and black – can sometimes stain your hands.

### 7. *Can I use Pasta Model to make flowers?*

Of course you can, although the petals will sometimes be a bit thicker than those made with Gum Paste.

### 8. *Why is Pasta Model hard?*

Because this is how it has to be, at ambient temperature. If the paste is too soft, your creations would lose their structure. But don't worry. The paste may be hard at room temperature, but as soon you hold it and start to work with it, the heat from your hands will make the paste softer and easy to work with. When you stop modelling it, it returns to a more solid state. You can repeat this process as often as you like.

### 9. *Do I need to include any additives, to make my creations?*

No, Pasta Model as perfect as it is. The only trick is to dust your hands with a little rice or corn flour, so that it doesn't stick to your fingers.

### 10. *Why does the paste sometimes become oily?*

The only vegetable oil that Pasta Model contains is cocoa butter. It doesn't contain hydrogenated fats, palm oil or similar. Cocoa butter, like chocolate, needs to be worked at a specific temperature. We recommend never higher than 35°C. If you work with the paste at higher temperatures, the cocoa butter will almost certainly begin to dissolve, which gives the paste an oily feel. If this happens, leave the paste to rest in a cool place, and the cocoa butter will re-solidify. Apart from the ambience, the temperature of your hands is also very important. If you always have warm hands, it's a good idea to work in a cool place, and consider wearing latex gloves or washing your hands often.

### 11. *Why do I find small lumps when I re-use the paste?*

This means that the paste hasn't been stored well. Left-over sugar paste should ALWAYS be made into a ball, and then wrapped in the film. This allows the surface to stick completely, without leaving air bubbles.

### 12. *If there are little scraps of dry paste left over, do I have to throw them away?*

Unless they've turned into crumble, you can reuse them after heating them for 2 SECONDS in a 750 W microwave.

### 13. *Why do the 3D figures I make sometimes crack?*

Because the paste has not been modelled or amalgamated properly. Be careful of temperature changes, and the additives you use.

### 14. *How long will the Pasta Model figures last?*

If they've been made well, in other words if the paste has been modelled properly and the parts of the decoration have been securely attached, they will last for years.

**15. *Is Pasta Model vegan?*** No, the natural flavouring used in the paste contains a tiny percentage of caramelised milk. We're working on a milk-free flavouring suitable for vegans.



*The UK's leading cake decorating, sugarcraft & baking show. Cake enthusiasts must experience this unique event that brings together the latest trends and supplies, cutting edge workshops and demos and the world famous Cake International competition display!*

# About Cake International

by *Simona Tomei* of Cake Design Italia

The heart of Cake International is all about the competitions, which attract hundreds of entrants. Here I want to explain how it works.

## “Competition classes”

The competitors at Cake International include amateur and professional cake designers from all over the world.

Many of the entries have endured long, arduous journeys, resulting in a few chips and scrapes and even a few missing pieces, but the exhibition takes care of that: there is a special repair zone where the designers can touch up the details before leaving the judges to assess their work.

The entrants can also leave a note that the cake was damaged during transport, and the judges will take this into account.

When the designated hour arrives (before Cake International begins), the long exhibition aisles are closed to the public, and the judges will spend the whole day checking each creation in minute detail. The visitors are only allowed to see the cakes up close, take photos and admire the work when the judges have finished. Of course, every creation is exhibited anonymously.



Entrants can take part in as many categories as they want, and can even submit multiple entries. There are no limits, except respect for the rules. You can be eliminated for a minimal error (such as including inedible substances in categories where this is not allowed, or using certain materials incorrectly), but if you do respect the rules, your entry will be carefully assessed, and the final score will determine your level of ability.



## Winners and losers

The Cake International judges base their decisions on three criteria:

**1.** First of all, each entry is rated in terms of its completeness and composition. The result will depend on the jury's final score, and basically ranges from 0 to 10. Several entries may be given the same score within a single category, so they will have the same ranking. Gold, silver and bronze medals are awarded, as well as merit certificates.

It may be the case that nobody in a category is awarded silver, or that everyone is awarded silver. In my experience, it's rather like taking an exam at university: your score will depend on how much you studied, the lecturer asking the questions, and luck. At the end of your study programme, what counts is not the vote of your peers, but the result you have obtained.

**2.** After the judging, the top three in each category are announced. The top three will be those who have done the best job and have been given the highest score. Don't forget this is a competition, and there is a podium. All the other entries will be rated gold, silver or bronze on equal merit (on the list, the names are only given in alphabetical order). There are also merit certificates for any creations that the judges consider worthy of a mention.

**3.** Apart from the podium for each category, there are two highly sought-after prizes: the “Best International Show” (which is given to the best non-UK resident) and the “Best In Show”, in which everyone participates. This year, the Best International Show was won by Jess Leung, who won two gold medals in two different categories, while the Best In Show was won by Katerina Schneider (who also came first in the “Supported or Sculpted Novelty Cake” category). You can admire her cake in the photo below.

I like this way of judging, as it creates a community spirit and avoids any bad feeling or unhealthy competition. I've seen competitors helping each other to repair cakes that had crumbled during transport. I've also seen judges willing to explain the reasons for their final score, without pulling any punches. Obviously I've also seen a few entrants upset with the result, but that's inevitable.



# The categories and crazy creations

There are many different categories, and some of them are not based on artistic confectionery, but on pure Sugar Art. In "A Decorative Exhibit", for example, the judges only mark the entrants' ability in sculpting, decorating and painting. Fair or unfair? I'm an ardent supporter of the "feasibility" of a sugar decoration. For me, a cake designer is someone who knows how to design and create something that's beautiful to look at, and which can be eaten.

But the format of Cake International also allows the competitors to express their artistic and technical ability in handling the raw materials. It's a choice. There are so many categories that each entrant can decide which one to take part in.

It's likely that if you're an all-round cake designer you will prefer the categories that show off your talents, but some people take these opportunities to have a bit of fun, and create sculptures that they would never have the chance to do in their everyday work. I have to admit that some of their pieces are truly amazing.



## An avalanche of gold

In the "International Class" category, to name just one, out of the 60 entries on show, no fewer than 26 won gold. That's more than one-third of the entrants. Does this high number of golds mean that the British judges are generous? I don't think so. There were a thousand entries at this stage of the competition, in 18 categories, and there were dozens and dozens of entrants who went home with no prize at all ... some of them were Italian.

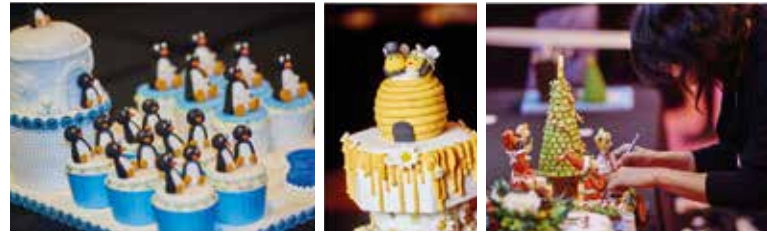
But it's a legitimate question: if out of 60 entries, 26 of them are basically perfect, why shouldn't all 26 of them be recognised as such? The score is based on the relevance to the theme, the techniques, the cleanliness of the creation, and obviously the judges' personal taste and experience. It's exactly like the Italian competitions in this sector.

The judges' scoring criteria have been perfected over time, both because this is a long-running show and also because Britain has a long tradition of artistic cake decoration. For example, as a general rule, their flowers have to be realistic and made from gum paste, the basic sugar paste icing

has to be perfectly smooth, a wedding cake has to be tiered ... unless the entries are done in this way, the British judges don't think they are done properly.

It's something to bear in mind. Some of the pieces that I thought were beautiful didn't win any prize at all. Others that looked rather bland to me have won multiple awards. Are they right? Are they wrong? It's a competition, you can't argue with the final decision.

[www.cakeinternational.co.uk](http://www.cakeinternational.co.uk)



MKTG AND ADVERTISING

## Youtube

On our YouTube channel, we've published demonstration videos which have now attracted 500,000 views. The videos on icing have been particularly successful, and they have really boosted our sales.

We have created four brand-new video tutorials (free!) which we'll be publishing each month. We will be giving them to anyone who sends us their email address, so we can build up a database of designers with a passion or interest in Saracino products. We've put together a series of professionally-made, well-produced trailers to drive demand. We will be using these shortly, to produce targeted campaigns involving the sales network (today there is a 30% discount at XXX store, don't forget there's a free demonstration at XXX and so on). This will also allow us to send you a list of potential customers. The videos have been designed to encourage people to buy Saracino sugar paste, and to try our range of products.

We have chosen well-known themes such as Masha and The Bear, The Minions, Frozen etc. We are focusing heavily on figures for children and other very popular characters. For this video, we've used established, highly talented cake designers to make the results even more attractive and eye-catching. We'll update you on the initial results which look as though they are going to be very positive. We are already working on new videos, with a further aim of strengthening our relationships with national and European cake designers.



# DOLCI TENTAZIONI



INTERVIEW with *Regina Zanardo*  
Proprietor of DOLCI TENTAZIONI in Conegliano, Treviso

My story began 12 years ago, when the owner of the Caramella Point franchise where I was working as an assistant asked me whether I wanted to take over the business. After a few sleepless nights came the big decision that was to radically change my life. I decided to make my dream come true: I was going to run my own business. I immediately realised that it was going to be hard to balance the books with sugary creations alone: so I quickly began adding party goods and balloons, before introducing cake design products about five years ago.

It was my customers who encouraged me: excited by this new trend, they kept asking me for sugar pastes, cake decorating accessories and products hitherto unknown. One of the reasons for my success was the speed at which I replied to my customers' requests. As soon as they asked for a new product, I would look for it, and make sure I stocked it in my shop.



The thing I like best about my work is dealing with people. With the help of my assistant Evelyn, I've become the go-to cake supplies store for customers in a wide area from Conegliano as far as Belluno. It's a great source of satisfaction for me to see customers coming back with the photos of their creations, and sometimes with slices of the cakes they've made after following my instructions.

I have used *Saracino Cake Design* products since I started out. *They are now a real highlight of the store's edible range, thanks to their great flavour, ease of use, and the company's customer service.*



I began to organise courses run by cake designers such as Monia Feletto and Valentina Graniero, as well as demonstrations where I would introduce some delightful ideas for cake decorating, as well as new products.

A few months ago I took another step, and left my 35 m<sup>2</sup> premises in the Conè shopping centre to rent a 100 m<sup>2</sup> shop close to the town centre, where I had more room to create a professional product display. I also bought a food printer, which I used to print wonderful decorations on wafers and sugar paste. It was a huge decision for me, both financially and commercially, but it's now bearing fruit. My ideas have been successful, and the business is going very well.

In the future, I see myself busy consolidating my customer base, by offering a stream of new products, courses and demonstrations by the best cake designers in Italy. I look forward to seeing you at my shop!

[www.dolci-tentazioni.it](http://www.dolci-tentazioni.it)

*"Nine people out of ten love chocolate.  
The tenth person is lying".*

*John Iulius*





# le Supreme Flavouring pastes

by Emanuele Saracino

If you enjoy making home-made cakes from time to time, you will have encountered the problem of how to give your dessert a different flavour. It's not actually that easy to make a lemon or hazelnut flavoured cake, or to produce pistachio or vanilla-filled profiteroles!

Often, you simply make do. Some people use the pre-prepared vials of flavourings you can buy in the supermarket, others might use spreads like Nutella or plain chocolate spread, with reasonable results, while others use jam for that fruity taste, or even fresh fruit. I have to say that fresh fruit can give excellent results, but you need to take care in selecting the fruit, have excellent knowledge of the product, and be aware of the preparation time and how the fruit will interact with the other ingredients.

You can buy flavouring pastes which are (wrongly) referred to as semifinished or industrial products, while in fact they are delicious, very natural, artisanal pastes. One example is a typical Italian delicacy, the hazelnut, which is considered the best in the world. The nuts are harvested from hillside hazelnut groves in the Langhe valleys and in Tuscany, before



being shelled and compressed into a fluid paste. The pastes I use are exclusively sourced from Italy, and only contain a single ingredient: hazelnut. There are no colourings, flavourings, sugars, or other substances. The same is true of pistachio and almond, which also have a great tradition in Italian confectionery. All non-fruit flavouring pastes are ideal in Italian recipes such as coffee-flavoured desserts, panna cotta and tiramisu,

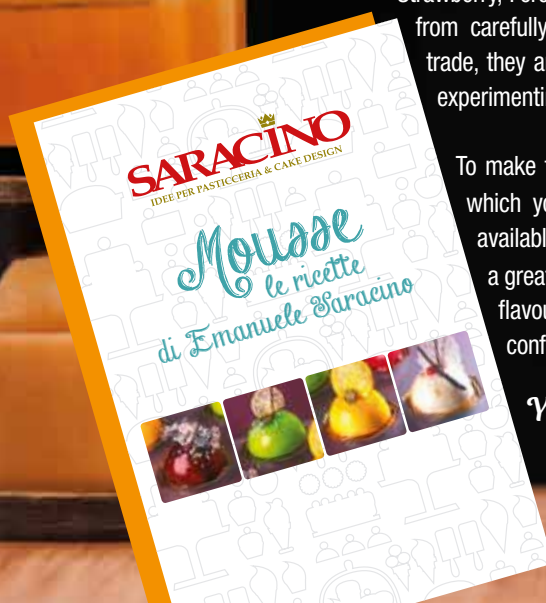
with a simple blend of ingredients. All you need is 100 g of flavouring paste for 1 kg of mixture.

I have produced a range of high quality fruit or nut flavouring pastes, **Le Supreme**. You can use them to make traditional Italian cakes, the latest mousses and moulded puddings, or even ice cream.

The non-fruit range includes Hazelnut, Pistachio, Coffee, Praline, Tiramisu, Vanilla and Zabaglione, while the fruit range includes Banana, Coconut, Strawberry, Forest Fruits, Raspberry and Lemon. All the pastes are made from carefully selected ingredients. Previously available only for the trade, they are now also on sale to amateur confectioners who enjoy experimenting in the kitchen.

To make things even more fun, I've developed a series of recipes which you can find in the fantastic **Saracino** recipe book, available on request. Remember that the golden rule when making a great dessert is to use good ingredients: with **Le Supreme** flavouring pastes you'll be able to compete with the best confectioners ...

*You might even do better!!!*





# VISIT OUR WEBSITE

[www.saracinodolci.com](http://www.saracinodolci.com)



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YOU'LL ALSO RECEIVE PREVIEWS OF  
OUR AMAZING **VIDEO TUTORIALS**  
FROM THE BEST-KNOWN *Cake Designer.*



LUCIA SALMASO



LA BELLE AURORE



■ ■ Made in Italy

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*We love pastry*

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