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SWEET BY THE SEA: LIVING (AND CAKING) IN PORTSMOUTH

TO OUR READERS

There's something about the salty sea air that makes cake taste just a little bit sweeter. Living in Portsmouth, with its bustling harbour, naval history, and warm hospitality scene, has confirmed to me that cake isn't just dessert, it's an experience. From sipping cappuccinos by the seafront with a slice of lemon drizzle to chatting with local bakers who treat sugar and sponge like sacred art, Portsmouth is a hidden haven for cake lovers.

THE PORTSMOUTH VIBE: WHERE CAKE MEETS COAST

Portsmouth has the kind of energy that makes you want to create. Whether it's the hum of the Historic Dockyard or the laughter along Southsea Common, inspiration rises with the tide. And when you're a cake artist, that inspiration shows up in textures, colours, and flavours.

The sea influences my cakes more than I expected: flowing buttercream waves, driftwood-coloured fondant, sea-glass sugar shards.

Even the pace of the city, relaxed but full of character, finds its way into how I build flavours. Think lavender and honey for calm days, or zesty lime and coconut for that wind-whipped brightness.



FEATURE STORY BUTTERCREAM WAVES

There's something truly magical about this ocean-inspired doll cake, it's as if she's risen straight from the surf, ready to ride the next wave... in style.

The cascading ruffles of the dress, piped in shades of turquoise, ripple just like the waves rolling onto Southsea beach. Each tiered swirl of buttercream mimics the motion of the ocean a delightful dance between frosting and tide.

For cake artists and event planners alike, this is your reminder: edible art is more than a trend, it's a tidal wave of imagination. So the next time you're crafting a centrepiece, ask yourself: What would the sea wear to a party?

EVENTS TO INDULGE IN (AND WITH) IN SOUTHSEA

Portsmouth is full of community energy, and there's no shortage of cake-friendly events:

Love Southsea Markets (monthly at Palmerston Road)

A great place to pick up local bakes, meet food artisans, and maybe sneak in a bit of cake testing (research, of course). You can visit us here throughout the year on a Saturday, follow us to see which dates.

Southsea Food Festival (every July)

This is the place to find sweet and savoury treats galore, with pop-up bakeries, local cafés, and food trucks showing off their best. It's where cake dreams meet street food swagger. We're proud to be at the chef's table this year baking up something tasty. Very exciting!

Victorious Festival (August Bank Holiday)

Yes, it's mostly music, but the food court has surprisingly brilliant desserts. I once found a pistachio-and-rose layer cake that lives rent-free in my mind to this day. We're attending as festival fans but I'm sure we'll trading at Victorious next year.



TIPS FOR CAKE-LOVERS IN A SEASIDE CITY

- Humidity affects everything: If you're baking, remember the sea air can soften fondant and mess with meringue. Use stabilisers or lean into rustic styles that embrace the elements.
- Go seasonal and local: Hampshire strawberries in summer? Apple and elderflower in spring? Yes, please. The local markets are full of cake-worthy produce.
- Find inspiration in the landscape: Sketch cakes while sitting on the beach. Build colour palettes from seafoam, shells, and beach huts.
- Talk to café owners: Portsmouth café culture is built on friendliness. If you're an aspiring cake artist or just a fan, most owners love sharing their stories (and sometimes their secret recipes).

Living in Portsmouth means my life is always a little windswept, a little whimsical, and often full of cake. There's a community spirit here, between cafés, creators, and customers, that's as comforting as a slice of Victoria sponge on a rainy day.

So whether you're exploring a market, dancing at a festival, or baking with sea air in your lungs, may your cake always be soft, sweet, and seaside-inspired.

Until next time, Stay sweet, stay inspired.



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