

CACTUS CAKE

by Whitney DePaoli

There are few plants I love more than cactus. Whether they're in pretty terracotta pots or speckling an arid landscape, I just can't get enough of the look. I can't help but create cake designs inspired by the things I love in everyday life, hence this cactus cake was born. Paired with a sunrise-esque buttercream ombre and edible (graham cracker) sand, this cake gives off all the desert vibes I love.

Supplies:

- 6-inch cake
- 6 cups of buttercream
- gel food colors
- cake turntable
- icing smoother
- angled spatula
- 8-inch cake circle
- 1 cup crushed crackers
- piping bags
- piping tip 4B, 6B, 2 & 109

Create an ombre color

palette: Divide about 4 cups of buttercream amongst three separate bowls. In one bowl, mix in your favorite food color gel to create the darkest color in your ombre. In the second bowl, add a little bit less of the same color(s) to create a lighter version. And in the third bowl, add just a touch of those colors to create an ultra-light colored version.

Frost the buttercream ombre:

Place your crumb coated cake onto the turntable. Starting from the bottom of the cake up, add the darkest buttercream, the mid-toned buttercream to the middle third, and the lightest color to the top third and top of the cake. Smooth the cake to blend the

colors together. Chill the frosted cake for at least 30 minutes and allow it to firm up.

Add the crushed graham cracker sands:

Transfer the frosted ombre cake to an 8-inch cake circle and place it back onto the turntable. Add crushed graham crackers around the base of the cake.

Create the cactus color

palette: Set about ¼ cup of the remaining buttercream into a separate bowl and keep it plain white. Then, divide the remaining buttercream amongst four other bowls for color mixing. Add the buttercream into separate piping bags.

Pipe the cacti: Using the green piping bags, pipe cactus designs around the base of the cake.

Add some details: Pipe some drop flowers on the tops of some of the cacti. Then, pipe some dots with the white buttercream to create the look of spines.

Decorate the top: Create the cactus shapes on top of the cake and repeat the process of adding flowers and tiny dots. Then, sprinkle the reserved cracker crumbs around them.

