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Cupcakes take the cake



Traditional Christmas dessert recipes have inspired a range of Yuletide cupcakes.

THINK beyond the traditional Christmas cake, writes **LEAH McLENNAN**.

Once a humble offering (would you like vanilla or chocolate?) the little-cupcake-that-could has been so primped and preened it's now an attention-seeker of a dessert.

It dazzles with its frosting or rolled fondant and endless elaborate designs created from moulds, tappits, glitters, sugars and cachous pearls.

These size-challenged cakes have become so popular they frequently knock the traditional tiered wedding cake right off its stand.

Could the classic Christmas fruit cake be next?

Traditional Christmas dessert recipes have inspired a range of Yuletide cupcakes, including the plum pudding with brandy sauce frosting and fruit cupcakes with rolled fondant.

"These cupcakes double up to create magical themes displayed beautifully on cake or cupcake stands for the Christmas table," says Jennifer Graham, who has teamed up with the McGrath Foundation to release a new book, *The Crabapple Cupcake Cookbook*.

It features every kind of gorgeous cupcake imaginable, and several are just perfect for Christmas.

Graham says cupcakes

have become popular for a variety of reasons: their size, which helps with portion control; and the fact that they're a fun creative project for home cooks and families.

"Cupcakes are magical," says Graham, who teaches the art of cupcake baking and decorating.

"There will forever be home-based creativity being carried out and baking has always been a constant favourite.

"Cupcakes have taken over from the one-off large cake, with an entire cake-decorating industry having been developed to support this."

It seems like the cupcake craze is well and truly here to stay.

AAP

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