

Berries For All Seasons

by Mark Desgroeilliers

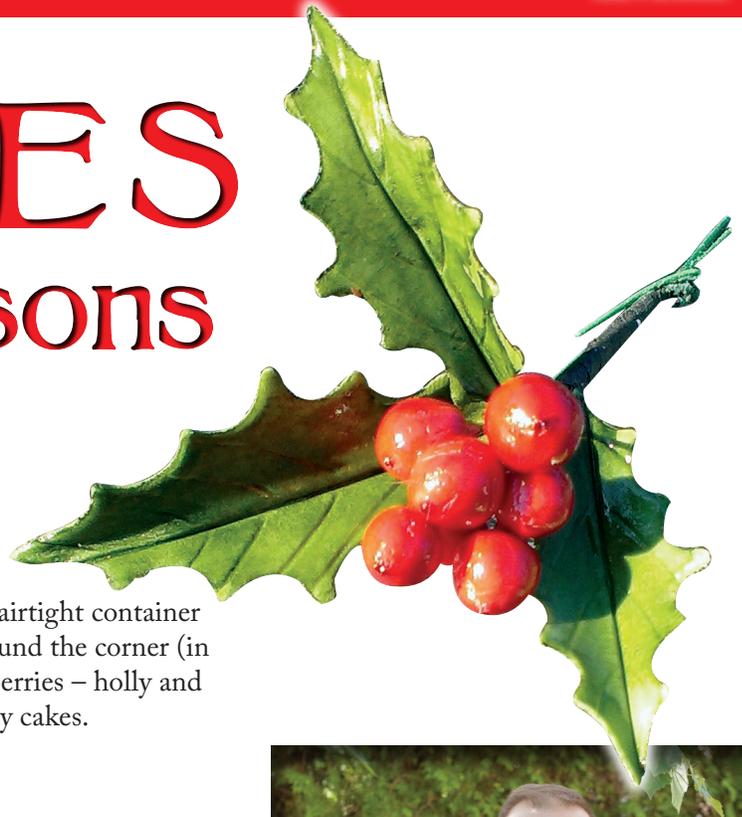


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BERRIES For All Seasons

A Tutorial by Mark Desgroeilliers

In this tutorial I will show you the techniques used to make realistic looking berries. There is no real mystery to how to make berries, and they make great fillers in floral arrangements. If using a good quality petal dust, you could have an array of white berries dried and stored in an airtight container that you can color in a pinch. With the colder weather around the corner (in North America at least), we will focus on two wintertime berries – holly and mistletoe, with their foliage – perfect for all of those holiday cakes.



To Make Holly & Mistletoe, you will need:

- Holly leaf cutters (Icing Inspirations)
- Holly leaf veiner
- Mistletoe leaf cutters (Icing Inspirations)
- Gum paste (use whatever paste you like; I like Fondarific brand paste)
- Paper-Covered Wire 24g and 22g
- Petal Dusts in desired shades
- Confectioner's Glaze and
- Glaze Thinner
- Floral Tape
- Groove Board (I like the plain white).
- Rolling Pin
- Metal Ball Tool
- Brushes for dusting
- Bumpy Foam and Styro block for drying



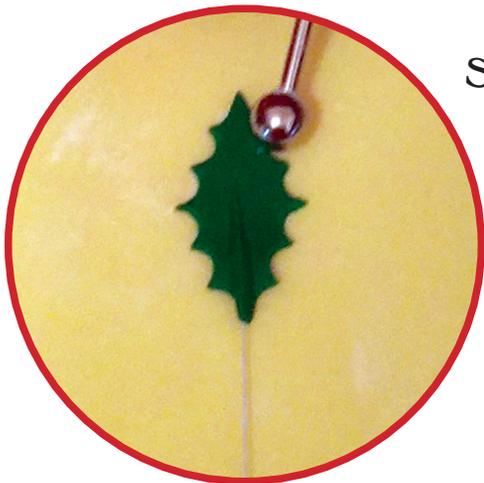
Mark is an award-winning Montreal based cake designer who is the administrator for the local chapter of the Canadian Cake Decorator's Guild and the owner of Morsels by Mark. He loves sharing his passion for sugar and teaches internationally.

Please visit Mark at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Morsels-By-Mark/100489563358531>.



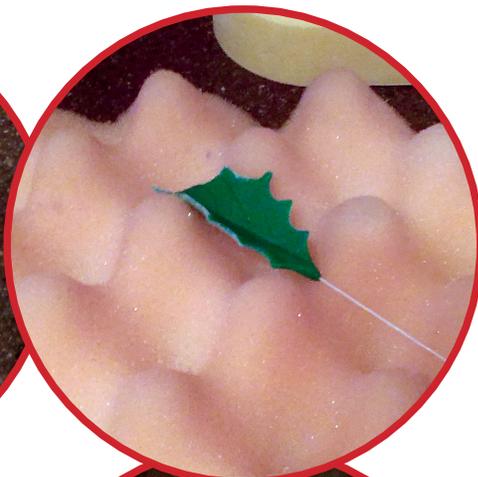
Step 1

Roll green paste out over grooves of groove board. You want your paste to be a tad thicker than petal thickness – think construction paper. Flip the paste over and cut out your petals (I am not giving specific counts on the number of petals/berries to make since that will depend on your project). Be sure to cut various sizes for your leaves.



Step 2

Insert 24g wire in groove and use ball tool to flatten the ridge and lightly thin the edges to remove the “cookie cutter” appearance.

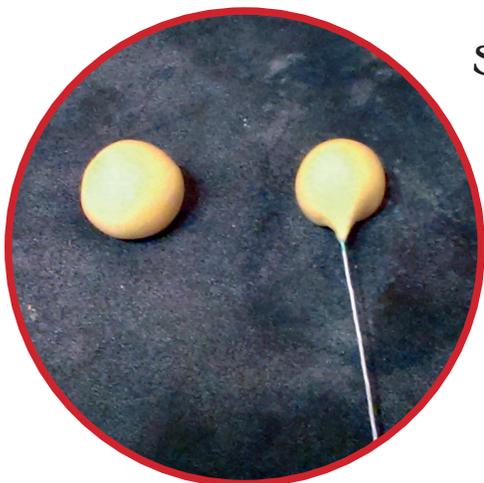
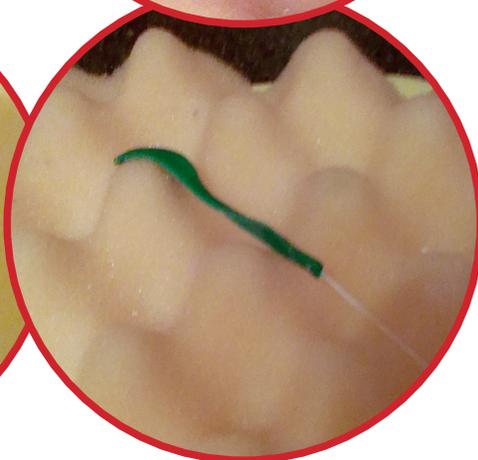
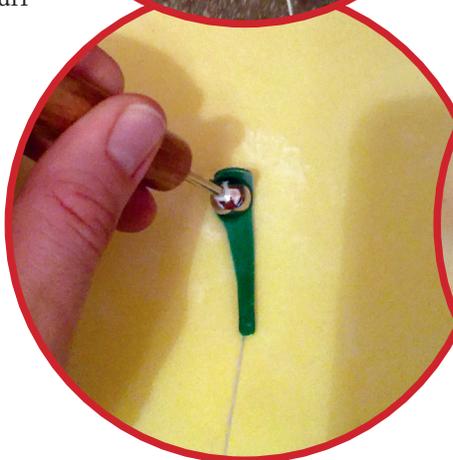


Step 3

Vein the holly leaves, fold in half to make a prominent central line and place in bumpy foam to dry. Don't be afraid to let the tips curl back on some of the leaves – this will make your final product look even more lifelike!

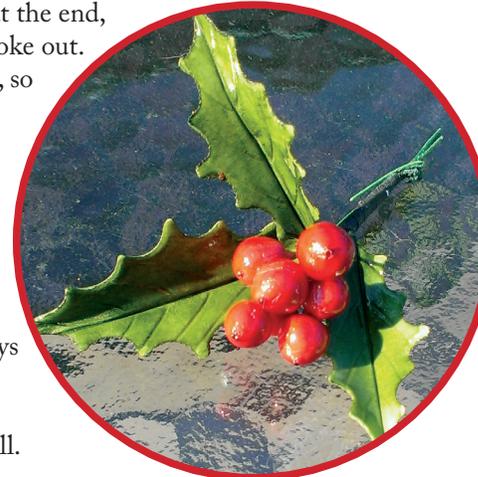
Step 4

Mistletoe leaves do not really have any visible veining (at least not the varieties I have seen). Once my edges have been thinned slightly, I use my ball tool to add a bit of an inward curl to my leaf by applying a bit of pressure at the top of the leaf with the ball tool and pulling it down towards the center. Place it in the bumpy foam to dry.



Step 5

Make berries by rolling balls of paste in the desired sizes (for a deep red berry like holly, I suggest starting with red paste). Insert a slightly dampened (with gum glue) 22g wire into the ball and pinch at the base to secure to the wire. It's always good to have a picture of your berry in front of you for reference. For example, holly berries have a small “protrusion” at the end, so you would want the wire to barely poke out. Mistletoe does not have the protrusion, so you don't want to insert the wire more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way in. Set berries in floral foam to dry.



Step 6

Using photos for reference, use petal dusts to color your berries accordingly. I always like to layer my colors whenever I can, so in the case of holly, I will use at least two shades of red. By layering, you are helping create depth that will result in a more realistic looking final project. If you have foliage with your berries, color that as well.



Again looking at your berry photos, you want to determine the level of “gloss” to your berry. You will obtain your gloss (and set the color) by dipping your berries in confectioner’s glaze. Use straight glaze for berries that are high gloss (like our winter berries). For berries with little gloss (like blueberries), use glaze that has been mixed with an equal part of glaze thinner (also known as 50/50 and is regularly used for most foliage as well). Set aside to dry in floral foam.

Step 8

Use floral tape to attach berries and leaves together in to your desired arrangement. If not using foliage with your berries, tape them into small bunches to add a bit more visual interest to them. The human eye is naturally drawn to things that occur in odd numbers, so your berry clusters should be in odd numbers (I usually stick to 3 or 5).

Bonus Berries



Blackberries Layer colors starting with ivory and green and adding deeper shades of purple to purple mixed with black. You will want to have this variation to show stages of ripeness. Glaze in straight glaze.

Red Raspberries Have a variety of ripeness like with the blackberries. For a ripe raspberry, start with a deep pink and layer with a mixture of red and pink. Glaze in 50/50. (Blackberries and Raspberries are made using a wired ball of paste in the desired shape that has been left to dry overnight. Brush with gum glue and press tiny balls of paste onto it to flatten them. I then roll the berry between two lightly corn starched fingers to secure “kernels”)



Orange Fall Berries When making the berries, indent the bottom with a star tool. Dust orange, use brown dust mixed with alcohol to accentuate the indentation you made and then glaze in straight glaze.

Blueberries When making berries, use scissors to snip an opening on the berry and indent with star tool. Color with a deep blue dust then brush over in some areas with white. Glaze with 50/50.



Gooseberries Dust with bright green and then lightly paint lines with a dust one shade darker mixed with alcohol. Glaze with straight glaze.

Bling Berries Dip in glaze and then roll in non-toxic Disco Dust to add sparkle. These make perfect fillers for all white wedding cakes, anniversary cakes, and even for mixing with fantasy flowers.

