

Sugarcrafters

Sibylle Koch

Dersau, Germany



As a child, I loved to bake cakes and cookies with my mum. Although these were rather simple creations, I found baking and decorating my creations very entertaining and exciting. At the age of 16 I made my first gâteau – a Barvarian *prinzeigentorte* for my father's birthday.

At that age, the idea of becoming a baker, pâtissier or sugarcrafter never crossed my mind. I saw baking as a hobby and a passion, but not as a job. Instead, my career took me into the business and commercial sectors and, over time, I worked my way up to export manager and managing director – yet I still loved baking cakes in my spare time.

When I reached my 40s, I had to accept that I was suffering from a genetic eye condition. Losing most of my eyesight became a real handicap which left me unable to drive a car, go to work for eight hours a day or work in front of a computer. My business career ended when I was 48.

Driven by sheer boredom and frustration, I rediscovered my love of cakes, cookies and gateaux. I learned about sugarpaste, flower paste and all the terrific equipment available for creating stunning sweet treats. My first project was a three-tiered chocolate cake for a confirmation which I decorated with pre-made sugar flowers. I started to collect books

from a number of well-known British sugarcrafters and wanted nothing more than to learn how to recreate the wonderful cakes that filled their pages.

The last few years have been spent with lots of sugar and many wonderful new friends, all of whom have a passion for cakes. I am always on the lookout for new challenges and am yet to grow tired of using very strong magnifying glasses to allow me to see at least a part of what I am doing. I love participating in competitions and, in spite of my handicap, have proudly collected a commended award in the BSG show in Telford in 2012, silver and bronze at the Tortenshow in Hamburg in 2011 and bronze, also in Hamburg, in 2012.

Decorating cakes will always be my hobby and my passion, never my work. It brings me great joy to be able to surprise my friends, their families and children with my creations and see their smiling faces. My dear husband is always by my side, giving me support and help. We both love to share the skills and knowledge of this wonderful craft with others and, to this end, we have started a small publishing company specialising in cake decoration books translated from English into German. Our first release, *Lindys kreative Tortenkunst*, was launched on 15th March 2013 and this has finally allowed my passion to become my business.

