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Versatile Artistry

Creating free-form shapes with Silicone Noodles™.

BY STÉPHANE TRÉAND & MICHAEL JOY

Stéphane Tréand (MOF) is the Executive Pastry Chef at the St. Regis Resort Monarch Beach. Michael Joy is the founder of the Chicago School of Mold Making and author of *Confectionery Art Casting*, *Silicone Mold Making for Pastry Chefs*.

A few weeks ago, I caught up with Chef Tréand while he was teaching a sugar casting class at the Maui Community College (MCC) in Kahului, Maui. MCC pastry instructor, Teresa Shurilla, has hosted several prominent guest chefs including; Stanton Ho, Ewald Notter, Jacquy Pfeiffer and Drew Shotts, at their new seventeen-million dollar state-of-the-art culinary academy, built by the University of Hawaii.

While in Maui, I couldn't help but notice the irony of visiting a place where so much sugar is grown and processed, yet the high humidity inhibits chefs from using it to make ornamental decorations. For those of you experienced with sugar work, you already know humidity is the enemy. It causes the crystal shine to turn cloudy and its surface to become sticky in a matter of hours.

Never one to pass up a sugar challenge, Chef Stéphane thought these circumstances would be a great opportunity to show the class some helpful tips on how to design and construct a sugar showpiece in a high humidity environment. As Stéphane said, "Don't let the humidity stop you from being creative with sugar." He continues, "Your job will be easier if you cook the isomalt hotter, work in a dehumidified room and spray your work with lacquer immediately after assembly. Working like this, you can make an impressive showpiece, even on an island." Here are a few tips Stéphane shared with the class.

Let's pour!

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1 Layout Chef Tréand arranges two flexible silicone Noodles to create a retaining wall for the cooked isomalt. For ease of movement, Stéphane arranges the Noodles on top of a piece of craft paper.



2 Trace Once satisfied with the layout, Stéphane traces the inside perimeter with a marker. Copying the contour onto paper will allow him (or an assistant) to accurately duplicate the same design without effort.



3 Insert A sheet of vinyl is set on top of the paper. The Noodles are repositioned on the drawing and a Showpeel leaf is set inside. *Casting Tip:* Hot isomalt will cause vinyl to stick to marble. You MUST have paper beneath the vinyl so it can be moved on the marble surface. (See photo 7 & 14)



4 Cook & color In humid environments, cook your isomalt to 370° F without water. Stéphane adds two drops of green and two drops of blue coloring to make an aquamarine color.



5 Pour Let the isomalt cool to 300° F / 148° C. Fill the Noodles slowly so they don't lift up. Pour in the center of the shape and allow the isomalt to flow towards the Noodles. After pouring an even ½" thickness, pour more isomalt at the bottom to add thickness for strength.



6 Torch After pouring, Chef Tréand uses a small torch to remove surface bubbles from the isomalt. *Casting Tip:* When using a torch, always keep the flame moving. Do not hold the torch in one area too long. Vinyl is flammable.



7 Move To help the isomalt cool more quickly, Stéphane slides the entire layout (paper and all) towards the top of the marble where it is colder. Remember, without paper beneath the vinyl. It would be impossible to move.



8 Bases While the long center-section is cooling, Chef Tréand fills individual Noodles to create tear-drop shaped bases. *Casting Tip:* Pouring isomalt onto silicone baking mats (instead of vinyl) will create a slightly frosted look.



9 De-Noodle In about 30 minutes, the center section is cool enough to remove the Noodles. *Casting note:* The purple silicone half-rounds (far left) were put on the vinyl at the same time the Showpeel was inserted in photograph 3.



10 Remove The tear-drop bases are removed from the silicone baking mat.
Casting Tip: When creating a showpiece in a humid environment, it is important to build it as quickly as possible.



11 Spheres Stéphane demolds sugar spheres from a 1.5" pop-up sphere mold. The spheres will be used as posts to support the two base sections.



12 Assemble The surface of the Isomalt base is quickly torched so the spheres can be attached. Once attached, they are torched again to eliminate small bubbles.



13 Attach Chef Stéphane attaches the top base plate onto the spheres.
Casting tip: It is important for all the spheres to be the same height. If they are not, the base won't be level. (A tall showpiece needs a perfectly level base.)



14 Slide & peel This is tricky. Stéphane carefully slides one end of the vinyl off the table. Inch by inch, the sugar section is slid off the table, as the vinyl sheet drops away from the sugar. (This is best done with two people.)



15 Instant height Stéphane positions and attaches the center structure to the base. Within an hour, Chef Tréand has created a simple but elegant four-foot tall showpiece.



16 Remove Stéphane uses a razor knife to carefully pry out the silicone half-rounds. (These can be seen at the top of the centerpiece in photograph 9.)



17 Special effect Next, the Dewdrop Showpeel leaf is peeled out of the isomalt. Notice the engraved effect in the sugar where the silicone Showpeel contacted the isomalt.



18 Finishing touch To unify the artistic elements of the showpiece, the sphere and Dewdrop Showpeel are used again to create a tropical flower. To protect it from the humidity, Stéphane will spray the entire showpiece with food lacquer.

Stretch Your Imagination

Use Silicone Noodles™
to create your next Masterpiece!



Showpiece by Stéphane Tréand

Tips & Tools Showpeel™ Illusion

You can create the illusion of etched glass in your sugar showpiece with Showpeels. For this effect, place a Dewdrop Showpeel leaf (detail side up) on a sheet of vinyl. Next, build a retaining wall around it with your Silicone Noodles™. Then, completely cover the Showpeel with lightly tinted Isomalt. Allow the sugar to cool and peel out your Showpeel. Presto, etched sugar!

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