



# Introduces



## Dinara Kasko's Pastry

Photograph by  
Stanislav Strilets

The topology of a Dinara Kasko cake is difficult to explain without discursions into higher math. A Ukrainian architect, Kasko, 30, is drawn to surfaces that are resolutely unflat. Some bulge outward,

morphing into a cluster of perfect spheres, like oversize bubbles skimmed off the top of a bath; some sink in concave dips, suggesting valleys of miniature waves — eerie acts of biomimicry. Others rise and fall in a tessellation of triangles with sharp, jewel-like edges, their vertices multiplying. These are speculative structures, based on algorithmic models. They just happen to be rendered in mousse and meringue, destined not to be revered as monuments but eaten.

Baking is an exacting science, requiring finely calibrated scales and thermometers and obsessive tinkering with ratios of liquid and dry, fat and sugar. But Kasko goes further, using tools such as parametric scripting software (which turns designs into code) and an Ultimaker 3-D printer to create thermoplastic prototype molds, which she then casts in silicone and fills with traditional cake components, like almond sponge and passion-

fruit crèmeux. In spirit, she is a modern descendant of Marie-Antoine Carême, the 19th-century codifier of French cooking who built replicas of Greek ruins and Chinese pagodas out of butter and sugar and claimed confectionery as the primary branch of architecture.

Kasko, the daughter of two engineers, grew up near Kharkiv, Ukraine, where she lives now, 25 miles from the Russian border. Her mother baked only for special occasions: “I remember waiting two to three months for a cake,” Kasko said. Five years ago, she left her job at a design firm to take care of her newborn daughter and soon started an Instagram account (@dinarakasko) for what were then relatively straightforward cakes, constructed in her small home kitchen with little more than a mixer and an oven. She experimented with store-bought molds but quickly exhausted their capacities. So, in 2015, she produced her first

Clockwise from top left: Kasko's ruby chocolate algorithmic modelling cake, blueberry geometric kinetic tart, strawberry and cherry origami-like folding cake, bubbles fruit cake, white chocolate geometric kinetic tart and dual-layer cherry cake.

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prototype on a friend's C.N.C. (computer numerical control) milling machine, which took a block of wood and carved away everything that was not part of Kasko's design.

The result: a square cake with long cuts that made it resemble nine separate cubes, airbrushed to a midnight finish with cocoa-butter spray and held together by glossy rivulets of red mirror glaze. A crosscut of the cake on Instagram reveals strata of Emmanuel sponge, airy as a madeleine and studded with red currants; jammy raspberry confit; and jelly and mousse spiked with sparkling wine — the drama of the exterior giving way to something of a giggle, an effervescent memory. Such contrast is key to Kasko's work. A cake might outwardly be inspired by Miura-ori, an origami fold involving a zigzag series of parallelograms, adapted in the 1970s by a Japanese astrophysicist for the deployment of solar panels on space satellites. But inside is all delicacy and lightness.

Kasko now sells her moulds online and travels the world giving master classes. Still, few of her more than 600,000 Instagram followers have had a chance to actually taste her cakes. I was lucky to try one last June at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, a Versailles-style three-tier glory with ornate geometric extrusions in mousse that disappeared, shockingly, under my fork. Kasko had confined herself to ingredients only available in 18th-century France, and suffused the yielding layers with sour cherry and rose. It tasted like summer, fugitive and bright.

This spring, a group of investors will open a pastry shop featuring Kasko's recipes and designs in Doha, Qatar, with others to come in Moscow and Boston. Kasko never expected to become a recognised pastry chef; at the Met, she told me, "I was a housewife." But recently, she shifted operations to a separate studio so that her family — soon to include a second child, due in May — no longer has to struggle to sleep while the Ultimaker churns out a template. Such 3-D printing can take as long as four days, provided that nothing goes wrong. "Sometimes there's lightning," Kasko said. "Something you just move a bit, and you have to start all over."

— Ligaya Mishan

## T is for Tomatoes and Tigers

KENZO'S CREATIVE DIRECTORS, Carol Lim and Humberto Leon, took to the supermarket as the place of inspiration for the fourth iteration of the house's archival capsule, La Collection Memento.

Celebrating founder Kenzo Takada's penchant for eating and entertaining, prints of hyper-realistic tomatoes in red and yellow are worked on to cotton garments — from short sleeve t-shirts and smock dresses to mesh and collared shirts. The collection also sees the house's iconic tiger motif reimagined in a medley of expressions. Airbrushed tiger prints from the 1992 menswear collection appear on T-shirts, sweaters and cotton poplin shirts in blue or tan hues, while a brand new "running tiger" motif in gold and burgundy accents is plastered on skirts and shorts. Sitting in line with the house's design ethos, the collection underscores much of Takada's whimsical and fun personality — a reputation on which it has built a cult following. — Sng Ler Jun



## FOR THE LADIES



THE OMEGA TRÉSOR collection is the watchmaker's recent offering particularly designed for women. Launched last year, it sets itself apart through

its discerning design, with feminine details such as an eight-petalled floral motif on its polished mirror caseback, crafted for the feminine wrist. This year, the widely popular range offers the timepiece in an alluring shade of red. Adding a sophisticated touch to the ever-slender timepiece, 38 single-cut diamonds are set on either side of the bezel and lugs, accentuating the hour-glass figure with its elegant curves.

— Sng Ler Jun



Sulwhasoo brand muse Song Hye-kyo with the Bloomstay Vitalizing Serum, \$188.



## Full Bloom

LUXURY SKINCARE LINE Sulwhasoo might be known for its potent anti-ageing solutions based on ancient Korean beauty secrets, but its latest line, Bloomstay Vitalizing, is targeted at a younger, millennial audience. The textures are light and the fragrances beautifully unobtrusive. In a pleasing palette of blush pinks, the three-piece range, consists of a Water, Serum and Cream all enriched with plum blossom extract to restore the skin's vitality and elasticity. The Serum, consists of an anti-glycation compound of germinated fruits and seeds like red bean, Korean pine seed and black sesame to prevent skin ageing while the Cream has a delightful bouncy texture that sinks effortlessly into skin, offering ample hydration. — Renée Batchelor

NOW BOOKING

## AWAY FROM IT ALL

AN IDEAL ISLAND GETAWAY often conjures up a postcard-perfect island of sandy white beaches, breezy palm trees, and fancy cocktails. Ticking all of the boxes are the following new hotels under the Small Luxury Hotels of the World group.



### Quinta da Comporta – Wellness Boutique Resort

Girdled within a swathe of wild sand dunes, gorgeous rice fields and pristine white-sand beaches, Quinta da Comporta wellness retreat is as serene as its surroundings. Designed by renowned Portuguese architect, Miguel Cãncio Martins, the 73-room hotel

fuses traditional Portuguese architecture and contemporary designs that evoke a sense of rustic charm with its minimalist décor. Proffering seasonal Mediterranean and international cuisine, the restaurant serves up dishes made of locally procured organic produce, which are harvested from the hotel's Bio Garden. The hotel provides a shuttle service to one of Portugal's most renowned beaches, the Carvalhal Beach, which welcomes anyone who dares to brave the waves or simply enjoy a quiet rendezvous with nature.

**Faarufushi Maldives** The captivating Raa Atoll in the Maldives is known for its exotic private island getaways. From turquoise lagoons to a small coral reef island, the stunning seascape surrounding the 80 villas at Faarushi Maldives offers the ultimate indulgence for those seeking a respite from the daily grind. Here, visitors can immerse themselves into nature by partaking in a plethora of water sports, including paddle



boarding, deep sea fishing and guided snorkelling at the water sports, fitness and food centre, Athiri. Getting to the resort in itself is a novel experience where visitors have to embark on a 50-minute journey on a seaplane from Ifuru Domestic Airport.



**Hotel Nantipa** Savour the finest of Costa Rican hospitality at Hotel Nantipa, the first boutique luxury beachfront hotel in the vibrant neighbourhood of Santa Teresa

in Costa Rica. Featuring only 15 guest bungalows and suites, each with either a pool or ocean view, guests can immerse in a simplistic Costa Rican way of living, in between feasting on the region's cuisine, riding horses by the beach and visiting the magnificent Montezuma Waterfall. — Sng Ler Jun

## Food with Thought



Pork and Broccoli.

EMBRACED AS A lifestyle on the whole, upcycling has found its way into kitchen spaces across the island. Chefs and restaurant owners are increasingly relooking their approach to ingredients, which would otherwise be discarded. Popular local cafe Stranger's Reunion has joined in the conversation with an all-day brunch menu built around sustainable eating practices.

"Ingredients that do not typically make the plate still have much to offer; it's up to us to explore," says owner and three-time Singapore National Barista Champion Ryan Kieran Tan. Tan's perspective is illustrated in his culinary endeavors at Stranger Reunion, where he presents broccoli stems alongside the usually under-used pork collar ends in a carnivorous main dish amongst other offerings created in a similar vein. Also found on the menu is salmon skin chips plated with sesame aioli, salmon puree and avocado coulis — an appetiser that gives a second lease of life to salmon cut-offs.

As the world shifts towards sustainability, it won't be long before the food industry gets behind the idea. Here, local cafe Stranger Reunion is amongst the pioneers to kick-start the shift. — Sng Ler Jun

## MILK FED

IT'S NOT OFTEN that Australian skincare brand Aesop releases a new product, so when they do you know it's because they believe they have something good on their hands. The Gentle Facial Cleansing Milk is the first of its kind from the brand and is especially suited to sensitive, dry or fragile skin. Massage a small amount directly onto the skin and rinse off, or apply it on a damp cloth to wipe over the face to remove light makeup. While you may not be used to non-foaming cleansers, over time you'll find the delicate texture of this product is gentler on the skin. The cleansing milk is packed with active botanicals — oils of lavender stem and sandalwood soothe the skin, while grape seed oil breaks down the oils in your makeup. If you need a more intensive cleanse, first cleanse with the brand's liquid or gel cleansers and end off with the cleansing milk to avoid that stripped-clean sensation. — Renée Batchelor

Aesop Gentle Facial Cleansing Milk, from \$45.

