

Easley baker has 7-foot-tall cake in TLC's 'The Ultimate Cake Off'

[By Cheryl P. Allen](#) • Staff writer • February 8, 2010

It took nine hours, dozens of eggs, 80-90 pounds of rolled fondant and gum paste, mounds of flour, buttercream icing and more.

The result was a 250-plus-pound, 7-foot-tall French vanilla bean chocolate chai cake. Part buttercream icing and part rolled fondant, the delectable masterpiece came courtesy of Christine Schnee, owner of Carolina Morsels in Easley and her assistants: local baker Kathy Norris; Aubrey Coffee, a culinary instructor at Clemson University; and Schnee's husband, Mark.

All will be featured on TLC's "The Ultimate Cake Off," which airs on the cable channel at 10 tonight.

Schnee was chosen from among hundreds of potential contestants who met with TLC's film crew during the ICES (International Cake Exploration Society) Convention in Chicago last year.

"They interviewed for different spots for the show's second season ... and of all those people, they only chose about 20," Schnee said. "They chose me, and I was thrilled. It was just an honor to be able to be on the show."

Tonight's episode will feature Schnee and crew competing against two other four-member teams from other parts of the country.

The day of filming, the team arrived at the studio at 6:30 a.m. to set up. The clock started at 8 a.m. "You had until 5 p.m. that evening to complete your cake," Schnee said.

"The cake had to be at least 5 feet tall, and it had to have mechanical elements to it and electrical lighting to it. And we chose to go above and beyond the 5 feet, so it would just shine above everybody else's."

At least 60 percent of the cake had to be edible, she said. "About 85 percent of ours was edible."

The theme focused on the 2009 American Kennel Club Agility Invitational in Long Beach, Calif. The winning team received \$10,000 and had its cake showcased at the event.



Christine Schnee, owner of Carolina Morsels in Easley, will appear on TLC's Ultimate Cake Off

It's a pretty intense and exciting episode, also featuring mini-competitions throughout the main competition, Schnee said.

"I've been in the cake decorating business for about 20 years, and I travel and teach cake decorating techniques and I invent cake decorating products. ... This is the first competition that I've ever been in like this. It was a tough competition."

To find out if local cake decorator Christine Schnee and her team emerge victorious, check out TLC's "The Ultimate Cake Off" tonight at 10.