

# Edible Jewels

Whether sparkly and whimsical or bold and glamorous, edible jewels add a special touch to cakes and cupcakes. Jewels can be bought ready-made or made at home using isomalt or candy clay.

If you're interested in sugar work, making your own isomalt jewels is a great place to start. Isomalt is a sugar substitute that is perfect for sugar decorations because it produces a much clearer sugar that is longer lasting and more moisture resistant. It also stays flexible and can be reheated, which is very helpful when trying to fill several small jewel cavities.

## Isomalt Recipe from Cooked Sugar Art

### Ingredients

2 cups isomalt  
1/2 cup distilled water  
Distilled water for brushing down crystals  
Food coloring  
1/2 teaspoon flavor, concentrated or oil

### Tools

Candy thermometer  
Heavy saucepan with lid  
Whisk  
2" brush  
Small strainer  
Large pan with ice water  
Microwave-safe bowls

In a cool, low humidity room whisk water into isomalt in a heavy saucepan. Heat on medium low and stop stirring for the rest of the process. When mixture becomes clear, skim off foam with strainer. Dip a clean brush into water and gently brush the inside perimeter of the saucepan with wet brush, slightly above the boiling sugar. Continue skimming the foam and washing down the sides of the saucepan until the syrup is completely clear. The impurities are not harmful for consumption, but by removing the foam, the resulting syrup will have more clarity and strength. When crystals are washed from the side and syrup appears clear, place thermometer in pan and cook to 250° F. Add food coloring if desired. Continue cooking on medium heat to 340° F. Immediately remove pan from stove and plunge into cold water for a few seconds to stop the cooking. Gently stir in flavor. Cover for two minutes to be sure the flavor is infused into the syrup. The resulting syrup is ready to pour into molds, or poured into puddles on parchment paper or a silicone mat to cool. Store the puddles in locking bags, storing flat without pieces in each bag touching each other. Better yet, vacuum seal the pieces in bags. Place bags in airtight containers with silica gel. If wanting to cast (mold) the hardened pieces of isomalt, place isomalt in a microwave-safe container and microwave at 5 second intervals until a liquid state. The resulting syrup is ready to mold into jewels (follow instructions above for casting jewels).

## Candy Clay Jewels

Use any commercial chocolate-flavored fondant or modeling chocolate, or make candy clay. Homemade clay jewels will be opaque and rich in color.

### Ingredients

1/2 pound chocolate-flavored candy coating  
1/3 cup corn syrup  
Melt candy coating. Stir in corn syrup and blend thoroughly. Wrap in plastic wrap for several hours before using. Knead chocolate fondant enough to "just" soften. Pinch off a small amount to fit a jewel cavity. Push into the cavity and push the edges toward the center so the edges are smooth. Use a bit more fondant to push against the fondant in the cavity and lift the candy jewel out of the mold. If candy clay loses shape when pulling it out, before taking it from mold, put it in freezer to harden for a few minutes then remove from mold. Note: If having trouble getting jewel to release, spray mold with cooking spray before putting candy clay into the cavity.

Painting jewel tones: Jewels come in many colors, so almost any color Luster Dust will work.

**Using Lemon Oil:** If jewels are already on the cake or will not be disturbed after they are painted, mix a little lemon oil with chosen color luster dust and paint jewels with a soft brush. The jewels may need to be touched up if not handled carefully as the lemon oil may remain tacky.

**Using Confectioners Glaze:** If making jewels ahead of time to be used even months later, mix luster dust with confectioners glaze and paint jewels with a soft brush. The finish will dry and the color won't come off.

### Syrup with Granulated Sugar

This recipe is the most cost effective. The syrup should be cast into jewels as soon as it is made. If no color is added, jewels which should be clear may appear light amber.

#### Ingredients

1½ cup granulated sugar  
1/2 cup distilled water  
Distilled water for washing down crystals  
1/2 cup light corn syrup  
Food coloring  
1/2 teaspoon flavor, concentrated or oil

#### Tools

Candy thermometer  
Heavy saucepan, lid  
Whisk  
2" brush  
Small strainer

Best to work in a cool room with low humidity. In a heavy saucepan on medium heat, thoroughly whisk together sugar, water and corn syrup until sugar dissolves. Stop stirring for the rest of the process. As mixture is starting to boil, skim off impurities with a strainer, and, with a wet brush, gently brush the inside perimeter of the saucepan, slightly above the boiling sugar. Continue skimming the foam and washing down the saucepan sides until the syrup is completely clear. The impurities are not harmful for consumption, but by removing the foam, the resulting syrup will have more clarity and strength. Place thermometer in pan, and cook to 250° F. Add food coloring and continue cooking to 300° F. Stir in flavoring and cover for three minutes. The resulting syrup is then ready to mold into jewels.

### Isomalt Nibs

Premade isomalt nibs are an easy and convenient way to create edible gems. Follow the directions below once the nibs are melted.

#### Ingredients

Melted Isomalt nibs  
Cooking spray

#### Tools

Jewel molds  
Funnel with stopper for large jewel cavities  
Large silicone spatula  
Baking sheets  
Large measuring cup for large jewel cavities  
Toothpicks or sucker sticks  
Silicone mat or parchment paper  
Silicone cupcake holder

With cooking spray, coat hard candy jewel molds and a funnel with a stopper if using a mold with large jewel cavities. Wipe out excess cooking spray with a paper towel. Set sprayed molds on a baking sheet or a surface that withstands heat. Prepare syrup recipe. For small cavities, use a toothpick or sucker stick to fill. If using a funnel, set the funnel with the stopper covering the hole, in a large measuring cup or any container which will hold the funnel level. Pour the hot syrup into the funnel. Fill each cavity by lifting the stopper just enough to allow the syrup to fill each mold cavity, then quickly cover the opening in the funnel with the stopper to stop the sugar flow. When jewels cool, invert each mold, letting jewels fall from mold onto parchment paper or a silicone mat, which is on a soft surface such as a folded towel.