

# The icon hang

**Fabrico Próprio** is Portuguese for “made properly”, and it’s what cafes in Portugal hang in their window if their cakes are made on the premises. It’s also the name of a new book by Frederico Duarte, Rita João and Pedro Ferreira celebrating the neglected art of Portuguese confectionery, which it treats as a semi-industrial design product.

“Cakes are such a big part of our culture,” says Duarte. “They can be design objects – the machinery and processes are common to, for example, ceramics. For the pastel de nata you need an oven that goes up to 400°, something you wouldn’t have at home.”

The pastel de nata (see p80) is also the cake that started it all, a flaky, creamy staple that Duarte, João and Ferreira wrote about for icon back in October 2006. Since then the trio has spent 18 months cataloguing cakes and, more importantly perhaps, recording the stories behind them. “We got quite obsessed [with] finding out these stories,” Duarte says, “and we realised that there’s no written record about this kind of pastry in Portugal at all, ever.”

The reason this area is neglected is that Portuguese confectionery culture – despite its obvious diversity and richness – is not a

source of pride for its practitioners.

“No pastry chef really wants to dedicate his life to these cakes,” says Duarte. “The whole community, all they want to do is wedding cakes and these weird constructions in sugar, they’re really tacky. No one really wants to talk about pastries.”

But the book has been a big success in Portugal, and Duarte hopes it will go some way to restoring pride in the confectioners’ profession. Already the Portuguese tourist authority has told him he has changed the way they promote Portuguese food.

[www.fabricoproprio.net](http://www.fabricoproprio.net)



### **Pirâmide Branca (White Pyramid)**

**Description** Cone made from trimmings dough, with chocolate icing. Decorated with chantilly cream and one cherry half.

**History** No one is seemingly able to explain why it is called a pyramid, when in fact it is a cone. In the Fifties and Sixties it was also known as a Matateu in homage to the famous football player of Mozambican origin. Icing variations and decoration variations (various coloured cherries, walnuts, sugar decorations, sugar glaze drizzle, and so on) are common.



#### Bolo de Arroz (Rice Cake)

**Description** Butter cake dough. Sprinkled with granulated or icing sugar.

**History** Originally made from rice flour, which gave it its white colour and greater density and weight. It has long been considered a cheap, nutritious cake. It is always served with the paper lining of the cylindrical mould in which it is baked, which also serves as its characteristic wrapper, and usually reads "Fabrico Especial da Casa" (Special Production of the House).



#### Limonete

**Description** Puff pastry dough, pastry cream, preserved fig and cinnamon filling. Royal icing topping and cross.

**History** Very similar to the Jesuíta, we were told that it also originated in Santo Tirso. Although its name evokes the shrub herb known as Lúcia-Lima (Verbena), we were not able to find any reference to this ingredient in its composition.



#### Mimo de Coco (Coconut Charm)

**Description** Shredded coconut, egg yolk, sugar and cherry.

**History** This cake may be categorised as a pudding. Its origin is connected to the town of Vouzela, in northern Portugal. According to tradition, Mimos de Vouzela were given to women as an expression of appreciation and courtesy.



#### Alsaciano (Alsation)

**Description** Sweet dough, custard filling, flavoured with lemon, candied cherries or dried fruits.

**History** Variation of the Bom Bocado with cylindrical shape. The different shape requires the inclusion of candied cherries or dried fruits to reduce the dough's density, allowing for even cooking of the filling.



#### Indiano (East Indian)

**Description** Two portions of roulade and "napkin" batter, joined with butter cream, covered with coffee or chocolate fondant icing.

**History** Also known as the Geladinho (Icy) or Delicioso (Delicious). The coffee variation also has coffee-flavoured butter cream. Due to its high calorie count, it has become less common in pastry production and teaching.



#### Pastel de Nata (Custard Tart)

**Description** Puff pastry dough, custard filling.

**History** Recipe originally from the Santa Maria de Belém Monastery (order of Hieronymites) in Lisbon, produced and sold since 1837 under the name Pastel de Belém. Multiple derivative recipes are produced today under the name Pastel de Nata. The Natão is a popular variation with twice the common height.



#### Glória (Glory)

**Description** Puff pastry dough, doce de ovos coating and sugar glaze.

**History** More common in Oporto and northern Portugal. In central and southern Portugal it is more common in a miniature form called the Argola Dourada (Golden Ring).



#### Disco (Disc)

**Description** Puff pastry dough, doce de ovos filling and lateral icing, topped with royal icing and decorated with an almond.

**History** Known in Oporto and northern Portugal as the Satélite (Satellite); it is a cylindrical variation of the Jesuíta.



#### Torta (Roulade)

**Description** Roulade and "napkin" batter, egg cream, sprinkled with granulated sugar.  
**History** Also known as Ericeiras, this cake may have originated in the Ericeira region. Available in a wide variety of variations, the most famous being the orange, almond and chocolate covered rolls. It is also greatly appreciated in Japan, perhaps due to its similarity with Castella.



#### Tibia (Tibia)

**Description** Choux pastry dough, pastry cream and chantilly cream filling, sprinkled with icing sugar.

**History** Originally filled by injection with a mixture of pastry cream, chantilly cream and rum through a small hole and finished with coconut and butter cream. Today it is often found in a more humble interpretation filled with egg cream or chantilly cream by means of a cut in the side of the cake and finished with fios de ovos (egg cream).



#### Moinho (Windmill)

**Description** Brioche or puff pastry dough, egg cream filling. Finished with egg white wash.

**History** Sometimes also called Estrela (Star) or Hélice (Propeller). Its shape, a variation of the Trinitá, is created by cutting a square of dough from each corner to the centre, creating four triangles. The filling is placed in the centre of the square and alternating triangles are folded over the filling. It is finished with a round dough "lid".



#### Lapo (Bow)

**Description** Puff pastry dough, coated with doce de ovos and sugar glaze.

**History** A formal variation of the Brisa prepared by twisting a rectangle of puff pastry dough twice, giving it its characteristic shape. It is occasionally possible to find variations sprinkled simply with cinnamon and sugar.



#### Allumette

**Description** Puff pastry dough, pastry cream, preserved fig and cinnamon filling, royal icing coating and decorative burning in jelly.

**History** French cake attributed to Dinard, a Swiss pastry chef who may have given it its name and meaning: Match. A simpler version, without the decorative lozenges, is also common.



#### Rim (Kidney)

**Description** Choux pastry dough, pastry cream filling, chocolate fondant icing (milk or dark).

**History** Another example of an anatomical cake. Variations of the Rim filled with egg cream or chocolate are common.



#### Esquimó (Eskimo)

**Description** Roulade and "napkin" batter, plain or chocolate butter cream, rolled in thin sheet of chocolate, finished with fios de ovos.

**History** Probable foreign origin. May be served with parchment used to roll the cake. Variations filled with a mixture of plain butter cream and candied fruit were also found. Its size may vary from shop to shop. The name Esquimó may be derived from the fact that it is served cold. Also known by the alternative name Charuto (Cigar).



#### Ratinho (Mouse)

**Description** Trimmings dough, chocolate icing. Ears made of sliced almonds or chocolate pieces, piped sugar glaze eyes and nose.

**History** Another way of recycling trimmings and other ingredients in addition to the more popular Pirâmide. Especially popular among children.