

Edible masterpiece



Cliffs chef gives gingerbread cottage
an eco-friendly twist

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How many people does it take to construct an eco-gingerbread cottage? A lot more than you'd think.

Normally, Chef Tom Hohman, head pastry chef for the Cliffs, is keen to tackle his annual Cliffs-inspired gingerbread project solo, but this year's replica of the Cliffs Cottage at Furman University (the first-ever "green" Southern Living Showcase Home) required extra brainpower.

"Normally it's just me," says Hohman, who has worked at the Cliffs for three years. But because of the emphasis on sustainable living, both at Cliffs Cottage and through lifestyle programs in the Cliffs

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Communities, he got help from Cliffs environmental services coordinator Marnie Record. "There were a lot more people involved, and it's a much more educational project this year."

Every detail had to be accounted for, from organic baking products to the recycled wooden supports used to reinforce the interior of the house and the reclaimed desk that it sits on. The eco-friendly twist did extend the process, Hohman admits. Turns out, a solar oven does not bake as fast as a conventional convection oven, says Hohman, who spent 40 hours over four days on his edible 7-foot-wide masterpiece.

This is Hohman's third gingerbread creation for the Cliffs, which is always a replica of one of the properties. Last year's was Gary Player's headquarters at the Cliffs at Mountain Park and the year before that was the chapel at the Cliffs at Glassy Mountain. He has no thoughts yet on what next year's might be, but Hohman's already got 2012's in the bag — the Tiger Woods project.

"It's a way to express myself through sugar or candy, or ginger-

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