

# 'MASSAI'

This red rose is based on a florists' hybrid rose called 'Massai'. The centre of the rose has been made with a layer of five petals, all interlinked with one another. The secret to achieving good colouring with a red rose is to dust the flower before it has had a chance to dry completely. Red roses are always a favourite choice for wedding bouquets and, of course, for Valentine's Day!

## Materials

18-gauge wire

White, Christmas red/ruby and holly/ivy flowerpaste (gum paste)

Christmas red and ruby paste colouring

Red, ruby, aubergine, holly/ivy and forest green petal dusts

## Equipment

Fine-nosed pliers

Pale green floristry tape

Rose petal cutters (TT551, 550)

Very large rose petal veiner (GI)

Rose calyx cutters (OP R11b)

## CONE

1 Tape over an 18-gauge wire and bend a large open hook in the end using pliers. Form a cone shape using some well-kneaded white flowerpaste. Make sure the tip is quite pointed and the base fairly broad. Moisten the hooked wire and insert it into the broad end of the cone. Push the wire closer towards the point of the bud so that it is well secured. Pinch some of the paste

from the base down onto the wire to secure it further. The cone should be no larger than the smallest cutter you are planning to use. You will need to make some cone shapes slightly smaller with a finer point if you are planning to make rosebuds. Allow to dry overnight if possible.

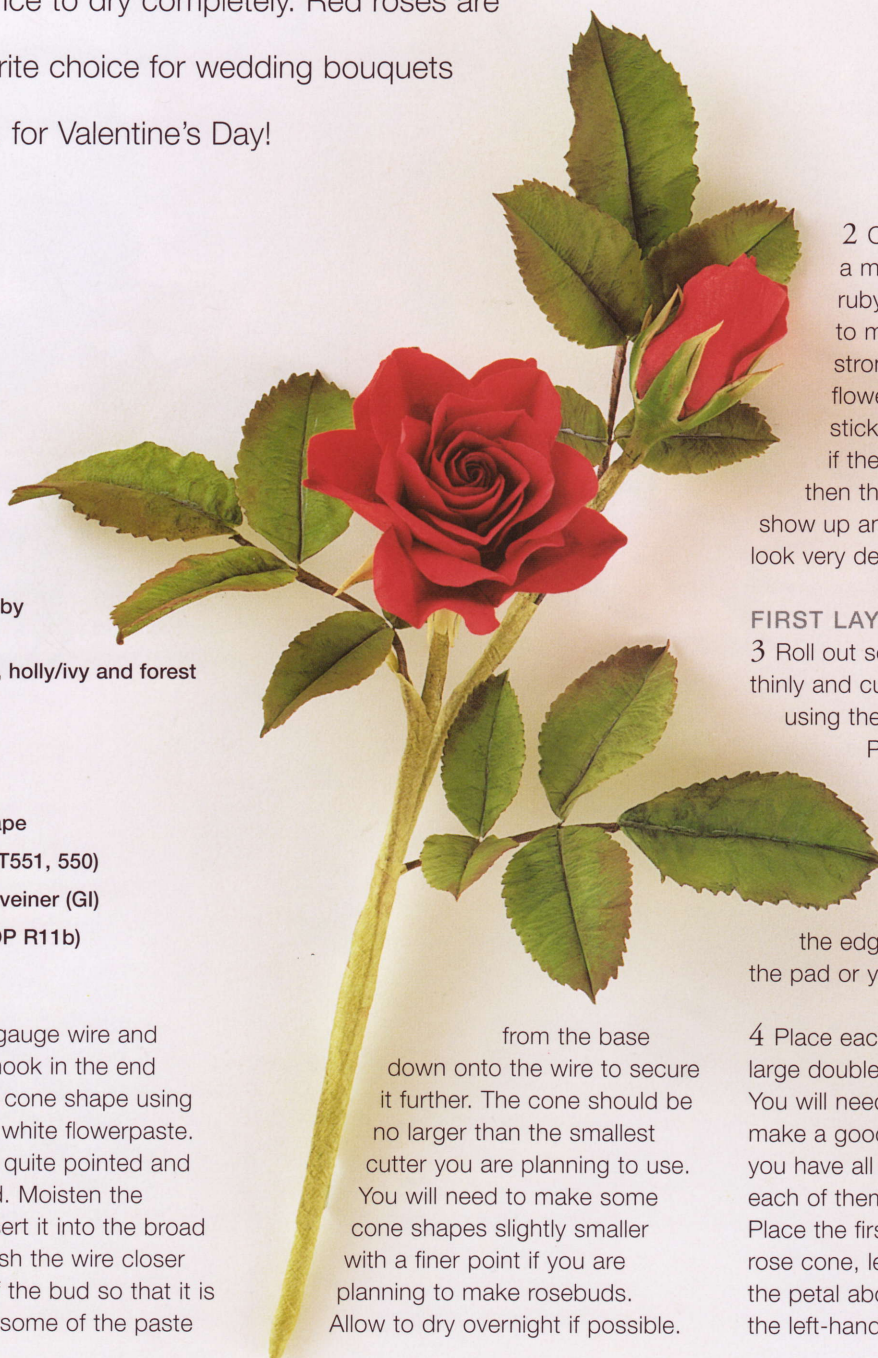
2 Colour some flowerpaste with a mixture of Christmas red and ruby paste colouring. I tend not to make the base colour as strong as I want the finished flower to be. Red paste can be sticky and difficult to handle and if the depth of red is too strong, then the petal dust finish will not show up and the finished flower may look very dead and flat.

## FIRST LAYER

3 Roll out some coloured paste quite thinly and cut out five rose petal shapes using the smaller cutter (TT551).

Place the petals onto a pad and soften the edges using either a medium metal ball tool or the rounded end of a large celstick, working half on the edge of the petal and half on the pad or your hand.

4 Place each petal in turn into the very large double-sided rose petal veiner. You will need to press very firmly to make a good, deep impression. When you have all five petals veined, moisten each of them with fresh egg white. Place the first petal onto the dried wired rose cone, leaving about 0.5cm (1/4in) of the petal above the tip of the cone. Tuck the left-hand side of the petal in towards



the cone, trying to hide the tip of the white cone underneath. Tuck the next petal tightly into the first and then repeat with the remaining petals until you have a tightly interlinked and spiralled centre. Tighten all of the petals down, pulling them at an angle to the base. Leave one of the petals open ready to take the first petal of the next layer.

### SECOND LAYER

5 Cut out another five petals using the same sized rose petal cutter as before. Vein and soften the petals as described above. Tuck the first petal underneath the open petal from the previous layer. Close the last petal from the first layer on top of this petal. Place the next petal over the join. Repeat with the remaining petals, working around the rose until you get to the last petal, which will need to be tucked underneath the first of this layer. Pinch the centre of each petal slightly between your finger and thumb to give a central vein. Once again, keep one of the petal edges open to take the first petal of the next layer.

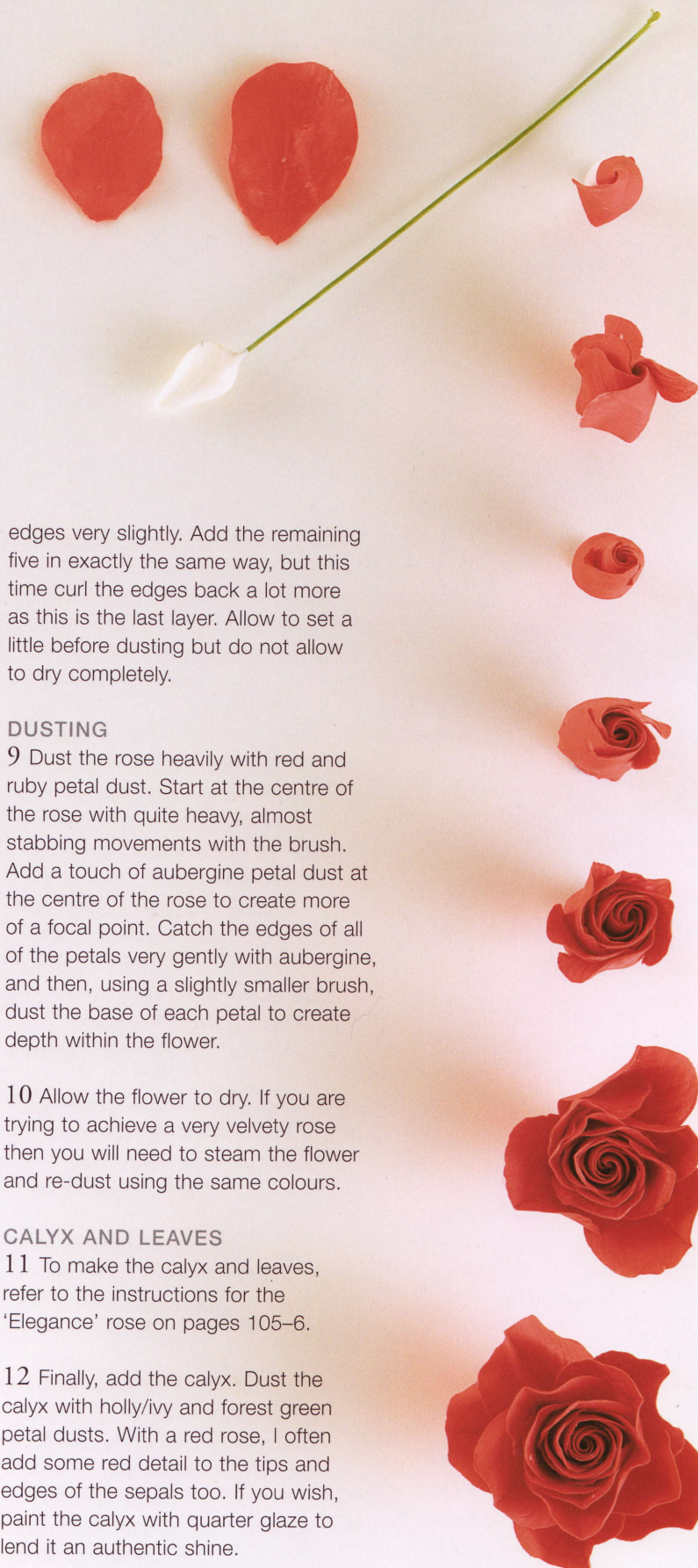
6 If you are making buds then you should have a tightly spiralled rose at this stage. Curl back all of the edges gently and add a calyx.

### THIRD LAYER

7 Repeat the process again using the same sized cutter as the previous two layers. Start to open up the rose shape a little more this time and don't forget to pinch the petals again.

### FOURTH AND FIFTH LAYERS

8 Roll out some more red paste. Cut out ten petals using the largest cutter (TT550). Soften and vein the petals as before. This time you will need to cup the centre of each petal either with a metal ball tool or by working the centre between your fingers and thumbs. Moisten the base of five of the petals and attach them in turn opposite one another, placing each over a join in the previous layer or in the layer you are creating as you work. Curl back the



edges very slightly. Add the remaining five in exactly the same way, but this time curl the edges back a lot more as this is the last layer. Allow to set a little before dusting but do not allow to dry completely.

### DUSTING

9 Dust the rose heavily with red and ruby petal dust. Start at the centre of the rose with quite heavy, almost stabbing movements with the brush. Add a touch of aubergine petal dust at the centre of the rose to create more of a focal point. Catch the edges of all of the petals very gently with aubergine, and then, using a slightly smaller brush, dust the base of each petal to create depth within the flower.

10 Allow the flower to dry. If you are trying to achieve a very velvety rose then you will need to steam the flower and re-dust using the same colours.

### CALYX AND LEAVES

11 To make the calyx and leaves, refer to the instructions for the 'Elegance' rose on pages 105–6.

12 Finally, add the calyx. Dust the calyx with holly/ivy and forest green petal dusts. With a red rose, I often add some red detail to the tips and edges of the sepals too. If you wish, paint the calyx with quarter glaze to lend it an authentic shine.