Crafts Beautiful

**Millefiori eggs**

Decorate your home for Easter with Ellen Kharade's bright and beautiful trinkets

**Start with...**

Polymer clay, Fimo: Soft, peppermint; raspberry; pacific blue; Special Effect, vanilla; peach; rose; lilac; aqua; mint

Eggs, white, six

Ribbon, co-ordinating

Cardstock, yellow

Paper, polka dot

Headpins, six

Jump rings, 6mm, six

Seed beads, green

Tape, double-sided

Sterilising fluid

Tools: Dremel hobby drill and narrow drill bit; sponge; needle, darning; beading; straw, thin; tissue blade; skewer, wooden; sandpaper; rolling pin; scalpel

**Millefiori Eggs**

1 Soak white eggs in a bowl of sterilising fluid for an hour and gently clean the surfaces with a sponge. Rinse thoroughly. Mark the centre of both ends of each egg and drill small holes through the shell, then change to a bigger drill bit and make the holes larger.

2 Insert a long darning needle inside, wiggle it around to break up the yolk and blow each egg using a thin straw. Soak them in sterilising fluid and rinse out thoroughly. Dry in the oven on a low heat for ten minutes. Knead and roll out a log of lilac polymer clay, 12cm long, and cover it with rectangles of mint, vanilla and rose clay until it measures 1cm in diameter. Roll the log so that all layers are compressed.

3 Knead raspberry clay until soft and pliable and roll into a long log, 1cm in diameter. Chop into six 12cm lengths. Cover each one in lilac and roll until smooth. Evenly space the raspberry logs around the pink core. Roll rose clay into a long log, 5mm diameter, and chop into six 12cm lengths. Position between the raspberry ones, compress the cane with your hand, and roll until smooth. Chop in half and put one half to the side – roll the remaining half until the desired size is achieved.

4 Using a tissue blade, cut the cane into thin slices and position over the egg. Continue until it's covered; any gaps can be filled in with very small millefiori, but take care not to cover the holes. Roll the egg gently in warm hands and over clean paper until smooth. Place a wooden skewer through, suspend it over a drinking glass, and bake for 15 minutes at 110°C. Once cool, gently rub over the egg with fine sandpaper.

5 Thread a long darning needle with a double length of co-ordinating ribbon and pass through the egg. Create a loop and tie a knot at both ends. Decorate the other eggs in the same way, building up canes to make them more complex or keeping them simple with rolls of coloured clays.

**Easter Egg Card**

1 Draw an egg onto stiff card and cut out. Roll out mint clay, 3mm thick. Cut off thin slices of the millefiori in various sizes and patterns, then lay them on top of the mint clay, spacing them closely and evenly.

2 Lay clean paper over the clay and roll until the millefiori is flush with the base clay. Place the egg template on top and cut around the shape using a scalpel.

3 Bake to the manufacturer's instructions. Cut cardstock, 14.5cm x 19cm, and fold in half. Trim polka dot paper, 9cm x 14cm, and stick to the base. Cut out a 7cm x 8.5cm rectangle of alternative polka dot paper and adhere on top.

4 Trim gingham ribbon to size, cover the back with double-sided tape and fix to the egg, then stick the egg to the card. Tie thin pink ribbon in a bow and glue to the centre.

**Mini Eggs**

1 Pinch off a ball of mint clay and roll into an egg shape, 3cm in height. Make up a cane of yellow petal flowers with a mint background. Roll into a long sausage with a diameter of 5mm to 10mm, then slice into even pieces. Arrange over the pre-formed clay egg.

2 Use your fingers to press the millefiori onto the base egg until seamless. Using a beading needle, make a hole through the egg and roll to reshape, then bake. Thread the egg onto a headpin, followed by a green seed bead.

3 Turn the end of the headpin into a neat loop and thread a jump ring on. Cut ribbon to size, tie the ends together and thread through the loop. Make another five mini eggs in the same way, changing the millefiori patterns as you do so. **CB**