

# MY "FOURTH OF JULY" COWBOY KITCHEN

Preparing a room box for the American holiday can be simple and fun... **Debbie Marshall** shows us how.



On July 4, 1776, thirteen colonies in what is now the United States adopted a "Declaration of Independence" affirming that they were independent of Great Britain. Every year on the 4th of July, Americans continue to celebrate that important moment with fireworks, parades, baseball games, barbecues, concerts, fairs and family reunions. Patriotic music is sung and red, white, and blue are

the colours of the day. Apple pies often feature in the festivities. The first apple orchard in North America was planted by a colonist in 1625 and the fruit eventually became an American staple. Today, an especially patriotic person is often said to be "as American as apple pie."

While attending university in the United States, I was impressed with the joy and community spirit expressed during this annual celebration. When asked to

construct a 4th of July tableau for Dolls House and Miniature Scene Magazine, I set the scene on a ranch in the American west sometime in the 1940s. In my 'cowboy kitchen', Betty is getting ready for a big Independence Day celebration. Every surface is filled with mouth-watering dishes - from baked ham to chicken stew, along with a freshly baked apple pie cooling nearby. The coffee is perking, homemade doughnuts are

set out on a platter, and Betty is showing off her American flag cake. Red, white, and blue colours are splashed around the room - there's a bunting of American flags, red cowboy hat, blue wallpaper, red and white checked cloth, and red 'Navajo' rug. Watermelon, a popular fruit across the United States has been prepared. (A mouse has already helped herself to a piece).

Fireworks have been placed near the icebox, ready for use. However, a mischievous little boy has lit a set of firecrackers on the chair beside the table. I made these firecrackers by wrapping and gluing a red paper napkin to a long piece of thin dowel I then sliced this into short pieces. I arranged these in two parallel rows on the sticky side of a piece of invisible tape. I ran a thin piece of cord down the centre of the rows and glued an orange tissue paper



'flame' to the end. Then I placed a piece of toothpick (its tip painted black with marker) in the boy's hand.

A variety of items in the scene suggest life in the 'wild west'. A painting of horses graces one wall of the kitchen, a rifle hangs above the woodstove ready to scare away coyotes, and a statue of a wild horse sits atop the china cabinet.

(This last item was made from a party favour glued to some balsa and painted silver.) White clapboard is fastened to the outside of the room box to imitate the clapboard-clad farmhouses once scattered across the American frontier.

Since there are so many small items scattered on every available surface, I decided to use Deluxe Materials Tacky Wax to keep them in place. As a hobbyist who likes to change her models with the seasons, I find this product especially useful since it does not create a permanent bond. Things held down by Tacky Wax can later be

moved without difficulty. In Betty's cowboy kitchen, even the painting is secured to the wall using Tacky Wax.

To create a 'plumped' pillow and a suitably weighed-down bag of flour, I used Liquid Gravity, another marvellous product from Deluxe Materials. This product can also be used to weigh down mini clothing to create a more natural appearance.

Nearly every item in my scene - from the ice box to the porcelain sink to the ham and potatoes - are Town Square Miniatures from Aztec Imports and can be ordered through your local 'mini' retailer in the UK, Canada, and the United States, [www.aztecimport.com/catalogs.html](http://www.aztecimport.com/catalogs.html). I especially liked their pretty blue pre-pasted wallpaper. It is simple and easy to apply. Their dolls are also wonderfully expressive. Betty is my favourite, but there are many to choose from. Aztec Imports also carries all Deluxe Materials products.

Happy Fourth of July! 🇺🇸

## INFORMATION

Debbie Marshall is a writer from Alberta, Canada. The small side table, 'doily', recipe box, framed photo, bead vase and flower, bricking, horse sculpture, flour, pastry, boy doll, boxed fireworks, handmade fireworks, and 'Navajo' rug used in this scene came from her personal collection.



## Deluxe Materials' Tacky Wax

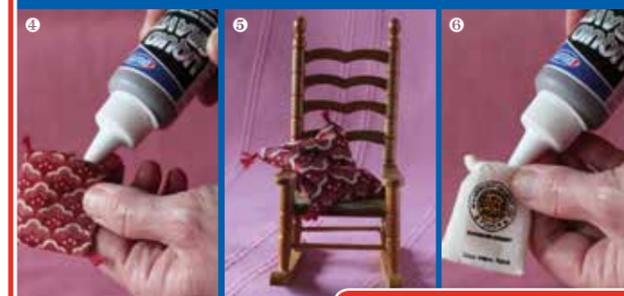
Mini-makers often want to change what their dolls are 'carrying' in their hands. To allow Betty to carry her cake, I applied a small amount of Tacky Wax to each of her hands using a thin coffee stirrer. (Photo 1) Then I placed the cake in her hands. (Photo 3)

When I want to change what Betty is carrying, I simply have to remove the cake and replace it with another item. If necessary, I can add a little more Tacky Wax as needed.



## Deluxe Materials Liquid Gravity

A dolls' house pillow can often look stiff and unrealistic. To give my pillow a 'plumped' look, I unpicked the seam along one side of the pillow and removed the stuffing. Then I refilled the pillow with 'liquid gravity', as shown. (Photo 4) Stitch up the pillow carefully. Repeat the process for the 'flour sack'. (Photo 6)



**Top Tip:** Don't overstuff your item with Liquid Gravity. Just fill until you get the effect that you desire.



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