

# Kids in the Kitchen

Written by: **Mary Reisinger**  
Photography by: **Lance C. Bell**

Olivia Stewart, who had her twelfth birthday on March 27, 2018, has been around cooking all her life because that is what her father does for a living.

Rick Stewart did not plan a culinary career. He worked construction until he was injured in an accident, and turned to bartending at a friend's place. When he helped out in the kitchen, he discovered an affinity for cooking. Since 1996, he has been building his reputation as a chef. Currently, he works for a restaurant called Crave Eatery that operates a take-out restaurant in Elkton, Maryland, a forty-foot food truck with stops in Maryland and Delaware, and catering services for private clubs and special events.

His daughter Olivia really enjoys making all sorts of things. Her favorite dish to cook is fried squash, but she also makes some delicious desserts such as brownies and cheese Danish. She says when they don't have time to make the Danish pastry from scratch, they buy the dough and mix up the cheese filling. The only food she avoids is eggs cooked by themselves. "They're okay if they're mixed into rice or something." Olivia watches cooking shows such as *Chopped* and *Kids Baking Championship*—but she thinks that while being a contestant would probably be "fun," it would definitely be "terrifying."

Olivia is a seventh grader this fall at Shue Medill Middle School in Newark, Delaware. In her spare time, Olivia enjoys riding horses, swimming, drawing, playing the cello, and reading. "I read all the time, actually." She hopes to be a marine biologist, and says she would love to learn scuba diving.

Olivia visits her paternal grandmother, Shirley Young, as often as she can. When her father's busy work schedule



**Olivia Stewart and the gluten free flourless cake.**

prevents him from taking Olivia to Shirley's home near Cumberland, Maryland, Shirley travels to Elkton to see Olivia. Olivia and her grandmother share a middle name, Rae, and like to "hang out" together. They engage in a variety of activities, including trips to the beach, browsing the shops, eating out, or cooking in. On a recent visit, they made some yummy Pizza Bites and then they decided to try baking a flourless cake, a suitable dessert for a gluten free diet, or simply a lovely ending to a hearty meal featuring fried squash.

## Chocolate Gluten Free Flourless Cake

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ cup blanched hazelnuts or almonds or macadamia nuts
- 8 tablespoons sugar, divided
- 3 ounces bittersweet chocolate
- ½ cup reduced-fat sour cream
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 tablespoon Frangelico or amaretto (optional)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 5 egg whites, at room temperature
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Fresh sliced strawberries for serving (optional)
- Strawberry yogurt (optional)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Generously coat an 8" or 9" springform pan with 2 teaspoons of the butter and dust with 1 tablespoon of the cocoa powder (don't tap out the excess cocoa; leave it in the pan).

In a food processor, chop the nuts with 1 tablespoon of sugar until finely ground.

In the top of a double boiler over barely simmering water, melt the chocolate and the remaining 4 teaspoons butter, stirring occasionally, until smooth. Remove from heat and place in a large bowl. Add the nut mixture, sour cream, egg yolks, Frangelico or amaretto, vanilla, cinnamon, 5 tablespoons of the remaining sugar, and the remaining 2 tablespoons cocoa powder. Stir until well-blended.

In another large bowl, with an electric mixer on high speed, beat the egg whites and salt until foamy. Gradually add the remaining 2 tablespoons sugar, beating until the whites hold stiff peaks when the beaters are lifted.

Stir ¼ of the beaten whites into the chocolate mixture to lighten it. Gently fold in the remaining whites. Spoon into the prepared pan. Gently smooth the top.

Bake for 30 minutes, or until the cake has risen, is dry on top, and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out with a few moist crumbs. Cool on rack until warm. The cake will fall dramatically. Loosen edges with a knife and remove the pan sides.

Serve with yogurt and sliced strawberries, if desired. Makes 12 servings.

**Per serving:** 160 calories, 4 g protein, 15 g carbohydrates, 10 g fat, 4 g saturated fat, 46 mg cholesterol, 1 g dietary fiber, 80 mg sodium.

## Pizza Bites

- 2 cans (12 oz each) Golden Layers refrigerated buttermilk biscuits
- 60 small slices Pepperoni (3½ oz)
- 5 sticks Colby-Monterey Jack cheese, cut into pieces
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 tablespoons shredded Parmesan cheese
- ½ teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 jar (8 oz) pizza sauce

Preheat oven to 375°F. Spray large cookie sheet with cooking spray. Separate 1 can of dough into biscuits. Keep second can refrigerated until ready to use.

On floured cutting board flatten and roll each biscuit with rolling pin, into oval shape. Cut in half.

Place several pieces of pepperoni and piece of cheese on one half; fold over half of dough to form triangular shape. Wet the edges with a little water to help hold together and then use fork to crimp edges. Repeat with remaining dough, pepperoni, and cheese. Place on baking sheet leaving about 2" between.

Brush dough with beaten egg. Sprinkle with shredded Parmesan cheese and Italian seasoning. Bake 18 to 20 minutes or until golden brown.

In small microwave bowl, heat pizza sauce, loosely covered for 45 to 60 seconds or until warm. Mozzarella Cheese and Italian seasoning may be added to pizza sauce to taste. Serve with Pizza Bites for dipping.



Finished Pizza Bites ready for dipping.