

Holiday Baking

Easy Holiday Desserts

(NAPSA)—Just because a dessert looks utterly elegant doesn't mean it has to take forever—or be difficult—to prepare. That's the genius behind celebrity chef's Nick Stellino's "Torta Con Fragole All'Aceto Balsamico," and those pressed for time around the holidays may be thanking him for years.

It pairs rich, buttery pound cake with a drizzling of sweet strawberries and tart balsamic vinegar.



Stellino

"The first time I had strawberries in balsamic vinegar I was 20 years old, traveling in Modena with my father," says Stellino, cookbook author and host of PBS' "Nick Stellino's Family Kitchen." "I knew instantly the berries would make the perfect complement for my favorite pound cake."

A side benefit of the dessert: It's made with Pompeian Extra Light Tasting Olive Oil, which gives you all the cholesterol-lowering health benefits of olive oil without influencing the taste.

Torta Con Fragole All'Aceto Balsamico

Ingredients (Pound Cake):

- 3 cups all-purpose flour, or use cake flour
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 cup Pompeian Extra Light Tasting Olive Oil
- 2½ cups granulated sugar
- 6 whole eggs
- 8 oz. sour cream
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350° F. Generously grease and flour a 10-inch tube pan or Bundt pan. Sift together flour, baking soda and salt, and set aside. With electric mixer, cream together



Torta Con Fragole All'Aceto Balsamico

(Pound Cake with Strawberries in Balsamic Vinegar)

olive oil and sugar (mixture will seem granular). Add eggs, one at a time, until each is blended. Alternate adding flour mixture and sour cream to the egg mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Add vanilla extract. Pour cake batter into prepared pan. Place in preheated oven and reduce temperature at once to 325° F.

Bake 1 hour and 15 minutes, until lightly golden and a wooden pick comes out clean.

Ingredients (Strawberries):

- 1½ lbs. strawberries, quartered
- 2 Tbsp. sugar (or to taste)
- ¾ Tbsp. chopped fresh mint
- 2 Tbsp. Pompeian Pomegranate Infused Balsamic Vinegar (or Pompeian Balsamic Vinegar if Pomegranate is unavailable)

Place strawberries in a large bowl and sprinkle with sugar. Add mint and vinegar and mix well. Let rest for 1 hour before serving.

Top pound cake with strawberries and serve.

CHEF'S TIP: Strawberries in Balsamic Vinegar also are delicious served alone or over ice cream.