

# THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SPATULA

## Living a Tasty Life with Donna DelCora

### No-Bake Mascarpone & Strawberry Torte with Crumb Crust (Sbriciolata alle Fragole Mascarpone Senza Cottura)

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Serves: 6 people

Calories: You don't want to know

#### Ingredients:

##### For the crust:

$\frac{3}{4}$  of a pound Italian biscuits, cookies ( see note)

1  $\frac{1}{3}$  sticks of butter

##### For the filling:

16 ounces of mascarpone cheese

1 cup heavy cream, whipped

1 pint of ripe firm strawberries

1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups confectionary sugar

1 tablespoon of vanilla extract

#### Directions:

Preparation:

You will need an 8-inch round springform pan. Spray the pan with non-stick cooking spray. Cut a piece of parchment paper into a 10-inch round and press flat into the pan. It will go up the sides about 2 inches. This will make it easier to remove the pie and plate. You can also use this method on an 8-inch regular pie plate.

1. Stem, wash and dry the strawberries. Gently chop and set aside.
2. Biscuit base: Cut the butter into small pieces and melt either in the microwave or small pan using very low heat. Place the cookies in a food processor and chop them into a coarse grind. Mix the butter into the crumbs until combined. Press  $\frac{3}{4}$  of this crumb mixture into the pan. Using a spoon, press the crumbs into the pan and up the sides a bit to contain the filling. Place in the refrigerator until ready to fill.
3. Prepare the cream. In a bowl, soften the mascarpone with the confectionary sugar and vanilla extract. Mix well until incorporated. In a separate bowl, whip the heavy cream with an electric mixer. Slowly and gently fold the whipped cream into the mascarpone. Add the chopped strawberries and add to the mixture.
4. Remove the biscuit base from the fridge and spoon in the filling. Top with the remaining cookie crumbs. Place in the refrigerator and chill for at least two hours. Before serving, dust with powdered sugar.

**Notes:** When I refer to Italian biscuits, I refer to cookies, not traditional hard biscotti. These can be plain vanilla, almond, even chocolate if you prefer. They are hard but cookie-like. They can be purchased in most Italian bakeries or the supermarket under the Stella Doro brand.

#### Inspirations:

- a. I made my torte with Italian biscuits that already had toasted almonds in them. I used one tablespoon of almond extract instead of the vanilla.
- b. To prepare a lighter version, use ricotta cheese instead of mascarpone.
- c. Use a touch of limoncello instead of extract, adding a touch of freshness for summer.
- d. Toast some slivered almonds or pistachio nuts and add the cookie crumbs
- e. Coconut cookies and coconut extract?
- f. Place on a beautiful platter or cake stand and garnish the plate with assorted fresh berries.



