American Cancer Society, The Culinary Institute of America and “Ace of Cakes” Chef Duff Join Forces to Reinvent the Birthday Cake

Emerging Chef Alexandra Mudry’s New Take on Red Velvet is the Official Birthday Cake of the American Cancer Society

ATLANTA 2009/07/23 -The American Cancer Society, the Official Sponsor of Birthdays, joined forces with The Culinary Institute of America (CIA), the world’s premier culinary college, to reinvent the birthday cake. Because healthy living is key to creating a world with less cancer and more birthdays, the Society and the CIA challenged CIA’s baking and pastry students to create a better-for-you birthday cake. CIA Alumni and star of Food Network’s TV’s “Ace of Cakes” Chef Duff Goldman joined the Society and the CIA to select the winner, Alexandra Mudry’s new take on red velvet cake, from a pool of five talented finalists. The winner is now the official birthday cake of the American Cancer Society.

“Birthday cakes help people celebrate important milestones in meaningful ways. We see a significant opportunity to use the American Cancer Society’s new official birthday cake to inspire people to stay well and lead healthier lives through simple lifestyle changes,” said Elizabeth T.H. Fontham, M.P.H, Dr.P.H., national volunteer president, American Cancer Society. “Who better to help create a healthier birthday cake without sacrificing fun and flavor than The Culinary Institute of America and Chef Duff?”

The Society’s official birthday cake is a healthier version of a red velvet cake that delivers plenty of taste but much less sugar and fat than a traditional recipe. In addition to cutting back on sugar, eggs, oil and butter, Mudry’s inventive additions - including roasted beets, dried cherries, applesauce and whole grain flour - help kick the nutrients up a notch. The result: a better-for-you cake that tastes great and still has the fun, celebratory feel of a traditional birthday cake.

To help promote healthier birthday celebrations throughout the country, students from The Culinary Institute of America were challenged to create an easy-to-replicate cake recipe that incorporates ingredients that reduce some of the not-so-healthy ingredients typically found in cakes. Students submitted recipes that included an original cake recipe and a description of how the recipe used more healthful baking ingredients and/or substitutions to improve on the traditional birthday cake. The CIA deans evaluated the recipes and selected five finalists. The other finalists included:

- Arthur Battistini, runner up, Hyde Park Campus
- Tamara King, Hyde Park Campus
- Lorraine Tran, Greystone Campus
- Laura Sansone, Hyde Park Campus

“Our students are encouraged to include ingredients with high nutritional value in their recipes,” said Thomas Vaccaro, associate dean for baking & pastry arts at The Culinary Institute of America. “When we were presented with an opportunity to work with the American Cancer Society to reinvent the birthday cake we were thrilled because the collaboration truly showcases our emerging chefs’ commitment to producing more healthful recipes. We’re also pleased to be part of the Society’s efforts to raise awareness of healthy living to fight cancer as the disease has touched so many of our students in very personal ways.”

Chef Duff selected the Official Birthday Cake of the American Cancer Society at his studio bakery, Charm City Cakes, where he tapes his popular Food Network show, “Ace of Cakes.” The finalist judging will be featured in an upcoming “Ace of Cakes” episode.

“The idea of having an official birthday cake and celebrating more birthdays is a very positive way of looking at

cancer and dealing with cancer," said Chef Duff. "If people are baking better-for-you cakes at home, then they are taking a step in the right direction to live longer, healthier lives and celebrate more birthdays. Baking isn't as scary as you think and the winning recipe is a prime example of just how easily more nutritious baking can be done at home."

To download the recipe for the official birthday cake of the American Cancer Society and more information on the finalists, visit www.morebirthdays.com.

Eating a healthy diet high in fruits, vegetables and whole grains and limited in processed and red meats is one important component of staying well to reduce your risk of cancer. In addition, it is important to get at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity on five or more days a week; to get the cancer screenings that are appropriate based on your age and family history; and to avoid cigarette smoking.

The American Cancer Society invites people to join the movement to create a world with less cancer and more birthdays by visiting morebirthdays.com where they can declare the American Cancer Society the official sponsor of their birthday, download a healthy "how to" birthday kit and send e-cards to friends and family. People can also spread the word on Facebook or by visiting OfficialBirthdayBlog.com.

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end suffering from cancer. As a global grassroots force of more than three million volunteers, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. We save lives by helping people stay well by preventing cancer or detecting it early; helping people get well by being there for them during and after a cancer diagnosis; by finding cures through investment in groundbreaking discovery; and by fighting back by rallying lawmakers to pass laws to defeat cancer and by rallying communities worldwide to join the fight. As the nation's largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, contributing about $3.4 billion, we turn what we know about cancer into what we do. As a result, more than 11 million people in America who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more about us or to get help, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.

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