

Baking With Antonio

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Antonio's favourite thing about school was, you guessed it: lunch time. Even though Antonio was just 8 years old he was the best cook in his entire family. Can you believe that he started making his own meals when he was just four years old?

Antonio didn't stay up late watching cocomelon videos on his ipad, but instead he chose to watch the most intense cooking tutorials on YouTube that you could ever imagine. After watching the videos, Antonio would make a shopping list and beg his mom to take him to the grocery store to buy the ingredients.

The grocery store was like a playground for Antonio, so many possibilities. He got his best ideas while walking through the produce aisles. His mind would race, he'd think about all of the delicious snacks that he could make for his family.

In just four days, Antonio's class would be hosting their very own bake sale to raise money for the local food bank. Each student wrote their name on the chalkboard along with the dessert that they'd be bringing to sell at the bake sale.

Right away, Antonio knew exactly what he was going to bring - his famous double chocolate cupcakes infused with caramel and garnished with his moms secret buttercream frosting. Ouuu, his mouth was watering just thinking about it.

Antonio urgently approached his mother after school, asking if they could go to the grocery store to pick up the ingredients for cupcakes. Ofcourse, she was so supportive and said yes - after all, it *was* for a good cause.

They went to two separate stores to get the *perfect* ingredients. "No name" cocoa powder? Pft, I think not, Antonio only used the best of the best - that's why he was *known* for these cupcakes.

The night before the bake sale, Antonio put on his hairnet and apron, cleaned the countertops, played his favourite music, and got to work. The key to a good moist cupcake is...

- room temperature ingredients
- hot water from the kettle
- sifting the flour
- using apple sauce - yes apple sauce (*don't knock it til' you try it*)

When it comes to baking, all measurements need to be precise. Antonio didn't scoop the flour and sugar, instead he weighed them on a food scale, just to be certain.

The kitchen was his happy place, he sang along to the tunes as he mixed his batter and poured it into the cupcake wrappers - it was almost time to bake!

Because the oven was so hot, Antonio's mom helped with putting the cupcakes into the oven and taking them out at the end. Using his iPad, Antonio set the timer to 17 minutes on the dot. He liked to clean the kitchen as he waited for the cupcakes to finish baking. He put his mixing bowls in the sink, soaking them with soapy warm water, then put away the mixer, wiped up the batter that he spilled, put away the ingredients, and finally washed and dried all of the dishes.

ring, ring, ring

"Yes, perfect timing!" said Antonio

He turned off the oven, and called for his mom, but she didn't answer. He yelled for her again, this time a little louder. She responded from the bathroom, saying that she would be down in three minutes to take out the cupcakes.

Antonio started to panic. His cupcakes were ready to be taken out of the oven NOW, who knows what an added three minutes of baking time would do? So he made the executive decision to take the cupcakes out on his own.

He put on his mom's oven mitts, opened the oven, mmmm the sweet aroma of fresh baked goods. Carefully, he reached for the tray and...

"Ahhhh, hot!"

He accidentally touched the inside of the oven door with his arm

At that very moment, his mom walked into the kitchen, quickly tended to the burn on Antonio's arm and *then* took the cupcakes out. They were fine, the cupcakes that is, but Antonio's arm was red with a burn.

Luckily, the burn wasn't terrible, but "it could've been worse", his mom explained. She was disappointed that Antonio reached into the oven knowing that he wasn't allowed to. His mom explained that he was still too young to use the stove completely on his own, and that next time he should wait.

Antonio told his mom that he just didn't want the cupcakes to get burned. She understood, but what was more important; a batch of cupcakes or safety? Even if the cupcakes got burned, they simply could've made another batch.

Thank goodness the cupcakes were still moist, decadent, and *not burned*. After they cooled, Antonio made his mom's secret buttercream frosting and then decorated all of the cupcakes. They looked *oh so delicious!*

"Ahhh, I really wish I could eat one", sighed Antonio

Antonio's mom looked at him, then looked at the cupboard, suggesting that they make a second batch for themselves. They both smiled and got straight to work on another batch of cupcakes.

QUESTIONS:

1. If your class had a bake sale, what would you bring?
2. If you had a secret recipe, would you share it with anyone? Friends? Family? Strangers?
3. What do you think Antonio could have done differently instead of reaching into the oven when his mom wasn't coming fast enough?
4. What safety tips do you have for kids when cooking in the kitchen? Think about hot things, sharp things, and things that can break easily