

# Introduction to Baking Summer Camp



## About the Camp

This camp will focus on the techniques and skills needed to become a confident and proficient baker. We will also spend some time on the science of baking, using different leavening agents and methods to achieve different results in taste and texture. We'll learn how to read a recipe, how to set up our "mise-en-place," and how to adapt when we make a mistake. We'll have fun and create something delicious every day.

The camp will meet Monday-Friday from 9:30 to 2:30 each day. Cost is \$335/week, except for the mini-camp which is \$200. Lunch is provided at no extra charge, along with snacks and drinks. I will send out a lunch menu the week before the camp (and campers are of course welcome to bring their own food). The camp is held in my home, at 5030 Alta Vista Road. The cost of the camp includes all ingredients and containers to take home finished products each day. For more information, please contact Valerye at [vstrochak@gmail.com](mailto:vstrochak@gmail.com) or 301-442-5870.

**Dates:** June 17-19 (mini-camp)                      August 3-7                      August 17-21

**Age Requirement:** Participants must be 8 years old or going into 3rd grade in the fall. I cannot accommodate younger students.

**To Register:** Please email me at [vstrochak@gmail.com](mailto:vstrochak@gmail.com). I will send you a registration form. I require a deposit of \$175 (non-refundable) to hold your child's place in the camp.

## Schedule

- Monday:** Introduction to Baking  
Skills: Measuring ingredients correctly—why is this so important in baking?  
Cutting butter into flour  
Finished Products: Scones, Pie
- Tuesday:** The Science of Cookies—how different leaveners and creaming methods affect taste and texture  
Skills: Creaming butter, browning butter  
Finished Product: Chocolate Chip Cookies, M&M bars
- Wednesday:** Cupcakes and Frostings  
Skills: Filling and using piping bags; different piping techniques  
Finished Product: Decorated cupcakes
- Thursday:** Decorating Sugar Cookies  
Skills: Rolling out dough, decorating techniques (wet on wet, flocking); royal icing  
Finished product: Decorated Sugar Cookies
- Friday:** Yeast breads  
Skills: Proofing yeast, kneading  
Finished products: Pizza Dough, Cinnamon Rolls  
(lunch that day will be homemade pizzas!)

## About the Instructor

Valerye Strochak has been baking for as long as she can remember. For the past 23 years, she has had a business selling gift baskets of baked goods during the Christmas holiday season. This past year she baked over 8,000 cookies and 500 breads, and made 40 pounds of candy for her basket business during the month of December. She also bakes during the rest of the year, although on a somewhat smaller scale.

Ms. Strochak has taught baking and cooking in the after-school program at North Bethesda Middle School, Westland Middle School, through her neighborhood association, and to her own children and their friends. She has cooked numerous meals for her church and her children's sports teams, and does occasional catering. This is the fifth year that she has taught baking camp.

Ms. Strochak completed a 9-month semi-professional program at L'Academie de Cuisine, a 3-week Cake Decorating Course also at L'Academie, and a puff pastry course at King Arthur Flour's Educational Center in Vermont. But mainly, she just bakes. And thinks about baking when she is not actually baking.