

Vanilla Facts

Vanilla: The number one flavor asked for in ice cream. Three out of five people order ice cream over any other flavor. Vanilla is the only edible part of a vanilla orchid plant. These plants are grown in the same regions that chocolate and coffee is. Within the world, there are three areas that vanilla orchids are grown, each with a distinctive flavor and aroma.

Madagascar: For baking, by far the best. Anytime you are going to heat vanilla in your baking such as in a cake or custard, you will want to use this vanilla.

Mexico: Best used for the essences, such as perfumes and candles.

Tahiti: For non-baking, such as ice creams, Frostings and such. Tahitian vanilla beans tend to have a “flowery” aroma and taste.

How to use a bean:

First, only purchase fresh beans. Most grocery stores have two beans in a jar on the spice isle. The problem is that they do not have a high turnover of the beans and the costs are very high. If you want to see the person at the checkout give you a questionable look, purchase a jar of the beans! I suggest that you purchase your beans in a specialty cookware shop or by mail on the web at www.penzeys.com.

To use a bean, flatted it lengthwise. Cut down the length of the bean with a paring knife. Scrape the bean of the black seeds that I refer to as vanilla “dirt”. If you are making custard, you can place the “dirt” into the saucepan with the liquid. Place the pod into the pan also; you can remove the pod once you are finished.

Vanilla Extracts:

Pure vanilla extract: This is the purest of the vanilla flavorings. It was created in 1847, it is made by soaking vanilla beans in grain alcohol and water. U/DA regulated that is must contain at least 35% alcohol.

Vanilla Flavoring: May contain less that 35% alcohol. It has a blend of pure and imitation vanilla.

Imitation Vanilla: Composed entirely of artificial flavorings, which most are byproducts of the paper-industry that are treated with chemicals

Vanillin: It is a flavoring that you will find in chocolate chips. Vanilla gives many people headaches. It is obtained either from vanilla or from various balsams and resins. It is a chemically a crystalline compound,

©2013 George Geary

www.georgegeary.com

Facebook: [George Geary Culinary Tours and Classes](#)

ggeary@aol.com

#chefgeary