

BOLD TASTES

Taking Vanilla Beyond Sweetness

New Recipes
Perk Up Palates

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Adding a teaspoon or two of vanilla extract to a batch of brownies, chocolate chip cookies or crème brûlée is no cause for surprise to any cook.

Add the same to spicy tequila shrimp, apricot mango BBQ ribs or white bean chili, and that's a shocker.

Not so, though, if you're a fan of Nielsen-Massey, the vanilla specialists who have been producing pure vanilla extracts and other natural flavorings for more than 100 years. They have come up with loads of tantalizing recipes for savory main courses and side dishes using their Madagascar Bourbon pure vanilla extract and vanilla powder and their Madagascar pure almond extract that will surprise your taste buds in the sweetest way possible.

Try this almond vinaigrette with your favorite salad, or serve the vanilla lobster sauce over bowtie pasta.

ALMOND VINAIGRETTE

- >> 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- >> 2 teaspoons maple syrup
- >> 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- >> 1/4 teaspoon almond extract

- >> 1/4 teaspoon salt
- >> 1/8 teaspoon white pepper
- >> 1/2 cup canola oil
- >> 1/4 cup natural rice vinegar

Whisk the mustard, syrup, vanilla and almond extracts, salt and pepper in a bowl. Add the canola oil in a fine stream, whisking constantly until incorporated. This will emulsify the dressing and prevent it from separating. Slowly whisk in the vinegar.

Makes 3/4 cup.

VANILLA LOBSTER SUPREME WITH PASTA

- >> 4 cups organic vegetable stock
- >> 1/2 cup white wine
- >> 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
- >> 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- >> 2 whole garlic cloves
- >> 1 leek, rinsed and coarsely chopped
- >> 2 bay leaves
- >> 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- >> 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- >> 1/4 teaspoon white pepper
- >> 1 teaspoon salt
- >> 3 tablespoons clarified butter (see note)
- >> 3 tablespoons cake flour
- >> 1/2 teaspoon vanilla powder
- >> 1 cup heavy cream, warmed
- >> 1-1/2 pounds cooked fresh or frozen lobster meat, coarsely chopped
- >> Hot cooked bowtie pasta
- >> Chopped fresh parsley for garnish
- >> Freshly grated Romano cheese for garnish

In a large saucepan over medium heat, combine the stock,

VA-VA-VANILLA, D8

wine, Worcestershire sauce, vanilla extract, garlic, leek, bay leaves, nutmeg, paprika, pepper and salt. Simmer for 1 hour. Strain through a fine mesh strainer into a bowl and set aside.

Place the clarified butter in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Whisk in the flour and vanilla powder. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes, whisking constantly. Gradually whisk in the strained stock mixture. Cook, whisking frequently, for 20 minutes, or until the sauce begins to thicken.

Add the warm cream and lobster to the sauce. Cook until heather

through. Place the hot pasta in a serving bowl and spoon the lobster sauce over the top. Garnish with parsley and grated cheese.

Serves 4 to 6.

Note: To clarify butter, melt the butter in a small saucepan and skim off the white milk solids that come to the top. The remaining clear butter is less heat sensitive, which reduces the risk of burning.

>> Margaret M. Johnson is the author of five Irish cookbooks, including "Tea and Crumpets," released in May by Chronicle Books.



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ALMOND VINAIGRETTE with vanilla gives salads a boost.