

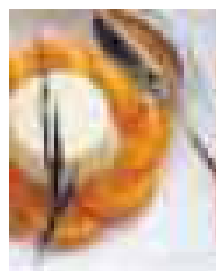
### To eat ... *using vanilla*

Vanilla comes in many forms, from extract and essence to pods and paste.

Trade up from the artificial flavour of vanilla essence (sometimes produced from pine trees) to pure extract. A bottle of extract is usually made from matured Madagascan Bourbon or Ugandan vanilla pods that produce an intense, slightly sweet liquid that is ideal for baking. For the seed effect without buying pods, use a vanilla-bean paste available from Waitrose.

Fresh vanilla pods add a fragrant scent and taste as well as a speckled look to ice creams and fancy custards.

Split the pod lengthwise down the middle with a sharp knife. If the pod is not too dry, then it can be used whole in custard or milk. Otherwise scrape out the seeds from the pod with a knife and add to a cake mix.



Surprise palates by sprinkling Halen Môn's Welsh sea salt flakes and Tahitian vanilla over rich chocolate puddings or mix them into a ganache filling for home-made truffles.

Nick Wyke