

How to Make Vanilla Extract

This free How To tip sheet was produced by the Cheapskates Club – www.cheapskates.com.au

Vanilla Extract

You will need:

6 - 8 vanilla beans

750ml bottle of vodka

Instructions:

Split the vanilla beans lengthwise and drop them into the bottle of vodka. Screw the lid back on and put it in a cool, dark cupboard and forget about it for around six weeks. That's it. After the six weeks, have a sniff and if it smells like vanilla extract it's ready to use. If it still smells a little of alcohol, let it cure another couple of weeks and do the sniff test again. If it smells right and is dark in colour, it's good to use.

I have an old Queen vanilla extract bottle (from back when I bought the stuff) that I keep my kitchen supply in. It holds 200ml and I just decant it as needed. When the vodka bottle is about half empty, I top it up with fresh vodka, add a fresh vanilla bean (leave the originals, they're still good) and start the curing over again. If I've used a vanilla bean in cooking I drop the scraped pods into the bottle too, so nothing is wasted.

Vanilla beans can be expensive if you buy them from the supermarket; around \$10 for two I think last time I looked. There is a stall at the Queen Vic market in Melbourne where they are \$6 for four, a much better price. Or you can even buy them on eBay for around \$4 for three.



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