

Try adding a twist to your holiday staples this year

Written by Editor

Sunday, 13 November 2011 14:28

[baby dress up](#) [online games](#) [bride dress up games](#) [baby dress up games](#) [business web directory](#) [weddi](#)
[ng dress up games](#)
[bride dress up games](#)
[online games](#)
[jewelry making supplies](#)
[2013 wedding trends](#)
[landscape design ideas](#)



(ARA) - We look forward to the holidays for many reasons, and the food is often near the top of the list. But while traditional holiday dishes are a familiar comfort that everyone in the family can look forward to, there's no harm in adding a slight twist to your staples to give them a gourmet touch.

No, it's not a good idea to scrap your family favorites altogether, but adding a surprising special touch to this year's dishes could be all you need to invigorate your holiday meal. Maybe it's augmenting your sweet potatoes with a couple tasty additions or providing a finishing touch in the form of a delicious sauce for your traditional steak dinner. Even just adding a slight change to one part of your meal will bring a little extra life to your traditional fare.

Nielsen-Massey Vanillas offers a line of pure vanilla and gourmet extract products that can be a part of your solution when you're looking for ways to add that extra little bit of flavor to your classic dishes. They also provide a number of holiday recipes if you're looking for a place to start. Here are a few ideas for classing up traditional holiday foods.

Try adding a twist to your holiday staples this year

Written by Editor

Sunday, 13 November 2011 14:28

Side dish

If you're like many families, sweet potatoes are a staple at this time of year. While nobody can argue with their raw goodness, try taking this side dish to the next level by adding a tablespoon of Nielsen-Massey Tahitian Pure Vanilla Extract with some cooked and crumbled bacon. Whipping your potatoes with those ingredients, some cream cheese and a dash of maple syrup will have your guests asking what you did to make your usual sweet potatoes taste so good.

Main course

Filet Mignon is a special treat this time of year for many. There's no need to mess with greatness as you cook this prime cut of beef the way you know best, but consider adding this sauce to give your dinner guests an extra rich experience.

Vanilla Wine Sauce

Ingredients:

2 cups organic beef stock

1/4 cup dry red wine

1 small onion, sliced in half

Try adding a twist to your holiday staples this year

Written by Editor

Sunday, 13 November 2011 14:28

3 large springs of fresh marjoram or oregano

2 whole garlic cloves

1 teaspoon Nielsen-Massey Organic Madagascar Bourbon Pure Vanilla Extract

1 1/2 tablespoons tomato paste

1 teaspoon light brown sugar

2 tablespoons butter, softened

Directions:

Combine the stock, wine, onion, marjoram, garlic, vanilla extract, tomato paste and brown sugar in a saucepan. Simmer until reduced by half. Strain through a fine mesh strainer into a small saute pan. Whisk the butter into the sauce one tablespoon at a time over medium heat. The sauce will become glossy and slightly thickened. Once the steaks are done, spoon the sauce over them. Consider adding sauteed mushrooms for an extra complement to the steaks and sauce.

Dessert

The dessert spreads at holiday gatherings are something to behold. You'll often have a table full

Try adding a twist to your holiday staples this year

Written by Editor

Sunday, 13 November 2011 14:28

of desserts laid out for grazing throughout your party. Try this twist on gingerbread cookies and you're sure to see your confections disappear before the rest.

Nielsen-Massey Chewy Chocolate Gingerbread Cookies

Ingredients:

2 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour

1/4 cup high-quality cocoa powder

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon ground cloves

1/4 teaspoon ground ginger

1/2 teaspoon salt

3/4 cup (1 1/4 sticks) unsalted butter, softened

1 cup granulated sugar

Try adding a twist to your holiday staples this year

Written by Editor

Sunday, 13 November 2011 14:28

1/2 cup firmly packed light brown sugar

1 tablespoon Nielsen-Massey Madagascar Bourbon Pure Vanilla Extract

1 teaspoon Nielsen-Massey Pure Chocolate Extract

1 egg

1/4 cup original unsulfured molasses

Directions:

Line two light-colored, heavy baking sheets with parchment paper and set them aside. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa powder, cinnamon, cloves, ginger and salt, set aside. To a large mixing bowl, add butter, granulated and brown sugars, Madagascar Bourbon Pure Vanilla Extract and Pure Chocolate Extract; beat with an electric mixer on medium speed until creamy. Beat in egg until combined. Add molasses and beat until combined. Reduce speed to low, add dry ingredients in three batches, beating after each addition, until combined.

Divide dough into two even pieces, press each piece into a disk shape, wrap with plastic wrap and refrigerate for one hour. Preheat oven to 350 F. Working with one piece of dough at a time, place on a clean, lightly floured surface. For dusting the rolling surface and pin: In a small bowl, combine 1 tablespoon of cocoa powder with 2 tablespoons of all-purpose flour. This will help keep the cookies a nice chocolaty brown. Roll dough to a 1/4-inch thickness. Using a 2 3/4-inch cookie cutter, cut desired cookie shapes. Transfer cookies to prepared cookie sheets using a thin metal spatula. Bake eight to 10 minutes, remove and place cookies on wire rack to cool. For a crispier cookie, roll dough to a 1/3-inch thickness and adjust baking time accordingly.

Try adding a twist to your holiday staples this year

Written by Editor

Sunday, 13 November 2011 14:28

Whatever your holiday specialty may be, think about ways you can make it extra special this year. Scan your recipe books, look for a variation of the recipe on the Internet or just use your imagination and give it a test run before the holidays. Then when it comes time to enjoy, your guests are sure to be impressed.

