

Make Your Own

VANILLA EXTRACT

MAKES 1 CUP

This is easy and satisfying, and makes a great gift! There are several choices for the alcohol to use here. Each will yield a different flavor extract, so experiment to find what you like. The rum can be either light or dark.

3 vanilla beans, split lengthwise

1 cup vodka, rum, or bourbon

1 tablespoon water

Scrape the seeds of the vanilla beans and put them and the vanilla bean halves in a 1-pint (16-ounce) jar, bending the beans in half to fit, if necessary. Pour in the liquor and water. Cap the jar tightly and shake it. Refrigerate for 1 month, occasionally shaking the jar to mix it up.

BAKING POWDER

MAKES 6 TABLESPOONS

Baking powder is really just a combination of baking soda and an acid (in this case, cream of tartar) that activates the baking soda when they're combined with a liquid. This homemade version is not what is called "double-acting" (which releases gas first when it gets wet and again in reaction to the heat of the oven) and if you use it, you should be sure to get your batter straight into the oven so that the rising power doesn't dissipate as the batter sits. You can scale this up

or down, as long as you keep the 2:1 ratio of cream of tartar to baking soda. Note: You can't make your own baking soda so don't even try it!

1/4 cup cream of tartar

2 tablespoons baking soda

Mix the two ingredients together. That's it!